

Appraisal AI Functionality Guidance

The Career and Performance area on Horizon has additional AI functionality to support the completion of the appraisal process.

For appraisees there is the option to use AI functionality to help you write Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound (SMART) goals. The AI generated goal is created by using the information contained in the Career and Performance module, including goal name, appraisee job title and team/department which ensures relevance to the appraisee's role.

Whilst for appraisers, controlled university areas (People Directorate, Academic Learning Enhancement Team and Executive Business Centre) for 2024/25 supported by the People Directorate will pilot the use of AI to support them in providing feedback to the appraisee. The AI generated feedback for the appraiser is based on Participant Feedback, anytime Feedback and the appraisers' own comments in each section. The pilot will be evaluated to determine whether this functionality will be rolled out more widely in 2025/26.

AI functionality in appraisal will only be used as a starting point to help generate narrative and **must** be checked and amended to ensure it is contextualised to the university's priorities. The AI generated text must be aligned to the appraisee's current role, responsibilities and aspirations whilst also appropriate to their grade and level of experience.

Appraisee AI functionality – points to consider

AI generated goals should be personalised to fit your role and aspirations. They can be used to provide a framework for setting clear criteria for what you want to achieve. This could include specific skills to develop, projects to complete, or metrics to improve.

Before using the AI functionality to help write SMART goals, make sure you have updated your previous goals with your progress.

As an appraisee using the AI functionality on Horizon to help write SMART goals, when checking the AI generated goals you should consider the following points to ensure that they are personalised and meaningful, motivating and relevant.

Check to ensure that the AI generated goal:

- Reflects your specific job role and your individual strengths and challenges.
- Takes into account your career aspirations.
- Aligns with the university and your team priorities.
- Is at the appropriate level for you (i.e. not **too easy** or too difficult to achieve).
- Is up to date and considers any relevant and recent changes that may affect the goals for the forthcoming year.
- Outlines a reasonable output and intended impact of achieving the goal.
- Is using inclusive language. Refer to our [Inclusive Language Guide](#) for support.

- Is using the most up to date information within the appraisal system by updating previous goals on progress made. This will help to ensure that the AI is using the most current information to generate the AI goals and eliminating any bias.
- Is realistic, taking into consideration your capacity and resources available.
- Considers your past performance and future growth areas in terms of performance and development.

If any of the points above are not included in your AI generated goals, you must change them accordingly.

Appraiser AI functionality for Pilot group 24/25 – points to consider

The AI generated appraiser feedback on the appraisees performance is a good starting point to save time and help you focus on refining the feedback. AI can suggest varied phrases and vocabulary, helping you avoid repetitive language and making each review feel unique.

The AI generated feedback must be checked and amended so that it is personalised and meaningful to the appraisee so that you are still retaining the important human element in providing effective feedback. It should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with your observations, evidence and the appraisees performance to make sure it is an accurate reflection of the previous year.

The following points should be considered when checking the AI generated feedback:

- Reflects the appraisees specific job role and individual strengths, contributions and challenges.
- Ensure the feedback is specific. It is important to add specific examples and context that only you, as the appraiser, would know.
- Takes into account the appraisees career aspirations.
- Aligns with the university and your team priorities.
- Is up to date and considers any relevant and recent changes that may affect the performance of the previous year and goals for the forthcoming year.
- Highlights the output and impact of the appraisees performance.
- Is using inclusive language. Refer to our [Inclusive Language Guide](#) for support.
- Is using the most up to date information within the appraisal system by the appraiser updating previous goals on progress made. This will help to ensure that the AI is using the most current information to generate the AI goals and eliminating any bias.
- Considers the appraisees past performance and future growth areas in terms of performance and development.

If any of the points above are not included in your AI generated goals, you **must** make the required changes to ensure the feedback is effective.

Remember, AI is a tool to assist you, not replace you. Your insights, empathy and understanding are irreplaceable in providing valuable feedback to your appraisee.