



## Discussing and preparing evidence at your first personal development review

Guidance for RCN members on  
the NHS Knowledge and Skills  
Framework

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## This guidance

This guidance will help you prepare for, and make the most of, your first personal development review (PDR). It gives pointers on discussing with your reviewer what evidence you should gather against the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) outline for your post, so that you can maximise your professional development and work towards future PDRs.

It is important to use this guidance alongside the NHS KSF and the *Development Review Process Handbook*, which allows for a thorough approach to the development review process – this guidance is not meant as a substitute for the NHS KSF document.

You will find further guidance on the KSF at [www.e-ksf.org](http://www.e-ksf.org).

### Creating a portfolio

This guidance will help you shape a portfolio of evidence. It is always good practice to keep an up-to-date portfolio of evidence about your practice and professional development, and to relate it to the KSF outline for your post. Your portfolio will be used in PDRs and will help you and your manager identify learning and development needs. It will also allow you to assess progress against your personal development plan throughout the year, and if you keep it constantly updated, you can save on preparation time for your annual appraisal.

### This guidance on evidence

*Why?* – Why do you need it?

*What?* – What criteria does your evidence need to meet?

*Where?* – Creating a portfolio

*How?* – Ways of gathering and recording your evidence.

## Why do you need to gather evidence?

Evidence provides objective information on the level of knowledge and skills you use to perform different tasks and activities in your job. Your reviewer will not always be aware of all the skills and knowledge you bring to your role, so it is important to have objective evidence so you can demonstrate how you practice, which will in turn help identify your learning and development needs.

## What sort of evidence do you need?

Although evidence gathering is used for other purposes, such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or formal accreditation, evidence for KSF is not as formal. In fact, as page 30 of the NHS KSF Handbook states:

*‘The development review should not be a “paper chase” – all of the evidence should be available naturally in the workplace, as the development review is about what an individual does at work.’*

Before or during your first PDR, discuss with your reviewer the type of evidence you will need to gather for now and the future. The requirements are that KSF evidence should be:

- *sufficient*: there must be enough of it to match your work against all the dimensions, levels and indicators in your KSF outline. However, one piece of evidence can be used for more than one indicator across different dimensions
- *relevant*: to your post and the levels within the KSF outline for your post. Relevant to any training and development needs that have been jointly identified
- *up-to-date*: even if you have achieved the full KSF outline for your post, you must still provide evidence to your reviewer that your knowledge and skills are being currently and consistently used. If not, further learning and development may be required
- *to the appropriate standard*: evidence must relate to the dimensions and levels in your KSF outline.

You could consider using information gathered using the competency guidance produced by one of the RCN professional forums. This would support your professional development according to the clinical area that you work in, and to the levels set out in the KSF outline for your post.

When deciding what your evidence needs to demonstrate, refer to your KSF outline which will give examples of application. These show the tasks you can provide evidence against in order to satisfy the outline. The evidence you produce must fit the levels defined in the outline.

**Example:**

*Communication level 2 – Communicate with a range of people on a range of matters. The level requires that evidence should show what sort of information you have communicated and to whom. This should be a routine occurrence rather than a one-off.*

*If there were differing levels of understanding, you may have to adjust your communication skills accordingly so that your communication can be understood by all. For example, communicating with people who have a hearing disability, or with people who do not have English as their first language.*

## Where should I record the evidence?

Start putting together an organised record of evidence – a portfolio – which contains evidence that you can relate to the KSF outline for your post. You may already have a suitable portfolio that you can use – perhaps a training record of continuous professional development (CPD). If not, you may need to discuss with your reviewer whether you need to set up a simple KSF portfolio.

In your portfolio, you will need:

- a contents page or index – to link the evidence with the relevant parts of your KSF outline for easy cross-referencing
- your KSF outline
- PDR records and personal development plans
- relevant personal and professional information, for example: CV, job description and person specification, certificates of achievement/education, courses or seminars attended, reflective logs
- your evidence – how you use your skills and knowledge in your post
- traceability – a record of how and when you gathered the evidence, to show that it is up-to-date. The portfolio should also allow for evidence to be updated, superseded and archived as appropriate.

## How: gathering and recording evidence

Evidence can be presented in different ways, as long as it meets the criteria of sufficiency, relevance, and of the appropriate level. If it doesn't conform to these requirements, it could be rejected by the reviewer.

If you are not sure about using a particular type of evidence, check with your reviewer at your first PDR to make sure both parties are happy with what is required in the future.

Try to ensure that your employer is using the e-ksf tool to carry out the personal development review process and all other aspects of the KSF.

There are different ways of recording evidence depending on the area of your activity it covers. Evidence could be:

- verbal – this can be discussed 'live' during your PDR, as long as the reviewer has background knowledge of the examples of your practice. Ideally, however, you would use written records to support verbal evidence. This could be, for example, a witness statement or a summary of feedback received after an event from a patient, client, colleague or supervisor
- handwritten – this includes reports (formal and informal) and other records such as minutes from meetings
- electronic – e.g. databases, emails, presentations, graphs, diagrams, digital photos, that you have produced.

## Examples of evidence

Core Dimension	Example of evidence
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● emails to colleagues providing information</li> <li>● letters you have written providing information, explanation or in response to a complaint</li> <li>● reports/summaries of projects or events</li> <li>● memos describing how staff can overcome communication barriers with members of the public</li> <li>● meeting minutes/notes</li> <li>● presentations given to staff or public</li> <li>● witness statements from colleagues, managers or members of the public on an issue you explained well or helped with</li> <li>● advertising material for training events, meetings etc.</li> <li>● ways you motivated staff or the public to achieve an objective</li> <li>● signs, leaflets or diagrams produced to simplify information</li> <li>● methods of maintaining confidentiality.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal and people development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● records of those you helped develop, train or assess (removing names for anonymity)</li> <li>● witness statements from those you have coached, encouraged to develop, or given advice</li> <li>● evidence of mentoring, shadowing, coaching or secondment – e.g. what did you learn?</li> <li>● records of induction or ongoing training</li> <li>● personal learning and development programmes/plans</li> <li>● team/department training programmes you have developed</li> <li>● records of your personal appraisal or performance review</li> <li>● examples of self-analysis, feedback-evaluation sheets or witness statements</li> <li>● reflective logs</li> <li>● examples of specific project work</li> <li>● examples of private study, e-learning, distance learning, copies of relevant articles or internet/intranet pages</li> <li>● qualifications and certificates of achievement.</li> </ul>

Core Dimension	Example of evidence
<b>Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● evidence of how you apply quality to your own job, team or environment in a responsible way</li> <li>● copies of investigations or audits you were involved in</li> <li>● evidence of your control over quality received by others, e.g. patients, clients – procedures in place, witness statements, photos</li> <li>● records of implementing quality initiatives</li> <li>● involvement in developing quality initiatives, e.g. posters, meetings, briefings, training, setting up systems</li> <li>● evidence that you help maintain the quality of equipment, vehicles or premises, witness statements, photos etc.</li> <li>● examples of how quality of communication has increased</li> <li>● graphs showing a reduction in complaints or errors</li> <li>● evidence of your involvement in producing a better product</li> <li>● report or witness testimony stating how a problem was prevented or resolved satisfactorily</li> <li>● evidence of your compliance with quality systems/legislation</li> <li>● any other evidence of your specialist role on this subject.</li> </ul>
<b>Equality and diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● examples of how you have been sympathetic to peoples' beliefs, preferences, choices or rights to privacy/dignity</li> <li>● evidence of your participation in partnership working</li> <li>● evidence that learning and development is available to all staff</li> <li>● work you have done where there are equality or diversity issues</li> <li>● copies of reports/presentations showing equality or diversity in the workplace or across a service</li> <li>● examples of how you have applied equality and diversity training in the workplace</li> <li>● projects you have been involved in targeting minorities or providing for their specific needs</li> <li>● evidence of your awareness of different cultures and beliefs</li> <li>● examples of how you have modelled good practice</li> <li>● any other evidence of your specialist role on this subject.</li> </ul>

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