NI GUARDIAN AD LITEM AGENCY

PERSONAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SCHEME
INCORPORATING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FRAMEWORK

Background

The scheme balances the corporate need to ensure that all staff within the Agency are managed in accordance with corporate and social care governance criteria with the necessary autonomy given to managers, employed guardians ad litem and administration staff for decision making for which they are personally accountable.

It is an appraisal scheme which

- can with some flexibility be applied to all staff.
- with flexible use takes account of the professional independence of GALs
- ensures the Continuing Professional Development requirements for a range of professional groups are met.
- is based around a number of ‘factors’ which
  - are key to business success
  - can be applied meaningfully at all levels and in all staff groups
  - relate directly to corporate objectives
- is captured on a short appraisal form which is easy for both appraiser and appraisee to use.
- is intended to augment and not replace the professional development systems set out by the NI Social Care Council and Departmental/Agency requirements
- incorporates KSF and the gateway review processes

This appraisal scheme does not apply to self employed contracted Guardians ad Litem.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the scheme is to focus staff on the need for NIGALA to achieve its organisational objectives. An additional purpose is to enable open discussion about performance between individual staff members and line managers and to agree what needs to be done by individuals and by the organisation to help them develop and improve performance.
Factors

Most of the following factors are considered to be common to the performance of all staff although departmental fine tuning is possible to reflect the distinct roles of guardians, managers and administrative staff. In total not many more than 8 objectives should be prioritised for inclusion in the scheme although it is recognised that many staff will be required to undertake many more job tasks than this.

1. Quality

- For Guardians:
  i. The quality of reports provided to the courts.
  ii. The constructive engagement in process of professional assurance established within NIGALA which will not impinge on the professional independence of GALs
  iii. The use of support mechanisms which facilitate guardians and the organisation’s performance
  iv. Case File assurance audit report
  v. Case records quality audit report

2. Measureable Performance indicators

Performance can be assessed over a number of indicators for example

For Guardians

- Number of Live cases to be in accordance with organisational average key performance indicators
- The preparation and submission of reports arising from final hearing and recording of final hearing on the Guardian Case Information System (GCIS) within 3 working days
- Return of case files within the 90 day limit – case files unreturned report
- Solicitor usage monitoring
- Attendance records – staff meetings, PD groups, task groups
- Children’s feedback monitoring
- Case profile report for last 12 month period (comparison with previous 12 month period)
- Submission of Reports for typing/formatting in a timely fashion (2 days before court deadline) to administration staff
3. Professional Support and peer review

- This can be assessed over a number of sub factors for example

- Participation in the support measures provided to all managers, guardians and administrative staff (SMT meetings, SCG, Risk and Board meetings, Professional Staff meetings, Administration Staff Meeting, NIGALA Task groups).

- Evidence of participation in peer centred reflective consideration of the work of guardians which could manifest itself within NIGALA’s personal development groups and/or feedback from gals on a particular training area/topic possibly linked to further education or research which has been completed

- Participation in organisational learning activities (e.g. T&D report from John to support appraisal)
  i. Mandatory training to include
     1. Corporate governance; health and safety; information Governance, Equality, Fraud awareness, risk management, Adverse Incidents
  ii. Non mandatory training to include
     1. professional guardian ad litem in-house training
     2. external course/conference attendance
     3. Internal workshops, seminars and group learning
     4. Annual NIGALA training and development awaydays

4. Management / supervision\(^1\) e.g.
   This can be assessed over a number of sub factors for example

   (For non Managers) Teamwork or collaborative working
   a. a measure of how effective the person functions in their work environment, work team or working collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams

5. Professional relationships

- This can be assessed over a number of sub factors for example

- Assessment of the positive nature of relationships with
  i. NICTS
  ii. NIGALA management
  iii. DHSSP Representatives
      Other Agency Representatives
  iv. Children
  v. Trusts and other experts
  vi. No evidence of unnecessary conflict
6. **Professional / Personal development (will be further developed to ensure effective link to KSF)** e.g.

- This can be assessed over a number of sub factors for example
  - maintenance of professional registration where this is a requirement of the job
  - advancement towards professional qualification for those being supported in this process by NIGALA
  - achievement of targeted skills levels where this is supported by NIGALA
  - Demonstration of relevant competences set out in the Knowledge and Skills Framework
  - Management of CPD record by each member of staff

**The generic description of these factors should not prevent the interpretation of the objectives set out for each individual directorate to meet the various factors**

**Appraisal Process**

The centre point of the process is an annual appraisal meeting between each individual (the appraisee) and their immediate line manager (the appraiser). This will contribute towards but not fully replace the normal supervision process. If conducted properly confidence in performance will develop and should see a reduction in the number of files which need to be reviewed as part of the current process. The continuous nature of the appraisal process will mitigate the current need to read large volumes of files on a periodic basis for appraisal as there will be more regular discussion and feedback for staff. The process should also incorporate a degree of reflective discussion about performance with line managers.

Prior to the meeting each should prepare to ensure an effective meeting as follows:

- the appraiser should
  - Set the individuals performance objectives taking into account the KSF outline for their role
    - review the individual’s performance in relation to the objectives set and the knowledge and skills framework within the last review period
    - consider appropriate objectives for the incoming year in association with the KSF job outline
- the appraisee should
  - Constructively review their own performance in relation to the objectives set within the most recent review period and consider how this has been achieved by using GCIS or for administrative staff their Personal Performance Plan.
Consider what development in the incoming year may be of help in improving performance.

Consider the support that may be required to enable performance against objectives set.

Consider how their experiences can contribute to peer development and review.

The conclusion of the first meeting should result in a series of agreed objectives and a Personal Development Plan, whilst the final meeting should result in an overall indication to the employee that (s)he has performed as follows:

- meets all objectives and exceeds in some
- substantial achievement of all objectives
- achievement of most objectives and showing good progress in the course of the year
- failed to meet many of the objectives and did not show improvement in the course of the year effectively

**Documentation**

The appraisal forms have been kept as simple as possible but can be supported by supplementary pages where necessary although the paperwork should not be allowed to develop to a point where it becomes unhelpful. The first form captures the individuals objectives which are in line with the corporate objectives for NIGALA. It has the following components:

- column one indicates the factor being assessed
- column two sets out the objectives agreed at the beginning of each year in relation to each factor. There may be more than one objective for each factor but, in the interests of focusing on priorities, there should be no more than three in any one factor heading. Objectives should be measureable if possible. If direct quantitative measures are not easily available, the next best option is the use of indirect quantitative measures. Qualitative indicators of performance may be used to support quantitative measures
- column three states as factually as possible the achievement of each appraisee against the objectives agreed at the outset of the year. This can be used for quarterly or midyear reviews. This column is completed by the appraisee prior to their appraisal meeting
- column five provides the opportunity for the appraiser to comment on the outturn for the year in relation to each factor

The second form links the knowledge and skills framework job outline to the overall assessment of individual performance.

**Overall Assessment**

The overall level of achievement for each employee will be based on four ratings
meets all objectives and exceeds in some
- substantial achievement of all objectives
- achievement of most objectives and showing good progress in the course of the year
- failed to meet many of the objectives and did not show improvement in the course of the year.

The form should be signed by both the appraiser and appraisee. There is space for the appraisee to make additional comment although additional pages can be attached. This should be used to note any particular circumstances which may have contributed to underperformance in the course of the year. If the appraisee has unresolved concerns about the appraisal, they may also use this section of the form to ask for the matter to be considered by a more senior manager.

It is envisaged that current management structures will be the platform upon which appraisers and appraisee will be allocated.

**ASSESSMENT FOR PROGRESSION THROUGH THE PAY POINTS AND GATEWAYS**

This scheme will also enable NIGALA to make informed decisions in respect of pay progression in accordance with the AFC agreement. In accordance with the terms and conditions of service pay progression takes the form of an annual increase in pay from one point within a pay band to the next as there is a normal expectation of progression. At defined points in a band – known as “gateways“ – decisions are made about pay progression as well as development.

There are 2 Gateways in every pay band:
- The Foundation Gateway – which takes place no later than the first twelve months in post regardless of the pay point to which the individual is appointed
- The Second Gateway – this is set at a fixed point towards the top of a pay band as set out in the Agenda for Change National Agreement.

The purpose of the Foundation Gateway is to ensure that individuals can meet the basic demands of the post as detailed in the KSF Post Outline. The Foundation Gateway (subset of the full KSF Outline for the post) is based on a selection of the elements of the full KSF Outline for the post.

The purpose of the Second Gateway is to check the individuals are applying their knowledge and skills to consistently meet the full demands of their post, as set out in the KSF Outline for the post.

Where the appraisee has provided sufficient examples/evidence of applying their knowledge and skills to the post and is fully meeting or exceeding all of the competencies as described in the full KSF outline.

**Appraisal Training**
It is important that all supervisory and management staff are trained in running successful one to one appraisal meetings. The quality of the appraisal will be directly reflected in the outcome which it produces. A good appraisal meeting will result in the appraisee being motivated to do better even if their result for the year was below what might have been expected. It is of fundamental importance to the appraisal that issues of underperformance can be raised and discussed between the appraiser and appraisee in a manner which is not confrontational and points towards development. This requires skill on the part of both appraisers and appraisees, particularly in giving and receiving difficult feedback, and those responsible will need to be equipped with appropriate training.

**Review**

The effectiveness of the appraisal process set out above will be monitored on a six monthly basis and adjusted as required following consultation with users.
Objectives should be explained to employees as to how they relate to overall NIGALA Corporate Objectives and their contribution to the achievement of the Business Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Appraisal Year:</th>
<th>Job Title:</th>
<th>Grade:</th>
<th>Directorate:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Objectives Set at Outset of the year</th>
<th>Achievement at Year End (completed by appraisee)</th>
<th>Appraiser Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Professional and Quantitative measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professional Support and Peer Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Management / Supervision. Teamworking / collaborative working (for appraisal of those who do not have management / supervisory responsibilities)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Professional relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Personal / Professional Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each objective is assessed as achieved, partially achieved or not achieved. I have discussed the content of this appraisal with the employee who has agreed to its content.

Appraiser: ____________________
Signature: ____________________ and Comment: ____________________
### SIMPLIFIED KSF LEVELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BANDS 7 &amp; 8</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 1 COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 2 PERSONAL AND PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 3 HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 4 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 5 QUALITY</th>
<th>CORE DIMENSION 6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAND 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND 5</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND 6</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANDS 8A &amp; 8B</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANDS 8C &amp; 8D</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
<td>LEVEL 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The link to the level descriptors should be included to enable the appraiser to cross reference the required level/evidence with objectives*