



**Interaction &
Communication**

— Academy Trust —

Appraisal Policy

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Practice

The policy applies to the CEO, Principals and teachers employed at the Interaction and Communication Academy Trust (ICAT) except, for teachers on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e., NQTs) and those who are the subject of capability procedures.

Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of the CEO, principals and teachers employed at the ICAT and for supporting their development needs within the context of the Trust's/school's/service's improvement plan and their own professional needs. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the assessment of performance throughout the cycle against the performance criteria specified in the statement will be the basis on which the recommendation is made by the reviewer.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Links to School Improvement Planning

To comply with the requirements to show how the arrangements for Appraisal link with those for School Improvement planning and to minimise workload and bureaucracy the Appraisal process will be the main source of information as appropriate for self-evaluation and the wider improvement process.

All reviewers are expected to explore the alignment of reviewees' objectives with the school's priorities and plans. The objectives should also reflect reviewees' professional aspirations.

Consistency and Fairness

ICAT is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of Appraisal.

To ensure this the following provisions are made in relation to moderation, quality assurance and objective setting.

Quality and Assurance

ICAT has determined that it will delegate the reviewer role to the teacher's line manager. In these circumstances the Principal will moderate a sample of planning statements to check that the plans recorded in the statement of teachers are consistent between those who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility.

The Trust will review the quality assurance processes when the Appraisal policy is reviewed. The CEO of the trust will be responsible for quality assurance.

Objective Setting

The objectives set will be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to teachers with similar roles/responsibilities and experience, and will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of any teacher in that position given the desirability of the reviewee being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge his/her professional duties and the time required to pursue his/her personal interests outside work, consistent with the ICAT strategy for bringing downward pressure on working hours. They shall also take account of the teacher's professional aspirations and any relevant pay progression criteria.

The reviewer and reviewee will seek to agree the objectives but where a joint determination cannot be made the reviewer will make the determination.

In the ICAT all teachers, including Principals, will have no more than 3 objectives but will have a whole school objective and a team objective as appropriate.

Though Appraisal is an assessment of overall performance of teachers and the Principal, objectives cannot cover the full range of a teacher's role/responsibilities. Objectives will, therefore, focus on the priorities of an individual for the cycle. At the review stage it will be assumed that those aspects of a teacher's roles/responsibilities not covered by the objectives or any amendments to the statement which may have been necessary in accordance with the provisions of the regulations, have been carried out satisfactorily.

Reviewing Progress

At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance against an objective will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the cycle. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably.

The Appraisal cycle is annual, but on occasions it may be appropriate to set objectives that will cover a period over more than one cycle. In such cases, the basis on which the progress being made towards meeting the performance criteria for the objective, will be assessed at the end of the first cycle and will be recorded in the planning and review statement at the beginning of the next cycle.

Appeals

At specified points in the Appraisal process teachers and Principals have a right of appeal against any of the entries in their planning and review statements. Where a reviewee wishes to appeal based on more than one entry this would constitute one appeal hearing. Details of the appeals process are covered in the Trust's Personnel Procedures.

Confidentiality

The whole Appraisal process and the statements generated under it, in particular, will be always treated with strict confidentiality. Only the reviewee's line manager or, where he/she has more than one, each of his/her line managers will be provided with access to the reviewee's plan recorded in his/her statement, upon request, where this is necessary to enable the line manager to discharge his/her line management responsibilities. Reviewees will be told who has requested and been granted access.

Training and Support

The school's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified in the training annex of the reviewee's planning and review statements.

The Trust will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for any training and support agreed for reviewees.

Regarding the provision of CPD in case of competing demands on the school/service budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which: (a) the CPD identified is essential for a reviewee to meet their objectives; and (b) the extent to which the training and support will help the school service to achieve its priorities. Teachers should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria where the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

Appointment of the Reviewers for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

At ICAT the PM Committee is the reviewer for the CEO and to discharge this responsibility on its behalf may appoint 2 or 3 members.

Appointment of the Reviewers for the Principal

At ICAT the CEO is the reviewer for the Principals.

Appointment of the Reviewer for teachers

The school will designate the teacher's line manager as the reviewer. The role will be delegated in its entirety. The Trust recommends no more than 4 reviewees per reviewer.

Where a teacher has more than one line manager the Principal will determine which line manager will be best placed to manage and review the teacher's performance.

Where a teacher is of the opinion that the person to whom the Principal has delegated the reviewer's, duties is unsuitable for professional reasons, s/he may submit a written request to the Principal for that reviewer to be replaced, stating those reasons.

When it becomes apparent that the reviewer will be absent for the majority of the cycle or is unsuitable for professional reasons, the Principal may perform the duties himself/herself or delegate them, in their entirety, to another teacher. Where this teacher is not the reviewee's line manager the teacher will have an equivalent or higher status in the staffing structure as the teacher's line manager.

The Appraisal cycle will not begin again in the event of the reviewer being changed.

All line managers to whom the Trust has delegated the role of reviewer will receive appropriate preparation for that role.

The Appraisal Cycle

The performance of the teachers must be reviewed on an annual basis. Appraisal planning and reviews must be completed for all teachers by 31st October and for Principals by 31st December.

The Appraisal cycle in the Trust, therefore, will run from September to July, for teachers.

The Appraisal cycle for the CEO and Principals will run from September to July, with the performance management process taking place in July to set targets for the following year.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract or less than one year, will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning the provision of this policy. The length of the cycle will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where a teacher starts their employment part way through a cycle, the line manager shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post part way through a cycle, the line manager shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the reviewer.

Retention of Statements

Appraisal and review statements will be retained securely for a minimum of 6 years.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust will monitor the operation and outcomes of Appraisal arrangements.

The CEO will provide the Directors with a written report on the operation of the Appraisal policy annually. The report will not contain any information which would enable any individual to be identified. The report will include:

- the operation of the Appraisal policy
- the effectiveness of the Appraisal procedures
- teachers' training and development needs

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the Appraisal process is fair and not discriminatory.

The CEO will also report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

Review of the Policy

The Trust will review the Appraisal policy every academic year.

The Trust will take account of the principals' reports in its review of the Appraisal policy. The policy will be revised as required to introduce any changes in regulation and statutory guidance to ensure that it is always up to date.

The Trust will seek to agree any revisions to the policy with the recognised trade unions having regard to the results of the consultation with all teachers.

To ensure that teachers are fully conversant with the Appraisal arrangements, all new teachers who join the Trust will be briefed on them as part of their induction.

Classroom Observation Protocol

All classroom observation will be undertaken in accordance with the Appraisal regulations.

ICAT is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy.
- evaluate objectively.
- report accurately and fairly, and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher will not exceed 3 hours per cycle having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher.

There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

The arrangements for classroom observation will be included in the plan in the planning and review statement and will include the amount of observation, specify its primary purpose, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will

be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the Appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation.

Where evidence emerges about the reviewee's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the cycle, classroom observations may be arranged in addition to those recorded at the beginning of the cycle, subject to a revision meeting being held in accordance with the Regulations.

Information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school improvement strategies in accordance with the commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff.

Those being observed will be notified in advance.

Classroom / other observations will only be undertaken by persons with QTS, who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation. Also, to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given in a suitable, private environment.

Written feedback will be provided within 5 working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation as recorded in the planning and review statement, these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with regulations and guidance.

The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.

A Principal and the CEO have a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained. Principal and Line Managers have a right to drop in to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning.

Drop ins will only inform the Appraisal process where evidence arises which merits of the revision of the Appraisal planning statement, in accordance with the provisions of the regulations.

Aims

The aim and purpose of curriculum monitoring and evaluation at ICAT is to:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- raise levels of achievement.
- strengthen the organisation and management of the curriculum.

- enhance the role of the lead curriculum teacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation – definitions

Monitoring – a systematic gathering of evidence over a period of time

Evaluation – judgements based on the evidence gleaned from monitoring.

Monitoring and Evaluation Programme

During the academic year a programme of monitoring and evaluation will be discussed with staff, Directors and Governors. Teacher cover will be required for this so that lead curriculum teachers can work with the teachers. Scrutiny of pupil's work may be used to analyse performance but must be seen in the context of the lesson content, planning, recording and reporting information.

All aspects of the learning and teaching which takes place in the school, the ways in which teachers teach, the environment in which the learning takes place, the support given, and the outcome will be monitored, evaluated and developed.

Procedure

To establish agreed criteria for all subject areas

- reflection of the teaching of the subject in school
- review of subject policy
- completion and then review of the subject Scheme of Work (SOW)
- identifying strategies to assist in monitoring and evaluating of the subject.
- identifying successful teaching strategies in the subject area
- identify training needs.
- to identify appropriate resources
- to monitor progression
- to collect evidence about the standard of achievement and quality of teaching and learning
- to report back to senior management team, staff and local governors
- findings to inform the School Improvement Plan

Code of Practice for Monitoring and Evaluation

- all monitoring activities involve staff consultation.
- the whole procedure is supportive and developmental.
- the monitoring process adheres to the agreed procedures outlined in this policy.
- the quality of learning and the standard of achievement are the responsibility of every member of staff.
- the quality of teaching is the responsibility of the individual teacher and of the senior leadership team.
- the role of the lead curriculum teacher is to have an overview of their curriculum area throughout the school.
- lead curriculum teachers to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum delivery.

- the identified strengths and weaknesses are shared with all staff throughout the monitoring process.

Strategies Available

- termly class observation by senior leadership team
- lead curriculum teacher observation
- Appraisal observation
- lead curriculum teacher's files of evidence
- staff meeting time to discuss individual subject teaching.
- scrutiny of teacher's individual planning files
- scrutiny of pupil work if appropriate
- INSET for lead curriculum teachers.
- visits by teachers to other similar school's
- opportunity for teachers to work in a different base and teach their subject.
- lead curriculum teachers audit and evaluation to teaching staff.
- link governor visits to the school to meet with the lead curriculum teacher.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation is an essential part of the school improvement process and at ICAT we constantly seek to improve so that the quality of education is of a very high standard. As a school we are engaged in a continuous review of our strengths and weaknesses.

Self-evaluation involves a review of our performance across the whole school and then a closer look at specific issues on a regular basis.

As a school we should know:

- what we are aiming for
- whether we are meeting our aims successfully
- whether our developments are effective
- what we should maintain; what we should stop; what we should further develop and what we should initiate

School self-evaluation and review is about knowing:

- how are we doing in the school
- how are we doing in the team
- how are we doing in the classroom
- how are we doing with this pupil

We need to be engaged in a process of self-evaluation to gather information about the quality and effectiveness of our work in order to:

- continue to raise and sustain levels of pupil attainment and achievement by improving the quality of the learning and the teaching.
- be able to manage the process of change.
- enable the staff to continue to reflect on and develop their own practice.
- be accountable to our local governing body.

Our school is effective if it:

- ensures that each pupil achieves their highest standards possible.
- promotes progress for all our pupils based on value added and taking into consideration background factors.
- enhances all aspects of pupil achievement and development.
- maintains these effects over time.

As an ICAT school we constantly strive for perfection and to continue to improve. To do this we need to be asking ourselves the following questions:

- are we effective for all pupils?
- are we more effective for some groups of pupils than others?
- are there some individual pupils for whom we are not effective?
- does our timetable and curriculum offer support to achievement in our aims.
- are we well managed and led?
- are we making it possible for parents to work with us in the way we would wish?
- is the quality we provide a 'built in' and not a 'bolt on'?
- do all pupils feel safe in our school?
- do colleagues feel positive about working in our school?

It is not possible to answer these questions if we do not have systems and processes in place so that we can:

- gather this information.
- make judgements about the information.
- rely on processes that ensure that actions are taken.

The Five Stage Cycle for Improvement at ICAT

