

Model Appraisal Guide: Model Appraisal Form

MAG Form User Guide

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1. Headlines

- Use Adobe Acrobat Reader XI, or Adobe Acrobat Reader DC or above. MS Windows 7 or higher, or Mac OS10.7 or above are also required.
- Always download and save the form first before attempting to complete it, rather than working on a version downloaded/opened directly from the internet or an email. Open the form from within Adobe Acrobat Reader to avoid inadvertently using other default PDF readers. This especially applies to Mac users.
- Make your own base form by filling in Sections 3 and 4 and saving this as your starting form for each year, remembering to update relevant content where appropriate.
- Attachments limit is 10 Mb. Bear in mind quality vs quantity when selecting your supporting information.
- Anyone handling the form is subject to all relevant information governance rules in terms of data protection and confidentiality, and has a personal duty to know what these are and to follow them.
- The 'Print' function in Section 21 may also allow the various selected parts of the form to be saved to disc, if suitable PDF converter software is installed on your computer.

2. Purpose

The '[Medical Appraisal Guide \(MAG\): Model Appraisal Form \(NHS England 2016\)](#)' is intended as an example of a repository that holds the information required for a medical appraisal. It has been designed with the appraisal meeting in mind, in a logical manner that mirrors how the appraisal conversation may flow. It is also intended as a practical demonstration of the information in the '[Medical Appraisal Guide: A guide to medical appraisal for revalidation in England, version 4 \(NHS Revalidation Support Team, 2013 \[reissued with updated hyperlinks September 2014\]\)](#)'.

It is a dynamic, interactive PDF, with inbuilt functionality, which allows you to type information into boxes and upload supporting evidence documentation into the form.

Your designated body will advise you whether you should be using the form for appraisal.

Organisations wishing to adopt the MAG form for appraisal and revalidation should also refer to the '[Guidance for organisations using the MAG Form](#)'.

3. Confidentiality and Information governance

Please note:

You must take care to abide by local confidentiality, data security and information governance protocols when adding details into this form.

In particular, you must remove all patient and personally identifiable data. If you are unable to do this for specific items of information, you should log the existence of the information in this form but provide the information itself separately to your appraiser.

Remember, you are providing this information primarily to your appraiser. After your appraisal is signed off, your responsible officer or other person with appropriately delegated authority will receive a copy of the form, specifically to read the appraisal outputs (the appraiser's statements, the appraisal summary, and your personal development plan). Your responsible officer may also access the rest of this form and all of your supporting information (whether attached to this form or provided separately) when considering your fitness to practise (for your revalidation recommendation or in other circumstances) and for quality assurance purposes. Your responsible officer can provide you with more information about who may view your form and the circumstances under which they may do so.

Throughout the appraisal process, doctors and appraisers must adhere to local information governance protocols, particularly in relation to the sending of this form and any supporting information by appropriate email or other means and in relation to the storing/filing of this form and any supporting information in an appropriate place and for an appropriate length of time.

4. Downloading and opening the form (IT compatibility)

You should always download and save the form first before starting to complete it, rather than working on a version downloaded/opened directly from the internet or an email, and which may then not save all the information entered or attached.

Use 'File' on the toolbar and 'Save as' to save the document first and then use the 'Save' buttons throughout the document to save as you go.

PC operating systems

The form has been tested as working in **Microsoft Windows 7** and higher. It will not run on older versions of Windows. The form is also fully functional when using an Apple Mac computer.

iPads and other tablet computers

This form will not work on an iPad or other tablet computers because they do not yet support the use of interactive PDF documents.

Adobe Acrobat Reader

The MAG form is a PDF type file (not eg MS Word or MS Excel). It can only be opened (with full functionality) in Adobe Reader. You may need to install [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#), if not already available.

The form requires Adobe Reader version XI (eleven), or Adobe Acrobat Reader DC, or above to make full use of the functionality built into the form. In other versions, the form will open, but some elements of functionality may be reduced. Users are likely to encounter difficulties with much older versions such as the form becoming unstable and with some data loss occurring.

If you experience any problems in downloading and/or opening the form, please refer to the following points:

1. **Download and save the form:** Right-click on the MAG form link above. Then select 'Save link as...' or 'Save target as...'. Then select the location/folder you wish to save the form in. Go to that location and open the form.
2. **Default PDF reader:** Your computer/laptop may attempt to unsuccessfully open the form using its default PDF reader, which may not be Adobe Acrobat Reader. For example, **Windows 10** now defaults to Microsoft Edge to read PDF files and **Apple Macs** default to MacOS Preview. Follow one of the following steps to open the MAG form in Adobe Acrobat Reader instead:
 - **Windows 10**
 - i. Go to the folder location you have downloaded and saved the MAG form in. Right-click on the MAG form PDF file icon and select 'Open with'.
 - ii. To make only the MAG form file open in Adobe Acrobat Reader, select 'Adobe Reader'.
 - iii. To make all PDF files open in Adobe Acrobat Reader, select 'Choose default program...'
 - iv. Select 'Adobe Acrobat Reader' and then ensure you tick the box that says 'Always use this app to open .pdf files' and click OK.
 - v. If Adobe Acrobat Reader is not listed, click on 'Look for an app in the Store'. This will open the Windows Store and you can then search for it.
 - vi. Test opening the MAG form to make sure Windows 10 is now using Adobe Acrobat Reader instead.
 - i. **Apple Mac**
 - i. Go to the folder location you have downloaded and saved the MAG form in. Click the MAG form PDF file icon in the Finder to select it.
 - ii. Select 'File' and then 'Get Info'.
 - iii. Click the triangle next to 'Open with' and select 'Adobe Acrobat Reader' from the pop-up list (if it is not there, select 'Choose Other' to select it.
 - iv. To make all PDF files open in Adobe Acrobat Reader, click on 'Change All...'
3. **Corruption:** On very rare occasions, it is possible for the MAG form itself and/or any supporting evidence documentation uploaded into the form to become corrupted as it is emailed between doctor and appraiser (and vice versa), resulting in the form and/or uploaded documentation not opening. It is advisable, therefore, to regularly save the form with updated version filenames, so that should this happen, a fairly recent version of the form can be used to recover your appraisal form, without the need for extensive additional work to recover it.

Please note:

If you use other software versions, the form may still work but not all of the functional elements may be supported and you may not be able to complete your appraisal.

5. Saving a template of the form

Version 4 of the MAG form is an annual appraisal form only, unlike the previous Version 3. To save time for future appraisals, you are advised to create your own 'base/template form' by completing Section 3 with your personal details and Section 4 with your scope of work, saving that version of the form as a template to use as a starting point each appraisal year and remembering to update any relevant information that may have changed.

6. Completing the form

All aspects of a medical practitioner's role can, and should, be detailed within the form, including clinical and educational roles, supervision, teaching, academic and research; managerial and leadership roles; and any other role that requires you to hold a medical qualification / licence to practice e.g. sports medicine, occupational health, ascetic practice, appraiser, voluntary roles etc. If in doubt, include it anyway - better to be over inclusive than under inclusive.

Your main focus throughout the appraisal process should be your reflection on both your activity and the outcomes as a result. For any supporting information you include, you are encouraged to consider this from a quality versus quantity perspective. With this in mind, the form limits the total capacity for attachments of supporting information to 10Mb.

The footer on the form will display headline details as you enter these specific details into the relevant sections in the form. These may be truncated if the detail is particularly long and over a certain number of characters.

You should complete up to and including Section 17 and submit the package of information to your appraiser by a mutually agreed date (normally at least two weeks before the appraisal). Sections 18, 19 and 20 will be completed during and immediately after the appraisal meeting by both you and the appraiser.

To navigate through the various sections you must either use the numbered navigation bar down the left-hand side or use the **< Previous section** and **Next section >** buttons at the bottom of each section.

Hovering the mouse over the numbers on the navigation bar will show you the name of each section, as listed in the contents page. Clicking on any of these numbers will open the corresponding section.

You can type or copy and paste information into the boxes. These expand as much as you need them to, although you should note that no line in any table may extend to greater than a full screen in size.

Click the  buttons to reveal more information. Click them again to hide the information. The relevant helptext will often contain a link to obtain [further guidance and information](#) from a specific resource such as the GMC. You will need to be on-line to follow these links.

An asterisk (*) next to a question denotes that this field is mandatory and you will not be able to submit the form at the end unless all mandatory fields are completed. These fields will usually be surrounded by a red box as well, although the red box may not always be visible, depending on personal settings in Adobe Reader.

Please note:

There are many 'hidden' questions that only appear when you have answered 'Yes' or 'No' to particular questions.

7. Attaching documents

The form is designed to have documents uploaded into it, so all your appraisal information is in one place. Supporting information documents are attached just as you would attach one to an email.

Many file types can be uploaded including Word, Excel, PowerPoint documents, PDFs and image files. Some file types may not be compatible with the form. If you try to upload one of these, a warning box will tell you that it is not possible. Zip files and web pages are examples of some documents that cannot be uploaded. Also, documents that are open on your computer will not attach.

Each **Attach** button allows you to attach one document.

There are also tables which allow you to attach multiple pieces of supporting information in each section. The tables allow you to register and identify the location of your supporting information documents in a number of ways:

- Attached
- Emailed to appraiser
- Provided separately
- Not available

Once a document is attached, the button turns to **View**. Click it and the attachment will re-open. If you need an extra row, use the **+** button.

If you wish to amend a document that you have already attached, do not click on 'View' and open the attachment from within the form. You must click 'Remove', amend the document from where it is originally filed, and reattach the amended version into the form.

The maximum size of the form cannot exceed 10Mb due to restrictions with most email servers, and the desire to ensure quality of supporting information over quantity. If a document is large, you can email it to your appraiser, or provide a hard copy separately. If you choose to do this, you should log this in the table by clicking the **Log** button. This will then turn to **Logged** and indicates to your appraiser that there is separate information available.

If you change your mind and want to delete an entry, use the **Remove** or **-** buttons.

Please note:

Be careful when removing rows using the **-** button, as you do not get a reminder and it will delete immediately. Ensure you copy any text that you wish to re-enter before doing so.

You may want to scan documents to include in the form. However, be advised that saving files as .tif or .jpg means that the file size will be quite large. If possible, you should save such files as a .pdf.

You may also wish to share videos, large presentations containing graphics, and long report documents as examples of supporting information. These files are often too large to be included within the form and you should be assured that providing documents

separately is perfectly acceptable, as long as you record that you have done so on the form.

Please note:

In Section 5 of the form, it is advisable that you do not attach a copy of the full MAG form as evidence of last year's appraisal, as this will use a significant amount of the form's memory.

Instead, attach your Appraisal Outputs Report (via Section 21 from last year's appraisal form [once you have used the form for more than one year]). If your summary is part of a larger document, it may be wise to print out the summary page, scan it and just upload that one section, or log it and provide it separately to your appraiser via Section 14.

All supporting information is listed in Section 15 of the form. The table automatically populates with all the information you have provided. Check this section is complete before submitting your form to your appraiser.

When documents are attached into the form, Adobe compresses them slightly. The file size displayed in Section 15 shows the actual size of the documents attached. The compressed size can be viewed via the Adobe dashboard, but the size limitation of the form is programmed based on the actual size. It is not possible to override how Adobe measures the file sizes. However, the difference between actual and compressed file sizes is small.

Adobe has functionality to attach and remove documents, independently of the form, using the side panel or menu bar. These functions should not be used as they are not compatible with the form. Only buttons within the form, as described in this guide should be used.

8. Using the Appraisal Checklist

Section 17 contains a checklist of the essential things you are expected to include for your appraisal. It is based on GMC requirements and College guidance. You should find that the structure of the form means that you should have included most things as you have gone along, but it may be helpful to use this checklist to review your submission before sending it to your appraiser. Doing so will reduce the possibility that your appraiser might need to ask you to provide anything more before your appraisal meeting.

You may also find the checklist useful as you enter information progressively between appraisals, as a way to remind yourself when you have completed a section.

9. Saving the form

The **Save form** button at the end of each section saves the form. You do not have to save each section as the form will remember the information once you navigate to another section, but it is good practice to save the document regularly anyway.

Adobe makes the 'Save As' box appear each time. You can save over the original file name and replace it with your updated file rather than creating many new copies, if you wish.

Please note:

Remember to keep copies of your completed form and the locked copy your appraiser will provide you with after your appraisal meeting. Keep them safe.

10. Submitting the form for the appraisal meeting

Your designated body will prescribe how the appraisal system works in your organisation. They will advise you how you should submit the information, where you should send it and by when. If you have **Logged** that you will provide information by email or hard copy, you should provide this in advance of the appraisal meeting.

Prior to the appraisal meeting, you should complete up to and including Section 17. Sections 18, 19 and 20 will be completed during or immediately after the appraisal as they require input from the appraiser too.

Please note:

Do not email the form onwards using the Adobe Reader menu bar: 'File', 'Send File...'; nor the 'Send file as email attachment' icon. This will result in a warning message and the form will not transfer as an attachment into your email application. You should instead save and close the form, open your email application and attach the form directly from where it is filed.

11. During and after the appraisal meeting

In the appraisal meeting, your appraiser will discuss with you the information that you have provided, including a review of your personal development plan over the last year and discussing your personal development plan for the forthcoming year.

Content to be completed by the appraiser is identified by a yellow text box. 'Appraiser's comments' boxes can be found at the end of a number of sections throughout the form. The appraiser also has content to complete in Sections 19 and 20.

Some information may need to be added after the appraisal meeting. The form may need to be passed between the appraiser and yourself so that content can be agreed. Always make sure you save copies.

Once you and the appraiser have signed off the form, the appraiser should click **Save form – final save of editable version**.

The appraiser should then click **SAVE FORM - LOCKDOWN**. This makes the whole form read-only and no further changes can be made.

The form can only be locked down if all mandatory fields (denoted by an asterisk (*) and usually a red border) have been completed. A prompt will appear at this point if you try to lock down the form and not all mandatory fields are complete.

Once the appraiser has locked down the form, they should share a copy of the form with you.

Please note:

It is normally the appraiser who locks down the form. The doctor should not use the lock down facility – it cannot be undone and if not complete, you may have to start the form from the beginning again.

12. Saving and printing sections of the form

Section 21 allows you to save, lockdown and print out the form. Once locked down, you can also print out a number of different section options, which can also be saved separately if you have PDF converter/writer software functionality in your printer settings/options (e.g. CutePDF Writer). Such software is readily available on the internet and is commonly free of charge. Select print options, then select the PDF converter/writer as the printer and click 'Print'. Then choose the filename and where to save the document. The options include:

- Whole form
- Section 3 Personal details and 4 Scope of work
- Section 18 The agreed personal development plan
- Appraisal Outputs Report – Sections:
 - 3 Personal details
 - 4 Scope of work
 - 18 The agreed personal development plan
 - 19 Summary of the appraisal discussion
 - 20 Appraisal outputs report

Please note:

If you have any issues with the form, or queries about how to use it, you should contact the appropriate revalidation/appraisal lead in your designated body or your appraiser. NHS England does not provide additional support for the use of the form.