

APPRAISAL POLICY CHECKLIST

This checklist should be used alongside the NEU's model policy on this area to help you negotiate a policy acceptable to the union. **Non-negotiable points (ie those required by law or union policy) are highlighted in red.** You may not be able to secure everything on this checklist – if this is the case, you will need to consult members on whether the proposed policy is sufficiently positive to be acceptable.

The policy

- ☐ Policy contains a clear statement that the appraisal process is developmental and supportive and is intended to foster professional dialogue between colleagues.
- ☐ All appraisal activities will take place within the teacher's directed time, but not within a teacher's planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.
- ☐ Policy applies to all teachers at the school apart from those on contracts of less than one term, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undergoing induction or teachers on capability procedures.
- ☐ Is there a clear timeline for the completion of the appraisal process in the annual cycle?
- ☐ The length of the appraisal period for teachers on fixed-term contracts of less than one year will be determined by the length of their contract.
- ☐ The head teacher (or governing body in the case of the head) will determine the length of the first cycle for newly appointed teachers starting midway through a cycle, aiming to bringing their cycle into line with that of other teachers as soon as possible.
- ☐ The head teacher (or governing body in the case of the head) will determine whether the cycle will begin again for teachers transferring to a new post within the school/academy midway through a cycle, and whether to change the appraiser.

Appointing appraisers

- ☐ All appraisers will be qualified teachers with current or recent teaching experience.
- ☐ The head teacher is the person responsible for choosing each teacher's appraiser or, where appropriate, to appraise teachers her/himself.
- ☐ The policy provides for teachers to object to a particular choice of appraiser.
- ☐ Any such objection will be carefully considered and, where possible, an alternative appraiser offered.
- ☐ An appraiser will normally be the teacher's line manager or someone with an appropriate position in the staffing structure and suitable background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

- ☐ Appraisers must have sufficient professional knowledge and experience to make fair pay recommendations for teachers who are eligible.
- ☐ The appraisal of the head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group of the governing body supported by a suitably skilled external adviser appointed by the governors for that purpose.
- ☐ The policy permits head teachers to object to a governor choice of appraiser as above.

Setting objectives

- ☐ The policy limits the number of objectives to a maximum of three.
- ☐ Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period.
- ☐ Objectives will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) and appropriate to the appraisee's role and experience.
- ☐ As far as possible, objectives should be agreed between appraiser and appraisee.
- ☐ Teachers may register objections on the appraisal record if objectives are not agreed.
- ☐ A moderation process ensures all appraisers are working to the same standards.
- ☐ The policy avoids the use of raw numerical targets.
- ☐ If numerical targets are used, where possible these should be agreed with the teacher and, in all cases, must be reasonable, recognising that circumstances outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.
- ☐ Appraisers must take account of an individual teacher's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives.
- ☐ There is no requirement for formal interim meetings to review performance during the cycle.
- ☐ A statement is included that the Teachers' Standards (or in Wales, the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership) will not be used as a tick list against which the teacher's performance is assessed.
- ☐ Assessment against the standards will start from the premise that all teachers are meeting the standards, and will be assessed as meeting the standards, unless clear, compelling written evidence to the contrary is provided.

Observations

- ☐ Total time occupied by all observations will under no circumstances exceed three hours per year, with a maximum of three observations for all purposes including appraisal.
- ☐ Policy reflects the NEU classroom observation protocol/learning walks model policy.

Annual assessment

- ☐ Appraisees will receive, as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period, a written appraisal report.
- ☐ Content of the appraisal review statement must be drawn up in discussion between the appraiser and appraisee.
- ☐ The report will include the teacher's objectives; an assessment of the teacher's performance against these objectives and the relevant standards; an

assessment of the teacher's training and development needs; a recommendation on pay where applicable; and a space for the teacher's comments.

☐ Review statements are confidential to the head teacher, appraiser and the appraisee.

Development and support

☐ Training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process are linked to the school's continuing professional development (CPD) programme.

☐ The governing body is committed to making available resources for appraisees to undertake appropriate training to enable them to succeed in meeting their objectives.

Teachers experiencing difficulties

☐ Teachers experiencing difficulties are to be given support and guidance through the appraisal process, with the aim of achieving an improvement in performance and thereby a resolution of the problem.

☐ Policy sets out a process to be followed in such cases, in which the teacher is given clear written feedback about the concerns, and made aware that these concerns are such that, if not rectified, could result in capability procedures.

☐ The teacher will be given the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns.

☐ This process constitutes informal support and is not part of a formal capability procedure.

☐ Will the head teacher, or other member of the leadership team, meet with the teacher to discuss a programme of support?

☐ The teacher will have the right to be accompanied by a union representative or a workplace colleague at this meeting (a right which extends to any future meetings where concerns about his/her performance will be discussed).

☐ Following discussion with the teacher in the above meeting, is an action plan to be drawn up (eg coaching, in-class support, mentoring, visits to other classes/schools etc) to help the teacher address the specific concerns?

☐ Does the policy state how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed?

☐ Where there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked, the appraisee should be informed of this at a meeting with the appraiser/head teacher, after which the appraisal process will continue as normal.

☐ If no – or insufficient – improvement has been made, will the teacher be invited to a meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced, or whether there will be a continuation of the appraisal process?

Pay progression

☐ Eligible teachers will receive pay progression as a result of the appraisal review where teachers have met or made significant progress towards meeting their objectives.

☐ The appraisal review statement at the end of the cycle must be the only source of evidence teachers require to support pay progression.

☐ The policy enables teachers to submit additional evidence if they choose but they cannot be requested or directed to submit additional evidence or penalised if they choose not to do so?

Appeals

- ☐ Does the policy set out details of the appeals process?
- ☐ Do appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the appraisal report?
- ☐ Teachers may exercise the right to appeal where they have not been recommended for pay progression, and may be assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, trade union official or trade union representative.

Equality

- ☐ The policy requires the governing body to abide by all relevant equality legislation.

Sickness

- ☐ Where a teacher in the informal support stage of this policy is on sick leave, will the sickness absence policy be followed in the usual way, including an occupational health referral where appropriate?
- ☐ Will the views of the occupational health physician, where involved, be taken into consideration by the governors before any further steps are taken?

Grievances

- ☐ Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal process, will the process be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance?

Monitoring and evaluation

- ☐ Is the governing body required to monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal's arrangements?
- ☐ Is the head teacher obliged to provide the governing body with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal policies annually?
- ☐ Is the equality monitoring of the policies undertaken annually or, at the very least, biennially? Will the results of equality monitoring be shared with the recognised trade unions?
- ☐ Will the head teacher report on whether there have been any appeals or representations, individually or collectively, on the grounds of alleged discrimination?

Retention

- ☐ Will the governing body and head teacher ensure that all written appraisal records are kept in a secure place for six years and then destroyed?