

Professional Judgement Matters

ETFO Professional Judgement Guidelines for the Occasional Teacher Evaluation and the Teacher Performance Appraisal

This document applies to the Occasional Teacher Evaluation and the Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) for both new and experienced teachers.

Professional judgement is an important concept for educators. It is now defined in our central agreement. Section C.2.5 of the Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Agreement reads as follows:

“Professional Judgement” shall be defined as judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction.”

As an educator exercising your professional judgement, you should be prepared to provide rationale for the decisions you make. The Occasional Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Performance Appraisal processes are intended to promote teacher development for improved teaching and student learning. Within that objective, the processes are also intended to promote collaboration and professional dialogue between the principal and the teacher. Educator professional judgement is an essential component of that professional dialogue.

Local Collective Agreements may have additional language which further defines the Occasional Teacher Evaluation/Teacher Performance Appraisal process. Teachers should consult their local Collective Agreement and seek clarification from their ETFO local president as necessary.

Occasional Teacher Evaluation

In 2013, the Ministry of Education put in place an evaluation process for occasional teachers related to O. Reg. 274/12. The components of the ministry process include:

- seven performance expectations;
- a set of observable indicators within each performance expectation;
- pre-observation meeting;
- classroom observation (at least one);
- post observation meeting;
- evaluation outcome of satisfactory or unsatisfactory;
- an evaluation template that documents the outcome of the evaluation;
- recommendations for professional growth.

A Provincial Framework and Evaluation Template has been provided and may be used by boards as is or may be adapted by district school boards in collaboration and with the agreement of the local union(s). If an adapted version is used it must meet the core requirements of the ministry criteria.



Professional Judgement Matters

Occasional Teachers in their first LTO of four months (80 days) or more must be evaluated and must demonstrate each of the seven performance expectations

The following are aspects of the Occasional Teacher Evaluation process where there is NOT room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- Occasional Teachers in their first LTO of four months (80 days) or more must be evaluated.
- The evaluation will be conducted by the principal or vice-principal of the school.
- The criteria for evaluation will be the seven performance expectations identified in the provincial framework.
- The Occasional Teacher will attend a pre-observation meeting with the principal to discuss the evaluation process.
- There will be at least one classroom observation.
- The evaluation outcome will be determined by the principal as either “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory”.
- There will be recommendations for professional growth.

The following are aspects of the Occasional Teacher Evaluation process where there IS room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- Occasional Teachers may exercise their professional judgement as to the manner in which they demonstrate each performance expectation. (i.e.) specific practices and strategies used.

Note: The administrator responsible for the Occasional Teacher Evaluation has considerable authority to make this judgement. However, there is a wide range of acceptable practices and means to demonstrate the performance expectations. The Occasional Teacher Evaluation: Provincial Framework and Evaluation Template, 2.1 Performance Expectations explicitly states,

“The observable indicators listed within each performance expectation are possible ways the occasional teacher could demonstrate the expectation; these indicators are not intended to be an exhaustive list and not all need to be demonstrated during the teacher’s LTO assignment. The principal may include other examples of how the expectation was or was not demonstrated in the comments section provided on the OT Evaluation Template.”

- In the event that the principal determines to conduct the pre-observation meeting with a group of Occasional Teachers, each individual Occasional Teacher may request a one-on-one meeting with the principal prior to the classroom observation.
- Occasional Teachers should have input into the scheduling of evaluation meetings.
- The timing and focus of the classroom observation should be determined with input from the Occasional Teacher.
- The Occasional Teacher can determine how to act on the recommendations for professional growth made by the principal.
- The Occasional Teacher may request additional evaluations.

Professional Judgement Matters

Teacher Performance Appraisal (for new and experienced teachers)

The Education Act and Regulations outline the process required for teacher evaluation. The *Teacher Performance Appraisal Technical Requirements Manual – 2010* details the requirements of the process for both new and experienced teachers. New teachers must achieve two satisfactory performance appraisals within the first 24 months of teaching in order to successfully complete the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). Experienced teachers are on a five year evaluation cycle (four years with no evaluation, the fifth year is the evaluation year).

Note: The principal may conduct additional performance appraisals in a “non-evaluation year” if there are serious concerns related to a teacher’s performance.

The components of the TPA process are:

- 16 competencies based on five domains that mirror the OCT Standards of Practice (new teachers are appraised on eight of the competencies under three of the domains)
- Pre-observation meeting
- Classroom observation
- Post-observation meeting
- Summative report

The following are aspects of the Teacher Performance Appraisal process where there is NOT room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- The timelines and components of the appraisal process must be followed.
- The principal (or vice-principal or supervisory officer) will conduct the appraisal.
- The teacher must demonstrate the competencies.
- There must be at least one classroom observation.
- The teacher must sign to indicate receipt of the summative report.
- Professional growth strategies will be recommended in the summative report.

The following are aspects of the Teacher Performance Appraisal process where there IS room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- Teachers may choose to review the advice from ETFO.
- Teachers may choose to review the *Teacher Performance Appraisal Technical Requirements Manual – 2010*.
- Teachers should have input into the scheduling of TPA meetings.
- Teachers may request a meeting to discuss the summative report.
- Teachers may include their own comments on the appraisal in the summative report.
- Teachers may choose to use the Log of Teaching Practice (Appendix F and Appendix G in the *Teacher Performance Appraisal Technical Requirements Manual – 2010*).
- Teachers may exercise their professional judgement as to the manner in which they demonstrate each competency. (i.e.) specific practices and strategies used

Professional Judgement Matters

Note: The administrator responsible for the TPA has considerable authority to make this judgement. However, there is a wide range of acceptable practices and means to demonstrate the competency. The *Teacher Performance Appraisal Technical Requirements Manual – 2010* is explicit in Appendices F and G by stating, “The following are examples of possible ways the competency may be shown in practice. The principal and teacher may add other examples of good teaching practices that they identify during the appraisal process.”

- New teachers may choose whether or not to gather and reflect on parental and student input.
- Teachers can choose how to act on the professional growth strategies recommended.

Annual Learning Plan

The Annual Learning Plan (ALP) is a component of the TPA process for experienced teachers. Every experienced teacher must update their ALP each school year. New teachers are not required to complete an ALP. New teachers complete an Individual NTIP Strategy Form as a means to plan, track and record the NTIP induction elements the new teacher participates in. Upon successful completion of the NTIP elements, new teachers receive the NTIP notation on their Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The year following receipt of the NTIP notation, “new” teachers become “experienced” teachers and develop their ALP in the first year of their initial five-year evaluation cycle.

The following are aspects of the Annual Learning Plan where there is NOT room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- The teacher’s ALP must be updated each school year.
- A minimum of two professional growth goals are required.
- Teachers must include a proposed action plan and timelines for achieving the professional growth goals.
- In an evaluation year, the teacher and principal must review and update the teacher’s ALP in a meeting as part of the performance appraisal process.

The following are aspects of the Annual Learning Plan where there IS room for the exercise of professional judgement:

- The ALP is teacher authored and teacher directed.
- In determining professional growth goals, teachers are to take into account their own learning and growth over the year and the suggestions for growth in the summative report of their most recent performance appraisal. Teachers may wish to consider school and board improvement goals. With these considerations in mind, teachers are still fully able to determine what their professional growth goals will be.
- Teachers decide which professional activities to include in the ALP action plan.
- Teachers decide the timelines for carrying out the professional activities in the action plan.
- In non-evaluation years, teachers can choose to request a meeting with the principal regarding their updated ALP.
- Teachers may review the ETFO advice on the ALP.
- Teachers decide if it is appropriate to gather parental and student input in developing, reviewing, and updating the ALP.

Professional Judgement Matters

ETFO Resources

Performance Appraisal for New Teachers

- New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) – Performance Appraisal for New Teachers, Role of Mentors:
<http://www.etfo.ca/link/prsm34.aspx>

Teacher Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers

- Teacher Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers – PRS Matters Bulletin, Vol. 49:
<http://www.etfo.ca/link/prsm49.aspx>
- Teacher Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers – ETFO Belief Statement:
<http://www.etfo.ca/link/tpabeliefs.aspx>
- Professional Relations Services Webcasts – Teacher Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers:
<http://www.etfo.ca/link/tpawebcast.aspx>

Annual Learning Plan

- Annual Learning Plan: <http://www.etfo.ca/link/alp.aspx>
- The Annual Learning Plan (ALP) Advice to Members, PRS Matters Bulletin, Vol. 50:
<http://www.etfo.ca/link/prsm50.aspx>
- Annual Learning Plan Template: <http://www.etfo.ca/link/alptemplate.aspx>

Occasional Teacher Evaluation Resources

- Occasional Teacher Evaluation: Provincial Framework:
http://www.otbud12.com/media/OT_EvaluationFramework.pdf
- Examples of Board Developed LTO Evaluation Templates:
<http://mentoringmoments.ning.com/group/otevaluation/page/boardtemplates>

Ontario Ministry of Education Teacher Performance Appraisal Resources

- Teacher Performance Appraisal Technical Requirements Manual – 2010:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/pdfs/TPA_Manual_English_september2010l.pdf
- New Teacher Induction Program Induction Elements Manual – 2010:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/pdfs/NTIP-English_Elements-september2010.pdf

For further information members should contact their ETFO local president or Professional Relations Services (PRS) staff at the ETFO provincial office: 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.