



The
MAST
 Academy Trust

Policy	Staff Appraisals Policy		
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Approver	Trust Board		

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Objective of Policy
To set out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all employees, and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust’s plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the set standards expected of each employee.

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1.0	Development of Policy

Sign off requirements	
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1.0 Introduction

The Mast Academy Trust is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning as part of our vision. 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.

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.

This appraisal policy has been developed to comply with current legislation including the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations).

This policy has been implemented following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time, recognised trade unions will be consulted with any amendments to the policy.

2.0 Scope and purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all employees, and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the set standards expected of each employee.

The 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. Teachers will be deemed to meeting the teaching standards at point of employment and appraisal points.

The Trust has decided to use the principles of the Appraisal Regulations and apply them to support staff employed within the Trust, to ensure consistency across all employees.

This policy applies to all employees of the Trust, including the CEO, the senior leadership team, teachers, support staff and central staff, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction and those who are subject to the Trust's Capability Policy. It does not apply to agency workers.

Employees within a probationary period are, in addition, subject to the Trust's Probationary Policy in Appendix A.

Where an employee is not covered by this policy as set out above, then performance will be managed through regular supervision and feedback.

3.0 The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months, from September to August, covering the academic year.

The agreed pay progression periods can be found in the Mast Academy Trust Pay Policy.

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 will be determined by the duration of their contract.

4.0 Appointing appraisers

- The Headteachers will be appraised by the Chief Executive Officer, supported by other individuals (Chair of the governing body, or a representative of), as appropriate.

- The Headteachers will decide who will appraise all other academy based employees.
- The Chief Executive Officer will decide who will appraise central trust employees.

Employees will be notified of who their appraiser will be, before or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period and will be notified if this changes through the appraisal period.

Any objection by the employee to the appraiser appointed, and the grounds for it, must be notified immediately in writing to the employee line manager or Headteacher (as appropriate).

5.0 Setting objectives

5.1 All employees

Objectives for each employee will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and should be fair, reasonable and appropriate to the 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 appraisee will have opportunity to note their disagreement and rationale on the appraisal form.

Should an employee's role change within the appraisal period, objective(s) may be adjusted in agreement with the appraiser and appraisee to reflect the new role and the time period remaining or served within the appraisal period.

The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the Trust's plans for improving educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils. The Executive Team together with the Principals will be responsible for quality assuring objectives set across the Trust against the Trust's priorities for development and improvement.

It is not the intention that the appraisal process will cause excessive workload demands on teachers and the impact of this policy will be kept under review.

5.2 Teachers & UPS expectations

The expectation is that all teachers continue to meet the teachers' standards as a minimum and this expectation flows throughout this policy. There will not be a tick box exercise but rather a professional judgement to determine continued achievement of these standards. The Teachers' Standards can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

As detailed in The Mast Academy Trust Pay Policy, the expectations for UPS teachers include:

- Consistently high quality teaching
- Evidence of coaching and supporting colleagues to achieve improved student outcomes
- Acting as a role model for Teaching & Learning
- A commitment to personal development and CPD focused on improving outcomes for students
- Highly competent in all areas of the Teachers' Standards
- The contribution at this level must be substantial and sustained.

This expectation applies to those who are UPS teachers now and those who aspire to progress to this level and teachers will be supported through the appraisal and line management process to achieve these.

6.0 Reviewing performance

6.1 Observation

6.1.1 Teachers and Teaching Assistants

The Trust understands the usefulness of carrying out observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities of teachers and teaching assistants within a suite of review activities (see paragraph 8). Observation assesses performance against objectives to identify strengths (so the appraiser can give positive feedback and praise) and areas for development but also provides a way of gaining useful information which can inform improvements in the academies more generally.

Performance will be observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the employee and the overall needs of the academies. The standard expectation is three formal observations each year, however, where concerns or areas of support are identified this number may be exceeded. Responsibilities outside the classroom will also be observed and assessed where appropriate as part of general line management. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and one week's notice will be given for formal observations. It is not the intention of the trust to place undue burden on staff through repetitive and frequent use of observations. Classroom observation for teachers will be carried out by those with QTS and for teaching assistants by those with QTS or a HLTA.

In addition to formal observation, the Headteacher or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may "drop in" in order to evaluate 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. "Drop in" can be used to provide feedback to teachers as part of the ongoing and supportive appraisal process.

6.2 Development and support

Our appraisal process is used to inform and direct continuing professional development which improves performance. 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. Agreed training and professional development will be linked to Academy improvement priorities and wherever possible, to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals. 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 in the academy and across the Trust.

6.3 Feedback

Within the Trust, employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and ideally within 24 hours after a formal observation has taken place (where applicable) or other evidence has come to light. Feedback should highlight particular areas of strength (what went well) as well as any areas that need attention (even better if). Often this can resolve issues without the need for any formal action.

Feedback will also be sought from relevant employees within the academies. For example, a teacher may be asked to provide feedback on a teaching assistant who works with them.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of an employee's performance the appraiser will meet the appraisee to:

- give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the appraisee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns and to agree a follow up observation if appropriate;
- 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;
- make clear what improvements need to be made and how this 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 against the milestones of the objectives, and with agreement of the appraisee will either set new and clear milestones and objectives which will be assessed during the review period or by revising current objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time for this would reflect the seriousness of the concerns. This will be an informal review period and will be confirmed in a Support Plan;
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made during the informal review period i.e. the application of the capability policy.

This meeting can happen at any time during the appraisal period, and sufficient time will be allocated. . 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, the appraiser will follow Capability Policy should these be on-going or serious concerns for which the school will provide support. (see The Mast Academy Trust Capability Policy for further detail).

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. The note of the meeting will be provided within 5 working days of the meeting.

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.

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 no or insufficient improvement is being made, then the appraiser may decide to start a formal capability process (see The Mast Academy Trust Capability Policy for further detail).

7.0 Annual assessment

Performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed throughout the process and an interim appraisal meeting may take place at the end of each term or at the mid-point of the cycle to review performance and progress towards objectives. Any concerns will be noted and an appropriate support plan will be put in place for the remainder of the cycle. The support plan will set out what improvement is required and what support will be provided.

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. The employee will receive a written appraisal report within 10 working days and have the opportunity to comment on it in writing. 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.

In particular the report will include:

- details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of performance against their objectives ;
- a summary of observation findings if applicable;
- an assessment of training and professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- 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.
- Should the colleague be eligible for pay progression, the headteacher will make recommendation and notify the employee.

8.0 Monitoring and evaluation

8.1 All employees

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 and this will be discussed at annual and interim review meetings. The appraiser will then record the discussion on this evidence and make an assessment in the appraisal report.

8.2 Teachers

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

- lesson observations
- work scrutiny
- planning scrutiny
- learning walks or drop-in's
- tracking data of evidenced through the school monitoring systems
- progress of individuals/groups
- Assessment of effectiveness in leadership responsibilities including TLR's

9.0 Transition to capability

Performance and general line management is an ongoing process. If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, despite the support provided, 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 (see The Mast Academy Trust Capability Policy), and will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

10.0 Appeal

Staff have the right of appeal their appraisal. The appeal should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher within 10 days of the publication of the appraisal paperwork. To appeal a pay decision from the Headteacher, the appeal should be in writing to the chair of the Trust's staff committee within 10 days of the notification that a pay award has been declined. Any appeal should include:

- the reasons for the appeal;
- the evidence under which the appeal is made;
- the requested amend.

11.0 General principles underlying this policy

11.1 Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated confidentially. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Trust to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

11.2 Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Trust 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 and no employee will be placed at a disadvantage due to any long periods of absence, e.g. maternity or adoption leave, or sickness absence. The Trust Board is aware of the guidance on the Equality Act issued by the Department for Education.

11.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Chief Executive Officer will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal arrangements. In developing, applying and evaluating this policy the Trust will monitor the impact on different groups of people with protected characteristics. This will ensure that what we do is done fairly.

11.4 Retention

The appraisers will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place. It is the appraiser's responsibility to ensure the HR within each academy has a copy of all relevant documents. All records will be kept no longer than is necessary, in accordance with the Data Protection legislation, and will be confidentially destroyed after this time.

12.0 Review of policy

This policy is reviewed as required with the recognised trade unions. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

APPENDIX A

PROBATIONARY MONITORING POLICY

Introduction

This guide describes the steps involved in effectively managing and supporting employees during their probationary period or dealing with those who are not able to demonstrate they can meet the required standards of performance.

All employees who are new to the School(s) and the Trust need to complete a probationary monitoring period before being confirmed in post. This is normally 6 months from appointment.

Step 1 - Induction

The induction process is an important step in effective probationary monitoring and will usually last around 6 weeks. The induction period may include things like:

- Meeting other colleagues.
- Providing information, guidance or training on what their department and other departments do and how their role fits in with that.
- Shadowing colleagues and on the job training.
- Ensuring documentation and information is provided. e.g: working hours, attendance management, conduct, behaviours, health and safety and data protection requirements.
- The Employee handbook
- School/council policies and procedures.
- Details of further information and support.

Step 2 - Targets and performance expectations

Whilst the new employee is being inducted, their manager will be clear about expected levels of performance so reasonable and achievable targets are set. These will be linked to the specific requirements of the role but will also include overall school objectives and key behaviours. This will consider what the expectations would be for the employee at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months together with the support their manager will put in place. Records will be kept to confirm the targets identified, support provided and discussions that take place with the new employee.

If there are any disciplinary issues they will be dealt with as they arise. Such issues could lead to an earlier decision being made about their employment with the School/Trust.

Step 3 – Probationary Monitoring

At the end of the employee's induction period the headteacher/ line manager will meet with the employee to confirm the key targets, behaviours and performance expectations that will be used for the rest of the probationary monitoring period.

The headteacher/ line manager will continue to meet with the employee on a regular basis to ensure their progress is being assessed and the appropriate support and training is identified.

A Probationary Review meeting will be held at 3 months to consider how the employee is performing. This will usually be a meeting with the headteacher / line manager and the employee without any HR or Trade Union involvement. Any areas of concern that have been identified should be discussed and further support identified and put in place.

A written record of the key areas discussed will be kept, including any comments from the employee, and they will be provided with a copy.

After 3 months in post the Headteacher / Line Manager will hold a probationary review meeting with the employee to consider how they are performing. Normally this meeting is just the employee and their manager without Trade Union involvement. Any areas of concern that have been identified will be discussed and further support identified and put in place, the employee will also be provided with the opportunity to identify any support they feel is required.

A written record of the key areas discussed will be kept, including any comments from the employee, and they will be provided with a copy.

Step 4 – Final Probationary Review Meeting.

Just before 6 months service is completed a Final Probationary Review meeting will be held. This does not usually include Trade Unions.

This meeting is to carry out a final review of performance and decide whether the employee has reached the required standards of both performance and behaviour.

A written record of the key points discussed, including comments from the employee, will be kept.

Successful probationary period

In most cases appointments are confirmed. The Headteacher/line Manager will arrange for a letter to be sent to confirm the success of the employee's probationary period and ensure the outcome is placed on the employee's personal file.

Unsuccessful probationary period

Throughout the probationary period will have been regular discussions with the employee and obtaining feedback on their performance and behaviour. Any concerns will have been raised with the employee as they arise.

Factors such as disability or personal circumstances which might affect an employee's performance will be taken into account.

If there are concerns about an employee's performance which means the school(s) / Trust are unable to confirm their appointment, a Final Probationary Review meeting will be arranged, if required (refer to the Scheme of Delegation) the appropriate governing body will be contacted to obtain delegated authority to dismiss.

The employee will be notified of the arrangements for the meeting in writing and be advised of the possible outcomes which may be an extension of the probationary period or their employment ended. The employee can bring a trade union representative or work colleague with them. The headteacher / line manager may also require HR representation to be present.

During the meeting documentation will be required to show the targets that have been set and areas which indicate the employee has failed to reach the required standards, alongside the detail of the support provided during the probationary period and why the headteacher / line manager believe the employee have failed to reach the required standard. The employee will also be provided with an opportunity to provide their feedback. The headteacher/ line manager will consider the case and confirm their decision to you at the meeting.

If there are fundamental concerns about the progress the employee is making early in the probationary period the Final Probationary Review meeting can be brought forward. This will be discussed with HR as this action will only be taken in exceptional cases.

Extending the probationary period

An extension to the probationary period may be considered: the maximum extension would be 3 months. An extension will only be used where the headteacher / line manager genuinely believe that the employee can achieve the standards required. The employee will be informed of the extension.

If the employee is not satisfied with a decision to extend their probationary period they can request a review. They will make their request to the Chair of Governors (schools) Trustee (Trust) explaining why they are unhappy with the decision. The review will normally be conducted within 15 working days of the decision being communicated to the employee at the meeting. The decision of the Chair of Governors/Trustee review will be final.

Dismissal

If the required standards cannot be achieved the employee will not be confirmed in post and their employment ended. This decision will be confirmed in writing. The employee will be asked not to return to work or work their notice; a payment in lieu of notice will be paid.

The outcome letter will confirm the right of appeal and timescales for this, which is normally 15 days from receipt. All appeals will normally be heard by a Governors Appeal's Panel.

Appeal Hearing

At an appeal hearing the headteacher / line manager will present management's case and show all the documentation with the targets set, support given and concerns which demonstrate the employee has failed to reach the required standard.

The employee will have the opportunity present their case and will be able to bring a trade union representative or work colleague with them.

The decision of the appeal will be communicated at the hearing and written confirmation within 15 working days. The decision of the appeal panel would be final and there would be no further right of Appeal.