



Department  
for Education

# **The use of evidence in appraisal and pay decisions**

**Departmental advice for local authorities,  
maintained schools, academies and free  
schools**

**June 2014**

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# Summary

## About this departmental advice

This is departmental advice from the Department for Education. This advice is non-statutory, and has been produced to give advice to schools and local authorities on the appropriate use of evidence and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy when making appraisal and pay decisions.

## Expiry or review date

This advice will be kept under review and, if necessary, updated in the light of future School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) reports.

## Who is this advice for?

This advice is for:

- Local authorities
- School leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies and free schools.

## The use of evidence in appraisal and pay decisions

1. *The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012* ("the Regulations") came into force on 1 September 2012 and apply to all maintained schools in England, including maintained special schools, and to local authorities in respect of unattached teachers. They do not, however, apply to teachers in maintained schools who are serving a statutory period of induction, teachers employed for a period of less than a term, or any teacher who is the subject of capability procedures. *The School Teacher Appraisal (Wales) Regulations 2011* apply in Wales (although appraisal is a devolved matter in Wales and some aspects of this guidance may not be relevant). The Department for Education (DfE) are considering the implications of this in relation to existing guidance for schools on establishing fitness and ability to teach (as required by *the Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003*).

2. [The Departmental Advice on Reviewing and Revising Your School's Approach to Teachers' Pay](#) (published in September 2013) explains that schools need to set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about whether teachers' performance has met the relevant standards and their individual objectives. The range of evidence required should be clearly set out in the school's pay policy.

## Reducing bureaucracy

3. A fundamental principle that schools must take into account when developing and implementing pay and appraisal policies is the need to minimise the impact on workload for individual teachers, line managers and headteachers. Schools should always be aiming for policies and processes that avoid unnecessary bureaucracy for all parties concerned, and that are proportionate to support robust decisions. Schools should also ensure that all teachers are treated fairly, and should take particular care in respect of those teachers who have different working patterns or those with particular protected characteristics under equality legislation – the Department has issued further advice for schools on taking account of their equalities responsibilities in the context of their appraisal and pay processes.

## No evidence outside of the appraisal process

4. While schools are free to determine the range and level of evidence that is appropriate for pay determination purposes, that decision must be taken in the context of minimising bureaucracy. Whatever evidence is used, it should provide all teachers with a fair opportunity in their appraisal to demonstrate that they have met the relevant standards and their individual objectives, and the range of evidence requirements must be rooted firmly within the parameters of the appraisal process as set out in the school's pay policy. **It would not be appropriate for schools to introduce evidence requirements that are not directly and explicitly related to the formal appraisal process and with the objectives and standards that have been agreed with the**

**teacher.** Schools should consider carefully the inappropriate use of evidence, and the need for targets and objectives that enable teachers to demonstrate *performance*, rather than simply results.

5. Teachers should receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year. In addition to the annual assessment, performance and development priorities may be reviewed and addressed during the course of the year, on a basis agreed between the teacher and their line manager.

6. Both the teacher and their line manager are responsible for considering and reviewing evidence for the assessment, in accordance with the school's appraisal policy. The appraisal process should be supportive and developmental and the school's pay and appraisal policy should set out clearly how the outcome of the appraisal process will feed into pay decisions. The school should manage the appraisal process so that there are no surprises at the end of the year – throughout the appraisal cycle both the teacher and line manager should understand what objectives are in place, the evidence that will be used and the criteria to assess performance, and progress towards meeting these.

7. There is a clear expectation in the statutory School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document that good performance should lead to pay progression and the school's pay policy should define what constitutes good performance in the context of the school. Schools should also take sensible financial decisions that take account of the likely cost of pay progression. However, in circumstances where a teacher does not receive pay progression, an important part of feedback will be to explain the evidence which was taken into account to support this decision, and how any development issues can be addressed. Provisional assessments of performance against the Teachers' Standards in England and the Practising Teacher Standards in Wales should be given at performance reviews and, should they be deemed necessary, any interim feedback meetings. Schools should provide feedback where necessary during the course of the year on the areas where the teacher might need to improve in order to secure a positive assessment at the end of the appraisal period. If any additional support and training to improve performance is deemed necessary before the end of the appraisal cycle, the teacher and their line manager should consider how these should be delivered. The Regulations state that each teacher's appraisal report must include an assessment of that teacher's professional development needs, and identification of any action that should be taken to address them. Throughout this process schools need to take account of the need to ensure robust processes which fully enable all teachers to demonstrate their performance but which are not overly bureaucratic and time-consuming.

8. The role of line managers/appraisers is central to ensuring that the appraisal and pay determination process is carried out effectively and efficiently. Appraisers must take account of the principle that evidence for appraisals must be proportionate and clearly rooted within the appraisal process and that the appraisal cycle does not add unnecessarily to teachers' workloads. It is also essential that all appraisers fully understand the appraisal process within their school, how it is linked to the school's pay policy and have the skills necessary to carry out this important function. Schools should

therefore ensure that all appraisers are suitably prepared for carrying out all elements of the appraisal process and ensure suitable training is made available where necessary.

9. It is for governing bodies to decide how far they delegate decisions to headteachers. Headteachers may delegate the role of appraising teachers within their schools to other individuals, but remain accountable for the appraisal process under the Regulations. All appraisers should have appropriate knowledge and skills before they appraise other staff.

## **Intelligent use of private providers and their materials**

10. Under the Regulations, teachers' performance must be assessed against the relevant standards and against their individual objectives. For the majority of teachers in maintained schools in England, the relevant standards are the Teachers' Standards, and in Wales they are the Practising Teacher Standards

11. Teachers' performance should be assessed against the relevant standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. Headteachers and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance. It is not necessary for schools to adopt rigid models that seek to set out exactly what the relevant standards mean for teachers at different stages in their careers and teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

12. When considering how to support the delivery of appraisal and pay reform, Governing Bodies may wish to consider services provided by Local Authorities and collaboration with other schools. If, however, they choose to use external or private providers, they should satisfy themselves that the method of procurement gives the school the greatest value for money and that resources do not negate the use of professional judgement of appraisers or impose an unnecessary bureaucratic burden on teachers.

## Further information

### Other relevant departmental advice and statutory guidance

- [Departmental Advice on Reviewing and Revising Your School's Approach to Teachers' Pay](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>



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for Education

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