Southern Health and Social Care Trust

TOGETHER, IMPROVING CARE, TRANSFORMING LIVES

Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Screening Template

*****Completed Screening Templates are public documents and will be posted on the Trust's website*****

See 'Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Guidance Notes' (on SharePoint) for further background information on the relevant legislation and for help in answering the questions on this template.

(1) Information about the Policy/Proposal

(1.1) Name of the policy/proposal

Appraisal Policy

(1.2) Is this a new, existing or revised policy/proposal?

This is a revised policy and supersedes the Appraisal Policy (July 2024).

(1.3) What is it trying to achieve (intended aims/outcomes)?

The Appraisal Policy describes the key principles and process of appraisal within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Trust has a clear, consistent and fair approach to appraisal.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all employees, including both appraisee and appraiser, are aware of the expectations of the Trust in relation to the appraisal process and that they have access to an Appraisal Conversation with their line manager, which is relevant and timely to support them in their role.

The Trust, through this policy, ensures that employees have a strong and effective appraisal that has a very positive effect on the individual's performance, their development and that of the organisation and can therefore contribute greatly to the improvement and development of the services the Trust provides for its patients and clients.

(1.4) Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy/proposal?

This Policy is applicable to all employees (excluding doctors, physician assistants and dental employees for which there are separate arrangements for appraisal).

The Appraisal Policy sets out the Trust's commitment to ensuring employees have a high

quality, supportive and consistent annual appraisal to maximise the effectiveness and potential of each individual employee in order to support the delivery of safe, high quality, compassionate care.

As described within the Appraisal Policy, the annual appraisal within the Trust is referred to as an 'Appraisal Conversation'.

The Appraisal Conversation is designed to be person-centred; the first part of the conversation focuses on health and wellbeing; offering individual's protected time, in a safe space, to reflect on their health and wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional, social, safety etc.) and to communicate any support they feel they may need from their manager/manager can help them to access. To this end, all section 75 categories have the potential to benefit from the Trust's Appraisal Policy.

(1.5) Who owns and who implements the policy/proposal - where does it originate, for example DHSSPS, HSCB, the Trust?

This is a Trust-wide policy. The Human Resources & Organisational Development Directorate is responsible for the policy.

(1.6) Are there any factors that could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/proposal/decision? (Financial, legislative or other constraints?)

The Appraisal Policy states the Trust's commitment to ensuring employees have a high quality, supportive and consistent annual appraisal to maximise the effectiveness and potential of each individual in order to support the delivery of safe, high quality, compassionate care. However, we recognise that in order to do this, our managers will require the necessary training, skills and information to carry out an Appraisal Conversation. The HROD directorate is responsible for providing advice, support and training and ensure that managers and employees are provided with appropriate paperwork and systems to undertake and record the appraisal process.

As part of their responsibilities and with the support of senior management, Line Managers / Supervisors should ensure that each relevant member of their team has an Appraisal Conversation at least once every 12 months. HROD will provide regular appraisal compliance reports at Trust and Directorate level.

(1.7) **Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy/proposal/decision could impact upon? (staff, service users, other public sector organisations, trade unions, professional bodies, independent sector, voluntary and community groups etc)**

Internal - Employees, Management, Trade Unions, HR, Occupational Health

External - The appraisal process supports professional registration / revalidation in some professions.

This list is not exhaustive.

This policy applies to all employees of the Trust covered by NHS Agenda for Change Terms & Conditions, those on a fixed term contract and long-term agency workers (6 months and over). This policy excludes doctors, physician assistants and dental employees for which there are separate arrangements for appraisal.

Trade Unions have been consulted on the Appraisal Policy.

(1.8) Other policies with a bearing on this policy/proposal (for example regional policies) - what are they and who owns them?

SHSCT:

The following Trust-wide policies/guidance notes/documents have a bearing on the Appraisal Policy:

- Trust Vision & Strategy 2030
- Our People Framework
- Workplace Health and Wellbeing Framework
- Corporate Mandatory Training Policy
- Induction Policy
- Management Guidance Note: Management of Probationary Periods
- Appraisal Conversation: Guidance Notes for Appraisee (Staff)
- Appraisal Conversation: Guidance Notes for Appraiser (Manager)
- Appraisal Conversation: Guidance Notes for Group Appraisal Conversations
- Appraisal Conversation: Guidance Note – How to Record Appraisal Conversation on LearnHSCNI

This list is not exhaustive.

(2) Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

2.1 Staff Affected by this Policy/Proposal / 2.2 Composition of Southern Trust Workforce

The Appraisal Policy applies to all employees of the Trust covered by NHS Agenda for Change Terms & Conditions, those on a fixed term contract and long-term agency staff (6 months and over). The policy excludes medical and dental staff for which there are separate arrangements for appraisal.

The Trust is not aware of evidence that the revised Appraisal Policy would have a differential impact on any Section 75 groups.

Section 75 Group	Make up of Staff Affected January 2026	Percentage
Gender	Female	85.4%
	Male	14.6%
Religion	Protestant	33.9%
	Roman Catholic	55.9%
	Neither	10.2%
Political Opinion	Broadly Unionist	8.9%
	Broadly Nationalist	9.9%
	Other	7.2%
	Do Not Wish To Answer/Not Known	74%
Age	16-24	6.6%
	25-34	22.7%
	35-44	28%
	45-54	21.1%
	55-64	17.5%
	65+	4.1%
Marital Status	Single	32.1%
	Married/Civil Partnership	55.9%
	Other/Not Known	12%
Dependant Status	Caring for a Child/Children/Dependant Older Person/Person(s) With a Disability	13.8%
	None	31.9%
	Not Known	54.3%
Disability	Yes	2.8%
	No	73.3%
	Not Known	23.9%

Ethnicity	Bangladeshi	0.01%
	Black African	0.56%
	Black Caribbean	0.01%
	Black Other	0.03%
	Chinese	0.08%
	Filipino	0.55%
	Indian	1.24%
	Irish Traveller	0.01%
	Pakistani	0.15%
	Mixed Ethnic	0.24%
	White	73.5%
	Not Known	23.62%
Sexual Orientation towards:	Opposite Sex	58.3%
	Same Sex	1.2%
	Same and Opposite Sex	0.3%
	Do Not Wish To Answer/Not Known	40.2%

2.3 Patients / Clients Affected

The Trust is not aware of evidence that the Appraisal Policy would have a differential impact on patients/clients.

2.4 Northern Ireland Health And Social Care Workforce Key Statistics

According to the 2025 Census figures some key stats for the HSC are:

- The HSC workforce grew by 22% (11,944.8 WTE) between the 2016 and 2025 Censuses.
- The largest employer in the HSC was the Belfast Trust with 21,191 (19,038.9 WTE) staff or 28% of all HSC staff.
- The largest Occupational Family was Nursing & Midwifery with 24,887 (22,269.3 WTE) staff or 33% of all HSC staff.
- Over two thirds (34%, 22,402.2 WTE) of WTE HSC staff were employed at Agenda for Change Bands 1 to 4.
- Over three quarters (78% or 58,354 headcount) of HSC employees were female.

(3) Needs, experiences and priorities

(3.1) Taking into account the information above what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the Section 75 categories and for both service users and staff. ***(NB: Use relevant statistical and qualitative data to complete the table below)***

Section 75 Category	*Details of Needs, Experiences and Priorities*	
	Staff	*Service Users*
Gender	Those working part-time (most of which are females with dependants) may experience difficulties attending training courses. Therefore, training will be delivered across a number of different days and times.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Age	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Religion	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Political Opinion	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Marital Status	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Dependent Status	Those working part-time (most of which are females with dependants) may experience difficulties attending training courses. Therefore, training will be delivered across a number of different days and times.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
	Training may need to be tailored to suit needs of staff who have a disability, i.e. accessibility, training style, etc.	
Disability		No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Ethnicity	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.
Sexual Orientation	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.	No evidence of specific needs has been identified.

(3.2) Provide details of how you have involved stakeholders, views of colleagues, service users and staff etc when screening this policy/proposal.

- Trade Union Consultation
- Corporate HROD Team

(4) Screening Questions

You now have to assess whether the impact of the policy/proposal is major, minor or none. You will need to make an informed judgement based on the information you have gathered.

(4.1) What is the likely impact of equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy/proposal, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Section 75 category	*Details of policy/proposal impact*		*Level of impact? Minor/major/none*
	Staff	*Service Users*	
Gender **Age** **Religion** **Political Opinion** **Marital Status** **Dependent Status** **Disability** **Ethnicity** **Sexual Orientation**	from an Equality perspective, the Appraisal Conversation presents an opportunity for relevant staff to have a one-to-one conversation focusing on their health and wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional, social, safety etc.) and to communicate any support they feel they may need from their manager/manager can help them to access. To this end, this is created to be a positive intervention and all section 75 categories have the potential to benefit.	The Trust is not aware of evidence that the introduction of the Appraisal Policy would have a differential impact on patients/clients.	Level of impact for **staff** – from an Equality perspective, the Appraisal Conversation presents an opportunity for relevant staff to have a one-to-one conversation focusing on their health and wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional, social, safety etc.) and to communicate any support they feel they may need from their manager/manager can help them to access. To this end, this is created to be a

			positive intervention and all section 75 categories have the potential to benefit.

(4.2) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories?	
Section 75 category	***Please provide details***
Gender	See considerations at 3.1. Must ensure the policy/associated training is fairly and sensitively applied.
Age	As above
Religion	As above
Political Opinion	As above
Marital Status	As above
Dependent Status	As above
Disability	As above
Ethnicity	As above
Sexual Orientation	As above

(4.3) To what extent is the policy/proposal likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none		
Good relations category	***Details of policy/proposal impact***	***Level of impact Minor/major/none***
Religious belief		See Section 4.1
Political opinion		See Section 4.1
Racial group		See Section 4.1

(4.4) Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?	
Good relations category	***Please provide details***
Religious belief	This Policy will be implemented in partnership with all relevant parties in particular Trade Union Representatives. All critical partners will have a role to play in the implementation of this Policy.
Political opinion	As above
Racial group	As above

(5) Consideration of Disability Duties

(5.1) How does the policy/proposal encourage disabled people to participate in public life and promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

The Policy is intended to reach all AfC staff, those on a fixed term contract and long-term agency staff (6 months and over).

All staff with or without a disability can receive the help, support and guidance that is available.

The policy and related information will be made available in alternative formats –where necessary/on request to ensure employees with a disability can access the policy and associated provisions. Reasonable adjustments will be considered in the out-working of the policy for employees with a disability.

(6) Consideration of Human Rights

The Trust has a duty to act compatibly and must take Human Rights considerations into account in its day-to-day functions/activities.

(6.1) How does the policy/proposal impact on Human Rights?
Complete for each of the articles

Article	Positive impact	Negative impact = human right interfered with or restricted	Neutral impact
Article 2 – Right to life	✓		
Article 3 – Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	✓		
Article 4 – Right to freedom from slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour	✓		
Article 5 – Right to liberty & security of person	✓		
Article 6 – Right to a fair & public trial within a reasonable time			✓
Article 7 – Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law & no punishment without law			✓
Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence.			✓

Article	Positive impact	Negative impact = human right interfered with or restricted	Neutral impact
Article 9 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion	✓		
Article 10 – Right to freedom of expression	✓		
Article 11 – Right to freedom of assembly & association			✓
Article 12 – Right to marry & found a family			✓
Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention rights			✓
1st protocol Article 1 – Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions & protection of property			✓
1st protocol Article 2 – Right of access to education			✓

Please note: If you have identified potential negative impact in relation to any of the Articles in the table above, speak to your line manager and/or Equality Unit on tel: 028 375 64151. It may also be necessary to seek legal advice.

(6.2) Please outline any actions you will take to promote awareness of human rights and evidence that human rights have been taken into consideration in decision making processes.

Ongoing Human Rights Awareness Training and staff completion of 'Making a Difference' – Equality, Good Relations and Human Right e-learning training. Considering human rights aspects as an integral part of the Trust's decision making processes and in this instance policy development, implementation and review

(7) Screening Decision

(7.1) Given the answers in Section 4 of this template, how would you categorise the impacts of this decision or policy/proposal? *(Please tick one option below and list your reasons for the decision in 7.2 below)*

Major impact		**EQIA Required? *(Delete as appropriate)***	
			No

Minor impact		Mitigation Required	Alternative Policy Required
		See table 3.1 needs and experiences	**No**

No impact		**Screened Out**

(7.2) Please give reasons for your decision and detail any mitigation or alternative policies considered.

The Policy will have a minor positive impact and is therefore screened out for an EQIA.

The intended aim of the Policy is to ensure that staff have a strong and effective appraisal that has a very positive effect on the individual's performance, their development and that of the organisation and can therefore contribute greatly to the improvement and development of the services the Trust provides for its patients and clients.

The Appraisal Conversation also presents an opportunity for staff to have a one-to-one conversation focusing on their health and wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional, social, safety etc.) and to communicate any support they feel they may need from their manager/manager can help them to access. To this end, this is created to be a positive intervention and all section 75 categories have the potential to benefit.

The Trust will continue to monitor the uptake of this policy and later identify on-going and new trends

(7.3) Do you consider the policy/proposal needs to be subjected to ongoing screening? NB: for strategies/policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages – screen at various stages during implementation.

Yes	
No	✓

(8) Monitoring

(8.1) Please detail how you will monitor the effect of the policy/proposal for equality of opportunity and good relations, disability duties and human rights?

This Policy will be reviewed in line with the Trust's default position to review polices at least once every 3 years/sooner where it is necessary to do so.

Approved Lead Officer:	Maxine Willliamson
Position:	Deputy HR Director, Workforce and Organisational Development
Email:	Maxine.Williamson@southerntrust.hscni.net
Telephone No:	Tel: 028 3756 4286 Mob: 07795561288
Date:	08/07/26
Policy/proposal screened by:	Lynne Hainey, Senior Organisational Development Practitioner

Please forward completed screening template to Equality.Unit@southerntrust.hscni.net for inclusion in the Trust's Policy Screening Reports which are uploaded to the Trust's website