



# Appraisal Policy for Support Staff

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CHAIR OF DIRECTORS: Julian Soanes	
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# Introduction

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This policy has been adopted by the Directing Board of the EPA Trust for use in its schools and the central team.

This policy applies to all support staff working in schools and the central team.

A separate appraisal policy is available for teachers and head teachers.

Advice and support on the application of this policy is available from CEO [CEO@epatrust.org](mailto:CEO@epatrust.org)

## Definitions

The term 'relevant body' has been used throughout this policy. In most circumstances the relevant body is the Local Governing Body of the school. For issues relating to the central team, the relevant body is the Directing Board.

The term 'head teacher' has been used throughout this document, however depending on the size and structure of the school this role may be delegated to other members of the senior leadership team or line managers as appropriate.

## Consistency of treatment and fairness

The EPA Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation, i.e. Employment Rights Act 1996, Employment Relations Act 1999, Employment Act 2002, Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 and Equalities Act 2010.

Particular care should be taken to ensure consistency of treatment and fairness across all of the schools in the trust.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The relevant body and head teacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

# Appraisal policy for support staff

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## Purpose and scope

1. This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all support staff and for supporting their development within the context of the plans for improving educational provision and performance.
2. This procedure applies to all support staff employed in EPA Trust schools and the central team, except those on contracts of less than 4 months, newly appointed employees undergoing probation and those who are subject to formal capability procedures.
3. Appraisal is a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their roles effectively. The appraisal discussion provides an opportunity for reflection, review and the celebration of success. It is an opportunity to identify training and development needs.
4. The appraisal procedure will also be used to address any concerns that are raised about an employee's performance. If the concerns cannot be resolved through the appraisal process performance will be managed under the Professional Capability Procedure.

## The appraisal cycle

5. The appraisal cycle will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August or as determined by the head teacher of the school or for the Central team, the CEO.
6. Employees who start their employment part-way through the appraisal cycle will initially have their performance managed through probation. On completion of probation they will have their first appraisal which will run over a longer or shorter period as the appraiser determines most appropriate, with the aim of bringing them into line with the annual appraisal cycle as soon as possible.
7. If an employee transfers to a new post within the school or the central team part-way through the appraisal cycle, the appraiser will consider whether it is appropriate to continue with the current cycle and/or to revise the objectives in line with the new post.

## Appointing appraisers

8. The head teacher or for the central team, the CEO, will decide who will appraise employees; normally this will be their line manager.
9. Where an employee has more than one line manager the head teacher or for the central team, the CEO, will decide which line manager is best placed to be the appraiser and they will liaise with other managers.

10. Where an employee is of the opinion that the person appointed is unsuitable to act as the appraiser, they may submit a written request to the head teacher or for the central team, the CEO, for the appraiser to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.
11. All appraisers will receive appropriate training and guidance in these procedures.

## Setting objectives

12. Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience. In setting objectives, the appraiser will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with achieving a work/life balance for all staff.
13. The objectives set will, if achieved, contribute to the plans for improving the school's and/or EPA Trust's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils. The objectives should also support employees' professional development.
14. Employees will normally have no more than three objectives. The number of objectives should be proportionate to the employee's role. For example, a lunch time supervisor working 1-2 hours a day might have one objective.
15. For some roles, it will be appropriate to link objectives to relevant professional or occupational standards.
16. The appraiser and the employee will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.
17. The head teacher or for the central team, the CEO must ensure that arrangements are in place for objectives to be moderated to ensure that they are consistent between employees with similar experience and levels of responsibility.

## Reviewing performance

18. The appraiser should monitor and review the employee's performance on an ongoing basis, providing regular feedback and encouragement through both formal and informal discussions. Feedback will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.
19. An interim review meeting should be held at least once part way through the appraisal cycle.

## Development and support

20. Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The EPA Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development.
21. The EPA Trust and the schools' continuing development programmes will be informed by the professional development needs identified as part of the appraisal processes for teachers and support staff. The relevant body will ensure that, as far as possible, resources are made available in the budget for appropriate training and support agreed through the appraisal process.

## Assessment

22. Each employee's performance will be formally assessed annually in a review meeting. This assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process.
23. The employee will receive a written appraisal report (Annex D) within five working days of the review meeting. The appraisal report will include:
  - details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period;
  - an assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives;
  - an assessment of the employee's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
  - a space for the employee's comments.
24. The assessment of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

## Appeals

25. Employees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in their written appraisal report. If an employee feels that an entry is wrong or unjust, they should first talk to their appraiser with a view to reaching agreement.
26. If the employee is unable to resolve the issue informally, they may appeal in writing within five working days of receiving the written appraisal report, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal.

27. The appeal will be considered by a senior manager or an individual member of the relevant body who has not been previously involved with the case. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and, where possible, at an agreed time and place. The employee will be given at least five working days' notice of the date of the hearing and has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague. Notes will be taken and a copy sent to the employee.
28. Appeals should normally be restricted to considering the reasonableness of the decision made, any relevant new evidence or any procedural irregularities.
29. The employee will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing within three working days of the date of the hearing.

## Confidentiality

30. The appraisal process and the written appraisal report will be confidential. However, confidentiality does not override the need for the head teacher and relevant body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.
31. The head teacher or for the central team, the CEO will provide the relevant body with a written report on the operation and impact of the support staff appraisal policy annually.

## Record retention

32. Appraisal records must be retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

## Concerns about an employee's performance – structured support

33. Where there are concerns about any aspects of an employee's performance at any time during the year, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the employee to arrange the provision of structured support: The appraiser will:
  - give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
  - give the employee the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
  - agree any support e.g. coaching, mentoring, work shadowing, that will be provided to 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.

34. The employee should be advised, in advance, of the nature and purpose of the meeting and given the opportunity to bring a trade union representative or work colleague to the meeting, if they wish<sup>1</sup>.
35. Notes will be taken of the meeting and a copy given to the employee within three working days of the meeting.
36. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process. It may be appropriate to revise objectives. It will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement; this will depend on the circumstances but will normally be for a period of not less than four to six working weeks<sup>2</sup>.
37. When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the employee has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process.
38. If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the Professional Capability Procedure. They will be invited to a "formal capability meeting".
39. Full details of the procedure to be followed are contained in a separate Professional Capability Procedure.

## Other relevant policies and procedures

Professional Capability Procedure

Pay Policy

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<sup>1</sup> As this is an informal meeting there is no automatic right for the employee to be accompanied.

<sup>2</sup> The person conducting the meeting will determine the set period which should be reasonable and proportionate and provide sufficient opportunity for improvement to take place.

## Annex A – Frequently Asked Questions

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*My meeting cannot be fitted into my work time. Will I be expected to do this in my own time?*

No - appraisal should take place during working time. Arrangements should be made to release you from your duties.

*I have more than one role in the school - which one will be discussed and reviewed?*

Your job as a whole will be reviewed by your line manager. If you have more than one line manager, the head teacher will decide who is best placed to review your performance.

*I work for a few hours only - do I need to have appraisal?*

Yes, your role in the school is important and all employees should have the opportunity to discuss their work.

*I am on a short-term contract - do I need to have appraisal?*

Not if your contract is for less than 4 months.

*Can I choose who I would like to carry out my appraisal?*

No, the head teacher will decide who is best placed to carry out your review. If you consider that the person identified as your reviewer is unsuitable you can make a written request to the head teacher for the appraiser to be replaced, stating your reasons.

*What will I gain from the appraisal process?*

Appraisal gives you time to discuss your role and responsibilities. It offers an opportunity to reflect on your work and to plan for your professional development.

*Is appraisal relevant when I work 1:1 as support for a pupil with special needs?*

Yes - the work you do contributes to the progress of the pupil and the success of the school. In the future you may change your role.

*Is appraisal offered to voluntary workers in schools?*

No, appraisal is just for employees.

*Will my pay be related to my performance?*

Your pay grade is related to the duties in your job description and is determined through the job evaluation process. You will normally move up the points within your grade each year, until you reach the top of the grade. This is based on completing a year's service not on appraisal.

## Annex B – How to get the best from your appraisal

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Appraisal is for everyone! Your work is important and we want all employees to have the opportunity to reflect on the work that they do. Here are just a few things which will help you to get the most from the experience.

Give some thought to preparing for the meeting. Use the preparation questions below to help you focus on your achievements during the year. You should also remind yourself of the content of your job description before your appraisal meeting.

- Remember that appraisal is a two-way conversation between you and your manager.
- Be honest in discussing your performance. If you believe you have done well, say so, but also be prepared to talk about things that have not gone as well as you hoped.
- Think about any suggestions you have for how your job and the work of your team (if appropriate) could be improved.
- Listen to feedback which is given to you and ask if you are not sure what is meant.
- Think about any training and development needs that would help you in your job.
- Take an active part in your appraisal.

### Preparing for your appraisal

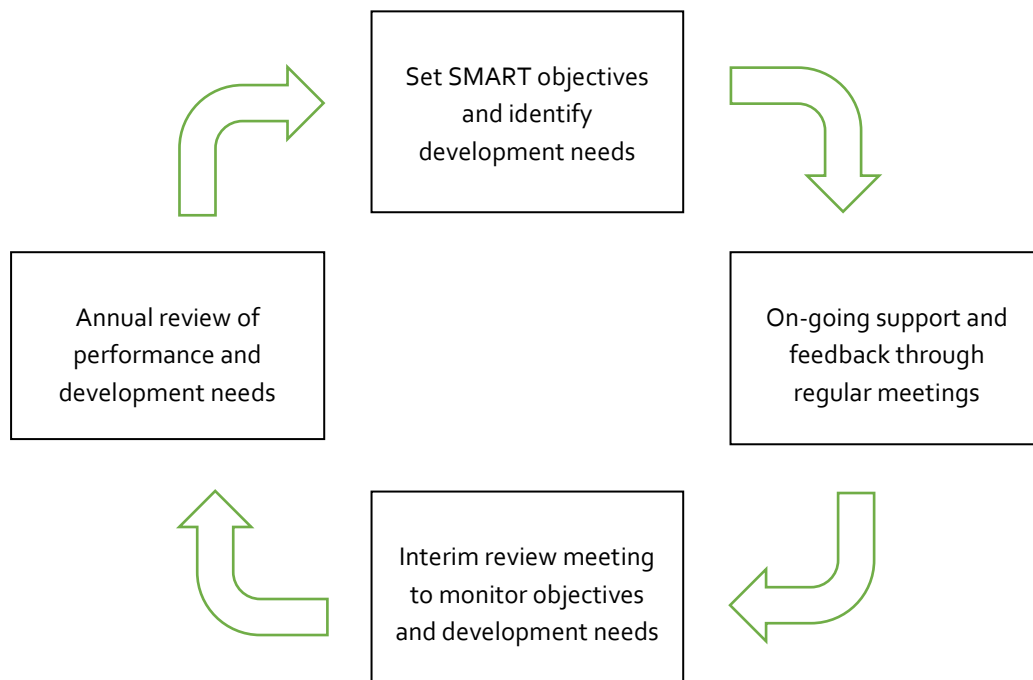
The questions below are pointers to help you think about your performance before your review meeting.

- What have been my achievements over the last year? What has gone well?
- Where do I feel I have been most successful?
- Where do I feel I have been least successful or would have done things differently?
- What development and training have I had in the last year? How has this helped me to do my job?
- What do I think are the most important tasks and priorities to be achieved in the coming year?
- What challenges or difficulties might prevent their achievement and in what way might they be overcome?
- Is there anything else I would like to raise at the appraisal meeting?

## Annex C – Guidance for Appraisers

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### The annual appraisal cycle



### Preparing for the appraisal meeting

Make sure you are prepared for the appraisal meeting. Gather all the documentation you need, e.g. school development plan, the employee’s job description, previous objectives and notes from the interim review.

- Encourage the employee to read *How to get the best from your appraisal* and think about the questions in *Preparing for your appraisal* (Annex B)
- Allow enough time for the meeting and to write up the Appraisal Report.

### During the meeting

- Remember that appraisal is a two-way conversation between you and the employee you are appraising.
- Encourage the employee to take the lead wherever possible i.e. allow them to give their self-assessment of their performance first rather than telling them what you think.

- Use open questions where possible to encourage the appraisee to talk. Open questions usually begin with what, why, when, where, how, who or which.
- If things haven't worked out as planned explore why this has happened, what needs to be done and what can be learned.
- If there is an issue about the employee's performance be prepared to address this using the appropriate procedures.
- Take the opportunity to review the employee's job description. If there have been significant changes to their duties since the previous appraisal consider whether the job description should be amended. Note: you must seek advice from the CEO [CEO@epatrust.org](mailto:CEO@epatrust.org) before making any changes.

## After the meeting

- Complete an Appraisal Form (Annex D gives an example of an appropriate approach and this or similar should be used) and give a copy to the employee within five working days of the meeting for them to add their comments and sign the record.
- Send a copy of the completed report to the Head teacher.
- Send details of any identified training and development needs to the appropriate person within the school.

## Annex D – Appraisal Report

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### Part One: Record of meeting to set objectives

Name:	Job Title:
Appraiser:	Date of meeting:

#### Objectives

Note: Employees will normally have no more than three objectives. The number of objectives should be proportionate to the employee's role.

<b>Objective 1:</b>
Success criteria:
Monitoring arrangements:
<b>Objective 2:</b>
Success criteria:
Monitoring arrangements:

**Objective 3:**

Success criteria:

Monitoring arrangements:

**Professional Development**

Professional development to support achievement of objectives:

**Employee's comments (optional)**

Signed: Appraiser

Date:

Signed: Employee

Date:

## Part Two: Record of Interim Meeting

Date of interim meeting:

### Progress to date

**Objective 1:**

**Objective 2:**

**Objective 3:**

**Professional Development:**

If objectives need to be revised during the year the changes and the reason for the changes must be noted, e.g. significant change to job description, issues arising during the year

### Employee's comments (optional)

Signed: Appraiser

Date:

Signed: Employee

Date:

## Part Three: Assessment of performance of role and responsibilities

Date of review meeting:

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**Assessment against the objectives recorded in Part One**

<b>Objective 1:</b>	Met	Partly met	Not met
Comments:			
<b>Objective 2:</b>	Met	Partly met	Not met
Comments:			
<b>Objective 3:</b>	Met	Partly met	Not met
Comments:			

**Employee’s comments (optional)**

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Signed: Appraiser	Date:
Signed: Employee	Date: