



Triumph Learning Trust

Aspiration - Collaboration - Innovation

Professional Growth and Appraisal Policy

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1. Introduction

Growing and developing the talents and skills of all staff is Triumph Learning Trust's priority. Our Professional Growth and Appraisal policy puts improving and maintaining the highest quality of staff at the very heart of this process. It genuinely focuses on continuous professional development and supporting all staff in school to always improve and to always get better through a range of support and professional development opportunities.

The challenge to us all within Triumph Learning Trust is to always improve, to always get better; to continually grow in order that we can contribute to the effectiveness of our schools and of Triumph Learning Trust. The appraisal process is an intrinsically supportive and developmental one, that values openness and fairness.

All staff within the trust will have an annual appraisal which will be conducted in a supportive and safe environment where individual staff and their line managers can have open and honest conversations about successes and areas for improvement. A fundamental principle underpinning our approach is to minimise the impact on workload for individual staff, line managers and school leaders.

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of and the development of staff and our expectations in terms of the high standards to which all will aspire. It is a policy based on professional trust. In terms of our teaching staff, it is assumed that, unless evidence suggests otherwise, teachers are meeting the Teachers Standards and Career Stage Expectations. In terms of our support staff and the Shared Services Team it is assumed that they are working within their individual Job Descriptions and Person Specifications.

Whilst this policy encompasses the DFE July 2024 Teacher Appraisal Guidance for schools this is Triumph Learning Trust's policy of career investment and development of all our staff to ensure that we retain, sustain and grow them. Our Trust principle is to **Retain, Sustain and Grow** our staff.

All support staff and teachers on Teachers Main Scale will automatically proceed up their pay range unless they are receiving support through a formalised process.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all staff within the Trust, including all teaching staff and support staff, who hold a contract of employment directly with the Trust, with the exception of those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those who are subject to capability procedures.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant Pay Policy and it also explains the process for invoking the Capability Policy where there are serious concerns about an employee's performance. It will be applied in a way that is robust whilst minimising the impact on workload for staff and Trustees.

3. Responsibilities

The Trust recognises it has a statutory obligation to adopt formal policies and establish workplace procedures for dealing with professional growth and appraisal. The Trust recognises that appraisal rules and procedures promote good employment relations and is committed to dealing with matters in a fair and consistent way.

The CEO of Triumph Learning Trust ensures this policy is consistently applied and implemented across the trust with sufficient resources allocated to meet statutory procedures and developmental opportunities reporting to the Trust Board on its impact.

Specific roles in the process are outlined within this policy. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure they are fulfilling their responsibility.

4. Purpose

Our Professional Growth and Appraisal policy outlines the consistent approach that we take to help our staff to become the very best version of themselves; supporting them to develop whilst also creating a culture that encourages them to stay and grow with us.

We recognise that it is also vital to provide all staff the opportunity to reflect on their role, the way in which they undertake it and to offer them support in removing unnecessary workload where possible.

Professional Growth and Appraisal within Triumph Learning Trust has several purposes:

- To build and enhance expertise, and secure continuous growth and improvement;
- To enable reflection on strengths and successes, and areas for further growth;
- To recognise and promote a culture of professionalism.

Effective professional development is a core part of securing effective practice. It requires a desire and willingness to continually improve with a shared commitment for staff to support one another to develop so that our pupils benefit from the highest quality provision and learning opportunities. It is a process that requires a commitment from all staff to actively engage in the process, to seek further growth in professional knowledge that provides solutions to the issues we face.

We regard professional development as a key driver not only of staff development, but also of recruitment, retention, well-being, and school improvement and our goals will be closely aligned to each school's and the Trust's improvement priorities.

Effective, and genuinely continuous, Professional Growth:

- has a focus on improving pupil outcomes
- builds and enhances knowledge and expertise to bring about changes in practice
- has a narrow yet significant focus
- focuses on what works, challenges existing assumptions and is, therefore, evidence-informed
- involves collaboration with colleagues and peer support
- is sustained over time and includes frequent opportunities for learning;

experimentation and practice, reflection and evaluation, honest frequent feedback and solution-focused coaching.

5. Professional Growth and Appraisal Process and Practice

Appraisers

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are maintained.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust are responsible for managing the appraisal of the CEO.

The CEO is responsible for managing the appraisal of the Executive Leadership Team within Triumph Learning Trust.

Line Managers are responsible for managing the appraisal of those staff in the Shared Services Team that they line manage.

The Headteachers are responsible for the implementation and compliance of this policy within their school ensuring the competence of those staff responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy and for identifying training needs for staff. Headteachers are responsible for ensuring line management within their schools to ensure that all staff are appraised annually.

All staff within Triumph Learning Trust are expected to engage this process proactively and reflectively in order to enable their practice to have the greatest of impact, identifying training and development opportunities which they believe would support them in their practice.

Process

The process is based on all staff having three goals/objectives to focus on each academic year. Two goals/objectives are linked to the individual school's SIP, or in the case of the Shared Services function linked to Trust improvement strategies. One goal is a self-created (Inquiry Question IQ). The IQ will link to the SIP but will closely link to the specific role of the staff member and an aspect of their practice they want to develop further. The goals/objectives will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience. The appraiser and employee will seek to agree the objectives, but if they cannot agree, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised during the performance management period if circumstances change. The evidence staff use to reflect on their performance and development may include pupil data, case studies or a small number of lesson visits. We are committed to developing a professional culture which drives quality assurance from within; an enabling, reflective process focused on professional development and improvement.

Staff are expected to create partnerships with others, including those with expertise, to support their professional learning and generate information about their progress so that they can monitor and adapt their learning which should reflect new methodologies, technologies, and educational research. Staff are expected to support and assist colleagues through structured opportunities to reflect by reviewing progress and helping each other to consider the effectiveness of their practice. The role of any member of staff when supporting a colleague is to push and challenge their thinking so that each becomes an adaptive expert

who is capable of continually growing; reflecting on, and expanding, the depth and breadth of their expertise. Staff are encouraged to seek feedback from multiple viewpoints.

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to August. Employees who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance assessed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy, but the length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract. Performance will be reviewed throughout the year but with at least one interim review taking place midpoint through the year. Teachers' performance is assessed against their objectives, and the relevant standards and Career Stage Expectations (see appendix).

September /October	February / March	July / September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an aspect of practice you wish to know more about / develop Identify research that will help you to know more Set your goal ensuring it links to SIP Identify how you will showcase your development Identify further CPD that may benefit you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a midterm review Reflect on the year to date Define next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate your impact Finalise the evidence base against your goals and review your practice

It is the Trust's expectation that the Professional Growth of all teachers will be completed by 31st October and all support staff will be completed by 30th November. Providing people with feedback on how they are doing against their goals/objectives increases the chances of them being reached. Any feedback for staff should therefore focus on the agreed goals/objectives and should be provided as soon as possible after any support or visit has taken place. These conversations will be challenging yet respectful dialogue about improvement. Therefore, during this conversation staff and the manager will always identify a next step.

Review

The school will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about a staff members performance and whether they have met the relevant standards and their individual goals/objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the goals/objectives are being set at the beginning of the appraisal process.

6. Review Process for Teachers

Appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance, teachers are not expected to routinely provide evidence that they meet all the standards. As

long as teachers continue to meet the Teachers Standards and engage in the process of Professional Growth and Appraisal, pay progression will be automatic.

Upper Pay Range

Teachers wishing to progress to the Upper Pay Range will be required to write a letter (one side of A4) to their Headteacher by the 31st October explaining how they meet the Teachers Standards. To move onto the Upper Pay Range teachers must demonstrate that:

- They are highly competent in all of the Teacher's Standards and have an extensive knowledge and understanding of how to use and adapt a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies.
- They have fully engaged in the process of Professional Growth and Appraisal leading to an extensive knowledge of curriculum, assessment and pedagogical developments within their relevant phase or subject.
- Their achievements and contribution to their school are 'substantial and sustained'. We believe that as long as they have met Teacher's Standards that they have met the 'substantial' criteria.
- They have the potential and commitment to undertake professional duties which make a wider contribution to the school. This may include the sharing of good practice, mentoring and coaching, and providing demonstration lessons/sessions for less experienced colleagues. Upper Pay range staffs are expected to promote collaboration and work effectively as a team member.

Using the Career Stage Expectations (CSE) grid relating to UPS 1, UPS 2 and UPS 3 teachers can write a letter to their HT (by the 31st October) stating why they believe they are eligible to transition up the UPS pay range. If the teacher believes that they are sustaining the CSE then they can request this each year until they reach UPS 3. It is a UPS teachers responsibility to discuss and agree with their individual HT how they will meet the wider school / trust contribution element of the CSE. When teachers move on to the Upper Pay Range they must maintain this standard. The Trust will provide the support they need to be able to do this so that they continue to make a substantial and sustained contribution to the school and the development of their colleagues' skills for the benefit of all learners.

Informal Support

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and teaching standards, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and Trust, teachers should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process. Where there are concerns about any aspects of performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to:

- inform the teacher that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- give clear and specific feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement;

- agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement.
- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made – e.g. commencement of capability procedure.

The line manager/appraiser should partner with the teacher in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account the teacher's circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation. Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement such as six weeks. When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, if the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher 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.

7. Review Process for Support Staff

Appraisers should use their professional judgement when evaluating the performance of those that they are appraising. Support staff are not expected to routinely provide evidence that they are meeting their goal/target but will be able to share impact and progress towards it through professional dialogue.

Where a staff member's work is falling short of their job role requirements and expectations, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and Trust, a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process will be provided. In such circumstances, the appraiser will meet the staff member to:

- inform them that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns.
- give clear and specific feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- give the staff member the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement.
- agree any support (e.g. additional training), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement.)
- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made – e.g. commencement of capability procedure.

8. Review Process of Leaders

The Headteacher within their school will oversee the review process of all those on the Leadership scale in line with this policy. It is the expectations of all leaders on this scale to evaluate and reflect of their performance and impact in line with this policy and to evidence

this in their professional growth meeting. On the conclusion of this process the Headteacher will make a recommendation to the Trust Pay Committee regarding any pay adjustments.

9. Transition to Capability

If an employee demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support 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.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1	Teachers Career Stage Expectations
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Appendix 1 – Teachers Career Stage Expectations

Group 1 NQT / ECF Teachers	Group 2 Year 2 RQTs	Group 3 M3 - M6 Teachers	Group 4 UPS1 Teachers	Group 5 UPS2 Teachers	Group 6 UPS3 & Above Teachers
<p>Plan engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture - reach standard with support or guidance.</p> <p>Teaching may require improvement initially but should be good by the end of the year.</p> <p>Progress should be at least in line with national expectations.</p> <p>Shows a good knowledge and understanding of the relevant subject and curriculum area and current specification content.</p> <p>Monitors, analyses, evaluates and develops own class teaching. If not in the first year of teaching starts to take on a wider range of subject or key stage awareness and responsibility with appropriate support</p> <p>Effectively takes on board whole school developments and initiatives.</p>	<p>Plan engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture</p> <p>Independently reach the standards, building experience and sharing good practice with others within own subject area where relevant, with support.</p> <p>Teaching is at least good and secures good/ average progress across own students.</p> <p>Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the relevant subjects and curriculum area and current specification content.</p> <p>Monitors, analyses, evaluates and develops own subject area/Subject area/ key stage with appropriate guidance.</p> <p>Is actively involved with whole school developments in line with school and subject area targets.</p>	<p>Plan engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture</p> <p>Has built a good range of practice and accumulated relevant experience.</p> <p>Shares good practice and latest developments in own subject with colleagues.</p> <p>Teaching is at least consistently good with examples of highly effective teaching at times</p> <p>Average progress of all students is good.</p> <p>Have well developed understanding of subject knowledge, curriculum content and current specification content and coverage across the phase taught</p> <p>Monitors, analyses, evaluates and develops own key stage or subject area independently.</p> <p>Is actively involved with whole school developments and should lead or initiate some areas in line with school and subject area targets.</p>	<p>Is able to support other members of staff with planning engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture</p> <p>Has a high level of experience on which to draw on to advise and develop others and to inform own practice.</p> <p>Teaching is highly effective and average progress is good or above across own students.</p> <p>Have an extensive subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and current specification content and related pedagogy.</p> <p>Participates in school wide monitoring, analysing, evaluation and development across a range of areas.</p> <p>Researches and leads school wide developments in line with school and subject area targets. Including giving effective guidance and support to ensure good progress and good practice is apparent in own subject area across the school.</p>	<p>Is able to support other members of staff with planning engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture</p> <p>Has a high level of experience on which to draw on to advise and develop others and to inform own practice.</p> <p>Teaching is highly effective and average progress is good or above across own students, regardless of ability or needs.</p> <p>Have an extensive subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and current specification content and related pedagogy.</p> <p>School wide monitoring, analysing, evaluation and development across a range of areas over time.</p> <p>Researches and leads school wide developments in line with school development plan and priorities. Including giving effective guidance and support to ensure good progress and good practice is apparent in own subject area across the school.</p>	<p>Is able to support other members of staff with planning engaging lessons, with pace and challenge, making the purpose of the learning clear, including sharing the bigger picture</p> <p>An extensive level of experience on which to draw, this is continuously used to develop others and inform own practice.</p> <p>Continues to build experience by extending own research and self-development to lead further initiatives in staff and school development.</p> <p>Teaching is consistently highly effective and students make excellent progress and across all abilities.</p> <p>Continuing to develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of relevant subject and curriculum areas and related pedagogy through active involvement in CPD or research which is then shared with staff through training and coaching.</p> <p>A high level of contribution across the school and Trust, through monitoring, analysing, evaluation and development across a range of areas over time.</p> <p>Continued active involvement, school, Trust wide and beyond, in research and development which helps to keep the school at the forefront of education.</p>