



Talking to staff about completing PDR/SSS

This document is intended to provide support and guidance for people who are leading a group of staff in their school through the process of completing a NAPTA review or survey. This document sets out to provide all the information that staff will need before they complete the review/survey.

The document is supported by a PowerPoint presentation (**NAPTA profiling.ppt**). This outlines the key messages that should be given to staff and will address most, if not all, of their concerns. It is not essential to address your staff formally using this presentation; if preferred, it can be used simply as a source of reference.

Key messages to communicate to staff

- 1 Explain what NAPTA is.
- 2 Explain what the *Professional Development Review (PDR)* and *Support Staff Survey (SSS)* are.
- 3 Explain the benefits of completing the review/survey for the individual member of staff.
- 4 Explain how the reports are fed back to staff.
- 5 Explain that this is entirely a self-perception exercise – there is no external assessment.
- 6 Explain who should complete the PDR (ie those who support pupil learning) and who should complete the SSS (ie those who provide infrastructure support).

Practical points to explain to staff

- 1 Explain how the data is collected.
- 2 Explain how to answer the questionnaire.

Notes on the key messages

1 Explain what NAPTA is.

The National Association of Professional Teaching Assistants (NAPTA) is a membership organisation, it is not a union. It does not concern itself with pay and conditions; nor with collective bargaining with employers. It does not offer insurance and it does not have a political agenda. Its interest lies in helping individuals develop as professionals, and in offering practical assistance through a range of products and services, available either free to members, or at a special members' discount.

Individual membership is open to all members of support staff working in schools. Institutional membership is available to schools, colleges and local authorities.

2 Explain what the *Professional Development Review (PDR)* and *Support Staff Survey (SSS)* are.

The PDR and SSS are simple, convenient and non-threatening online systems that allow staff to consider the role that they perform in the school and any other skills that they may have, and to compare these with the relevant set of occupational standards.

This is part of a process of helping staff and schools to think about how staff might develop in their roles and the support that they would require in order to do so.

3 Explain the benefits of completing the review/survey for the individual member of staff.

Each member of staff will receive a detailed individual report (plus a record summarising their capabilities) which sets out the areas of activity that form a regular part of their job and any additional skill sets that they may have. The report can also form the basis for discussion with their line managers and may allow the individual to better demonstrate and articulate areas in which they would benefit from some additional support.

The most common outcome from completing the exercise is very positive, ie a demonstration by the individual of their extensive range of skills, which are required for many of the roles performed by staff in schools.

Every person completing either the PDR or SSS will receive membership of NAPTA free of charge. Further details can be found on NAPTA's Web site (www.napta.org.uk).

4 Explain how the reports are fed back to staff.

The final reports are sent to the school. The school is also provided with a summary of the responses of the staff as a whole. The school will then engage in a process of distributing firstly the records and subsequently the reports, at a time when discussion with staff on any matters arising out of the reports can take place.

The school may use the data and the subsequent discussions to inform their staff development programmes and to provide evidence for the Ofsted self-evaluation forms.

5 Explain that this is entirely a self-perception exercise – there is no external assessment.

Throughout the process, staff will be asked if they are confident with regard to specific skills or pieces of knowledge. The process requires staff to make judgements about themselves. The process is entirely based on how staff feel about themselves – there is no process of external assessment.

Many of the judgements will be about how confident staff would be in things that they aren't currently required to do. Answers will be entirely hypothetical. There is no way in which staff would be able to justify their answers and they will not be required to do so.

The process of undertaking both the PDR and the SSS set out to be positive and constructive. They are intended to be carried out in groups and discussion between colleagues is actively encouraged.

6 Explain who should complete the PDR and who should complete the SSS.

Schools may be undertaking the PDR, SSS or both. Staff should use the system that is most appropriate for them.

PDR (Professional Development Review)

This is intended for staff whose primary role is involved with teaching and learning. Typical job titles will include teaching assistant, learning mentor, classroom assistant, learning support assistant, SEN support and sometimes lunchtime supervisor.



A PDR questionnaire page

SSS (Support Staff Survey)

This is intended for staff whose primary role is to provide infrastructure support in the school. Typical job titles will include caretaker, technician, administrator, receptionist, ICT support, catering staff and lunchtime supervisor.



A SSS questionnaire page

There is a significant minority of staff who perform a number of different roles in the school. In this case, NAPTA recommends that they use the system that relates to the largest part of their role; however, if they wish, they may complete both systems.

Notes on the practical points

1 Explain how the data is collected.

The data is collected using an online questionnaire. Each member of staff is provided with a unique password which they use to log onto the requisite system via the NAPTA Web site (www.napta.org.uk).

Some staff may need assistance in logging onto the site, but the completion of the questionnaire is very simple once people are logged on.

Every member of staff **must** click on the **submit** button once they have finished the questionnaire. If the button does not appear, this indicates that they have not answered all of the questions or they have conflicting answers that must be changed.

2 Explain how to answer the questionnaire.

Both the PDR and the SSS start with the collection of demographic data about the individual. Staff should simply select the most appropriate answer from the choices available. If the answer does not exactly match the correct answer for a member of staff, they should answer with the closest approximation.

The PDR and the SSS then ask staff separately about their confidence in a particular skill or area of knowledge, and about whether or not it forms part of their current role. Where a skill does not form part of their role, they should answer the confidence question according to whether or not they would be confident if they were asked to do it.

When answering the PDR/SSS, it is important to keep the following things in mind:

Be confident

Most of the judgements are about whether or not staff are confident. Far more people undersell themselves when completing the process than oversell themselves. If staff are unsure about any judgements, they should be confident and/or talk to colleagues.

First reaction

The best answer to each question is usually the first reaction. If staff worry about each question, they are more likely to talk themselves out of the best answer than they are to improve their response. This will also significantly increase the amount of time it takes to complete the exercise.