



**NHS England Medical Appraisal
Policy**

**Annex D: Requesting postponement
of appraisal**

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Description	Policy for appraisal of licensed medical practitioners who have a prescribed connection to NHS England (circa 42,000 doctors from circa 700 designated bodies). It describes the framework for appraisal, with tools to support implementation contained within the annexes.	
Cross Reference	The Medical Profession (Responsible Officers) Regulations, 2010/2013 and the GMC (Licence to Practice and Revalidation) Regulations 2012	
Superseded Docs (if applicable)	Medical Appraisal Policy (v1) published October 2013	
Action Required	Responsible officers to ensure that Doctors with a connection to NHS England are appraised in accordance with this policy	
Timing / Deadlines (if applicable)	To be implemented as soon as reasonably practicable	
Contact Details for further information	Dr Maurice Conlon england.revalidation-pmo@nhs.net http://www.england.nhs.uk/revalidation/appraisers/app-pol/	
Document Status		
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The NHS Commissioning Board (NHS CB) was established on 1 October 2012 as an executive non-departmental public body. Since 1 April 2013, the NHS Commissioning Board has used the name NHS England for operational purposes.

Annex D: Requesting postponement of appraisal

This annex sets out the procedure which NHS England will adopt with regard to an application for a postponement of appraisal of doctors who have a prescribed connection to NHS England.

As described in the main body of this policy, all doctors with a prescribed connection to NHS England are obliged to undergo annual appraisal. This should take place during the doctor's appraisal month (as defined in the main policy document). There are circumstances when a doctor may request that an appraisal is deferred such that no appraisal takes place during one appraisal year (which runs 1 April to March 31), or that the appraisal is postponed to take place later than the last day of their appraisal month.

Doctors may request a postponement of an appraisal due to:

- breaks in practice due to sickness, maternity or adoption leave;
- breaks in practice due to absence abroad or sabbaticals;
- delay of an appraisal beyond the last day of their appraisal month due to unforeseen personal or work related issues.

It may be appropriate to postpone appraisal if a doctor is suspended or excluded from work, but it may also be appropriate to continue with appraisal and the individual circumstances in such situations should be considered on their own merit by the relevant NHS England responsible officer.

This list is not exhaustive and other reasons may also be identified.

A doctor who is seeking to return to practise after a period of absence should discuss their circumstances with their new responsible officer at the earliest opportunity. Guidance is also available from their specialty body. The timing of their first appraisal will be determined to some extent by their individual circumstances, including whether they can demonstrate that they have maintained fitness to practise in the relevant areas during their absence and hence whether a bespoke re-training programme or period of supervision is required prior to resuming practice. In general, the first appraisal should take place between 6 and 12 months after re-entry to professional practice. Where possible and practical, if the doctor had a previously agreed appraisal month this should be reinstated. Also, if the doctor has had an appraisal previously and circumstances permit, their first appraisal should be undertaken within 15 months of the last one.

No doctor will be disadvantaged or unfairly penalised as a result of protected characteristics.

1.1 Process for requesting a postponement

Prior to submitting a formal request for postponement of appraisal, a doctor may choose to seek informal advice from their local clinical lead for appraisal.

A doctor who thinks they may need to postpone their appraisal should complete a formal request and submit this to the relevant responsible officer.

Postponement applications should be submitted at the earliest possible opportunity and in most circumstances no later than 28 days before the last day of the doctor's appraisal month (i.e. the date by which the doctor should normally have notified the agreed date of their appraisal to the appraisal office (See Annex A)).

The NHS England responsible officer or other person with delegated authority will consider postponement requests and applicants will be informed in writing of the decision within seven working days.

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Appraisal postponement application form	
Section A Doctor's details and request for postponement	
Doctor's name:	
GMC number:	
Telephone number(s):	
Mobile:	
Practice:	
Home:	
Email:	
Doctor's appraisal month:	
Date of last appraisal:	
Name of last appraiser:	
Revalidation due date:	
Reason for request for postponement of appraisal:	
Proposed date for next appraisal:	
Date of request:	
Section B Local decision	
Name of person considering request:	
Position:	
Postponement agreed:	Yes No
Comment:	
Agreed new appraisal due date:	
Date of decision:	