

WALES BRIEFING

The professional development review is the new performance management. Take control of it now!

Performance management is changing.

It is vital that you get control of those changes to manage your workload.

This briefing will tell you what is changing and what you can do to manage that change.

Performance management is based upon the Appraisal Regulations 2011. It is important to note that these are not changing and that they take precedence over any change made in your school. They can be found here:

[The School Teacher Appraisal \(Wales\) Regulations 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

However, the Welsh Government has introduced new guidance which replaces the performance management 2012 guidance document. This briefing does not go into the detail of the new process and members are advised to read the guidance carefully. This can be found here:

[Professional development review - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

This new guidance reinterprets performance management and calls it the professional development review (PDR). The PDR is meant to be supportive, but it has the potential to be extremely workload intensive. This briefing shows you what you can do to manage this change to control your workload. However, this needs to be looked at urgently because the PDR is available now and may have already been introduced into your school or on the way soon.

It is important to note the following workload safeguards that are in the PDR:

- The school must plan to provide the time and space required to be an effective learning organisation.
- PDR should support practitioner wellbeing.
- One value of the PDR is 'agency'. This is defined as 'having the time and space to engage with, reflect on and map out your own professional learning journey to meet the needs of learners, within a supportive culture and environment'.
- Practitioners are not expected to provide evidence against every descriptor of the professional standards.
- Every school must have a PDR policy and all practitioners (except unattached teachers) at the school must be consulted.
- In consultation, the role of the recognised trade unions should be fully respected.

- Time must be allocated during directed time, as part of the school calendar, for PDR meetings to take place. These meetings must not take place at lunch/break times or during planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.
- The practitioner and the PDR partner (the new name for the team leader) are expected to agree development priorities. However, if they don't, the PDR partner has the power to impose them. If teachers and members have priorities imposed on them, they can comment upon these in writing if they disagree with them.
- The development priorities must take account of the practitioner's professional aspirations.
- To support the PDR plan, practitioners should have access to appropriate professional learning opportunities via Hwb and at a school level, along with the time to work towards their development priorities.
- In-school professional support should be available for all practitioners.
- The school will provide opportunities for collaborative working.
- There is a statutory requirement for the PDR partner to observe the practitioner at least once during the review cycle. Rather than focussing on the number of observations, the practitioners and PDR partners are encouraged to give careful thought to the purpose, nature and desired outcome of the observations to ensure that they are constructive. Schools are expected to create the conditions whereby observation and other activities are seen as a valuable opportunity for professional development, continuous improvement and mutual support.

The workload threat of the PDR

Left uncontrolled, the PDR has the potential to be a workload nightmare for teachers in schools where teacher workload and wellbeing are not taken seriously. This is because:

- The PDR partner can impose development priorities.
- There is a danger of practitioners agreeing to (or having imposed upon them) over-ambitious PDR plans which can create progress points throughout the year – which could create excessive work to attain.
- The PDR specifically makes mention of drop-ins, learning walks and book looks which are stressful and workload intensive – giving the potential for bullying and excessive monitoring activities.

How to deal with the PDR workload threat

Members can respond to the PDR threats in the following ways:

- It is required in the guidance and absolutely essential that NASUWT is involved in the creation of the school's PDR policy. If your school does not have a NASUWT Rep, members should contact their Negotiating Secretary or the Wales Centre (**rc-wales-cymru@mail.nasuwt.org.uk**). The PDR policy should ensure that the values and principles of PDR are adhered to so that teachers are given the time and space to develop as practitioners. The Welsh Government and NASUWT want to see a supportive professional development process. It must not be twisted into a workload-intensive accountability tool. The potential to control this is at the beginning when the policy is being written.

- Members should seek to ensure that the PDR plan is reasonable and that the way it is monitored is appropriate to the development priorities. Not all development priorities require lesson observations, learning walks etc. This needs to be set out at the planning meeting with the PDR partner. It should be noted that the Appraisal Regulations state that only one lesson observation is required. NASUWT's advice is that there should be no more than three observations in the academic year.
- Members should ensure that they are given the time and space to achieve the PDR and that their break, lunchtime and PPA time are not used for this purpose. There has to be allocated time that should be written into the school calendar. This must not be an ad hoc arrangement, such as staying behind after school at the behest of the PDR partner.
- Teachers are entitled to support for the PDR. This can be internal, but if that is not available, then the headteacher has the responsibility to source that support outside the school.
- Collaborative working must be supported, and teachers should be given opportunities to discuss their progress in a 'safe place'. Members should ensure that this support is available to them.

The Welsh Government wants the PDR to be a supportive and developmental tool for teachers in Wales. However, they have not dealt with the potential within the Appraisal Regulations for bad practice of excessive monitoring and accountability which exists in many schools in Wales. The PDR guidance requires schools to adopt a social partnership approach when adopting a new policy. This is an opportunity that must not be missed and should enable members to deal with the excessive workload drivers of the present performance management process.

NASUWT advises all members to grab this opportunity.

Make sure your school's PDR policy is teacher-friendly.

Your school is required to consult with you over the PDR policy.

NASUWT will support members collectively in any school where members suffer adverse workload pressures as a result of the PDR.

Telephone: **029 2054 6080** Email: **rc-wales-cymru@mail.nasuwt.org.uk** **www.nasuwt.org.uk**