


Appraisal and Personal Development Policy for Teaching staff

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Signed		LGB or Board approval:	Board

Teacher Appraisal and Personal Development Policy for Schools

Application of Policy

The policy applies to all full and part time staff contracted under Teacher's Pay and Conditions (including teachers, head teachers, along with relevant members of the executive and core team) employed by the trust, except teachers on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) 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.

Scope

Appraisal is a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers develop their skills and knowledge in line with teacher's terms and conditions and job descriptions.

Professional Development

The quality of teaching is the single most important in-school factor for improving pupil outcomes – and it is particularly important for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Effective professional development is an integral part of ensuring high-quality teaching that enables teachers to manage teaching and learning effectively. Therefore, we have built our appraisal cycle around access and provision of high-quality professional development opportunities, ensuring teachers' professional practice remains up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

Professional development is a shared responsibility between the individual teacher and their school. All professional development conversations will consider the personal development needs of teachers alongside school improvement needs of the school

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 Director of Schools, shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing the 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 Director of Schools shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

Links to School Improvement, Self-Evaluation and School Development Planning

To comply with the requirement to show how the arrangements for appraisal 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 appraisees' professional development and aspirations.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Board of Trustees 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.

Appointing appraisers

All appraisers, including the Trustee board and CEO have responsibility to ensure that workload and wellbeing are considered when setting objectives and carrying out the appraisal process. Below is a list of roles and suitable appraisers:

- CEO – The CEO will be appraised by the Performance Management and Pay committee, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external advisor. This advisor must be approved and appointed by the chair of trustees for the purpose of completing CEO appraisal.
- Trust Executive Team– The CEO will appraise all members of Victoria Academies Trust Executive Leadership Team
- Headteachers – Headteachers will be appraised by Victoria Academies Trust Directors of Schools
- School Leaders - The headteacher will appraise all school leaders. This includes all members of the school senior leadership team.
- Centrally employed teachers - The Directors of Schools will appraise any centrally employed teachers and leaders.
- Teachers – The headteacher will delegate responsibility of appraisal of teachers to an appropriate, suitably skilled member of their leadership team.

Appraisal Process

The Initial meeting will take place before 31st October or 31st December in the case of school Leaders. This meeting will comprise of two parts:

- Performance and objective setting
- CPD and Action Research to further develop practice

Performance and Objective Setting

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 e.g. UPS standards (see relevant policy)

During this conversation, teachers will review their effectiveness in role against teaching standards or any other relevant standards and the Training and Development Matrix. They will then set objectives which are 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 their professional duties and the time required to pursue their 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. 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.

As a guide, no more than three objectives should be set, unless this is mutually agreed between appraiser and appraisee.

Across Schools within Victoria Academies Trust

- All teachers, including the head teacher, will have an objective based on the School Development plan
- All teachers, including the head teacher, will have an objective based on role e.g. classroom practice, subject leadership, (system or wider leadership for head teachers)
- All teachers, including the head teacher, will have an action research objective based on personal interests and /or progression

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 each 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.

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. **Action research to improve practice**

Depending on role, the teacher will decide on a small action they want to address to further development their skills and practice as either a teacher in class or a leader. This might, but does not have to, include:

- improvements in specific elements of practice such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback,

- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff,
- wider contribution to the work of the school.

Reviewing performance

During the cycle the appraiser will set out the evidence they will take into account when making judgements against each of the objectives. This evidence will be decided at the beginning of the appraisal cycle. We believe that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess teachers' performance. It is important to our trust that methods of assessing teacher performance do not add to teacher workload. There will be 2 review periods as part of the appraisal cycle:

Mid-point review

A mid-point review meeting will be held by February 28th. During this meeting, the appraiser will identify if there are any concerns relating to the completion of the appraisal cycle. Colleagues will be expected to submit relevant paperwork to their appraiser at least 1 week prior to this mid-point review.

End Point review (completed alongside initial meeting)

All teachers will be expected to meet with their appraiser to review progress and outcomes of their objectives no later than 31st July. The conversation will take place in two parts:

Performance and objectives

During this conversation, the colleague must demonstrate how they have effectively met the teaching standards over the course of the academic year as well as the impact of any CPD they have undertaken. The appraiser will also discuss the outcomes of any performance boards attended.

Action Research to improve practice

During this conversation, colleagues will share their Action Research report and discuss their findings. They will also discuss how they have shared their findings across their school and other schools where relevant to role. It is expected that all senior leaders share their findings more widely - school to school.

Quality assurance

Directors of Schools will quality assure anonymous targets across schools to ensure equity and fairness. The CEO will QA anonymous leadership targets.

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 a sample of objectives to ensure equity and fairness.

All objectives set should:

- Be consistent between those across the school/ trust who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility
- Comply with this appraisal policy, the regulations and the requirements of equality legislation.
- Be set on factors which are within the remit and control of the appraisee.

Targets for the executive leadership team will be quality assured by the performance management and pay committee.

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 VAT pay policy.

Confidentiality

The teacher appraisal process, and the documents 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.

Retention of Appraisal documents

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

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Each head teacher will provide the CEO with an overview of the operation of the trust's teacher appraisal policy annually using appended form in Appendix 1

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 school office.

Evidence Gathering

Throughout the year, evidence supporting the quality of teaching and learning will be gathered informally through a range of activities including but limited to:

- Looking at pupils' work and outcomes
- Discussions during pupil progress meetings
- School drop ins and observations
- Assessment data

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation or review 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 for 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.

Transition to capability

If a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support process, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure and will be invited to a formal capability meeting. Advice should be sought as appropriate from a HR provider. Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. Schools should be careful not to conflate these procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently.