

HCAT
Appraisal Policy
2020



HCAT

Reviewed – 30/09/20
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HCAT APPRAISAL POLICY

Please note:

This policy has been developed between key advisors, the trade unions represented at the school and professional associations recognised by HCAT who have been consulted in the development of this policy.

1. Introduction

Appraisal arrangements are set out for all teachers in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

These Regulations apply to any teacher employed in a school for one term or more.

They place a legal obligation on a school or academy to have an appraisal procedure in place for all teachers and a capability procedure in place for all staff.

The regulations do not apply to a teacher whilst that teacher is undergoing an induction period or whilst a teacher is the subject of a formal capability procedure.

In this Trust we are committed to continually improve the quality of teaching and learning for all our pupils and we believe that appraisal will assist our staff to achieve this aim through clarity of role and expectations, encouragement, development and feedback.

We believe that appraisal will enable a professional discussion to take place regarding workload and priorities and will give staff the appropriate focus, development and support. It will also provide staff with an opportunity to discuss in confidence any matters regarding their employment at work that may inhibit their performance.

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees of the HCAT including the Chief Executive Officer, central Trust staff, Principals, Headteachers, Teachers, and support staff, and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of all employees. This policy also sets out the Trust's approach to the link between the appraisal process and pay progression.

2. Principles

We will implement our appraisal arrangements on the following principles:

- **Equality of Opportunity:** All staff should be encouraged and supported to achieve their potential through clarity of expectations and job role, regular feedback, performance review and provision of relevant development.
- **Consistency of Treatment and Fairness:** We will take action to ensure our performance appraisal process is fair, non-discriminatory and that staff are treated consistently.

- High Standards: We believe by setting appropriate and challenging standards of performance and providing suitable feedback and development all staff have the potential to continually improve their performance.
- Work – life balance: All staff are entitled to a satisfactory work – life balance and performance appraisal is an appropriate mechanism to facilitate this.
- Pay and Rewards: Pay progression for staff should reflect their overall contribution to the school both as individuals and as team members.

3. Application of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff employed in the Trust with the exception of teachers undergoing their formal year of induction or on contracts of less than a year. The operation of this policy will be suspended for any staff whose performance merits the application of the Trust's formal Capability Policy.

Performance appraisal arrangements for temporary and part – time staff, including job-sharers, should apply on the same principles as for full-time, substantive staff. The same degree of challenge in the process should apply but the breadth and volume of each element in the process should be proportionate to the period of time worked.

Teachers 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.

The intention is that all staff will have equivalent access to appraisal, development and support.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 General

Performance appraisal is a shared responsibility. The Board of Trustees has the strategic responsibility for establishing this policy, providing the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School with the support to ensure it is fully implemented and ensuring the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School receives appropriate performance appraisal by the Chief Executive Officer, in order to set the right framework and culture for all staff in the school / college.

The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will ensure that this policy, associated regulations and guidance are communicated effectively and that staff with performance appraisal responsibilities have access to appropriate training and preparation.

The performance of all staff must be reviewed on an annual basis. Appraisal planning and reviews will be completed by 31 October (Primary review and planning / Secondary reviews only), in any one academic year and by 31 December for the CEO / Executive Principal / Principal / Headteacher / Head of School.

Where a member of staff starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the length of the first performance appraisal process will be such that the cycle can be brought into line with the appraisal process for that group of staff at the earliest opportunity.

Where a member of staff transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle, the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School shall determine whether to amend the cycle and to also determine their Appraiser.

4.2 Appointing Appraisers

The Chief Executive Officer will be appraised by committees of the Trust Board, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced advisor should this expertise not be available from the appointed Board of Directors. The subcommittees will have a membership of no less than 2 Directors. The CEO pay committee must include the Chair of the Trust Board or the Vice Chair in its membership. The COO pay committee must include the CEO in its membership.

The Executive Principal / Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will be appraised by the CEO.

The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will determine the appropriate Appraiser for all staff covered by this policy taking due consideration of line management responsibilities and other relevant factors.

If a member of staff has a concern regarding their allocated Appraiser then this should be communicated to the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School, in writing, stating the reasons. The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will exercise careful consideration of the concerns and may allocate an alternative Appraiser.

The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will ensure all Appraisers receive appropriate training and preparation for their role.

4.3 The Appraisal Meeting

It is the responsibility of the Appraiser to arrange the meeting with their Appraisee at the beginning of the cycle. This should be arranged by mutual agreement and normally with at least five working days' notice. The Appraiser must prepare for the meeting and ensure all relevant information and evidence that will be used during the meeting has been shared with the Appraisee at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Appraisal meeting (s) should provide a two-way discussion to:

- Assess performance during the previous year against the Appraisee's role and responsibilities, including performance objectives and any relevant standards
- Agree clear objectives for progression for the year ahead by reviewing job description, Appraisee's roles and responsibilities, and any whole school objectives
- Confirm timescales for achievement of the objectives and for provision of support, including development
- Ensure the Appraisee understands the performance criteria, including relevant pay progression criteria, relevant professional standards and any other appropriate evidence

to be taken into account in appraising performance including potential barriers to success

- Discuss and agree appropriate monitoring arrangements and other support for the Appraisee, including classroom observations, if appropriate to the reviewee's role
- Agree any areas of relevant training and development and related actions
- Allow the reviewee to raise any issues or concerns regarding their workload or work - life balance and potential barriers to success
- It is the appraisee's responsibility to play an active role in their review. This includes preparing for the meeting by:
 - reflecting on their performance over the past year including their performance against the relevant professional standards
 - considering how they have made a wider contribution to the school, and
 - identifying some of their future development needs

4.4 Appraising Performance and gathering evidence.

All staff will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.

All teachers must understand the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable them to assess their performance against the objectives set. Judgements relating to performance will therefore largely be supported by evidence agreed at the beginning of the performance cycle.

The precise evidence gathered by a member of staff will be determined by the nature and scope of their agreed objectives and/or the Teachers' Standards but, in general, it should enable them to demonstrate:

- a clear and positive impact in pupil / student progress
- a positive impact on wider outcomes for pupils / students
- a general quality of teaching, learning and assessment that is either good or expert – and improvement in identified elements of practice related to the school / college's teaching and learning strategy
- a clear impact on the identified School / College/School/Department priorities, commensurate with role and responsibility.

Teachers' performance will also be assessed through the observation of classroom practice. This will be achieved through a series of learning walks undertaken by subject leadership teams, Teaching and Learning Leads and members of the School / College Leadership Team. Gathering evidence in this way enables the School / college to celebrate and share good practice, whilst identifying and supporting both individual and whole college areas for development. All learning walks will be undertaken in a supportive fashion and should not add to teacher workload.

Feedback on learning walks will be provided within 2 working days and recorded on SISRA Observe (secondary) or on the Teachers file.

4.5 Links with Pay

Before, or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period all staff will be informed of the standards and criterion against which individual performance in that appraisal will be assessed and on which pay decisions will be based.

Where the evidence from the appraisal process appears to suggest the appraisee's performance could be below that meriting pay progression at the end of the cycle, the appraisee should be made aware of this at the earliest opportunity. There should also be a professional discussion to identify actions which could remedy the position.

4.6 Objectives

All Appraisees must have performance objectives set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. All objectives must be relevant to the Appraisee's role, responsibilities and take full account of their experience and career/professional aspirations. The number and nature of objectives must be reasonable and, if achieved will contribute positively to the education of pupils at their school and the implementation of any plan designed to improve the school's educational provision and performance.

Objectives will be set during an initial meeting as soon as practicable after the start of the appraisal period.

The purpose of the initial meeting is to review the employee's current role, their performance and their future plans. More specifically, the meeting will be an opportunity to discuss how the employee can contribute to the wider work of the school and to agree the three objectives.

Objective Setting

The objectives for the Executive Principal / Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will be set by the CEO.

The objectives for each teacher will be set by their appraiser. These objectives will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. They will focus on the priorities for the school and individual for the duration of the appraisal cycle. They will be such that, if they are achieved, they will improve the education of pupils and contribute to the school's plans for improving its educational provision and overall performance.

All teachers will be set three objectives, one under each of the following three headings:

Objective One – Quality of Education: to be accountable for the quality of education in your own teaching groups (and those within your area of responsibility)

Objective Two – Strategic priorities: to support the strategic priorities of the school / college, by developing (your) professional practice in line with departmental/school priorities, your career stage and your role and responsibility

Objective Three – Personal development: to develop an aspect of your personal (professional) practice, commensurate with your career stage

Appraisees should be encouraged to set challenging but achievable objectives using the term SMART (specific, measurable, achievable but challenging, relevant and time-framed). Meeting or nearly meeting challenging objectives is a good way to show the level of performance required for pay progression and will also assist career development. Objectives will be fair and equitable when judged across employees with similar roles and responsibilities. However, they will normally become more challenging as a teacher progresses up the main pay scale.

Teachers will be informed of the standards against which their performance will be assessed as part of the initial objective setting meeting.

Integral to the appraisal process is the expectation the teacher meets the 'Teachers' Standards' (effective from 1st September 2012) and any other sets of standards that are relevant to them i.e. Post Threshold/Leadership.

As far as possible the objectives should be reached by agreement. However where a joint determination cannot be made the Appraiser will make the determination with the provision for the appraisee to record any disagreement if required.

Consideration should be given to ensure that the appraisal objectives can be used to secure good evidence for pay progression in line with the expectations in the Trust's Pay policy.

4.7 Training and Development

Performance appraisal is a developmental process and a key part of the planning discussion. It should be about the support that the Appraisee will need in order to meet identified objectives and performance criteria.

This Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff have access to a level of development appropriate to their role, stage of career development, performance objectives and criteria and individual aspirations.

Development and training identified from the appraisal process must be recorded and then passed to the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School or the responsible person within the school to inform the school's programme for training and development.

This Trust recognises that development and support may take a number of forms and a wide range of activities which may not necessarily involve a formal course.

4.8 Monitoring

The Appraiser will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support the Appraisee with regular monitoring and feedback. This should be discussed in broad, flexible terms in the appraisal meeting. There should be at least one formal mid-year review meeting to discuss performance, provide feedback and discuss the provision of training and development.

The purpose of the mid-year review meeting is to review progress towards agreed objectives, to highlight particular areas of strength and to identify areas that require further development. If concerns are identified about an aspect of a teacher's performance, potential implications will be clearly explained, and appropriate time-bound support agreed.

At the end of the appraisal cycle, at the final review meeting, an assessment of overall performance is made on the basis agreed at the beginning of the cycle.

When assessing the performance of a teacher (including the Executive Principal and Principal, Headteacher and Head of School), the appraiser will consider that teacher's overall performance during the appraisal period against the agreed objectives, the relevant 'Standards' and any identified professional development needs.

To achieve a successful appraisal outcome, a teacher, the Head of School / Headteacher / Principal or Executive Principal must be considered to have 'met' all three objectives.

Good progress towards the achievement of challenging objectives, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, may be assessed favourably. If agreement cannot be reached on the outcomes of an appraisal, the teacher may appeal to the Head of School / Headteacher / Principal (or the Executive Principal and Principal may appeal to the Chair of the Trustees), whose decision will be final.

The overall assessment of performance will be subject to a process of moderation, arrangements for which are put in place by the Head of School / Headteacher / Principal with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

A written appraisal report will be provided at the conclusion of the appraisal process – by 31st October for teachers and by 31 December for the Head of School / Headteacher / Principal / Executive Principal / CEO. This report must record the overall performance assessment. Pay recommendations are made on the basis of this report.

Recommendations relating to professional development needs will be shared with the relevant members of the School / College Leadership Team and used to inform a programme of professional development. The sharing of such information is governed by the data protection principles under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

4.9 Recording Plans

Primary - Within five working days of the meeting the Appraiser will complete a draft statement and provide the Appraisee with a copy. The Appraisee may request changes if he/she feels the statement does not convey a fair summary of the meeting and/or may add comments. The Appraiser will prepare and sign a final statement within ten working days of the initial meeting.

The Appraiser may retain a copy of the appraisal plan, but he/she must pass a copy to the Appraisee and pass the original to the Headteacher / Head of School.

Secondary - All appraisal objectives for teachers will be recorded on SISRA Observe, along with details of any training and support which have been agreed. Individual 'planning documents' will also outline the evidence that will be collected to support the review of performance, including details regarding the assessment of the quality of classroom practice. Objectives may be revised, in agreement with the appraiser, if circumstances change.

5. Moderation

The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School is responsible for ensuring that performance appraisal is applied fairly and consistently across the school and that there is a strong link with school improvement. The Principal / Headteacher / Head of School may therefore make appropriate arrangements for the moderation of performance appraisal reviews and objectives in particular to ensure consistency of approach and expectations between Appraisers. However, this exercise will be undertaken with due regard for the need to maintain confidentiality.

6. Changes to Plans in Mid Cycle

There may be occasions when it is necessary to amend or change the content of the appraisal plan. This may include changes in the Appraisee's circumstances, school priorities or local/national policy initiatives. In this event the Appraiser and Appraisee should discuss and ideally agree the necessary changes.

If there is no agreement to the proposed changes then the Appraiser shall amend the appraisal plan with any changes he/she thinks ought to be made and pass the revised statement to the Appraisee who may add his/her comments.

7. Confidentiality and Retention of Records

The performance appraisal process will be treated with full confidentiality at all times.

All plans and appraisal reports must be retained in a secure place on the school premises for a period of six years from the date the appraisal cycle ends. After this date it would be normal to dispose of these records and this must be done confidentially and the employee notified.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body and the Principal / Headteacher / Head of School will monitor the operation and outcomes of the performance appraisal arrangements.