

Appraisal and Personal Development Policy for non- teaching staff

Date of last review:	July 2025	Review period:	2 years
Date of next review:	July 2027	Owner:	DoS
Signed:		LGB or Board approval:	Board

Non-Teaching Appraisal and Personal Development Policy for Schools

Application of Policy

The policy applies to all full and part time non-teaching staff including; Teaching assistants, office, maintenance and finance staff. Except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction 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 non-teaching staff and for supporting their development needs within the context of the school's improvement plan, needs and their own professional needs.

Scope

Appraisal is a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff develop their skills and knowledge in line with job descriptions.

Professional Development

The quality of support and operations within a school is a vital factor in creating an environment where pupils can thrive – and this is especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Effective professional development is essential for ensuring that all staff, including teaching assistants, finance, and administrative teams, are equipped to perform their roles efficiently and confidently. As such, our appraisal cycle is designed to include access to high-quality professional development opportunities, helping staff stay current with best practices, relevant technologies, and sector-specific developments.

Professional development is a shared responsibility between each individual and the academy. All appraisal discussions will take into account the personal development goals of staff members alongside the operational and strategic needs of the school.

The Appraisal Cycle

The performance of all staff must be reviewed on an annual basis.

Staff 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 staff member starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, shall determine the length of the first cycle, with a view to bringing the cycle into line with the cycle for other staff at the school as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher shall, determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

All elements of the appraisal process will be conducted through 2 meeting. The initial meeting will review the previous years objectives and set new objectives. The second meeting will be a mid-point review.

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

The school improvement and development plan and the school's self-evaluation form are key documents for the 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 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. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that all appraisal systems and processes are followed fairly and that all objectives are relevant to role. All staff will be appraised by the headteacher or a suitable designated member of either SLT or the operations team, depending on role.

Appraisal Process

The Initial meeting

This meeting will comprise of two parts:

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

Performance and Objective Setting

During this conversation, appraisees will review their effectiveness in role against their job description and 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 appraisee 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 appraisees professional aspirations.

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 appraisees, will have an objective based on the School Development plan or school priorities
- All appraisees will have an objective based on role e.g. classroom practice, SEND, finance, organisation etc.
- All appraisees, will have an action research objective based on personal interests and /or progression

Though appraisal is an assessment of overall performance, objectives cannot cover the full range of 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 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.

Action research to improve practice

Depending on role, the appraisee may decide on a small action they want to address to further development their skills and practice. This might, but does not have to, include:

- improvements for working as a team
- improvement/ impact on systems and process'
- 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 performance. It is important to our trust that methods of assessing performance do not add to workload. There will be 2 review periods as part of the appraisal cycle:

Mid-point review

A mid-point review meeting will be held midway through the process. 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

All staff will be expected to meet with their appraiser to review progress and outcomes at the end of the cycle. The conversation will take place in two parts:

Performance and objectives

During this conversation, the colleague must demonstrate how they have effectively met their objectives 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.

Quality assurance

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

Each Head Teacher can delegate the appraiser role for some or all staff 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.

Appeals

At specified points in the 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 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

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

Each head teacher will provide the CEO with an overview of the operation of the trust's teacher appraisal policy annually.

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.

Feedback

All staff 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.

Staff experiencing difficulties

Supporting Non-Teaching Staff Experiencing Difficulties

When a member of the support staff is experiencing difficulties in their role, the objective is to provide appropriate support and guidance through the appraisal process to help improve performance and resolve any issues.

If it becomes clear that personal circumstances are contributing to challenges at work, support will be offered as early as possible—without waiting for the formal annual review.

If a line manager identifies, either through the appraisal process or other sources, that the difficulties are significant enough that they could lead to formal capability procedures if not addressed, they must seek approval from the

Headteacher or relevant senior leader to hold a review meeting. As part of this process, the line manager will:

- Provide clear, written feedback to the staff member outlining the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- Offer the staff member an opportunity to respond to and discuss the concerns raised.
- Give at least five working days' notice of a meeting to discuss improvement targets and a support plan. The staff member will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague at this and any subsequent meetings.
- Collaboratively develop an action plan that includes appropriate support (e.g., mentoring, training, shadowing, or workflow adjustments) to address the concerns.
- Clearly outline how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed.
- Explain the potential implications and next steps if insufficient improvement is made.

The staff member's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process, with a reasonable timeframe—typically no less than four weeks—provided for improvement. During this period, regular feedback will be given, and the support plan may be adjusted as needed.

If sufficient progress is made and the staff member is performing at an acceptable level, they will be informed in a formal meeting, and the standard appraisal process will resume.

If there is no, or insufficient, improvement, the staff member will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability procedures should begin or if the appraisal process should continue. They will be given at least five working days' notice and may be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague.

Transition to Capability

If a staff member demonstrates serious underperformance or does not respond to the informal support process, they will be notified in writing that their performance will now be managed under the capability procedure. A formal capability meeting will be arranged, and advice should be sought from the trust's HR provider. Disciplinary procedures will only be initiated in cases of misconduct or breach of professional standards. These procedures should not be conflated but may run concurrently if appropriate.