

Appraisal Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Appraisal plays an important role in the communication and performance management processes within the STAR MAT. It is key to supporting our commitment to developing staff and to delivering excellent educational provision to pupils/students.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all staff employed in the STAR MAT and for supporting their development needs. The policy provides a process through which staff appraisal objectives may be linked to each school's development plan and priorities.
- 1.3 The assessment of performance reached through this policy will contribute to pay decisions in line with the STAR MAT pay policy.

2. Purpose of appraisal

- 2.1 The main purposes of the Appraisal Policy are to:
 - Ensure that the appraisee's contribution to the school is recognised
 - Help the appraisee to identify ways of enhancing their professional practice and work performance
 - Assist staff to realise their potential and to plan for professional and personal development
 - Provide information which will assist in reaching pay decisions
- 2.2 Other functions are to:
 - Provide an opportunity for appraising in a positive and constructive way the work of the appraisee and how this has been carried out
 - Provide opportunities for the discussion of development needs for the current role and for future career opportunities
 - Allow for the appraisee to identify and discuss difficulties or obstacles which hamper their effectiveness
 - Provide a means of balancing the ambitions and personal needs of the appraisee with the development plan of each school
 - Help staff to meet the responsibilities of their current role and to enhance their confidence in carrying them out
 - Agree appraisal objectives for the next year
 - Discuss the appraisee's contribution to delivering the school's development plan
 - Contribute to each school's succession planning processes

3. **Application**

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the STAR MAT with the following exceptions:

- Newly qualified teachers undergoing their statutory induction period
- Newly appointed support staff within their probationary period
- Staff employed on a contract of less than one term
- Any member of staff who is the subject of developing performance or capability processes
- Supply, casual and relief workers who work rarely within each school

3.2 Modified appraisal arrangements will apply to staff who have only been at work for part of the appraisal cycle. This will include employees:

- on parental leave including maternity and adoption leave
- on long-term sickness absence
- who join or leave each school part way through the year
- who come out of other arrangements during the year including probation, statutory induction and developing performance/capability

3.3 These arrangements are detailed in paragraphs 6.6.

4. **Guiding principles**

4.1 In developing and applying this policy, the STAR MAT is committed to ensuring fairness and consistency of treatment within the prevailing legal framework applicable to all employers and in line with the STAR MAT's equality policy.

a. The appraisal process and the supporting documentation will be treated in the strictest confidence at all times. Only those who need access to such information to enable them to discharge their responsibilities will be granted access.

4.3 At the end of the appraisal period, and once a pay decision has been made, all appraisal documentation will usually be placed on the employee's personal file, though may be held elsewhere, for example on an electronic system, provided that this is secure and confidential. Appraisal information will be held for a minimum of 6 years from the end of the appraisal period to which it applies.

4.4 Appraisal is a two-way process and actions and outcomes should be agreed between the appraisee and the appraiser. Any rights of appeal and the process to follow are detailed within the relevant section.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The role of the appraiser

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the appraiser to ensure that appraisal meetings take place and that the process is completed in accordance with the requirements of the policy. As a minimum there will be an annual planning/review meeting and ideally at least one interim review. An interim review must be held if it is necessary to amend objectives, for example as a result of emerging new priorities or a change of role.
- 5.2 Appraisers will be responsible for:
- Assessing appraisees against their appraisal objectives
 - Assessing appraisees against the relevant competency framework or the Teachers Standards on the basis of their career stage
 - Agreeing new performance objectives linked to the team and school development plan
 - Agreeing appraisal objectives and suggesting how these will be met
 - If the appraiser is not the Headteacher, making a recommendation to the Headteacher regarding salary progression

The role of the appraisee

- 5.3 The appraisee is expected to support and participate in the appraisal process and any agreed development activities arising from the process.
- 5.4 In addition, appraisees should self-assess their performance and progress made towards appraisal objectives and gather evidence and information to support their assessments. Appraisees should prepare for any appraisal meetings and be prepared to discuss and/or evidence their self-assessments.

Appraisal of the Headteacher

- 5.5 The appraisal of the Headteacher will be carried out by the LGB headteacher appraisal committee supported by the Chief Education Officer

Appraisal of all other employees

The Headteacher is responsible for the appraisal of all other employees but may delegate this responsibility, for some staff, to line managers/SLT line managers.

Where employees have fractional contracts with two different line managers, they may undergo two appraisals.

Should a member of staff object to the appointment of their appraiser, they should put the grounds for their objection in writing to the Headteacher who will consider this and make

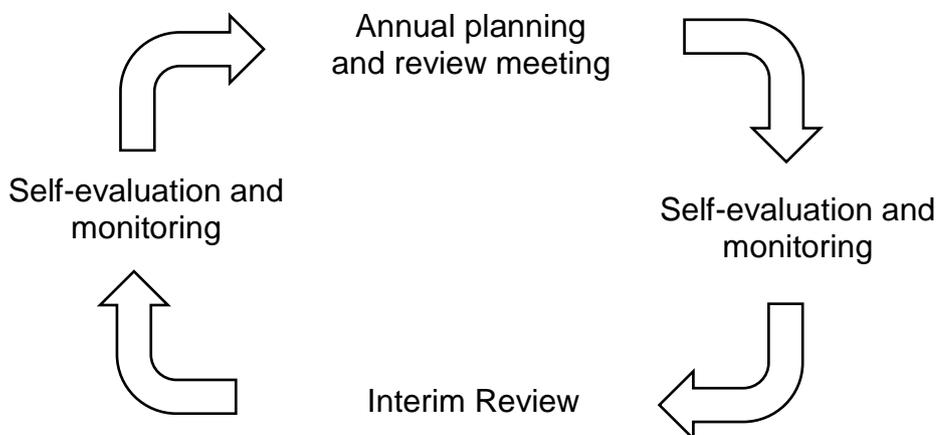
a determination. The decision of the Headteacher is final and not subject to further appeal.

6. The appraisal process

- 6.1 The appraisal process is an integral part of good performance management and should be an enjoyable and empowering process for both appraiser and appraisee. The process provides an opportunity for the employee and their appraiser to have an in-depth, two-way, confidential discussion regarding the employee's performance and job role.
- 6.2 It gives the appraiser an opportunity to give appropriate appreciation and recognition of good work. At the same time it gives the appraisee the opportunity to discuss how they are progressing in terms of the achievement of objectives, objectives and key performance indicators as well as competency development.
- 6.3 Issues of concern regarding performance should be addressed as and when they arise as part of normal day-to-day management and, therefore, should not be first raised at appraisal meetings. Any concerns about performance that may pose a risk to pay progression should be signalled at an early stage.
- 6.4 Please also refer to the further guidance documents associated with this policy, available via the School website/office.

Stages in the appraisal process

- 6.4 The appraisal process works on an annual cyclical basis which is shown below:



The appraisal period

- 6.5 The appraisal period for all staff will be 12 months. However, some schools may operate different appraisal periods for different groups of staff.
- 6.6 In line with the STAR MAT pay policy, teachers' salaries will be reviewed annually with effect from 1 September and no later than 31 October (or 31 December in the case of the Headteacher).
- 6.7 Where a member of staff starts their employment with a school or changes post part way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher shall determine appraisal arrangements for the remainder of the appraisal period, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with the cycle for other staff as soon as possible. This may also apply to staff starting or returning from maternity or long-term sickness absence part-way through the appraisal period or those successfully completing their statutory induction or probationary period or coming out of Developing Performance or Capability processes. In such situations either shorter-term or longer-term objectives may be set, linked to the end of the current or next appraisal cycle respectively.
- 6.8 Where an employee is moving between roles within a school then there will be a review of their appraisal objectives and their appraisal arrangements.
- 6.9 Where an individual is employed on a fixed term contract for a period between 1 term and 12 months, the length of the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of the contract.
- 6.10 Where an appraiser is absent for an extended period, or leaves the employment of a school during the cycle, the Headteacher will ensure that alternative arrangements are put in place and communicated to the appraisee.

7. The annual planning and review meeting

- 7.1 The performance of all staff will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process and will take place at the planning and review Meeting.
- 7.2 Appraisal discussions are most successful when both appraisee and appraiser are well informed and prepared. The areas for discussion should be agreed at the start of the meeting as should the arrangements for making notes and writing up appraisal records.

7.3 The appraisal record should include:

- Acknowledgement of achievements, strengths, good practice and successes of the appraisee as appropriate
- Review of achievement against the previous year's objectives and relevant competency framework/the teaching standards
- Review of professional development activities undertaken in the previous period including how these activities have enhanced the appraisee's work effectiveness
- Discussion regarding pay recommendations following assessment of achievement
- Review of the appraisee's job role and description
- Agreement of work related appraisal objectives for the coming year linked to department and school development plans
- Agreement of how objectives will be assessed and evidence of achievement gathered
- Agreement of how development will be supported and objectives met

7.4 The appraisee will be provided with a copy of the appraisal record within 10 working days of the planning and review meeting.

8. **Interim review**

8.1 There will usually be at least one interim review during each appraisal cycle. The date for the interim review may be set at the annual Planning and Review Meeting.

a. The main purposes of the interim review are:

- To review the appraisee's progress made to date against appraisal objectives
- To review objectives to ensure they are still relevant
- To provide guidance and support in ensuring that appraisal objectives are achieved

8.3 Alternative objectives may be substituted at this point should they be relevant to the school development plan in each school and agreed by the appraisee. Development needs may also be reviewed and revised.

8.4 Additional interim reviews may be held if there is a need to review objectives due to changing circumstances or the appraisee moving to a different job role. If there are concerns regarding a lack of progress made towards performance objectives, additional reviews may be arranged to support the appraisee and monitor their progress. The number of additional interim reviews should be reasonable in the circumstances.

- 8.5 The appraisee will be provided with a record of the interim review within 10 working days of the meeting.

9. **Appraisal objectives**

- 9.1 The appraisal objectives set will be relevant to the individual's job role and contribute to each school's development plan. Staff with a management or additional responsibility may have a specific objective set in relation to this. It is the policy of the STAR MAT to give staff no more than 3 objectives of which at least one is developmental.
- 9.2 On the grounds that emerging issues are unlikely to be known at the outset of an appraisal period, objectives may need to be adjusted throughout the appraisal period so that they remain relevant to the performance of the individual and to the priorities of each school. This would usually be through agreement and an interim review would be arranged to discuss any necessary changes.
- 9.3 The objectives set will be fair and equitable when judged across employees with similar roles and responsibilities taking into account part-time working arrangements and where employees hold multiple posts. However, objectives are likely to be more challenging depending on the individual's level within each school's structure or on the pay scale. When setting objectives due regard will be paid to current guidance regarding the use of pupil assessment and attainment data¹.
- 9.4 Every effort will be made to reach an agreement regarding an individual's objectives and they should only be imposed on an appraisee as a last resort. In cases where there is a disagreement of this sort, the Headteacher may make a final determination regarding the suitability of objectives. There is no further appeal regarding the suitability of objectives.

Teachers' standards

- 9.5 The Teachers' Standards define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded QTS. However, each school has an expectation that a teacher develops their professional practice throughout their career as they gain more experience and expertise.
- 9.6 In order to meet fully the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 (Teaching) and Part 2 (Personal and Professional Conduct).

¹ [Making Data Work – November 2018](#)

- 9.8 It is important that all members of staff are clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and how this will be collected. The methods of measurement and collection will be agreed at the planning and review meeting at the beginning of the appraisal cycle when objectives are agreed. A range of methods will be used to assess the performance of appraisees and over-reliance will not be placed on any one particular method.
- 9.9 Judgements relating to performance must be supported by evidence and will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and/ or the competency framework/Teachers' Standards.
- 9.10 Self-evaluation is an important part of an effective appraisal process and staff can develop their skills when they explore their strengths and areas for development through reflection.
- 9.11 The STAR MAT believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion.
- 9.12 The amount and type of classroom observation relating to appraisal will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of each school, but normally the total amount of time will not exceed three hours/three occasions in any appraisal cycle. Classroom observation of teachers will be carried out by those with QTS.
- 9.13 In addition to observation relating to appraisal, the Headteacher and/or other leaders in each school with responsibility for teaching standards may undertake monitoring observations, learning walks and 'drop ins' 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, proportionate to need, and in line with each individual school's agreed approach to 'drop ins' and learning walks, in consultation with staff and professional associations. In agreement with the employee, observations may be used to meet multiple needs.
- 9.14 Observation may also be appropriate for the appraisal of roles supporting teaching and learning in the classroom, both for monitoring and development, and will be carried out in a supportive fashion by line managers/appraisers.

10. Interaction with the Pay Policy

- 10.1 The assessment of performance reached through the appraisal process will contribute to pay and incremental progression decisions under the STAR MAT pay policy. The pay policy details the other criteria which will be taken into account when considering pay/incremental progression.
- 10.2 For teaching staff to meet the appraisal criteria for pay progression, they will need to have a successful appraisal and met the Teachers' Standards. Due consideration will be given to unmet objectives that are due to reasons beyond the teacher's control.
- 10.3 For support staff to meet the appraisal criteria, they will need to have a successful appraisal including assessment against any relevant competency framework.
- 10.4 Should an employee disagree with their individual pay recommendation, they should discuss this, in the first instance with their appraiser. Any appeals relating to pay recommendations will be dealt with under the appeals process in the STAR MAT pay policy.
- 10.5 If appraisal is delegated by the Headteacher they must ensure that pay decisions are consistent and fair the following measures will be taken:
 - All appraisers will receive appropriate development and guidance on the appraisal system in order to make justifiable pay decisions
 - The Headteacher will moderate appraisal documents to ensure that outcome and pay decisions are consistent and performance objectives are appropriate
11. **Interaction with the developing performance and capability policies**
 - 11.1 The STAR MAT operates developing performance and capability policies when employees are not performing to the required standard. These policies aim to support and develop staff to help them improve their work performance and recognises the important role which appraisal has to play in this process.
 - 11.2 Where an employee is subject to either of these policies the normal appraisal process will be suspended for the duration of actions under these policies. In all cases the employee will be informed of the impact on pay progression of developing performance and capability processes.