

# Appraisal Matters

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## Welcome

A huge welcome to everyone who has committed themselves to being part of our growth as an independent appraisal service. Thank you for your kindness while we have worked through a steep learning curve. After 15 years as part of Health Education England and the Wessex Deanery, we are delighted to be able to continue to offer outstanding appraisals as Wessex Appraisal Service Ltd. We couldn't do that without you.

## Our appraisers are amazing

Reading your appraiser profiles and understanding more about all the wonderful things that you do outside appraisal makes me very excited about the new Wessex Appraisal Service. You are outstanding appraisers, pre-selected for your great feedback and the quality of your appraisal outputs. I am not exaggerating when I advertise how exceptional you are.

## Appraiser Support Unit

Sometimes we all need personal as well as professional support. When there is a personal or family crisis - such as bereavement or ill health - it can be most helpful to have a listening ear from someone outside your closest circle.

If you feel you would like support, advice or guidance and/or just need someone to listen to you in confidence, who better than an appraiser? Don't struggle alone - please contact Susi privately. Wessex Appraisal Service will maintain an Appraiser Support Unit (ASU) based on the previous Appraiser Professional Support Unit (APSU).

You will also continue to find other resources on [our website](https://www.wessexappraisal.org).



## Check you have everything you need from us

### All systems go

Hurrah! After some false starts, with challenges around setting up a bank account, getting the right insurance in place and ensuring everyone has an appropriate contract, the Wessex Appraisal Service is now up and running. We have nine commissioning bodies, in addition to the independent doctors, and the first few appraisals have already taken place.

### Terms of Engagement

Please check that you have filed a copy of your signed Terms of Engagement somewhere safe, and that you are happy with your appraiser profile and photo. If you realise that you have not yet provided yours, please do so as soon as possible. Your doctors deserve to know a little about you and to be reassured that the person on screen is actually their appraiser.

### Notifications

You should now have received your annual notification e-mail with the due months for all of the appraisees that have been allocated to you for 2022-23 to date. Most of you do not yet have the full 8 appraisals that we hope to allocate because the independent doctors are not yet on contract or allocated. If there is someone that you were expecting to appraise again and you have not yet been together for three appraisals, then please let Emma know on [emma.pierce@wessexappraisal.org](mailto:emma.pierce@wessexappraisal.org).

### Appraisee contact details

You will only have the contact details for your appraisees to the end of August because the former system was only set up to provide them up to four months in advance. We plan to change this so that you know the contact details for all your appraisees as soon as the annual allocation is made.

If something comes up during the year and an appraisal match has to be altered for any reason, we think knowing the details will work better for everyone.

## Good news for appraisal beyond the pandemic

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges' Professional Development Committee (APDC) has agreed a final updated version of the Medical Appraisal Guide to use going forwards. We are expecting publication by the end of May. The agreed MAG builds on the successes of Appraisal 2020, but no longer focuses on the pandemic – instead asking what the impact of the period since the last appraisal has been. We have learned from what was most valued by doctors – a return to a more formative and developmental discussion. There are fewer documentary requirements because the value of verbal reflection facilitated by the appraiser is recognised. Appraisal still provides an important opportunity to discuss maintaining the health and wellbeing essential to practising safely and effectively.

## Working towards net zero

Please let us know if you travel to an appraisal so we can factor that into our carbon offset (unless you already offset your own travel).

Remote videoconferencing is now our default preference for appraisal meetings. They are good for the planet and pose the least infection risk to both parties, as well as saving travel time and cost.

In the pandemic we learned how valuable remote appraisals can be - some doctors feel able to say things they could not have said if the appraiser had been in the room. Of course, some doctors still prefer to meet in person.

### What our commissioners say...

For Gibraltar, and Guernsey off-island appraisers, you should not be offering in person appraisals unless the responsible officer asks for one specifically, when a travel and expenses allowance will be agreed in advance. For Jersey off-island appraisers, each doctor has been given the choice of remote or in person appraisal. If you have to travel to Jersey, you will be paid a flat rate expenses allowance, but we will need to know in advance to be able to charge it to the doctor.

For Guernsey and Jersey on-island appraisers, the smaller mainland designated bodies, and independent doctor commissions, the location and mode of the appraisal should be the doctor's choice, as long as what they suggest is professional and safe enough to meet your needs. Within a 45min each way travelling time, no expenses are payable. Travelling further should be avoided by appropriate allocations. Please let us know if you have any questions about what is appropriate.

## Get outside and get creative



We would like to celebrate the creativity and flair of our appraisers by including your seasonal photos and offerings in our newsletters and on the website. Please send us pictures, cartoons, inspirational quotations. There will be a small prize for every contribution that we use.

## Remote video-conferencing

Principle: We trust you to make wise decisions, and our commissioners have not made any stipulations, so please choose whatever tool suits you and the appraisee best.

**Zoom** - some people have had difficulties with the limit for free Zoom meetings being re-introduced and meetings getting cut off at 40minutes.

**Microsoft Teams** - this is the NHS England preferred option but none of our commissions are with NHSEI.

**Google Meets** - we will be using this for the company meetings, so you may wish to try it.

**WhatsApp**. - I have used this with a doctor when the Teams meeting crashed for an unknown reason.

## Business premises insurance

You should not offer an appraiser a home setting for an in-person appraisal unless you have a professional home office or meeting room, and business premises insurance in place.



## An opportunity to gain an appraisal qualification

64 appraisers in Wessex gained the Postgraduate Certificate in Medical Education - PGCME - (Appraisal) from the University of Winchester while we were in Health Education England. If you missed out, I am delighted to be able to offer you the opportunity to take on this challenge with all tuition fees paid.

The course comprises a mixture of in person and remote taught sessions (five half days across the year) and four assignments:

- 2 x 1000 word case studies,
- 1 x 2000 word assignment,
- 1 x 10 minute presentation,
- 1 x 4000 word assignment.

Click here for [Programme Summary](#). >

In person sessions will be held at the University of Winchester.

Session 13:30-17:00	September Cohort	January Cohort
In person	16 <sup>th</sup> Sept 22	27 <sup>th</sup> Jan 23
Remote	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 22	17 <sup>th</sup> Mar 23
Remote	20 <sup>th</sup> Jan 23	19 <sup>th</sup> May 23
Remote	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar 23	30 <sup>th</sup> Jun 23
In person	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr 23	8 <sup>th</sup> Sept 23

Do think about the benefits of gaining this qualification. It is obviously not easy, but it is great fun and stretches you. I will be one of the team teaching the programme and would love to see you there.

There's limited availability, so apply now.

## Answering your questions

*Does my doctor have to pay for FourteenFish?*

No. The commissioners (through us) are paying for the FourteenFish portfolio and patient and colleague surveys. Everyone should switch for free from whatever they currently use using [FourteenFish-Switch](#).

Although most doctors should do this immediately, Guernsey doctors only need to do it by 1st Jan 2023 when their contract with Clarity runs out. (I still recommend to mine that they think about switching now).

*How do I invoice?*

We will pay you monthly, without invoice on receipt of completed documentation. >

*How will I find out more about the regions and designated bodies I am appraising for?*

We will be producing some briefing notes about Gibraltar, the Channel Islands and the smaller designated bodies so that you have some background information when appraising those doctors. Remember appraisal is a generic skill and the doctor in front of you is the expert on what they do, and you will find that the differences are interesting and easy to deal with.

*Contact details for the responsible officers?*

We are currently creating a place on the website so that the contact details are accessible and up to date.

*An Oak tree is a daily reminder that great things often have small beginnings.  
Matshona Dhliwayo*

## CPD and communications strategy

Despite having almost 60 appraisers, we are going to start with a single appraiser support group. This is a new idea, tailored to how experienced you all are and the new comfort with working remotely which makes a larger group feasible.



### WhatsApp

We want to make it as easy as possible to get quick answers to quick queries - so Emma has set up a WhatsApp group for all Wessex Appraisal Service appraisers, including those from Jersey and Guernsey. The aim is to use this to communicate when the subject matter is not particularly confidential, and the wisdom of the group is needed.

## Appraiser support meetings

We will have short (up to 1 hour maximum) drop-in virtual lunch time meetings (1-2pm) approximately monthly that cycle round the days of the week so that no-one should be excluded from attending the minimum requirement of one appraiser support meeting for calibration (or two if you do not appraise elsewhere and attend other CPD). You will not need to send acceptance or apologies in advance. We suggest you pencil the invitation in your diary and come if you can, especially if you have a hot topic arising from a recent appraisal that you wish to discuss in this more confidential environment.

## Appraiser support meeting dates, times and links

Wednesday	8 <sup>th</sup> June	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/dtq-kqky-htp">meet.google.com/dtq-kqky-htp</a>
Thursday	7 <sup>th</sup> July	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/bty-fxtw-gxb">meet.google.com/bty-fxtw-gxb</a>
Friday	8-9 <sup>th</sup> September	tbc	Annual Conference
Monday	10 <sup>th</sup> October	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/anr-jcwa-sdt">meet.google.com/anr-jcwa-sdt</a>
Tuesday	8 <sup>th</sup> November	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/gox-tuza-jqw">meet.google.com/gox-tuza-jqw</a>
Wednesday	11 <sup>th</sup> January	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/fgw-jrxa-iqc">meet.google.com/fgw-jrxa-iqc</a>
Thursday	9 <sup>th</sup> February	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/rzz-isnw-wws">meet.google.com/rzz-isnw-wws</a>
Friday	10 <sup>th</sup> March	1-2pm	<a href="https://meet.google.com/ubr-gdow-wpj">meet.google.com/ubr-gdow-wpj</a>

## Annual Conference

We need to hear from you

Do you want an in person Annual Conference this year with skills development and networking at the heart of the programme?

If enough people do, we propose to choose a venue that allows those that wish to stay overnight to come and socialise on the evening of the 8<sup>th</sup> September, with the conference on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September. Please complete the [survey](#) and save the date.



[www.careysmanor.com](http://www.careysmanor.com)

## Teething problems – our apologies

I know some of you have had some initial difficulties in getting prompt answers to your queries. I am sure that this will improve now that we have up to date contact details. Please let us know if you have any outstanding questions.



## Postponing the appraisal month

It has taken us some time to set up everything for the new company. We do know that the recent appraisal notifications may not give you sufficient notice to set up your initial appraisals in their due month, but please do your best to get them done as soon as possible. Remind your appraisees that next year their appraisal month will revert back to normal and design the PDP accordingly.

There is no documentation needed for a short postponement into the next appraisal month – but if your doctor is on sick leave or parental leave and likely to need a significant shift in their appraisal month, then please do tell us about it as soon as you can.

## Looking at the spread of your appraisals

We have worked hard to try to create a reasonable spread of appraisals over the year, but two of the bigger commissioners have significant bunching in the Autumn, especially November, and we do not know what else you may be committed to doing for other appraisal contracts. If you do not have the capacity to do what we have proposed – let us know as soon as you can so that we can reallocate in good time.

## Looking at the number of appraisals you have been allocated

We asked you all to commit to undertaking eight appraisals to justify the CPD and QA time involved in appraising for us. Given that we plan to grow, we decided to engage everyone who wished to transition with us, plus a few other outstanding appraisers whom we knew well, so you will probably not have eight appraisals yet. I am sure there will be new opportunities if you would like to do more.

Thank you for helping us continue to make appraisals matter,

 Wessex Appraisal Service Ltd Team 

Contact us

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Linked In [Wessex Appraisal Service](#)

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