

## **Competency Based Pay Progression Framework (CBF)**

Thank you for attending the CBF events on 24 and 28 March 2022. Please find below a consolidated list of the questions asked at each event with responses.

If you have any further queries, please do contact us at [cbf-enquiries@justice.gov.uk](mailto:cbf-enquiries@justice.gov.uk)

### **1) Q. Why is automatic pay progression being replaced with the CBF for the Probation Service?**

A. The 2018 Agreement committed to introducing competency based pay progression replacing automatic progression each year, to bring the Probation Service in line with other Civil Service Departments and central pay guidance and supports the Probation Service moving to a more modern and beneficial pay framework.

### **2) Q. Will pay progression for April 2022 remain automatic?**

A. Yes, pay progression for April 2022 will be automatic and is not linked to the CBF. The new CBF year begins on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and pay progression for eligible staff will be linked to the CBF for the first time in April 2023.

### **3) Q. What are the benefits of engaging with the CBF?**

A. The main benefit of CBF is that it facilitates progression through the pay points of your pay scale, the CBF also provides a shared set of competence areas which are demonstrated by all Probation Service staff, regardless of grade, function or role. The CBF supports positive conversations between line managers and staff, acknowledging the competence demonstrated through the tasks and activities in individual roles. For those who are not required to use the CBF, developing an understanding of the process and framework is beneficial preparation should you need to use CBF in the future, if you change roles or if the pay scales change.

### **4) Q. How do I know if I am eligible for using the CBF?**

A. You should be using the CBF if you are a member of Probation Service staff and are on Probation Service terms and conditions. This includes staff who are:

- Former NPS staff;
- Former CRC staff who transferred under the National Agreement;
- Staff who are on fixed term contracts;
- New joiners or staff who are still in their probation period;
- Staff on secondment or loan to another Government Department; and
- Staff on the PQiP programme.

The CBF is not mandatory for:

- Staff who are already at the top of their pay band or on a spot rate; and

- Staff who are not on Probation Service terms and conditions so for example former CRC staff who did not transfer under the National Agreement, or staff who are on agency terms and conditions.

For staff who are at the top of the pay band and staff joined from a CRC but aren't on Probation Service terms and conditions, for example **if you're part of a CRC supply chain** we do strongly recommend that you familiarise yourselves with the process or take part in the CBF in case you need to use it later in the year due to changes within your pay band and through harmonisation.

**5) Q. With high workloads how am I expected to engage with the CBF?**

A. During the trial year some staff were concerned that the CBF might be time consuming but once they took part, the majority of staff have found the whole CBF process takes less than an hour in total over the whole year, especially as much of the process can be incorporated into routine line manager conversations.

**6) Q. If I don't engage with CBF and I am NOT at the top of my pay band will I still receive pay progression?**

A. No, you must engage with the CBF and demonstrate competency across all the competency areas as part of your eligibility for pay progression.

**7) Q. Can I progress more than one pay point at the end of the CBF year?**

A. No, you can only progress by one pay point within your pay band each year.

**8) Q. I am a PQiP, does the CBF apply to me?**

A. Yes, if you are a PQiP you will need to engage with the CBF. PQiP's train for either 15 months or 21 months and so you will experience annual pay progression in the PQiP pay banding during this time. You will therefore be required to use the CBF in order to progress one point in the pay band ahead of completing training and moving up a band as a result.

**9) Q. Once the April 2022 pay award has been resolved I will be at the top of my pay band should I still be engaging with the CBF?**

A. If you were in the penultimate pay band in the CBF trial year (2021/2022) then you do not need to open a SOP record as you are currently (although notionally) at the top of the pay band as of 1 April 2022.

**10) Q. Why do people at the top of their pay band not have to engage with CBF?**

A. Members of staff who are at the top of the pay band do not have to take part in the CBF as they are not eligible for pay progression.

**11) Q. If I am on a temporary promotion do, I need to engage with the CBF?**

A. Yes since, will be eligible for competence-based pay progression within your promoted pay band if you were in the temporarily promoted (TP) grade for more than six months of the CBF year at the point of progression - if you were TP before 1 October continuously to 31 March.

If on 31 March you have been in the TP grade for less than six continuous months of the competence year, you will not be eligible for progression in the TP grade. Any pay progression to which you may be entitled (if you are below the top of your substantive pay band) will be calculated and applied when you return to your substantive grade.

**12) Q. How should I choose my competency level?**

A. You can choose a competency level that makes sense to you and reflects your current expertise in your current role. When thinking about a competency level some guiding principles may be; choose 'entry' level if you are new to the role and require support or if your role has changed as a result of a level transfer; 'intermediate' if you are able to work more independently; and 'advanced' if you are more experienced and confident leading complex work. The competence level is not about your performance.

**13) Q. If I choose the same competency level as last year, will this affect my pay progression for this year?**

A. No the competence level that you choose does not decide whether or not you will receive pay progression. The competence level you select is an individual choice and should reflect your current expertise in your current role.

**14) Q. How many competency examples do I need to provide?**

A. You will only need to record a maximum of 5 examples (or 6 if you have line management responsibilities) in total and two or three complex examples might demonstrate competence across multiple areas. You don't need to record multiple examples of the same competency area.

**15) Q. Can I use examples of tasks and activities that demonstrate my competency that I have undertaken prior to the start of the competency year?**

A. No, competency examples should be drawn from the current competency year, i.e. from the 1<sup>st</sup> April onwards.

**16) Q. What is the difference between a SOP CBF record and the CBF template?**

A. A SOP CBF record is your HR record where your line manager will record the date of your opening conversation, a summary of your competency examples and the outcome decision of pay progression. The CBF template is a word document that you can use to record your competency examples on during the year and share with your line manager during supervision meetings. There is space on the template to summarise your competency example into 150 characters which will then be recorded on to the SOP CBF record.

**17) Q. Where can I find a list by grade of the mandatory training?**

A. A list of mandatory training can be found on the Probation Hub under My Learning and development. It is recommended that staff check the mandatory training requirements for their grade and role on a regular basis.

**18) Q. For what reasons would I not be eligible for pay progression?**

A. You will not be eligible to receive pay progression if you have not provided examples which demonstrate the competence areas, are subject to the formal poor

performance process (from the first formal warning), if you have received a disciplinary outcome that prevents you from pay progression or if you had not completed all the mandatory training that had been made available to you during the CBF year.

**19) Q. A member of staff is currently on maternity leave, what should I do with their CBF SOP record?**

A. If the member of staff had the opportunity to engage with the CBF process before they took maternity leave, you will be able to use their past competence as an indicator of current competence and complete the CBF record on SOP. If not, they will not be disadvantaged for CBF-based progression. A CBF SOP record will need to be opened in their absence and whilst no evidence needs to be entered, Manager's need to confirm pay progression at the end of the CBF year and note the maternity absence.

**20) Q. Do I have the right to appeal if I do not agree with my Line Managers decision on pay progression?**

A. Yes you have the right to appeal if you do not agree with your Line Manager's competence decision at the end of the year, although we ask that you attempt to resolve disagreements informally first. Please refer to the guidance on [appealing a competence decision](#) for more information.

**21) Q. How has unconscious bias been addressed to ensure consistency and fairness throughout the CBF process?**

A. The CBF guidance includes content to support line managers in ensuring that the progression decision is made fairly. Staff will also have the right to appeal if they believe the progression decision is unfair.

**22) Q. Could CBF lead to poor performance?**

A. Measures relating to quality, quantity or timeliness of work will always remain within the performance management system and for operational staff the Quality Assurance (QA) process. The CBF does not replace either of these.

**23) Q. Where do I locate details around the pay scales and pay points?**

A. You can find the current pay scales using this link:

**24) Q. I am on secondment to a different department, how does the CBF work for me?**

In you are on secondment to a different government department and remain on Probation Service terms and conditions you will need to engage with the CBF. Guidance on how this should be managed can be found in the FAQ's on My Hub HERE: [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service | Competency Based Pay Progression Framework \(CBF\) \(NPS\) FAQs \(sscl.com\)](#) ).

## **SOP Recording**

**24) Q. Does the CBF template need uploading to SOP?**

A. No the CBF template does not need uploading on to SOP. To close the CBF SOP Record, managers will need to summarise each example a staff member has provided, briefly noting the activities a carried out to demonstrate the five competence areas (line managers will also need to demonstrate a sixth competence area, leadership and management). There is a 150-character limit for each field. For further guidance please see guidance on Recording a CBF records on SOP which can be found HERE: [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service | Useful documents \(sscl.com\)](https://www.sscl.com/Useful%20documents)

**25) Q. The CBF SOP record for the trial year 2021-2022 is still open, what should I do?**

A. If the CBF SOP record for the trial year is still open, it will need to be closed by your Line Manager. Please do remember that the CBF trial year does not impact pay progression for April 2022 as this remains automatic.

**26) Q. Who opens a CBF SOP record, is it me or my manager?**

A. Following the opening conversation your line manager will open and update the CBF SOP record with the date of the opening conversation and the agreed competency level.

**27) Q. What reporting year do I need to enter into the CBF SOP Record for this year (2022-2023)?**

A. You will need to enter 2023 in the 'reporting year' field on SOP, as this is the year that pay progression takes place.

**28) Q. I have recorded the wrong date in the CBF SOP record what do I do?**

A. Line Managers are able to edit the CBF SOP record and correct any incorrect dates that may have been entered.

It is important to remember to not use dates outside of the reporting year period - i.e., for the reporting year 2022/23, you must only use dates between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

**29) Q. I have created a duplicate record what should I do?**

A. If a duplicate CBF SOP record has been created in error, Line Managers can delete duplicate CBF SOP records.

**30) Q. Do I need to record anything on SOP if a member of my team is at the top of the pay band and hasn't participated in the CBF process?**

A. No, if a member of staff who is at the top of the pay band, they are not eligible for the CBF and nothing needs to be recorded on SOP.

## **Performance Management**

**31) Q. Does the CBF replace SPDRs?**

A. No, the CBF is not a replacement for SPDR's. The Performance Management process is the new process replacing SPDR's and the CBF remains separate to this process.

Performance Management will start to be rolled out in line with your functional and regional plans throughout 2022/2023 and your Regional Probation Director's will implement this process in a way that makes sense for their specific regions.

**32) Q. What is the difference between CBF and Performance Management and why are they separate?**

The CBF and Performance management processes are separate with different outcomes.

The CBF is purely for staff to look back and record how they have demonstrated competence and the outcome is progression through the points in your pay scale. There are no objectives to set, as the focus is on staff capturing competence examples from everyday tasks and activities delivered rather than an aspirational level of performance.

The Performance Management process is forward looking and is focusing on agreeing performance expectations, set personal development goals – short- and longer-term aspirations and identify strengths, barriers and development activity. The outcome is the understanding of an individuals' performance, strengths and aspirations.

**Trial Year feedback**

**33) Q. What changes have you adopted from the feedback from the trial year?**

A. Your feedback has led us to update and simplify our guidance and templates, so you'll see some changes to the CBF area on MyHub. For example, we had some feedback that the terms were confusing, and language is important. The CBF record is now renamed a CBF template – this is the form you complete. The CBF record is the CBF SOP record.

**Useful links**

All CBF documents including CBF Guide, template and worked template examples [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service | Useful documents \(sscl.com\)](https://www.sscsl.com/Her-Majesty-s-Prison-and-Probation-Service/Useful-documents)

CBF front page on MyHub - [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service | Competency Based Pay Progression Framework \(CBF\) \(For PS Staff\) \(sscl.com\)](https://www.sscsl.com/Her-Majesty-s-Prison-and-Probation-Service/Competency-Based-Pay-Progression-Framework-(CBF)-(For-PS-Staff))

Short videos covering each part of the CBF process - [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service | The CBF process \(sscl.com\)](https://www.sscsl.com/Her-Majesty-s-Prison-and-Probation-Service/The-CBF-process)