

EPMS Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a probationary period?

The probationary period is the initial working test period of employment in an FTE position with the State of not more than 12 months duration for non-instructional personnel or the academic year duration for instructional personnel except for those at State technical colleges, or of not more than 2 full academic years duration for faculty at State technical colleges. An employee who receives an unsatisfactory performance evaluation during the probationary period must be terminated before becoming a covered employee.

2. Can an employee's probationary period be extended?

An employee's probationary period cannot be extended beyond 12 months.

3. What happens if an employee changes positions prior to completing their initial probationary period?

Should an employee be promoted, demoted, reclassified or reassigned prior to completing a probationary period, the employee would start a new 12-month probationary period. However, at the President's discretion or designee may count up to six months of continuous satisfactory service in the previous class toward the employee's probationary period which would result in a reduction in the length of the employee's performance review period.

4. What is a trial period?

A trial period is the initial working test period of six months immediately following a covered employee's promotion, reclassification, demotion, reassignment or transfer to a classification or unclassified state title in which they have never attained permanent status. Upon successful completion of a trial period, the employee attains permanent status in the class. The trial period provides the supervisor an opportunity to observe an employee's performance prior to the employee receiving permanent status in a new classification or unclassified state title.

5. Can an employee's trial period be extended?

An employee's trial period may be extended for up to 90 calendar days upon written notification to the employee of the extension prior to the end of the six-month trial period.

6. What happens if an employee does not successfully complete their trial period?

If the employee has been promoted, reclassified, or reassigned and does not successfully complete the trial period, the agency must remove the employee from the position by demoting, reclassifying, or reassigning the employee back to the previous position or a position equal to the old position. If a transfer from another agency is involved, the agency has the option of removing the employee from the position by reassigning the employee to a position similar to their prior position.



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7. Can an evaluation be completed early?

The supervisor can complete the employee's evaluation any time during the 90 days before the conclusion of the employee's review period.

8. What is a universal review date?

A universal review date is the one date on which annual performance reviews are due for all employees in an agency or every employee in an organizational unit. Lander University's universal review date is October 1, beginning in 2021.

9. What is a short year review?

A short year review is a performance appraisal that evaluates an employee's performance for a period of time less than twelve months to phase onto a universal review date. Employees who successfully complete a probationary period or a trial period will have a short year review to transition to the University's universal review date.

10. What happens if my supervisor does not complete my evaluation by my review end date?

The rater must complete the employee's EPMS evaluation by the close of business on the day before the employee's annual performance review date or the employee will receive a "successful" rating by default. EPMS documents should be completed prior to the annual performance review date. Good management practices encourage the rater to complete the employee's EPMS evaluation even after the annual performance review date has been missed.

11. What are my options if I do not agree with my Supervisor's evaluation of my job performance?

If an employee disagrees with their evaluation, they may include a response to the EPMS evaluation stating their reasons for the disagreement in the employee comment section provided.

12. Can I file a grievance about my EPMS rating?

The EPMS rating is neither grievable nor appealable under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act.

13. How does the EPMS system numerical rating work?

Each rating is multiplied by the weight (percentage) given to that job duty. These are totaled and divided by the total possible percentages, resulting in a numerical score.



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14. Why is a numerical rating used?

The use of a numerical rating provides some objectivity to the evaluation process and ensures that the appropriate weight is given to the primary job duties of the employee's position.

15. Are performance characteristics used in the numerical rating?

No, there is no numerical value given to characteristics.

16. Are comments required in the EPMS Online System?

Comments are required when a rating of Exceptional is awarded. Overall comments by the Rater are also required. A comments section is provided for the Reviewer and the Employee, but these are optional. Please note that comments must be entered prior to signing off on the evaluation.

17. Can a planning stage be changed after it is signed off by the Employee?

Yes, the Rater can revise the planning stage as necessary until 90 days prior to the employee's end review date. At that point, no changes can be made.

18. Can an evaluation be changed after it is signed off by the Rater and the Reviewer?

No. Once the evaluation is completed by the Rater and approved by the Reviewer, it cannot be changed.

19. Can the Office of Human Resources representatives make changes to the planning stage or evaluation documents?

No. EPMS System administrators within the Office of Human Resources may administratively close planning documents or evaluations, but they cannot make changes to the documents or select or edit ratings.

20. Who has access to an employee's planning stage and evaluation documents?

An employee, their direct supervisor (Rater), their second level supervisor (Reviewer) and the Office of Human Resources representatives that administer the EPMS system for Lander University.

21. Are current and prior planning and evaluation documents available for review and printing?

Yes. An employee may see their current planning and evaluation documents as well as any prior ones completed within the system. The Rater and Reviewer may continue to see these documents as long as they remain the direct or second level supervisor.



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22. When can an employee see their evaluation document?

Once the Rater and the Reviewer have completed the document and signed off, the Rater will release the document for review by the employee. This allows time for the Rater to personally review the document with the employee prior to them receiving it electronically. However, at seven days prior to the employee's review end date the system will automatically route the document to the employee if the Rater has failed to do so.

23. Does having the online system remove the expectation for the Rater and Employee to meet personally?

No. The online system is intended to facilitate efficient processing of planning and evaluation documents but it is not intended to replace one-on-one discussions between the employee and rater. The EPMS process is intended to provide formal communication and should be used to develop employees, therefore direct, personal communication is essential.