



# QUANTOCK

## EDUCATION TRUST

### **Appraisal Policy**

LINKS: [Pay Policy](#), [Capability Policy](#), [Probation Policy](#)

DATE UPDATED: September 2021

POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: Trust HR Manager

TRUSTEE COMMITTEE: Finance, Operations and Infrastructure

AUDIENCE: All Trust Staff

This policy will be reviewed annually on or before 30 September 2022

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Scope and purpose of this policy .....	3
3	Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation .....	4
4	The appraisal period.....	4
5	Appointing appraisers .....	4
6	Setting objectives .....	5
7	Reviewing performance .....	6
8	Development and support .....	7
9	Feedback .....	8
10	Individuals Experiencing Difficulties.....	8
11	Evidence .....	9
12	Annual assessment.....	9
13	Pay Recommendations.....	10
14	Monitoring & Evaluation .....	10
15	Transition to Capability .....	10
16	General principles underlying this policy .....	11
17	Review of policy .....	11

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Quantock Education Trust is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning. Through our workforce we aim to provide opportunities for all of our pupils, whatever their ability. Each employee will therefore be given support to ensure that they have the skills they need to carry out their role, help them continually improve their performance and develop to their full potential which will in turn help improve outcomes for our young people.
- 1.2 Having an effective performance management process in place is one of the ways we can support our employees and deal with performance matters as they arise. This involves effective day-to-day supervision, carrying out appraisals, providing development opportunities and operating a fair and reasonable capability process.
- 1.3 This appraisal policy has been developed to comply with current legislation including the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations), that apply to teachers in all maintained schools. The Trust has decided to follow the principles of these Regulations in developing and implementing this policy. These will also apply to support staff employed within the Trust to ensure consistency across all employees.
- 1.4 This policy has been implemented following consultation with staff and the recognised trade unions.
- 1.5 The Board of Trustees adopted this policy on 11 October 2021.
- 1.6 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

# 2 Scope and purpose of this policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all staff, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), , Heads of School/Headteachers, senior staff, teaching staff and Trust Central staff.
- 2.2 This Trust regards the Department for Education Teachers' Standards as the baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers, from the point of qualification.
- 2.3 In implementing this policy, the Trust will ensure that appraisal is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned, for example, reviewing the number and frequency of meetings and observations, and ensuring the process for collecting evidence is always proportionate.
- 2.4 This policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust including teachers and support staff, except those on contracts of less than one year, those undergoing induction (i.e. Early Career Teachers) and those who are subject to the Trust's Capability Policy. It does not apply to agency workers.
- 2.5 Employees within a probationary period are, in addition, subject to the Trust's Probationary Policy.
- 2.6 Where an employee is not covered by this policy as set out in 2.4 above, then performance will be managed through regular supervision and feedback.

### 3 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 3.1 The People and Performance committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility to, Heads of School/Headteachers and senior staff across the Trust to ensure the fair application of this policy. All employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 3.2 The Trust's chosen platform for undertaking staff appraisal is via BlueSky. Leaders and managers can monitor the effectiveness of objectives being set via BlueSky and should ensure that performance objectives are linked to organisation objectives, suitably rigorous and subject to continuous review.

### 4 The appraisal period

- 4.1 The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to August.
- 4.2 Where a teacher starts their employment part-way through an appraisal cycle, the Head teacher or, in the case where the employee is the Head of School/Headteacher, the CEO shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his/her cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.
- 4.3 All new teachers must complete a whole and full cycle before pay progression is considered, except in exceptional circumstances approved by the Head of School/Headteacher/or the CEO where applicable.
- 4.4 Employees who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year but more than one term will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period and teacher's objectives will be determined by the duration of their contract.
- 4.5 It is intended that staff will have their annual appraisal meeting and received their appraisal report by the end of the autumn term.
- 4.6 it is intended that the CEO, Heads of Schools/Headteachers and other senior staff across the Trust will have had their annual appraisal meeting and received their appraisal report by the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

### 5 Appointing appraisers

- 5.1 Heads of School/Headteachers and Heads of School will be appraised by the CEO and Trustees.
- 5.2 The Director of Finance and Operations will be appraised by the Chair of the Trust and the CEO. The CEO will be appraised by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 5.3 Central Trust staff will be appraised by the CEO and/or the Director of Finance and Operations depending on their level of seniority and job role.
- 5.4 Heads of School/Headteachers and Heads of School (with support from the CEO) will appraise members of their own Senior Leadership Teams.
- 5.5 Heads of School/Headteachers and Heads of School will authorise who will appraise all other employees.

5.6 Employees will be notified of who their appraiser will be, before or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period.

## 6 Setting objectives

### All employees

6.1 From September 2021, all appraisals will be carried out using BlueSky. Objectives for each employee will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period.

6.2 The objectives will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be fair, reasonable and appropriate to their role and level of experience. The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. The Heads of School/Headteacher's objectives will be set by CEO and Chair of the LGC. The Trust has a duty to have a regard to the work life balance of all employees and the objectives will reflect this.

6.3 Each employee will set three objectives with an emphasis on the following;

- Personal career development: A focus upon developing leadership at every level
- Developing personal practice: A focus on relevant national and/or school determined standards, competencies, skills and behaviours
- Sharing and driving forward whole Trust priorities: A focus on how each individual can contribute to the whole Trust

6.4 The objectives will be appropriate to the member of staff's role and level of experience. Teachers who are on the Upper Pay Scale will be set more demanding objectives which may include a whole school contribution.

6.5 Any teacher who holds a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) should have a performance objective associated with that TLR.

6.6 Any member of support staff who holds a specific responsibility should have an objective relating to that responsibility.

6.7 The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the following:

- The Trust's plans for improving educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils, or
- Improving the quality and efficiency of service provision facilitating and enhancing the core focus of developing pupils, and
- Towards an individual's own continuing professional development.

6.8 The Head of School/Headteacher together with the senior leadership team will be responsible for quality assuring objectives against school improvement plans.

- 6.9 Objectives for senior leaders should reflect their whole school leadership and management responsibilities and match school improvement plans, the Trust vision and the professional standards applicable to their individual role.
- 6.10 Each employee will have a BlueSky account to view their objectives and feed into the appraisal process. The evidence added to BlueSky builds an online portfolio and supports employees to monitor their strengths and development needs and allows them to take responsibility for their own progression.

### **Teachers**

- 6.11 With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, all teachers must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011.
- 6.12 For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the Head of School/Headteacher to decide which standards are most appropriate.

### **Support Staff**

- 6.13 Support staff will be assessed against the support staff Core Standards on BlueSky, any other relevant national standards, competencies, skills and behaviours and their job description and/or the person specification.

## **7 Reviewing performance**

### **Observation**

#### **Teachers**

- 7.1 The Trust believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities of teachers is important as a way of assessing performance to identify strengths and areas for development but also to gain useful information which can inform improvements in the Trust more generally and enable teachers to learn from each other and collaborate. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and not add to teacher workload.
- 7.2 Teachers' performance will be formally observed a minimum of once a year by a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team and once by their Subject Leader / line manager, 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 for the purposes of appraisal will be carried out by those with QTS.
- 7.3 It is expected that the observation should be discussed between the appraiser and appraisee by the end of the next school day and written feedback provided within 5 working days. For the purposes of professional development, positive feedback and advice on areas of improvement should be given wherever possible.
- 7.4 In addition to formal observation, the Head of School/Headteacher or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may "drop in" in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and classroom practice 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 but will not be to the detriment of the teacher. "Drop in" can be used to provide feedback to teachers as part of the ongoing supportive nature of the appraisal process.

- 7.5 Teachers (including Heads of School/Headteachers) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

#### Support Staff

- 7.6 Although appraisal is an assessment of overall performance, objectives cannot cover the full range of roles/responsibilities. Objectives should focus on school improvement priorities which are aligned with the Trust's overall vision and improvement plan.
- 7.7 Each member of staff will conduct a self-evaluation with reference to relevant standards (where appropriate), competencies, behaviours and skills, their job description and the person specification. Any aspects of an employee's role and responsibilities not covered by the objectives will be assumed to have been carried out satisfactorily, unless otherwise stated. If there are on-going issues with an employee's performance which have been raised during the regular line-management process then these should be discussed again at the appraisal review meeting.
- 7.8 The employee should be invited in advance to present evidence of meeting or working towards their appraisal objectives. This must be quantifiable where possible, showing the depth and breadth of evidence where necessary. This evidence could include, for example, minutes of line management meetings, feedback from stakeholders in the organisation and any external assessment bodies such as auditors etc.
- 7.9 The objectives set for each support staff employee will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision, performance and efficiency.
- 7.10 For a teaching/learning assistant or other employees who come into regular contact with pupils as part of their job role, a performance objective relating to improving specific outcomes for pupils should be made and reviewed.
- 7.11 For employees who manage a team or those who hold a higher support staff grade, there should be a team performance objective. Whole school or team objectives should reflect school improvement priorities or the Trust's strategic development plan.
- 7.12 The nature and level of challenge of objectives will reflect the nature and level of challenge of the support staff role and / or the career stage of the employee.

## 8 Development and support

- 8.1 Our appraisal process is used to inform and decide continuing professional development (CPD) which improves performance and to determine decisions on pay progression. The Trust encourages a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance in their role and extending their depth of knowledge through appropriate professional development.
- 8.2 Training and professional development will be linked to Trust improvement priorities and where possible, to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals.
- 8.3 The Trust wishes to support individual staff by identifying their professional and personal needs. Once identified this will help inform and shape the Trust's CPD priorities. We are committed to supporting appropriate and reasonable development which not only assists the employee in their role but also leads to improvements in performance across the Trust. Where a gap is identified in a specific area, expertise may be sought from external agencies.

## 9 Feedback

- 9.1 Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after an observation has taken place (where applicable) or where other evidence has come to light. Feedback should highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require further development. Often this can resolve issues without the need for any formal action.
- 9.2 Feedback will also be sought from relevant employees within the Trust for example, a teacher may be asked to provide feedback on a teaching assistant who works with them.

## 10 Individuals Experiencing Difficulties

- 10.1 When dealing with an individual experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the individual's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.
- 10.2 If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, for example parental complaints, that the difficulties experienced by an individual are such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures the appraiser, the, Head of School/Headteacher or a member of the leadership team, will, as part of the appraisal process meet the individual to:
- give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
  - give the appraisee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
  - find out if there are any issues (both in or outside of work) that are affecting their performance that the appraiser can assist with or provide support;
  - set clear objectives for the required improvements and how these can be achieved;
  - agree any support (for example coaching, mentoring, training, structured observations, observing others in a similar role etc), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
  - make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress either by setting new and clear objectives for required development which will be assessed during the review period or by revising current objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time for this should reflect the seriousness of the concerns. This will be an informal review period and will be confirmed in an Action Plan.
  - explain the implications and process if no - or insufficient - improvement is made during the informal review period for example, impact on pay progression and potential move to formal capability.
- 10.3 This meeting can happen at any time during the appraisal period. It is designed to be a supportive meeting to address issues early to avoid the matter escalating, giving the employee the opportunity to improve. At the meeting, the appraiser will present evidence collected that indicates that the employee's performance is not up to the required standard. There is no right to be accompanied to this meeting. Although this is part of an informal process, a note of the meeting will be made and a copy given to the employee so that they are clear about the support they will be given, what improvements need to be made and the timescales.



- 10.4 An informal review period will follow this meeting; the length will be determined by the appraiser based on the individual circumstances of the situation but it should not be unduly long. During the informal review period, regular meetings should take place to ensure progress is being made.
- 10.5 At the end of this informal review period 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. If performance is improving and the appraiser feels that further time is required to monitor improving performance, the appraiser can decide to extend the informal review period but it should not be unduly long.
- 10.6 If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the individual will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or the appraisal process remains in place (see section 15 below). The individual may be accompanied by a trade union representative or official, or work colleague, and will have at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

## 11 Evidence

- 11.1 Evidence supports the appraisal process. The range and level of evidence collected for appraisal and pay determination purposes will always be proportionate and minimise workload.

## 12 Annual assessment

- 12.1 Performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed throughout the process and an interim appraisal meeting may take place at the mid-point of the cycle to review performance and progress towards objectives.
- 12.2 Each employee's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. An annual assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal cycle and will formally assess each employee's performance in respect of that cycle. Teachers and Support Staff will receive a written appraisal report by 31<sup>st</sup> October. Heads of School/Headteacher will receive a written report by 31<sup>st</sup> December. The appraisal report will be a summary of the performance during the year and set out what the employee's development needs are for the next year. The report will include:
- details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question;
  - an assessment of performance against their objectives and any relevant standards;
  - a summary of observation findings if applicable;
  - an assessment of professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
  - a recommendation on pay if relevant. This will be in accordance with criteria set out in the Pay Policy, which will include reference to sources of evidence that may be used in assessment of pay progression.
- 12.3 The assessment of performance and of professional development needs from each individual appraisal will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period for the whole Trust.

## 13 Pay Recommendations

- 13.1 Any recommendation on pay where it is relevant will be made by the CEO, in accordance with the Trust's Pay Policy. In the case of the CEO this decision will be made by a panel of three trustees. In the case of a Head of School/Headteacher this will be made by the CEO with consultation with the Chair of the LGC. Pay recommendations will be made by 31<sup>st</sup> October for Teachers and by 31<sup>st</sup> December for Heads of School/Headteachers and other senior executive staff.

## 14 Monitoring & Evaluation

### All employees

- 14.1 During the appraisal period, each employee has a responsibility for gathering evidence of their progress throughout the year in order for them to identify any particular strengths or areas for further development at annual review meetings (and interim review meetings where relevant). The appraiser will then record the discussion on this evidence and make an assessment in the appraisal report.

### Teachers

- 14.2 In addition, a range of evidence should be available to the appraiser on a teacher's performance as part of the Trust's quality assurance processes. Evidence may include but is not limited to:

- lesson observations (including "drop ins")
- work scrutiny
- questionnaires (pupil or parent - where obtained)
- planning scrutiny
- learning walks
- pupil feedback (where obtained)
- tracking data of pupil's progress
- progress of individuals/groups
- evidence of meeting Standards
- Assessment of TLR

## 15 Transition to Capability

- 15.1 Performance management is an ongoing process. If an employee demonstrates underperformance and has not responded to support provided within the appraisal process, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the

capability procedure, and will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the Trust's Capability Policy.

## 16 General principles underlying this policy

### **Confidentiality**

- 16.1 The appraisal process will be treated confidentially. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Head of School/Headteacher and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. In this Trust the Head of School/Headteacher, in conjunction with the senior leadership team, is responsible for reviewing objectives and written appraisal records, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers.

### **Consistency of Treatment and Fairness**

- 16.2 The Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.
- 16.3 In developing, applying and evaluating this policy we will monitor the impact on different groups of people with protected characteristics in line with the Trust's Equal Opportunities policy and our Workforce Privacy Notice.

### **Retention and data protection**

- 16.4 As part of the application of this policy, the Trust may collect, process and store personal data in accordance with our data protection policy. We will comply with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Records will be kept in accordance with our Workforce Privacy Notice, and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

## 17 Review of policy

- 17.1 This policy is reviewed and amended annually in consultation with staff and the recognised trade unions by the Trust HR Manager, who will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.