



Victoria Academies Trust

Appraisal Policy for teaching staff

Teacher Appraisal Policy for Schools

Introduction

Revised appraisal arrangements came into force with effect from 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations).

Schools, Academies and local authorities must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations and in other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection).

Schools, Academies and local authorities must have an appraisal policy for teachers and a policy, covering all staff, which deals with lack of capability.

This model policy applies only to teachers, including head teachers, and executive leaders who come under School teachers pay and Conditions

These regulations come into force on 1 September 2012 Schools should ensure that all teachers are briefed on teacher appraisal arrangements.

The regulations require that the Board of Trustees shall ensure that appraisal of teachers and the head teacher/ executive leaders is managed and reviewed in accordance with the regulations and the school's teacher appraisal policy. Before establishing or revising the school's teacher appraisal policy the Board of Trustees shall seek to agree the policy with the recognised trade unions, having regard to the results of the consultation with all teachers.

As the school is required to demonstrate the link between teacher appraisal, school improvement and it's development plan it is good practice to consult all teachers on the school improvement plan and self-evaluation process.

Application of Policy

The policy applies to the all full and part time staff contracted under teachers pay and Conditions (including teachers, head teachers and executive head teachers, along with relevant members of the core team) employed by the trust except teachers on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (ie NQTs) and those who are the subject of capability procedures.

Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teaching staff and for supporting their development needs within the context of the school's improvement plan and their own professional needs. Where teaching staff are eligible for pay progression, the assessment of performance throughout the cycle against the performance criteria specified in the statement, will be the basis on which the recommendation is made by the appraiser.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the trust's pay policy which provides details of the arrangements relating to teacher's pay in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Links to School Improvement, Self Evaluation and School Development Planning

To comply with the requirement to show how the arrangements for performance management link with those for school improvement, school self-evaluation and school development planning and to minimise workload and bureaucracy, the teacher appraisal process will be one of the main sources of information as appropriate for school self-evaluation and the wider school improvement process.

Similarly, the school improvement and development plan and the school's self evaluation form are key documents for the teacher appraisal process.

All appraisers are expected to align the appraisee's objectives with the school's priorities and plans; and reflect appraisee's professional development and aspirations.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Board of Trutees is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of teacher appraisal.

To ensure this, the following provisions are made in relation to moderation, quality assurance and objective setting.

Quality assurance

Executive Head Teachers will Quality Assure targets for their relevant schools. Each Head teacher can delegate the appraiser role for some or all teachers for whom s/he is not the line manager. In these circumstances the head teacher will moderate all the planning statements to check that the plans recorded in the statements of teachers at the school:

- are consistent between those across the school/ trust who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility
- comply with the school's teacher appraisal policy, the regulations and the requirements of equality legislation *

Executive Leadership team will QA across the trust, and the Director of Quality Assurance will QA head teacher targets.

The CEO will set targets for members of the executive leadership team; these will be quality assure by the Performance management and pay Committee

Objective Setting

The objectives set will be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to employees with similar roles/responsibilities and experience, and will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of any teacher in that position given the desirability of the Appraisee being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge his professional duties and the time required to pursue his personal interests outside work, consistent with the school's strategy for bringing downward pressure on workload. They shall also take account of the teacher's professional aspirations and any relevant pay progression criteria. They should be such that, if they are achieved, they will contribute to improving the progress of pupils at the school.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but where a joint determination cannot be made the appraiser will make the determination.

In this school:

- all teachers, including the head teacher, will have a trust based objective
- all teachers, including the head teacher, will have a whole school objective

Though teacher appraisal is an assessment of overall performance of teachers and the head teacher, objectives cannot cover the full range of a teacher's roles/responsibilities. Objectives will, therefore, focus on the priorities for an individual for the cycle. At the review stage it will be assumed that those aspects of a teacher's roles/responsibilities not covered by the objectives or any amendment to the statement which may have been necessary in accordance with the provisions of the regulations have been carried out satisfactorily.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school.

At the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which their teacher performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. This will be recorded in the planning statement.

All teachers should be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011. The appraiser will need to consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State that are relevant to them.

Reviewing Progress

At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance against an objective will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the cycle. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably.

The teacher appraisal cycle is annual, but on occasions it may be appropriate to set objectives that will cover a period over more than one cycle. In such cases, the basis on which the progress being made towards meeting the performance criteria for the objective will be assessed at the end of the first cycle and will be recorded in the planning and review statement at the beginning of the cycle.

Appeals

At specified points in the teacher appraisal process, employees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in their appraisal and review statements. Where an appraisee wishes to appeal on the basis of more than one entry this would constitute one appeal hearing.

Details of the appeals process are covered in the school's pay policy.

Confidentiality

The teacher appraisal process, and the statements generated under it in particular, will be treated in the strictest of confidence at all times. The appraisee's line manager or, where s/he has more than one, each of her/his line managers will be provided with access to the appraisees statement,.

Appraisees will be told who has requested and has been granted access.

Development and Support

Appraisal is a supportive process that will be used to compile the school's training and development programme from taking those needs identified in the training section of the appraisee's planning and review statements.

The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development.

Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs of individual teachers.

School leaders will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for any training and support agreed for appraisees.

With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which: (a) the CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives; and (b) the extent to which the training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities. The school's priorities will take precedence.

Teachers should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria where the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

Appraiser for the Head Teacher , Core Team and Executive Leaders

The head teacher will be appraised by their executive head teacher. Core team members will be appraised by their respective ELT line manager. Executive Head Teachers will be appraised by the CEO.

The CEO will be appraised, with the COO by the Performance Management and Pay Committee, with the support of an externally appointed adviser.

Appointment of Appraiser for Teachers

The head teacher will decide who will appraise other teachers.

In the case where the head teacher is not the teacher's line manager, the head teacher may delegate the duties imposed upon the reviewer, in their entirety, to the teacher's line manager.

Sufficient directed time will be allocated to enable appraisers to carry out their responsibilities. PPA time may not be used for Teacher Appraisal meetings under any circumstances. There will be a published list that identifies appraisers and appraisees which will be updated annually

Where a teacher is of the opinion that the person to whom the head teacher has delegated the appraiser's duties is unsuitable for professional reasons, s/he may submit a written request to the head teacher requesting that the appraiser be replaced, stating those reasons. The Head Teacher must give a written response to any such request within 5 working days.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser will be absent for the majority of the cycle or is unsuitable for professional reasons the head teacher may perform the duties himself/herself or delegate them to another teacher. Where this teacher is not the appraisees line manager the teacher will have an equivalent or higher status in the staffing structure as the teacher's line manager.

A teacher appraisal cycle will not begin again in the event of the appraiser being changed.

All line managers to whom the head teacher has delegated the role of appraiser will receive appropriate preparation for that role.

The Appraisal Cycle

The performance of teachers must be reviewed on an annual basis. Appraisal planning and reviews must be completed for all teachers by 31 October and for school and trust leaders by 31 December.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year, will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning the provisions of this policy. The length of the cycle will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the teacher is the head teacher, the executive head teacher shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers at the school as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the teacher is the head teacher, the executive head teacher shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

Retention of Statements

Teacher Appraisal planning and review statements will be retained in a secure place for a minimum period of 6 years and then destroyed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The trust Performance Management and Pay Committee will monitor the operation and outcomes of teacher's appraisal arrangements.

Each head teacher will provide their EHT with an overview of the operation of the school's teacher appraisal policy annually.

The CEO will provide a full Trust overview of the operation and recommendations from the Trust appraisal cycle annually to the Performance Management and Pay Committee.

The Performance Management and Pay Committee is committed to ensuring that the teacher appraisal process is fair and non-discriminatory and the following monitoring data should be included in the head teacher's report because they represent the possible grounds for unlawful discrimination (teachers can not be required to provide this information):

- Race
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religion and belief
- Age
- Part-time contracts
- Trade union membership.

The CEO as a minimum will report on:

1. any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the categories above in relation to teacher appraisal
2. cases, including the circumstances, where teachers have not made satisfactory progress towards objectives
3. any instances where the training and development set out in the training and development annex of the planning and review statement has not been provided

Access to Documentation

Copies of the trust or individual school's improvement and development plan, SEF and any other relevant documentation can be obtained from the relevant office.

Classroom Observation

This school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive manner.

In this trust, teachers' performance will be regularly observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. Individuals with QTS will carry out observations.

In addition to any formal observations, head teachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may “drop in” in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

The length and frequency of “drop in” observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Teachers (including the head teacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Teachers experiencing difficulties

When dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teacher’s performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.

Where it is apparent that a teacher’s personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at school, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures the appraiser must seek the approval of the head teacher to hold a revision meeting, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the teacher to:

- give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- give the teacher at least 5 working days’ notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support, and inform the teacher that he/she has the right to be assisted by a representative of an independent trade union or work place colleague, and at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;
- in consultation with the teacher at the above meeting, an action plan with support will be established (for example coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers), that will help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

Teachers will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a union representative at this stage. Five Days notice will be given of a revision meeting.

This information must be recorded on a revision meeting form.

The teacher’s progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable amount of time will be given for the teacher’s performance to improve. This period of time will depend upon the circumstances however will be for a minimum period of 4 weeks. The appropriate support,

as agreed in the Action Plan, should be provided in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If sufficient progress is made such that the teacher is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked, the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or head teacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.

If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting (see capability procedure) to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or, the appraisal process remains in place. The teacher may be assisted by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have at least five working days notice of the meeting. The capability procedures are detailed in the teacher's capability policy.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.

This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings which will take place at least once per year mid cycle; more regularly in individual cases if required.

The teacher will receive feedback as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment in writing on a written appraisal review form. Teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October (31 December for the head teacher/ EHT).

The appraisal report will include:

- details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the teacher's performance of their roles and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay, where that is relevant to be taken to the Autumn Meeting of the Performance Management and Pay Committee.

The assessment of performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.