

Pay progression

Staff guidance

As part of the 2018 NHS pay deal, a 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.

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 will help you to prepare for implementation of the pay progression framework and 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 you if you started your NHS employment on or after 1 April 2019, or for existing staff if you are promoted on or after 1 April 2019. Promotion means moving to a higher banded role. In the new Terms and Condition of Service 2018 pay structure there are fewer pay steps within each band. This means that, although the time spent in-between pay-step points is longer, you will reach the top of your 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 as 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 your next pay step point, you must have met the following standards:

1. Your appraisal process has been completed within the last 12 months and outcomes are in line with the organisation's standards.
2. You are not in a formal capability process.
3. There is no formal disciplinary sanction live on your employment record.
4. You have completed all required statutory and/or mandatory training
5. If you are a line manager – you have completed all the appraisals for all your 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.

The 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.

Appraisals

As you will see from the standards above, the new pay progression system is underpinned by the annual appraisal process.

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 staff and manager to undertake the appraisal meeting. It is your responsibility to actively participate in the appraisal meeting and your manager should ensure the meeting is constructive and that you feel comfortable during the process.

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

You should be having regular discussions with your manager or supervisor throughout the year. This is to allow frequent dialogue and the ability to build mutual trust between the two parties. These conversations allow ongoing discussion in relation to your achievements, progress of objectives and any areas of expectation that you may not be meeting. It is also an opportunity for you to raise any issues that you have, such as in relation to work, your health and wellbeing, work pattern or working relationships. It is particularly important to raise any issues that you think may affect your pay progression. The purpose of these regular discussions is to ensure that when it comes to your appraisal and any pay step review that there are no surprises.

Frequency and timing of the appraisal meeting

All staff must have an annual appraisal and it is a joint responsibility that these are undertaken and both parties actively participate. 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. Your pay progression should not be delayed if an organisational issue delays your appraisal.

There is no requirement on when your annual appraisal will happen in the year and will depend on your local guidance for objective setting. Therefore, the appraisal may occur at a different time to your pay step date. As such, there is a need for your manager to have regular, ongoing one-to-one discussions to be clear what is expected from you. At your pay step review your manager should take account of your last appraisal and of the progress you have made since it took place.

You need to be aware that there is a link between your performance and pay step progression. You should make yourself aware of your pay step date and speak to your manager if you have not had an appraisal within the last 12 months.

Arranging and preparing for the appraisal

Your manager should provide no less than two weeks' notice of your appraisal and where possible the date will be agreed with you. Your manager will provide you with access to forms as per your local policy, the trust standards, and any other local requirements. This may include a copy of your previous appraisal form and a copy of your job description and person specification.

You should actively prepare for your appraisal discussion. It is advisable to keep your own log of achievements or relevant examples that you update regularly throughout the year. This will make it easier to go into your appraisal with a comprehensive overview of your year. Your manager should also be doing this.

As you prepare for the appraisal, think about what things have gone well and what you are particularly proud of. Reflect on areas where you think things could have been better, and any barriers you encountered. Be ready to share and discuss your examples with your manager.

Competencies and trust standards

You should discuss with your manager what competencies are required for the position and think about examples of how you have met these. You must also be familiar with your trust's standards and think of examples of how you have demonstrated these within your work.

During the appraisal

You will be expected to do most of the talking and so it is important to prepare for the discussion beforehand. Your manager may use a coaching style to encourage you to reflect on your achievements and how you could do things differently.

There should be no surprises during your appraisal meeting. If your manager has had any previous concerns about an incident/performance during the year, they will

have raised this at the time, however they may refer to it to check how you developed and reflected on the issue since the incident.

Objective setting

You should agree your objectives with your appraiser for the coming year. The approach to objective setting is usually set out in organisational policies which you should be familiar with. Your objectives could be linked to corporate objectives/divisional objectives, ward/department priorities and issues identified during the appraisal. These should be recorded on the appraisal form.

Personal development plan (PDP)

Where possible you should identify any training and development needs you may have to enable you to achieve your objectives, meet organisational competencies and standards, or as part of succession planning and career development. There are a range of ways to do this, and you should not have 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. Make sure you are familiar with your organisation's training, learning and development policies. Your manager should ensure that you have adequate opportunity for development throughout the year.

After the appraisal

The appraisal form must be completed with comments by you and your manager. Both parties should agree between them who will take responsibility for this and set a timeframe for doing so. The completed form should be agreed and signed by both parties. You will be provided with one copy and another one will be retained on your personal file.

Your manager will follow the local policy for ensuring the appraisal is recorded in a timely manner. You will have an appraisal at least annually whether it is a pay-step year or not.

Pay progression meetings

As stated above, it is expected that all 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, which will draw on the most recent appraisal and any relevant progress since then, as well as the other pay progression standards.

As with appraisals, there should be 'no surprises' in the pay progression meeting. You should also have the chance to discuss any mitigating factors or things outside your control that you feel are relevant.

Managers will defer your pay step progression if they conclude that you are not meeting the pay progression requirements **unless** this is due to factors beyond your control or there are other relevant mitigating factors. Your manager will be required to follow their local policy to defer pay progression, noting the reason for non-progression. You have a right to contest it if you do not agree with their decision.

If your pay step is deferred, your manager should work with you to discuss and agree a plan for any remedial action needed to ensure that the required standards are met, including a timescale, and how any training and support needs will be met. As soon as you meet the standards, your manager will meet with you again to confirm your pay step progression and your pay will be increased effective from the date that you can show that you met the standards. Any deferral will **not** change your next pay-step date where you have one.

Right to contest

If you do not agree with the outcome of your pay step review, then you may contest this under your local procedure. Seek support from your trade union representative as soon as possible.

Staff checklist

Your responsibilities

To ensure successful pay progression you should:

- ✓ Actively participate in the annual appraisal process and agree your objectives with your line manager.
- ✓ Complete the local appraisal process each year, regardless of whether or not your next pay step date is that year.
- ✓ Make your line manager aware of any issues that may be preventing you from achieving your objectives.
- ✓ Set some time with your manager to review and agree what support you will need and how you can access this.
- ✓ Tell your line manager about anything that may impact your appraisal outcome and/or pay progression, such as if you have been prevented from completing agreed training or personal development targets due to reasons outside of your control.
- ✓ Show through relevant evidence, where it is available, that you have met the required standards and achievement of objectives in line with the local appraisal process.
- ✓ Work with your line manager to ensure that all relevant statutory, mandatory, and essential skills training is up to date.
- ✓ In relevant years, participate in your pay step review together with your line manager, completing local documentation as part of the pay step submission process.
- ✓ Seek support at any stage of the appraisal process if needed.
- ✓ Contact a more senior manager or HR department and your trade union representative if you are not receiving the support you need from your line manager.

Preparing for appraisal

You might want to think about the following areas before your appraisal to ensure it is meaningful and effective:

- ✓ What have you done well or been proud of in the last year?
- ✓ Have the development or training requirements set out in your original review been met? If not, are steps in place to facilitate this? If not, why not?
- ✓ What progress has been made in meeting the objectives agreed at your earlier review?
- ✓ Do you feel supported to deliver your work and meet your objectives?

- ✓ What could the organisation, your team, or your manager do to support you further?
- ✓ What evidence have you got that you have been meeting your objectives?

Action checklist

- Actively participate in your appraisal and ongoing performance discussions.
- Ensure you attend and actively participate in all of your organisation's statutory and mandatory training.
- Actively participate in appraisal training.
- Familiarise yourself with the required standards for pay progression.
- Be clear about when your pay step date is and be prepared for your pay step review in years when a pay step is due.

Further resources

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