



# **Staff Appraisal Policy**

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## **Guiding Principles**

In its oversight of the appraisal system, the management of NCG is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness, and to stay within the prevailing legal framework applicable to all employers; for example, the Equality Act 2010, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000, the Fixed Term Employees Regulations 2002 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Principal will moderate a sample of the planning statements (the documents used to record objectives agreed during an appraisal), to check that the agreed plans are consistently weighted between staff who have similar levels of responsibility, and that the plans comply with the school's appraisal policy.

The appraisal process and the supporting documentation will be treated with strict confidentiality at all times. Only those who need access to such information will be granted access, to enable them to discharge their responsibilities as directed by the school. The management team will monitor the operation of the appraisal system and review it at appropriate intervals.

## **Purpose**

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of managers, teachers and support staff, and for supporting their development needs within the context of the school's improvement plan.

## **The Appraisal**

The NCG Managing Director must appraise the performance of the Principal and the Sales & Marketing Director. In turn, the Principal of a school is responsible for ensuring the review of the performance of every other Department Manager (under the Principal's line management), teachers and administrative staff employed at the school. Please note, however, that in many cases the appraisals will be carried out by the appropriate line managers rather than the Principal.

Appraisal meetings should be held during normal working hours and should be scheduled for at least one hour, or longer if necessary.

The purpose of the appraisal meeting is to review the staff member's current job, their performance and their future plans. More specifically, the meeting will also be an opportunity to discuss how the staff member can contribute to the wider work of the school and to agree and set a number of objectives; typically three, however, there is no minimum or maximum number of objectives.

It is important to note that a positive appraisal may not necessarily lead to a salary increment.

## **The Appraisal Period**

The appraisal period will run for twelve months, from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August. Mid-year review meetings may also be held if agreed and considered necessary.

Where a member of staff starts their employment or transfers to a new post within the school part way through a performance management cycle, the Principal (or in the case where the staff member is the Principal, the Managing Director) shall determine appraisal arrangements for the

remainder of the appraisal period; with a view to bringing their appraisal arrangements into line with the cycle for other Department Managers, teachers and support staff as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff is employed on a fixed term contract for a period less than 12 months, the length of the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of the contract.

## **The appraisers**

All appraisers should be provided with appropriate training as well as attending internal workshops which will be run to ensure a standardised approach to objective setting.

The Managing Director is the appraiser for the Principal and the Sales & Marketing Director, and to discharge this particular responsibility may appoint other members of the Management Team.

The Principal is responsible for the appraisal of all other members of staff but may delegate this responsibility to others who will normally have line management responsibility for those that they appraise.

Any member of staff should be able to object to the appointment of an appraiser, on professional grounds, in writing to the Principal, who will consider the objection and make a decision. Where the objections are rejected by the Principal, the member of staff will be advised in writing.

## **Objective setting**

The job description is the main point of reference to begin the process of identifying relevant objectives for each individual job holder. However, the job description is just one 'reference document' that can be a helpful context to the process of setting and agreeing objectives. Other useful 'reference documents' may include the school improvement plan, the school's business plan, the ISI and British Council school inspection reports and the teachers' standards.

In addition, there is flexibility in the setting and agreement of objectives to enable objectives to be set and agreed around issues that are emerging for the school and that require some dedicated attention that is best articulated as one or as a set of objectives. 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 the school.

Objectives should be CSMART

- C = Challenging
- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Achievable
- R = Relevant
- T = Time-Bound

Objectives should also be fair and equitable when judged across similar roles and responsibilities. However, appraisal objectives will normally become more challenging as a staff member takes on a greater level of responsibility.

The Managing Director must inform the Principal and the Sales & Marketing Director of the standards against which their performance will be assessed, and set objectives for the appraisal period; preferably before the period starts, or as soon as is practicable after.

The Principal of a school must ensure every member of staff is informed of the standards against which their performance will be assessed and set objectives for the appraisal period. Principals may delegate this responsibility to line managers.

The objectives must be set in such a way that they will contribute to the improvement of the college's educational provision and performance, and appraisers will therefore be expected to align individual objectives with the college's priorities.

All appraisers and appraisees should make every effort to achieve agreement on their objectives; where agreement cannot be reached, the appraiser will make the final determination.

Objectives should focus on the priorities for the school, or individual, for the duration of the appraisal cycle. There is no actual minimum or maximum number of objectives that can be set, although, typically, each member of staff will have at least three objectives.

Objectives will be recorded in a planning statement, along with details of any training and support which have been agreed. The planning statement should also specify the evidence that will be collected to support the review of performance including details of the arrangements for task or classroom observation, where relevant.

Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. In such cases, the above process will be repeated and the planning statement amended accordingly.

## **Gathering the Evidence**

As part of the overall appraisal process, for all teachers and staff, it will be critically important for all members of staff who are subject to the school's staff appraisal policy to be clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and, if appropriate, make a substantiated and evidence-based pay recommendation.

Judgements relating to performance should be supported by evidence agreed at the beginning of the performance cycle. Evidence should show, and demonstrate, a contribution towards, for example:

- a positive impact on student progress;
- a positive impact on wider outcomes for students;
- improvement in specific elements of practice, e.g. lesson planning; and
- a positive contribution to the work at the school.

The evidence gathered by the school and the member of staff will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and/or the teachers' standards. Examples of evidence may include:

- Internal tracking
- Student feedback
- Stakeholder feedback
- Manager day to day observation
- Task observations

- Classroom observations
- Reviews of lesson planning records
- Evidence supporting progress against teachers' standards

Two aspects of gathering evidence relating specifically to appraising teachers' performance are teacher standards and classroom observation:

### **Teachers' Standards**

Under these appraisal arrangements, the performance of all teachers will be assessed against the teachers' standards described in the NCG Teachers' Standards document. The standards define the minimum level of practice expected of teachers.

In order to meet the teachers' standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in part one (teaching) and part two (personal and professional conduct).

The teachers' standards (based on the Department for Education Teachers' Standards) effectively set out a 'code' of good teaching practice and professional conduct, and as such, it would seem to be perfectly reasonable for NCG schools to expect all teaching staff to meet the expectations set out in the standards document. Teachers should therefore be evaluated against all the elements set out in the teachers' standards and it is the responsibility of NCG senior management to put appropriate arrangements in place to achieve a fair and equitable process of evaluation.

A full version of the NCG Teachers' Standards will be made available to all academic staff and can be found at N:\Shared Documents\Policies\Academic.

### **Classroom Observation**

Observations will be carried out by qualified teachers. At least five working days' notice of the date and time of the observation will be given, and verbal feedback will be provided by the end of the next school day in a suitable private environment. Written feedback will be provided within five working days. The appraisee has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.

For appraisal purposes, NCG is committed to ensuring that classroom and task observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

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 fashion.

At NCG 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. Classroom observation will typically be carried out by members of the Academic Management Team and/or the Principal (although the school may, from time to time, engage an external agency for this purpose). In addition to formal observation, the Principal 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 who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

Where evidence emerges about a teacher’s performance, giving rise to concern, additional observations may be arranged during the appraisal cycle.

There is no fixed limit on the frequency and duration of classroom observations for appraisal purposes. The Principal and other appraisers are free to decide how much observation is necessary for them to form an accurate assessment of a teacher’s performance.

A Principal has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained throughout the school and may therefore determine that it is necessary to collect additional evidence to help inform the evaluation of teaching standards and school improvement strategies. This additional evidence may include walkabouts, task observation, reviews of assessment results and lesson planning records. It may not be practicable to provide advance notice of these additional monitoring activities.

## **Reviewing performance and the annual assessment**

At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance will be on the basis agreed at the beginning of the cycle.

In determining an appraisal, the appraiser must assess the performance in the appraisal period, apply the relevant ‘standards’, assess performance against the agreed objectives, assess the professional development needs and identify any action that should be taken and, if appropriate, include a recommendation relating to pay.

A written appraisal report must be provided at the conclusion of the appraisal process – ideally by 30<sup>th</sup> September for Department Managers, teachers and support staff and, again, ideally by 31<sup>st</sup> October for the Principal and the Sales & Marketing Director; the report must record the overall performance assessment and any associated pay recommendation.

Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, may still be assessed favourably. If agreement cannot be reached, especially on the outcomes of an appraisal meeting, the appraisee may appeal to the Principal or the Managing Director, whose decision will be final.

The overall assessment of performance and its subsequent performance rating for individual members of staff will be subject to a process of moderation, arrangements for which will be put in place by the Principal with the approval of the Managing Director.

The final version of the appraisal documentation will be placed on the staff member’s file and a copy of their CPD made available to the college’s CPD Coordinator. The sharing of such information is governed by the data protection principles set out under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Managing Director and Principal will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for 6 years and then destroyed.

## **Continuing professional development**

The school's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified through the appraisal procedure. The senior management team will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources will be made available for any agreed training, support and continuing professional development.

Support to meet individual or collective development needs should be provided within the context of the school's improvement plan.

## **Conflict of interest**

In any circumstances where an individual believes that their participation in any part of the appraisal process amounts or may amount to a 'conflict of interest' they should declare this to their appraiser and/or absent themselves from any part of the appraisal process where they believe that a 'conflict of interest' would or is likely to prevail.

## **Pay progression linked to performance**

The Senior Management Team must set out clearly in the school's pay policy how pay progression will be determined. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to support the links between performance and pay and that agreed rates of pay progression are affordable and comply with prevailing legislation (e.g. equal pay).

Where staff members are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on an assessment of performance against agreed performance objectives.

## **Staff experiencing difficulties**

Where it is clear that a member of staff is experiencing difficulties at work, appropriate support should be offered at the earliest opportunity.

If the appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or through other sources of information, that the difficulties experienced by the member of staff are such that, if not rectified they could lead to the capability procedure, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the member of staff to:

- give clear written feedback to the member of staff about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the member of staff the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- give at least five working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support and remind the member of staff that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;
- agree and establish, in consultation with the staff member, an action plan with support that will help to remedy specific concerns;
- make clear, how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed; and
- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made.

The member of staff's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for their performance to improve. During this monitoring period, the member



of staff will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If sufficient progress is made, the staff member should be informed of this at a formal meeting and the appraisal process will continue as normal.

If no, or insufficient improvement has been made, the member of staff will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings will be invoked.

As a final check and balance to invoking the capability procedure, it is advised that line managers ensure that the following have been put in place:

- The member of staff has undergone an appropriate period of induction to their role
- An up to date job description has been issued
- Professional standards and overall expectations of performance have been made clear
- The staff members' performance has been monitored and feedback has been provided

### **Transition to Capability**

Performance concerns should be dealt with through the staff appraisal policy, but if progress towards addressing performance concerns is insufficient, or the concerns are sufficiently serious, the capability procedure should be followed.

The transition to the capability procedure will not normally be made unless there is evidence that:

- under-performance against agreed objectives and/or standards has prevailed for some time; and
- the underperformance is either serious or has persisted despite the provision of support.

The Capability Procedure can be found at N:\Shared Documents\Policies\Admin