

Performance Review and Staff Development ATL Guidance for Members

The Performance Review and Staff Development scheme (PRSD) was negotiated as part of an agreement on salaries in July 2004, based on the previously agreed SDPR scheme.

PRSD Scheme

PRSD training took place from January 2005 and the scheme officially commenced from September 2005. It will apply to all qualified teachers other than teachers participating in induction and Early Professional Development (EPD).

Each school has a legal responsibility to adopt a **PRSD policy** in accordance with the scheme and within the context of the school development plan. It is also the duty of the Board of Governors to ensure that training and development needs that are identified through PRSD are reflected in the school development plan and that corresponding opportunities for professional development are made available to all teaching staff.

Review Cycle

The review cycle will normally be a period of one year *but if a teacher moves to another school or to a new post as principal the review cycle shall begin again but may be shortened in length. If a teacher moves to a new post in the same school the objectives may be amended.*

It should be noted that while the review cycle is annual, salary progression on the Upper Pay Scale takes place after two years.

Reviewers

- Principals will be reviewed by a minimum of two reviewers designated by the Board of Governors.
- The two reviewers will be advised by an external advisor designated by the Employing Authority from a pool of trained and accredited advisers.
- The reviewer of a teacher shall be the principal or a teacher designated by the principal. Wherever possible the reviewer should have management and/or curricular responsibility for the teacher.
- If a teacher has concerns regarding the designation of reviewer the principal may, in consultation with the teacher, appoint a new reviewer.

Process

There are three stages in the PRSD process:

- planning and preparation
- monitoring
- review discussion

At the start of the review cycle the teacher will agree three personal/shared objectives covering the following three areas:

- professional practice (or, for principals - Leadership and Management)
- pupil and curriculum development
- personal and professional development

It is essential that these three objectives be SMART:

- specific
- measurable
- attainable
- realistic
- time-bound

If the objectives are not carefully defined then this may lead to difficulties in assessing whether a teacher has achieved the objective. The teacher should also be careful to avoid agreeing objectives that have more than one part as this would effectively increase the number of objectives beyond the agreed total of three.

Teachers should ensure that the objectives are compatible with their current job descriptions — the PRSD process should not be used as a vehicle to allow changes to job descriptions or the introduction of additional duties.

It should be noted that if a reviewer(s) and a teacher/principal fail to reach agreement on the objectives then the reviewer shall set and record the objectives and the teacher/principal may add comments in writing.

It is very important that the objectives chosen should be achievable within the time frame. It may be that a longer term objective will need to be achieved incrementally over a number of years. There may be objectives that are not fully achieved in one year due to factors that the teacher has no control over and that should be reflected in the review statement at the end of the review cycle. It is also important to note that *the school should provide the support necessary to achieve the set objective*. This should include access to the appropriate ICT facilities and the funding of training where necessary. *Teachers should not be expected to either fund their own identified training needs nor to attend training courses outside directed time.*

Success Criteria

The objectives set should be measurable and specific. It should be easy, therefore, for the teacher to identify how success could be measured - if not, then it is suggested that the objective should be re-visited and amended. Remember that all objectives should be checked against the **SMART** principles.

Collection of Information

The collection of information other than by classroom or task observation shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Code of Practice. A copy of the Code of Practice can be downloaded from the RTU website (www.rtuni.org.uk) or by contacting the ATL Office. The collection of information must comply with the eight principles of the Data Protection Act (NI) 1998 and any data collected is obtainable by the teacher/principal.

Classroom Observation

In the case of a teacher two classroom observations shall take place prior to the review discussion. These two observations **should not exceed one hour in total** and indeed for many teachers may be much less.

Principals will have either two periods of task observation or, where the principal has a significant teaching role, one of the periods may be of classroom observation. It should be noted that only those with appropriate professional skills in education should be permitted to carry out classroom observation. Any teacher or principal who has concerns regarding classroom observation arrangements should contact ATL for advice immediately.

Review Discussion

This is an extended interview between the teacher and the reviewer that will take place near the end of the review cycle. The teacher should be given adequate notice that the meeting is to take place and should therefore have time to prepare his/her suggested personal and professional development needs in advance.

At this meeting the reviewer will agree an action plan and objectives for the following year and a review statement in an agreed format will be drawn up. In a separate annex the training and development needs should be defined along with ways of meeting these needs. *The spirit of the Scheme is such that the needs of the **teacher** (as identified by him/her) should be given as much credence as the needs of the school.*

The review statement must be prepared *within 10 working days* of the review meeting and a copy given to the teacher/principal. The teacher/principal will then have the opportunity to comment on the statement and record any points of disagreement *within 10 working days*. The review statement is a confidential document to be kept on the teacher's/principal's personnel file.

Copies of the review statement will be made available to the following:

- the teacher/principal
- the reviewer (on request)
- any review officer appointed under the complaints procedure

Copies of the annex to the review statement which contains the training and development needs and the ways of meeting those needs shall be made

available to the person(s) responsible for planning and/or providing the training e.g. the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS), the RTU, Higher Education Institutes, etc.

Salary Progression

Teacher participation in the review process is a necessary requirement in respect of pay progression on all salary scales. Those responsible for taking decisions or making recommendations about the pay or performance of teachers shall take review statements into account.

Sickness / Maternity: In cases where a teacher is off for a significant period due to sickness and/or maternity – where this absence compromises a successful PRSD review and, as a consequence, pay progression. The guidance is clear that, notwithstanding time off during pregnancy or illness, that it is open to the Principal to exercise his/her professional judgement on the matter of progression to (and through) the Upper Pay Scale/s.

Complaints Procedure

Any teacher who has a complaint about any aspect of the PRSD process may initiate the Grievance Procedure at the appropriate level.

The scheme must be operated in such a way as to comply with all equality legislation. A teacher who believes she/he may have been discriminated against on equality grounds has the right to lodge an application to an industrial tribunal. Normally the application must be lodged within three months of the event occurring.

Monitoring

The PRSD scheme will be monitored and a review will be carried out every two years.