FAQ's

Information about
the appraisal interview (AI)

1. Basics / Definitions and differentiations
1.1. What is the AI?
1.2. What is the AI not?
1.3. What is the difference to an everyday meeting?
1.4. What is the purpose of an AI?
1.5. How is the AI anchored in law?

2. Scope of application
2.1. Who is entitled to an AI?
2.2. Should an AI also be conducted for temporary positions?
2.3. Can an AI also be conducted with employees who do not meet the required criteria?

3. Implementation of the AI
3.1. Preparing for the interview
    3.1.1. Is the AI mandatory?
    3.1.2. Who offers the AI to whom?
    3.1.3. What should I do if I have several managers?
    3.1.4. What should I do if my manager is absent for a longer period of time?
    3.1.5. What should be done if a manager does NOT offer the AI?
    3.1.6. What if I do not need an AI?
    3.1.7. What should I do if I initially refuse the AI but then need one after all?
    3.1.8. What should be done if several employees consistently and continuously refrain from taking a performance review?
    3.1.9. What if I would like to have an AI, but don't have the confidence to ask? / Where can I get help?
    3.1.10. How long should an AI take?
    3.1.11. How often should the AI be carried ou?
3.2. Making an appointment and preparation
    3.2.1. When is a good time to carry out an AI?
    3.2.2. How can I prepare for the AI?
    3.2.3. Where can I find relevant documents?
    3.2.4. Why is it important to prepare for the AI?
    3.2.5. What do I need to pay attention to in terms of the framework conditions?

4. Formal framework conditions of the interview
4.1. Who is talking to whom?
4.2. Can I take someone with me to the AI?
4.3. Who learns about the content of the AI?
4.4. What happens to the protocols of the performance review?
4.5. What should I do if I get a new manager?

5. Protocol/documentation
5.1. Why do you have to document an AI?

1. Basics / Definitions and differentiations

1.1. What is the AI?

The AI is a confidential discussion between the employee and their immediate manager in which the personal work situation, cooperation within the team and with the manager, as well as the agreement of work and development goals are worked out using standardized documents. It is intended to promote open behavior based on mutual respect in a partnership-based dialogue and requires that both parties can, want to and are allowed to contribute. A successful AI is proof of a practised feedback culture.

1.2. What is the AI not?

The AI is not a punishment/discipline tool, but neither is it small talk or everyday conversation.

1.3. What is the difference to an everyday meeting?

The AI is framed and needs preparation so that current topics of everyday working life do not distract, or an everyday conversation between "door and hinge" arises.

1.4. What is the purpose of an AI?

The AI serves in particular as an opportunity to discuss topics in a confidential setting that do not find a place in everyday working life (e.g: Discussing problems on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level, working out joint cooperation and expectations, giving mutual feedback). Furthermore, the AI serves to ensure and further develop job satisfaction. In addition, the activation of personal resources (e.g.: skills that would like to be acquired) and the stocktaking of previous work goals and results as well as their further development (e.g: Agreement on work goals, as well as development and further training measures) is promoted.

1.5. How is the AI anchored in law?

The legal basis can be found in:
1. § 45a Beamten-Dienstrechtsgesetz 1979 (BDG)
2. § 5 Vertragsbedienstetengesetz (VBG) mit Verweis auf § 45a BDG,
3. § 9 Abs. 4 des Kollektivvertrages für Arbeitnehmer_innen der Universitäten.

2. Scope of application

2.1. Who is entitled to an AI?

All employees of TU Wien who are in a valid employment relationship with a minimum of 10 hours of employment and whose duration is limited to more than 1 year are entitled to a AI. Of course, employees who do not meet these criteria can also be offered an appraisal interview - especially if the objectives of the appraisal interview can also be met there. For those employees at TU Wien who do not meet the required criteria, the planning period/horizon is limited, which is why the (AI-) process cannot be implemented in its

entirety. This also significantly limits the benefits of the AI.

2.2. Should an AI also be conducted for temporary positions?
Yes - an AI is particularly important for temporary positions (doctoral students/project staff) because there is less time to support developments.

2.3. Can an AI also be conducted with employees who do not meet the required criteria?
Of course, these employees can also be offered an AI, especially if the benefits of the AI are also given there.

3. Implementation of the AI
3.1. Preparing for the interview
3.1.1. Is the AI mandatory?
Employees are entitled to the AI, but are not obliged to do so. The manager is obliged to offer the AI once a year.

3.1.2. Who offers the AI to whom?
The AI must be offered by the immediate manager once per calendar year (legal basis: §45a BDG. (1); Kollektivvertrag §9 (4)). If the employee accepts the offer, an appointment is made. In general, it should always be ensured that the performance review brings added value and should therefore be conducted with the manager with whom the topics of the performance review can also be discussed.

3.1.3. What should I do if I have several managers?
If an employee fulfills the prescribed criteria with several managers, two appraisal interviews can be conducted with both managers in private if desired. In general, it should always be ensured that the appraisal interview brings added value and should therefore be conducted with the manager with whom the topics of the appraisal interview can also be discussed.

3.1.4. What should I do if my manager is absent for a longer period of time?
If the manager responsible is unable to conduct a performance review due to long-term absence, a deputy must be nominated for the manager. If the absence is purely local, the appraisal interview can also be conducted by telephone, preferably by video call.

3.1.5. What should be done if a manager does NOT offer the AI?
If a manager does not offer the appraisal interview, the first step should be for the employee to ensure that it is not a misunderstanding (e.g. the invitation was overlooked/unintentionally forgotten). If the manager really does not offer a appraisal interview, the manager must forward a written, comprehensible rejection of the appraisal interview, including identification of the employee, to HR Development and Workplace Health Promotion. If the employee does not agree to this, the works council

can be involved. HR Development can take appropriate support measures.

3.1.6. What if I do not need an AI?

Employees are free to accept the AI offer. There are no consequences under employment law for not accepting the appraisal interview. If the employee decides not to take part in the appraisal interview, this must be confirmed accordingly on the report form.

3.1.7. What should I do if I initially refuse the AI but then need one after all?

In principle, the initiative to offer an AI should come from the line manager. However, the employee can also request an AI at any time after rejecting the offer. However, it should be noted that the appraisal interview should only be requested in an appropriate cycle (annual cycle) so that the time interval does not disrupt the overall process.

3.1.8. What should be done if several employees consistently and continuously refrain from taking a performance review?

If, over a longer period of time, individual areas predominantly report that they are not taking part in the AI, the responsible member of the Rectorate will be informed, who can then call in the occupational psychologist. The latter will conduct anonymous one-to-one meetings with employees and managers to discuss the meaning and purpose of the AI and evaluate whether the topics intended for the AI have already been sufficiently discussed in other forms and whether the agreements reached have been adequately documented.

3.1.9. What if I would like to have an AI, but don't have the confidence to ask? / Where can I get help?

In principle, the initiative to offer an AI should come from the manager. However, employees can also request a performance review at any time. If problems or doubts arise, you can contact HR Development. They will try to prepare you for the meeting and support you if problems arise. You can also take a trusted person from the IV group with you to the meeting.

3.1.10. How long should an AI take?

Please allow as much time for the interview as is necessary to discuss all issues in detail (approx. 1 hour). A follow-up interview is not planned.

3.1.11. How often should the AI be carried out?

The AI should be offered once a year (see legal requirements). This provides a good timeframe for a meaningful review of the previous performance review, but also for an interim review and preview (feedback, target agreements and further training requests).

3.2. Making an appointment and preparation

3.2.1. When is a good time to carry out an AI?

In practice, it has proven to be a good idea for TU Wien to schedule the interviews during the lecture-free period within working hours so that both interview partners have sufficient time for the exchange. When arranging the appointment, allow adequate preparation time for both interview partners. Choose a date that allows you to conduct the AI without interruptions and without time pressure.

3.2.2. How can I prepare for the AI?

To prepare for the appraisal interview, we recommend using the questionnaire provided for employees and managers. With already formulated questions, it provides an orientation framework for what can be discussed in terms of content and helps the interviewees to address all important topics and not forget any issues. A selection of questions can be made that are considered relevant and appropriate for the discussion, whereby self-formulated questions can also be asked (the question catalog can be found on the AI website of HR Development).

3.2.3. Where can I find relevant documents?

The documents for preparing and conducting the AI can be found on the AI website of Personnel Development (see "Documents").

3.2.4. Why is it important to prepare for the AI?

Detailed preparation for the interview enables a constructive dialog and forms the basis for a successful AI. Careful preparation for the AI helps, among other things, to keep the objectives of the AI in mind and to achieve greater clarity and structure. Sufficient preparation also serves to engage with the content to be discussed on a meta-level, which promotes the quality of the AI.

3.2.5. What do I need to pay attention to in terms of the framework conditions?

It is recommended that you use a neutral room and eliminate all sources of interference as far as possible (e.g. telephone calls, access by uninvolved persons, noise, other interruptions).

4. Formal framework conditions of the interview

4.1. Who is talking to whom?

The AI is a one-on-one conversation between the manager and the employee.

4.2. Can I take someone with me to the AI?

If you wish to consult someone neutral, this can only be a person of the Interessensvertretung of TU Wien and must be announced in advance (see § 9 para. 4 of the Kollektivvertrag for employees of the universities: "At the request of the employee or the head of the organizational unit (the manager responsible or entrusted with the supervision),

a member of the work council responsible for the employee or another employee of the university is to be consulted as a person of trust. More detailed arrangements for the employee interview can be made by works agreement.").

4.3. Who learns about the content of the AI?

All contents of the interview must be treated confidentially and may not be passed on to third parties without prior agreement. If information on implementation (see questionnaire, section 4: Personal skills development) needs to be passed on, it will be agreed during the interview who will pass this on to the relevant department and to what extent using the appropriate form (AI website of Personnel Development).

4.4. What happens to the protocols of the performance review?

The written agreements (see the form for documenting the results on the AI-Human Resources Development website) remain exclusively with the interview partners.

4.5. What should I do if I get a new manager?

In principle, documentation from previous AIs is not to be handed over. However, documents from meetings conducted by the previous manager can be passed on to the new manager. Alternatively, individual excerpts (e.g. target agreements, objectives for further training requirements; see questionnaire, section 4: Personal skills development) can also be passed on. In general, however, it is recommended to discuss the most important topics and expectations in a start & orientation meeting (see recommendations for new employees).

5. Protocol/documentation

5.1. Why do you have to document an AI?

The key points should be recorded in writing in the minutes. For a successful meeting, it is important that individual topics of the AI lead to binding agreements and that the agreements made are documented immediately, as there is a risk that inconsistencies or misinterpretations of the outcome of the meeting may arise afterwards if they are not documented. The minutes also serve as a reminder of the agreements made after the AI, to provide orientation and to be able to evaluate and reflect on the goals achieved so far (see the form for recording the results on the AI website of Personnel Development).

5.2. Who writes the protocol?

It must be decided in advance by the manager and the employee who will be responsible for documenting the meeting. Both parties receive a copy of the minutes of the meeting, which are to be kept confidential and used as the basis for the next meeting (see the form for recording the results on the AI website of Personnel Development).

6. Contents of the interview & tailoring

6.1. What are the most important contents of an AI?

The AI covers the following topics in particular:

(1) Tasks of the employee

e.g: What specific tasks should be accomplished in the coming year; Which tasks would I like to take on/which would I like to hand over; Which tasks were difficult for me?

(2) Cooperation and leadership

e.g: What conflicts am I dealing with at work; Are there specific examples I would like to address; How do I experience working with my manager?

(3) Personal work and development goals

e.g: How do I assess the achievement of the agreed objectives; What are my expectations and wishes regarding my professional development?

(4) Personal skills development

e.g: What support/continuing education measures do I need to fulfill my tasks at TU Wien; What measures in the area of continuing education support the achievement of (long-term) goals?

6.2. What makes the AI MY meeting?

In general, around 2-3 questions per block from the question catalog are recommended. The focus of the selection of questions should be chosen according to the specific work situation. Of course, additional questions or your own questions can also be worked on together in the AI.

6.3. What does an ideal AI process look like?

A pleasant and constructive discussion atmosphere should be created at the beginning. Find a quiet, neutral place (e.g. in a meeting room) and make sure that you are not disturbed during the conversation (switch off your cell phone, divert the phone, do not disturb colleagues). The meeting atmosphere should help to ensure that everyone involved feels comfortable and can communicate openly.

The questionnaire for preparing the AI for employees and managers provides guidance on the order of the individual topics of discussion.

Mutual feedback is intended to promote cooperation and communication between managers and employees and, in a broader sense, the communication climate of the entire organization (see next point).

At the end of the meeting, it should be clarified whether there are any further questions that need to be discussed. Of course, personal issues can also enrich the discussion as long as there is a connection to the working environment.

6.4. Why is feedback to my manager essential and desirable?

Managers also appreciate feedback! Mutual feedback is intended to promote cooperation and communication between managers and employees and, in a broader sense, the communication climate of the entire organization.

6.5. Where can I get help? How do I give the right feedback?
HR Development is always available to answer any questions and provide assistance. Seminars / training courses on the subject of AI are also held at regular intervals (see PE training program).

6.6. What should I do if issues are raised that cannot be conclusively clarified by the involved parties due to a lack of authority / knowledge?
In this case, it is essential to involve the person responsible, either through a 6-eyes discussion or through a discussion between the manager and the person responsible, who passes the information on to the employees.

7. Goal agreements

7.1. What do I fill in under the heading "Goals"?
The AI should focus primarily on design and development goals. The tasks from the job description are the starting point for all objectives, but objectives should go beyond this in the sense that they provide a direction. They should not be descriptions of the daily work routine, but motivating challenges that the employee wants to face.

7.2. How do I agree on goals?
Goals should be defined and created according to the SMART rule:
(1) Specific (What exactly should be achieved?)
(2) Measurable (How can it be determined that the goal has been achieved?)
(3) Attractive (Is the goal attractive and challenging?
(4) Realistic (Can the goal be achieved under the given circumstances?)
(5) Deadline (by when should the goal be achieved?)

7.3. Suggestions for design and development goals
- Assign project management
- External presentation or lecture on a topic
- Speaker activity in the context of company training
- Preparing or leading a conference
- Organize / moderate department meeting
- Sponsor a new colleague who is in the induction phase
- Assign responsibility for special tasks (homepage, organization and documentation of processes, administration of infrastructure, IT officer, etc.)
- Qualification to take on management tasks
- Participation in Erasmus staff stay
- Prepare seminar attendance together (agree learning objectives!) and evaluate or pass on know-how after attending the seminar
- Participation in conferences, network meetings, congresses, workshops and trade fairs

- Training on the job in another institute / department

8. Follow-up of the interview

8.1. Follow-up on content

8.1.1. How to proceed if agreements were made in the AI?
It is agreed in the interview who will pass the information on to whom and to what extent. In addition, the information regarding training needs and feedback on completed training courses must be passed on to HR Development (see section on minutes/documentation).

8.1.2. Why does it make sense to hold team meetings/"Klausuren" following an AI?
Klausuren/team meetings following the AIs are used to pass on information about team-relevant but non-confidential content. They ensure an exchange at a collective level and complement the AI.

8.1.3. What should a team meeting / "Klausur" look like following the performance review?
The manager decides whether a Klausur or team meeting is necessary/appropriate. In general, the following order is recommended: (1) Klausur in advance (2) AI (3) team meeting.

8.1.4. What support is offered for team meeting/ "Klausuren" angeboten?
Human Resources Development offers co-financing and support for the selection of moderators (see Human Resources Development website).

8.2. Formal follow-up

8.2.1. Which documents should be passed on to HR development?
The following documents must be submitted following the AIs conducted:
(1) Report forms from each manager in the division on AIs offered or conducted for documentation purposes (see forms on the AI website of Personnel Development). These are to be submitted collectively.
(2) Information on training needs and feedback on completed training courses.

9. Monitoring and quality assurance

9.1. What happens to the report forms?
The number of AIs offered and actually performed is reported to HR Development using a report form for each manager and the collected data is submitted by the head of the organizational unit via the form on the AI website. The ratio between the AIs offered, those actually carried out and those waived by employees can then be evaluated. This evaluation report is sent once a year to the responsible member of the Rectorate, who can consult the occupational psychologist. In addition, the internal audit department must be granted

access to the report forms in the event of a susceptible audit, but not to the results logs.

9.2. What form of evaluation is planned?
Whether an evaluation by the occupational psychologist appears appropriate is decided by the responsible member of the Rectorate after he/she has received the evaluation of the report forms from Human Resources Development.

9.3. How will the monitoring be carried out?
If, over a longer period of time, individual areas predominantly report that they are not taking part in the AI, the responsible member of the Rectorate will be informed, who can then call in the occupational psychologist. The latter will conduct anonymous one-to-one meetings with employees and managers to discuss the meaning and purpose of the AI and evaluate whether the topics intended for the AI have already been sufficiently discussed in other forms and whether the agreements reached have been adequately documented. This clarification will be ensured by the occupational psychologist, who guarantees both professional competence and confidentiality. An evaluation report will be submitted by the occupational psychologist to the responsible member of the rectorate, together with recommendations for suitable measures if necessary. The responsible member of the rectorate can initiate appropriate measures.

9.4. What could be suitable measures resulting from the anonymous individual interviews with the occupational psychologist?
Collective counseling, workshops, sensitivity training, coaching, mediation.

10. Support und services
10.1. Which services are available?
The following documents are available in German and English on the AI website of Human Resources Development and are recommended for the preparation, implementation and documentation of the AI:
Guidelines, explanations and FAQs, a questionnaire with formulated questions for orientation, the form for the results protocol.

Furthermore, at the end of the website there is a mask for entering the report forms on AIs offered, carried out or rejected by employees, which are forwarded to HR Development.

In addition, HR Development offers seminars and training courses for managers and employees at regular intervals to provide support (see HR Development training program). Managers are also reminded annually before the deadline to offer AIs to their employees.

HR Development is always available for advice and/or support on the topic of AI.