

Pay progression

Manager guidance

This guidance will help managers to prepare for implementation of the pay progression framework. The new pay progression system will come into effect on 1 April 2019 for new starters or those promoted to a new role on or after 1 April 2019. Promotion means moving to a higher banded role.

For all other staff who were in post before 1 April 2019, current organisational pay progression procedures will continue to apply until 31 March 2021 after which time they too will be subject to the new provisions.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the [NHS Terms and Condition of Service Handbook](#) annex 23 and supporting pay progression materials.

The new pay progression framework

This will apply to your staff if they started NHS employment on or after 1 April 2019, or for existing staff if they are promoted to a job in a higher band from that date. In the new Terms and Conditions of Service pay structure there are fewer pay steps within each band. This means that, although the time spent in-between pay step points is longer, staff reach the top of their band more quickly than before. As pay progression will no longer be annual under the new system, the first pay step reviews will take place from April 2021, which is when staff joining or promoted from 1 April 2019 will reach their first pay step dates.

Staff in bands 2, 3, 4, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d and 9 will have one pay step date, as under the new structure these bands have an entry pay point and a top point. Staff in bands 5, 6 and 7 will have two pay step dates as these bands have an entry point, an intermediate point and a top point.

To progress to their next pay step point, your staff member must have met the following standards:

1. Appraisal process has been completed within the last 12 months and outcomes are in line with the organisation's standards.
2. They are not in a formal capability process.
3. There is no formal disciplinary sanction live on their employment record.
4. They have completed all required statutory and/or mandatory training

5. If they are a line manager – they have completed all the appraisals for their staff as required.

The expectation is that all staff will meet the required standards and therefore be able to progress on their pay step date.

This pay progression framework is underpinned by the mandatory annual appraisal process and is intended to ensure that all staff within each pay band have the appropriate knowledge and skills they need to carry out their roles and so make the greatest possible contribution to patient care. Local appraisal policies may cover issues such as development opportunities and organisational values and behaviours.

Purpose of appraisal

An appraisal is a two-way discussion between the staff member (appraisee) and their manager (appraiser) to enable a discussion about the staff member's role, progress towards objectives, demonstration of the organisation's standards, accomplishments, future objectives and development needs. Protected time should be given to both the manager and the staff member to undertake the appraisal meeting. It is the appraiser's responsibility to ensure the meeting is constructive and a coaching style is adopted to encourage discussion and to make the appraisee feel comfortable during the process. There is evidence that well-constructed appraisals significantly increase motivation, performance level and personal commitment to the ward/department/organisation.

Regular discussions (one-to-one meetings/catch-ups/check-ins)

An effective manager will have regular meaningful discussions with their member of staff throughout the year. This is to allow frequent dialogue and the ability to build mutual trust between the two individuals. The meetings allow ongoing discussion in relation to achievements, progress of objectives and the chance for the manager to highlight any areas of expectation that the staff member is not meeting. It is also an opportunity for the member of staff to raise any issues that they have, such as in relation to work, health and wellbeing, work pattern or working relationships. It is particularly important that any issues they think may affect their pay progression are discussed. The purpose of these regular discussions is to ensure that when it comes to the appraisal and any pay step review, there are no surprises.

Number of appraisals per manager (span of control)

Best practice would suggest that an effective manager would have no more than eight direct reports, where achievable. However, we are aware that some areas may potentially have more than this. Speak to your manager or organisational development team if you have more than this number, to look at ways of addressing this and/or alternative ways for delivering high quality appraisals. You should raise

any concerns you have and request additional support where you think you might need it.

Frequency and timing of the appraisal meeting

All staff must have an annual appraisal and it is a joint responsibility that these are undertaken. The manager is accountable and has an annual objective for ensuring they deliver an annual appraisal for all their team. It is recommended that postponements only occur in extreme circumstances (service needs/personal issues), and where this has occurred, the date is rebooked without delay. Any organisational delays must not cause the staff member's pay progression to be delayed. Equally as a line manager, any delays outside your control that affect your ability to complete your appraisals should be taken into account and should not delay your own pay progression.

There is no restriction on when the annual appraisal will happen in the year - this will depend on your local guidance for objective setting. Therefore, the appraisal may occur at a different time to the pay step date. As such there is a need for ongoing one-to-one discussions to manage expectations. If a manager is not able to confirm satisfactory performance at the time of the appraisal, then they should set further regular dates to discuss ongoing expectations and targets to ensure that all possible support has been provided to the appraisee before their pay step date. These meetings and actions must be documented.

At the pay-step review you should draw on the last appraisal and on the progress that your staff member may have made since then.

It remains important that staff are clear that there is a link between their performance and pay-step progression. A manager must be aware of and plan for the timely processing of pay step reviews for all their team.

Arranging and preparing for the appraisal

The appraiser should provide no less than two weeks' notice of the appraisal and where possible the date should be agreed together. The appraiser should ensure that the appraisee has access to the forms as per the local policy, the organisational standards and any other local requirements. This may include a copy of the previous appraisal form and a copy of the staff job description and person specification.

The appraiser and appraisee should use appropriate forms or materials to help them prepare for their appraisal discussion. The manager should think about specific examples of when the staff member has met the organisation's standards and their performance for each objective. The manager and/or appraisee may also want to

gather feedback from other members of the team or other stakeholders to provide examples of what has been done.

Competencies and organisational standards

The manager should consider the competencies required for the position and think about examples of how the staff has met these or not. In addition, there may be organisational standards that must be met by all staff. It is important for managers to discuss these during the appraisal meeting, acknowledge that these are being met and, if there are any gaps, setting out how they will be addressed.

During the appraisal

The manager must encourage their staff to do most of the talking, using a coaching style approach. The manager should allow the staff member to take the lead with the conversation and should provide them with constructive feedback using your prepared notes and any feedback that has been received from other stakeholders.

If the staff member is being negative about their own performance, the manager should try to help them to think of positive outcomes and ensure future objectives and the personal development plan build on this during the next year.

It is important to remember that the meeting should contain 'no surprises' for your staff member. If there have been any previous concerns about an incident/performance during the year you have a responsibility as a manager to raise this at the time rather than waiting for the appraisal meeting to do so. It may be appropriate to check how the staff member has developed and reflected since this incident. The appraisal meeting should complement and support regular discussions with your staff during the year.

Objective setting

You should agree objectives with your appraisee for the coming year. These could be linked corporate objectives/divisional objectives, ward/department priorities and issues identified during the appraisal. These must be recorded. The objectives should form part of the regular one-to-one discussions throughout the year.

Personal development plan (PDP)

The manager should coach the appraisee to identify any training and development needs they may have to achieve their objectives, meet organisational competencies and standards, or as part of succession planning and career development. You should be familiar with your organisation's training, learning and development policies and you must provide adequate opportunities for development to happen throughout the year. There are a range of ways to do this as there should not be an expectation that it's always necessary to attend a course. Other development

opportunities can be provided, such as through exposure to other tasks/attending meetings/reflective practice/reading/learning from others/shadowing etc.

After the appraisal

The appraisal form must be completed with comments by the staff and manager. The parties should agree between them who will take responsibility for this and set a timeframe for doing so. As a line manager you should ensure that the completed form is agreed and signed by both parties and you must provide one copy to the staff and retain one in their personal file.

If a member of staff disagrees with the outcome of their appraisal and/or pay progression they may contest it following the locally agreed procedure.

The manager must follow their local policy for ensuring the appraisal is recorded in a timely manner. This may delay your own pay progression if appraisals are not completed and recorded appropriately.

Pay progression

It is the expectation that staff will go through the appraisal process annually, even in years where they are not eligible for a pay step.

It is expected that your staff will receive the support they need to meet the required standards, so they can progress to the next pay step on their pay step date. A pay step review meeting should take place to confirm this. It is your responsibility to initiate this meeting in a timely fashion. In the meeting you will draw on the staff member's most recent appraisal and any relevant progress since then, as well as the other pay progression standards. You should use the organisation's form or local process to sign this off.

You may defer pay step progression for a staff member if you conclude they are not meeting the pay progression requirements, **unless** this is due to factors beyond their control or there are other relevant mitigating factors. You will be required to follow the local policy to ensure that the payroll team are aware that pay progression is to be deferred and the reason for it. You must work with the staff member to assist them to meet the expectations/standards required and once these have been achieved to a satisfactory standard, the pay step can be applied. Deferral of a pay step will not affect their next pay step date where they have one. You should ensure that you meet with the staff member as soon as the standards have been met and take action to apply the pay step effective from the date on which they can show they met the standards.

Manager checklist

Your responsibilities

Appraisals

- ✓ Carry out your role as outlined in the local annual appraisal process.
- ✓ Undertake annual appraisals and pay step reviews for all members of your team and ensure they are fully completed.
- ✓ Ensure that if absence or other circumstances will prevent you from completing these, that you flag this to your manager at the earliest opportunity so that cover can be put in place.
- ✓ Ensure that all staff have access to and undertake statutory/mandatory and any essential skills training.
- ✓ Hold regular appraisal discussions with staff on the basis of 'no surprises', so that if an individual may not be on track to reach their pay step point, any areas for development or improvement are identified and remedial action taken at the earliest opportunity.
- ✓ Conduct an objective review of the individual's work against the required standards as part of the annual appraisal process. This should include an assessment of the staff member's achievement of any personal and or organisational objectives.
- ✓ Demonstrate you have encouraged and supported the staff member to achieve the standards required during each local appraisal process.
- ✓ Ensure that staff understand what evidence they will need and its relevance to achieving the required standards.

Pay step reviews

- ✓ Undertake a meeting with the member of staff to review standards and follow the pay step submission process.
- ✓ Where a staff member is not meeting the required standards, set a plan following your local guidance to support the individual.
- ✓ Understand the required standards for progression and your local policies.
- ✓ Give the staff member at least two-weeks' notice of their appraisal to allow them to prepare. You should try not to postpone the appraisal, but where this is necessary, re-book without delay.
- ✓ Ensure that the staff member has access to any forms or materials they need as per the local policy, the organisation's standards and any other local requirements. This may include a copy of the previous appraisal form and a copy of their job description and person specification.

Ongoing

- ✓ Identify the skills and knowledge your staff members already have and where there are areas for development.
- ✓ Be clear about how you can help your staff progress and what you might need to do to support them.
- ✓ Listen to and take account of any barriers or mitigating factors that may affect your staff member so that their pay progression is not adversely affected by factors beyond their control.
- ✓ Find out what support is available across the organisation and how to access it.
- ✓ Make sure you are meeting regularly with your staff to see that they have all the resources they need to deliver their objectives.

Actions

- Ensure you have received training on delivering appraisals, and that your direct reports have been supported to receive appraisal training appropriate to them.
- Ensure that you understand the pay step process and the requirements of you.
- Familiarise yourself with the pay progression and appraisal resources available to you.
- Develop a schedule to ensure that regular discussions and annual appraisals are held with your direct reports, as well as the pay step review meetings.
- Ensure that you know that pay step dates of all your direct reports, and that they are also aware of their specific pay journey.

Further advice and resources

- ✓ [Pay step submission process flowchart](#)
- ✓ [Pay progression submission review template](#)
- ✓ [Pay progression diagram](#)
- ✓ [Pay journey tool](#)
- ✓ [NHS Terms and Conditions and Service - annex 23](#)