

Responsible Officer and Appraisal Networks Information Sheet 32

TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED APPRAISALS IN NHS ENGLAND (v1.0, July 2019)

Requests to hold technology-assisted appraisals, using internet-based video conferencing, are increasing as the technology becomes more reliable and accessible. Guidance on this is already published in the NHS England Medical Appraisal Logistics Handbook (Topic 8: Technology-assisted appraisal) ([link below](#)). This remains valid, including the need to use a secure method.

The following points are supplementary advice to ensure that Professional Standards Teams in England take an approach consistent with the handbook and each other:

- Face to face appraisal remains the preferred approach to optimise quality of the interaction and develop the most productive professional connection.
- All proposals to use a technology-assisted approach must be agreed in advance by the responsible officer via their team.
- The first appraisal with a new appraiser must be face to face. Any exceptions must be personally approved by the responsible officer.
- Other appraisals may be via technology-assisted means provided the requirements of the logistics handbook are met. However, there must be a clear reason why a technology-assisted appraisal is necessary. The most common is where the doctor is on an agreed short period of working abroad and the technology-assisted appraisal will avoid postponement of their appraisal. Sometimes the reason may be short notice to prevent postponement, for example severe weather, travel disruption or acute health problems. If possible approval from the appraisal office should still be sought in this situation. If the travelling distance is excessive, a technology-assisted appraisal may be more efficient use of time.
- If either the doctor or the responsible officer is not content, the default must be to hold a face to face appraisal. If the appraiser is not comfortable with the technology, it may be appropriate to allocate a new appraiser.
- The pre-appraisal submission must be provided two weeks in advance.
- The appraiser should note in the appraisal summary that a technology-assisted appraisal has been carried out, giving the reason, confirming that it was agreed in advance and that the technology worked on the day.
- The responsible officer's team should monitor the number of these appraisals.
- NHS England responsible officers take the view that appraisal by telephone without video facilities is not acceptable.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/medical-revalidation/ro/ma-handbook/>

This information sheet is relevant primarily to NHS England responsible officers.

These information sheets are written on an ad hoc basis, on issues of relevance to responsible officers and their teams, medical appraisers and doctors.

The latest version of all ROAN Information Sheets is available online via our SharePoint site. Contact england.revalidation-pmo@nhs.net for access.

