

Panel Member Self Appraisal and Peer Feedback - Guidance Notes

The Health Professions Council recognises that Partners are an important and valuable resource, essential to the success of the organisation. To help maintain a high quality service via the Partner programme, a Performance Appraisal system has been developed.

The following guidelines are designed to help you complete the Panel Member performance appraisal form. If you have any questions or need further support, please contact Liz McKell, Partner Manager on 020 7840 9757, or at liz.mckell@hpc-uk.org

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IMPORTANT

Assessment should only be based on the public performance of your fellow Panel Member; any discussions taking place during the private deliberations should NOT be assessed. This appraisal is concerned only with the conduct of the hearing, each Panel Member's public performance and the processes used to reach the decision. It does not seek to assess, judge or clarify the actual decisions reached by the Panel.

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2005-11-18

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Panel Member Role Brief

1. Investigating Committee

To contribute to the investigating process of allegations referred to the Committee

Main Responsibilities

- Receive and obtain information, representations and observations about the allegations received.
- Follow the procedures as laid down in the Committee's Rules;
- Reach a decision on whether there is a case to answer and if necessary refer the case to the Health Committee Panel, or Conduct and Competence Committee Panel, or
- To find whether an entry on the Register has been fraudulently produced or incorrectly made.

2. Conduct and Competence Committee

To contribute and participate in the hearings of allegations in relation to one or more of the relevant professions as agreed with and directed by the HPC.

Main responsibilities:

- To follow the procedures laid down in the Committee's Rules
- To provide advice and contribute to discussions and decision making as directed by the HPC or any relevant Committee.
- Advise the Committee (in conjunction with other Panel Members) as to the conduct and competence of the Registrant referred to it and take the appropriate action.

3. Health Committee

To contribute to the assessment of Registrants referred to the Committee for reasons of their health, and to make recommendations to the Health Committee on what action should be taken.

Main Responsibilities

- To follow procedures laid down in the Committee's Rules
- To advise the Committee as to the health of the Registrant referred to it

Person Specification (for all 3 Panel Member Roles)

- An understanding of the importance of upholding the public interest in all that HPC undertakes.
- Demonstrable experience of contributing to and encouraging open and pro-active accountability to the public and the professions.
- Experience of participating on quasi-judicial proceedings in equivalent situations, or similar.
- Ability to grasp the detail of a wide range of issues and contribute to objective decision making by exercising sound judgement.
- Experience of working collaboratively, sufficient to support networking and consulting with a broad range of stakeholders.
- Commitment to the seven principles of public life
- Well developed verbal and written communication skills
- Strategic thinking skills
- Gravitas to command public confidence and that of employers, HPC Stakeholders and Registrants

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Objectives

The objectives of the Partner Performance Appraisal will be to:

- Make sure that the HPC is providing a high quality service through the Partner Programme.
- Ensure the public is adequately protected in all decisions reached by Partners
- Highlight areas for improvement in Partners' Performance.
- Maintain best practice at all times.
- Identify areas for improvement in HPC's training and processes.

It is anticipated that all Partners will be appraised at least once per year for each role they undertake with the HPC. (e.g. an individual who is both a Panel Member and a Registration Assessor will receive two separate appraisals). To ensure consistency, no Partner will be assessed for a role until they have carried out their duties related to that role on at least two occasions.

Competencies

All Panel Members will be evaluated on the same criteria, set out as 'Competency Types'. These competencies are derived from the Panel Member role brief, HPC training and the professional expertise, experience and knowledge that all Partners are expected to bring to the role. Each Competency Type contains a number of questions, designed to help gauge overall performance in each area.

The competencies against which all Panel Members will be assessed are:

- Knowledge of Key Legislation governing the HPC
- Application of Relevant Procedure
- Understanding the importance of public protection and a fair hearing
- Decision Making
- Questioning
- Working in a Collaborative and Professional Manner
- Communication

The Ratings Scale

The ratings apply appropriate 'measures' (in this case a score of 1 to 5) to a list of performance criteria (competencies). These measures help indicate poor, good and above average performance. Please allocate only one mark for each question. If you feel that you cannot provide a mark in respect of a particular question or competency, please indicate why in the space provided on the form.

A marking of '3' for each question will indicate that the Panel Member meets the requirements of the role. It is expected that the majority of those assessed will receive this marking throughout the appraisal. Anyone allocating a marking above or below '3' is asked to provide a rationale as to why they think this is appropriate, providing examples of how/why the performance exceeds/does not meet the required standards.

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Please do not allow one performance characteristic to excessively influence your ratings in other areas. In other words, do not allow a serious fault in one area to reduce the markings elsewhere (or similarly a high marking in one area). Every attempt should be made to judge yourself and your colleague on a single factor or trait before moving on to the next question. Only the criteria set out in the Performance Appraisal form should be used to assess your fellow Panel Member. Please also ensure that you appraise only their performance, not their personal qualities.

- 5 Outstanding performance
- 4 Exceeds the requirements of the role
- 3 Good performance – meets the requirements of the role
- 2 Limited Performance – shows some minor weaknesses
- 1 Poor Performance – shows significant weakness, further training needed.

Completion of the form

Panel Members will be notified of their appraisal at least three weeks in advance of the date of the hearing, at which their performance is to be assessed. The appraisal, therefore, should be centred on the performance of each Panel Member at this hearing.

At first glance the performance appraisal form may look lengthy, however please bear in mind that only the first two sections of each competency need to be completed. The first section of each competency relates to your own performance, the second to the performance of your fellow Panel Member. Once you have completed these sections, please sign the last page and pass the form to the Panel Chair, who will complete the remaining section.

The HPC will consider anyone with a rating of '3' to be carrying out their duties for the HPC effectively. However we would like to hear of instances where you feel that your or your colleague's performance has exceeded expectations. This will help us identify how we can help others to improve. Similarly, if you feel that your or your colleague's performance in certain areas needs to be developed further, please ensure this is recorded. This information is necessary for the HPC to offer support and further training/clarification and, where appropriate, to re-examine its training and procedures.

Please note

- *We only ask for your HPC Registration Number as a unique identifier – we may have Partners in the same profession who share the same name. (If you are a Lay Panel Member, please ignore this section).*

What Happens Next

Once the Panel Chair has completed the final section of the form, a copy of the appraisal will be sent to each appraisee for their records. The original paperwork will be kept on the Partner's file, in the Human Resource Department.

Those who are consistently awarded a score of above 3 by their fellow Panel Member and the Panel Chair will be given written feedback by the Partner Manager. Those with scores consistently below 3 will be given telephone feedback by the Partner Manager to discuss the areas of concern, agree how these areas could be improved and the time-frame for this

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improvement. This will be followed up with the Partner in writing. If appropriate, further training will be offered to those who require clarification of their role, or HPC's procedures.

Time restraints dictate that it would be impractical to offer a one-to-one performance appraisal interview for all 550 Partners. However, those who wish to be provided with feedback in person can request a meeting with the Partner Manager, who will make every effort to accommodate their request within 28 days.

In cases where the markings show that a Partner's performance consistently and repeatedly falls below the required standards, the Partner will be asked to attend a meeting with the Partner Manager and, where appropriate, the Director of Fitness to Practise. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss in detail the areas of concern, establish if there are any factors adversely affecting the Partner's performance, offer advice on how to improve and agree a timetable for improvement. Another appraisal will be given after an agreed time-frame, to ensure the necessary improvements have been met.

Failure to Agree

It is important to note that the information gathered as a result of the performance appraisal will only be used to help monitor the Partner's performance and offer support where needed. All Partners have completed a lengthy recruitment and training process and it is in the HPC's best interest to ensure that we continue to support Partners in improving their performance as this will help the organisation to realise its goals.

In the event that a Partner does not agree with the feedback received, or if they feel they have been treated unfairly by their fellow Panel Member or Panel Chair, they may submit their comments in writing to the Partner Manager, who will ensure that these comments are placed on the Partner's file with a copy of the appraisal form.

In exceptional circumstances, an appeal meeting can be arranged with the Chair of the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee. A request for an appeal meeting must be submitted in writing to the Partner Manager. The Partner Manager will pass the letter and any other relevant background to the Chair. A meeting will be organised with all parties concerned. If the Chair finds that the appraisal has not been delivered fairly and does not, therefore, truly reflect the Partner's performance the details of this will be removed from file and another appraisal delivered as soon as possible. Details of the appeal meeting will be recorded on the Partner's file.

Confidentiality

All HPC Employees and Partners are required to keep details of any performance appraisal in which they participate confidential. All paperwork relating to performance appraisals will be kept on the Partner's respective file, all of which are maintained in a secure environment.

In order to help the HPC analyse the effectiveness of the Partner programme, identify trends and improve training it may be necessary for the Partner Manager to provide reports to the HPC's Committees or Council. This reporting will be done anonymously and no personal details will be divulged or discussed.

Other Important Information

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All participants must guard against unfair discrimination on any grounds (including sexual orientation, religion or believe, race, sex or disability). All fellow Panel Members must be assessed only on their ability to perform their role. Poor or above average marking must be justified, in writing, in the box provided.

The Performance Appraisal is not the forum to raise complaints or general concerns you may have about a fellow Panel Member's performance. The HPC has a formal Partner Complaints procedure that should be utilised for this purpose. For further information please contact HPC's Partner Manager.

Questions and Answers

Q Do I have to have an appraisal?

Yes, all Panel Members will be appraised and evaluated on the same criteria.

Q When will this take place?

If you have attended two or more Panels you will receive an annual appraisal. You will be given approximately three weeks notice of the date.

Q Who will the appraiser be?

You will assess your own performance and the performance of your Fellow Panel Member. The Panel Chair will then evaluate your performance.

Q Will a record of the assessment be kept on my file?

Yes. A copy of the completed form will also be sent to you.

Q Do I need to provide a reason if I allocate a rating below or above 3?

Yes. To guard against unfair discrimination or bias, it is important to justify particularly high or low scores, citing examples of performance where possible.

Q What if I do not know the Partner who I am being asked to assess?

You should only be evaluating your fellow Panel Member on his/her ability to perform the role. This is an objective process and is not based on personal attributes or past performance.

Q What is the role of the Panel Chair?

The Panel Chair will provide the 'balance' between your self assessment and the evaluation made of your performance by your fellow Panel Member. They may also have worked with either of you previously so could have an overview of both performances. For example, where a Panel Member has shown some weaknesses in the past and is re-appraised, the Panel Chair may help to determine whether an improvement has been made.

Q Why can't I assess the HPC?

All HPC employees undergo an annual performance appraisal by their Line Manager. General Feedback from Partners on the HPC, or the processes we adopt is always welcome and should be passed to the Partner Manager. If your feedback concerns the performance of an HPC employee feedback should be directed to that person's Line Manager. All of HPC's Fitness to Practise team report directly to Ms. Kelly Johnson. If

you would like to speak with Ms Johnson, please call the HPC switchboard, who will transfer your call.

Q What if I do not agree with the feedback I have received?

In the first instance any concerns about Feedback must be made in writing to the Partner Manager. This will be kept on your Partner file, together with the Performance Appraisal form, as a record of your concern.

In exceptional circumstances, where the Partner feels that the appraisal and subsequent feedback have been administered unfairly, an appeal can be made to the Chair of the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee. All requests for such an appeal should be made, in writing, to the Partner Manager.

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