



Public Service Commission

Te Kawa Mataaho

25 June 2026

9(2)(a) privacy

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Official Information Request

Our Ref: OIA 2026-0155

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request received by the Public Service Commission Te Kawa Mataaho (the Commission) on 3 June 2026 for:

- 1. A description of the performance rating scale currently used by your organisation when determining an employee's overall performance rating. Please note, I am not requesting information about your performance review process itself, only the rating scale used. For example, does your organisation assign employees a rating based on a 1-5 numerical scale, descriptive categories, matrices, or another model. I would like to know the type of rating scale used and how it defines each stage/step of the scale.*
- 2. A high-level description of what employees are currently assessed on as part of their performance review process. For example, is their rating based on the technical requirements/duties of their role, competencies, behaviours, alignment to values, etc. An indication of how these areas are weighted would also be helpful. A high-level description of your organisation's overall approach is fine, I am not seeking information on a role-by-role basis.*
- 3. A high-level description of if/how performance ratings are currently taken into account when your organisation carries out regular remuneration reviews. Does an employee's performance rating affect their remuneration review and, if so, how?*

Information being released

The Public Service Commission (Commission) does not use a formal performance rating scale. Instead, performance is assessed against whether an employee has met the *Commission's Benchmark for Performance* (document released). This operates as a binary assessment of whether the benchmark has been achieved or not, rather than a graduated rating scale.

Please find enclosed the following document which is relevant for your request.

Date	Document Description	Decision
August 2025	Whakatipu and the Commission's Benchmark for Performance	Released in full

What employees are assessed on

The Commission's performance and development process assesses whether employees have reached or exceeded the *Benchmark for Performance*.

At a high level, this involves assessing whether employees:

- deliver against the requirements of their role;
- act in alignment with the Commission's kawa (values); and
- take ownership of, and demonstrate progress in, their development.

The Commission does not apply formal weightings to these elements. Rather, they are considered together as part of an overall assessment against the Benchmark for Performance.

Relationship between performance and remuneration

Performance is taken into account in the Commission's annual remuneration review through consideration of whether an employee has met the *Benchmark for Performance*, alongside whether they meet the criteria for progression

Employees are eligible for progression where they meet relevant criteria, which include:

- effective delivery against expectations for their role;
- ongoing development; and
- demonstration of the Commission's kawa (values).

For employees in more advanced salary ranges, progression may also require:

- consistent contribution beyond role expectations;
- contribution beyond their immediate role (for example, to the Commission or wider system); and/or
- role modelling of the Commission's kawa (values).

Where an employee does not meet the Benchmark for Performance and the criteria for progression, their remuneration may not increase as part of the remuneration review (except where adjustments are required to maintain placement on a salary step, where applicable).

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on the Commission's website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Dirks', with a stylized, cursive script.

Nicky Dirks

Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services
Public Service Commission Te Kawa Mataaho



Whakatipu

Expectations at each Role Level

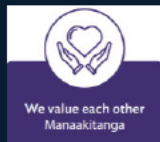
Whakatipu outlines the cumulative expectations of advisors at different levels.

Advisors/Analysts demonstrate a good understanding of Commission work, building collaborative relationships internally and with stakeholders. They deliver and contribute valuable content, have the ability to think, articulate and write logically, solve problems and have a clear focus on continuous improvement.

Senior Advisors/Analysts are subject matter experts, dealing with more complex issues, and are able to work more independently to achieve outcomes. They contribute significantly to the design and structure of content, may lead work processes, manage small to medium sized projects and guide and grow others.

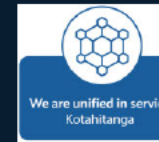
Principal Advisors/Analysts are thought leaders, who build capability within the team, the Commission and the wider Public Service. They can manage large and complex projects, and build and maintain influential relationships with senior stakeholders, to achieve outcomes.

Strategy			Delivery		
As an Advisor you:	As a Senior you:	As a Principal you:	As an Advisor you:	As a Senior you:	As a Principal you:
Are able to see how your personal work contributes to the bigger picture (including government and Commission expectations). Communicate clearly, managing stakeholder expectations. Are able to understand and adapt to shifts in priorities, strategies and/or approaches. Engage with others, making connections between teams, pieces of work across the commission and agencies.	Are strategic and insightful, seeing connections to the bigger picture. Can plan ahead and turn ideas into action. Are starting to lead influential thinking, dealing with complexity and ambiguity in your work. Understand and are able to apply policy frameworks in a range of situations and contexts. Have a sophisticated understanding of subjects and a depth of knowledge developing in specific areas.	Are known within the business as a strategic thought leader and seen to be a 'go-to'. See the wider context and you are able to work through challenging problems. Lead with strong influence, using your leadership skills to help others find a way through complexity and ambiguity. Embrace change and take action, applying change management practices. You are a subject matter expert with deep expertise and varied experience in different roles and contexts. Are able to work through conflict or disputes to get a positive and constructive outcome. Are able to engage and consult constructively to build synergy and consensus within a group.	Ask questions and use critical thinking skills to work through problems to achieve goals. Understand and contribute to effective work process and procedures. Are responsive to customer needs. Are adaptive and agile with your individual and team's work programme. Take ownership of your work, keeping people in loop – letting them know where things are at and escalating risks. Contribute to the cross-commission work programme.	Have strong analytical and communication skills. Are a trusted advisor within and outside of the Commission. You have a capable reputation and experience in a range of operating contexts beyond the Commission. Anticipate customer needs and take a codesign approach. Manage pieces of work end to end. Plan and prioritise your delivery with minimal supervision and meet delivery deadlines. Lead work processes, demonstrating an understanding of people and their roles and how to work with them effectively. Facilitate and co-create solutions with buy in from stakeholders – building their capability along the way. Take ownership of issues and actively work with others to resolve them.	Identify new opportunities and new ways of working and champion these, growing our organisation, our capability and practices. Celebrate success of self and others and actively promote the success of the Public Service and our talent. Can lead multiple, complex pieces of work at once. Have a track record of delivery (identified as achieving significant change and getting it across the line with Senior Leaders). Achieve through others and can influence without positional authority. Have the ability to do deep / slow thinking on important topics that contribute to Commission work programme (and system deliverables) and prioritise strategic thinking alongside delivery. Role model and drive integrity and best practice in the delivery for the organisation and system.
System			Talent		
As an Advisor you:	As a Senior you:	As a Principal you:	As an Advisor you:	As a Senior you:	As a Principal you:
Work collaboratively, to achieve a common goal. Take a continuous improvement approach. Write in a clear, concise and informative manner that is appropriate for the audience.	Can use your relationship building skills to influence stakeholders and to shape work responding to system priorities. Professionally represent the Commission with Senior Managers, Senior Leaders, or other senior stakeholders. Form clear advice/view and present this to other agencies for the public sector. Use your system lens to contribute to system and customer outcomes.	Enhance the system, by engaging and consulting constructively – internally and externally. Work seamlessly across boundaries with senior stakeholders-using influencing and persuasion skills with key decision makers. Use your experience and/or wisdom to identify, anticipate and manage political risks and outside influences. Deal with complexity and change, work in uncharted territory based on sound judgement, evidence and experience.	See Commission and team success as your own success and are willing to step up and take on work, that benefit us all. Contribute to and enjoy being part of a team environment. Are a self-starter, actively seeking feedback and opportunities to learn and grow. Use personal reflection and seek support to learn and adapt. Are comfortable with Te Ao Māori and basic te Reo.	Guide, mentor, coach and improve the quality of others work, enhancing team and Commission practices. Motivate and get the best out of others. You are inclusive and provide constructive, solution focused feedback to the wider team. Continually challenge yourself. Are growing your subject matter expertise and are committed to you own ongoing growth and development. Actively take a te Ao Māori perspective and promote up take of te Reo.	Actively mentor and coach others – contributing to the growth and development of a function/professional area through your advice, support and feedback. Provide thought leadership, contributing to the profile and evidence base of our work at the Commission. Role model enabling others to learn through talking about learning and development experiences and you are willing to authentically share your own experiences and challenges. Are a role model of our Kawa.
Indicators of leadership potential - Engaging others - Achieving ambitious goals - Honest and courageous - Curious - Self aware and agile - Resilient		Diversity Equity and Inclusion Develops and demonstrates cultural competence and understanding of the dimensions of diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, rainbow and age).	We aim for all staff to reach an appropriate level in the following: - Understanding and supporting the Māori Crown relationship - Understanding of racial equity and institutional racism - New Zealand history and the Treaty of Waitangi - Worldview knowledge te ao Māori, te ao Pakeha and diverse tauwi worldviews - Tikanga/kawa - Te reo Māori		



Benchmark for Performance

Behaviours we expect from everyone



To meet the benchmark, you will need to deliver, act in alignment with our kawa, and own your own development

Delivering Results What you achieve in terms of your individual goals, team and organisational contribution.	Our Kawa Matakite - We are bold and brave Manaakitanga - We value each other Kotahitanga - We are unified in service Whakapau kaha - we deliver for Aotearoa NZ	Your Development You are committed to growing your own skills and experience so that you are best placed to be successful in your current job and future career aspirations
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Above the line You are expected to:			✓
Delivering Results	Our Kawa	Your Development	
- Produce work under a variety of conditions - Own the deliverable not just the task and complete work consistently on time to the required level - Communicate clearly, concisely and effectively - Plan and set priorities - Identify problems and present ideas and solutions - Help your team or group deliver on the Commissions goals and work programme - Seek and act on constructive feedback	- Adhere to our public service values: impartial, accountable, trustworthy, respectful, responsive - Demonstrate behaviours which support our kawa, for example: - We speak up and act with integrity - We are open to try new and different ways of doing things - We are inclusive and treat people with respect - We look after our wellbeing and that of others - We are collaborative and work as a team - We involve the right people in the right way at the right time - We take action, inspire trust and confidence - We take responsibility and accountability	- Understand the skills and capabilities needed for the role - Work to improve and expand your skillset - Be reflective about where development might be needed and take opportunities to develop skills in critical areas - Develop an understanding of Te Tiriti, te reo and tikanga capability - Build and demonstrate cultural competence and understanding of diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, rainbow, neurodiversity, and age) - Continually looks to develop yourself and/or others both internally and where appropriate externally	

Below the line We don't want to see:			✗
Delivering Results	Our Kawa	Your Development	
- Work that is often late or frequently requires rework or correction - Not getting the job done from end-to-end - Being unreliable and not trusted to deliver - Communications that are often not clear or well received - Problems being ignored - Not being adaptable as situations change	- Behaviour that is counter to our kawa and public service values - Avoidance of responsibility or accountability - Actions which detract from a positive working environment, for example not treating colleagues with respect or choosing not to share relevant information - Actions that are not consistent with our code of conduct	- Lack of technical / fundamental skills to perform effectively - Ignoring constructive feedback - Not open to self-development - Not open to developing Te Tiriti understanding, te reo and tikanga capability - Not open to developing cultural competence and understanding dimensions of diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, rainbow, neurodiversity and age)	

Link to [our Kawa](#)