

Panel Chair 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 Registration Assessors 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

Contents

- Panel Chair Role Brief
- Objectives of Partner Performance Appraisal
- Competency Types
- Rating Scale
- Completion of the Form
- What happens next
- Failure to Agree
- Confidentiality
- Other important information
- Questions and Answers

IMPORTANT

Assessment should only be based on the public performance; 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 Chair'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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Panel Chair Role Brief

Purpose of Role

To Chair Fitness to Practise panels (within the parameters of each panel), ensuring they are conducted in accordance with the Health Professions Order 2001 and all other relevant policies and procedures.

Main Responsibilities

- Follow procedures laid down in the Committee rules.
- Act as spokesperson for the Panel.
- Manage the effective running of hearings, by grasping the details of a wide range of material and contributing to objective decision making, by exercising sound judgement.
- Ensure all decisions are reached objectively and are not influenced by public opinion, emotion or external pressure.
- Exercise a casting vote, if such action is necessary.
- Take advice, where necessary, from the Legal Assessor.
- Ensure that all reasoning and complex issues are clearly explained and understood.

Person Specification

- Understands the importance of upholding public interest in all that the HPC undertakes.
- Has participated in a minimum of 6 HPC panels, or equivalent.
- Experience of quasi-judicial proceedings in equivalent situations.
- Demonstrable experience of contributing to and encouraging open and proactive accountability to the public and professions.
- Gravitas to command public confidence and that of employers, training institutions, health professionals and other key stakeholders.
- Effective time management skills.
- Evidence of strategic thinking.
- Ability to analyse and evaluate complex information in order to form opinions and make decisions that are based on fact.
- Ability to work as part of a Committee, working collaboratively and co-operatively, establishing and maintaining effective working relationships.
- Highly developed communication skills.
- Ability to devote commitment and energy to support the Council in all its work.
- Willingness to undertake any training, assessments or performance review as required.

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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 Chair and a Visitor they will receive 2 separate appraisals). To ensure consistency, no Partner will be assessed for a role until they have carried out their duties in that role at least twice.

Competencies

All Panel Chairs will be evaluated on the same criteria, set out as 'Competency Types'. These competencies are derived from the Panel Chair 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 Chairs 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
- Chairing skills

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 marking for each question. If you feel that you cannot provide a marking on 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 Chair meets the requirements for 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

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why they think this is appropriate, providing examples of how/why the performance exceeds/does not meet the required standards.

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 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 the Panel Chair. 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 Chairs will be informed of the 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 Chair at this hearing.

The first section is for you to assess your own performance; the second and third will give the Panel Members an opportunity to assess your performance. The fourth will be completed by the Legal Assessor. Once the form has been completed, please return it to the HPC Executive present at the hearing.

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 to 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.*

What Happens Next

A copy of the appraisal will be sent to each 'appraisee' for their records. The original paperwork will be kept on the Partners file, in the Human Resource Department.

Those who are consistently awarded a score of above 3 by their fellow Colleagues 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

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could be improved and the time-frame for this 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 NOT be used punitively. 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 them in improving their performance, 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, they may submit their concerns in writing to the Partner Manager, who will ensure the Partner's 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 their 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 they participate in 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 individual's name or personal details will be divulged or discussed.

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Other Important Information

All participants must guard against unfair discrimination on any grounds (including sexual orientation, religion or believe, race, sex or disability). Colleagues 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 Partner's performance. The HPC has a formal Partner Complaints procedure which 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 Chairs will be appraised and evaluated on the same criteria.

Q When will this take place?

If you have done 2 or more assessments you will receive an annual appraisal. You will be given approximately 1 months notice of the date.

Q Who will the appraiser be?

You will assess your own performance. The Panel Members and Legal Assessor present at the hearing will also assess 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 colleague on his/her ability to perform the role. This is an objective process and is not based on personal attributes or past performance.

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, this should be directed to that Employee's Line Manager. HPC's Fitness to Practise team report directly to Kelly Johnson. If you would like to speak to 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 records, together with the Performance Appraisal form, to record your concerns.

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 Registrations Committee. All requests for such an appeal should be made, in writing, to the Partner Manager.

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