

Chapter 4

Teacher appraisal

A new national system of teacher performance appraisal was instituted in 2007 in the broader context of the integrated system of performance evaluation for public administration which applies to civil servants. Since then, teacher appraisal has undergone a range of adjustments as a result of the resistance it has faced. By the time the review team visited, a model launched in 2010 was in the process of being implemented. The main features of the model included a two-year appraisal cycle; a national framework defining reference standards, aspects to be appraised, instruments to be used and a five-level classification scheme with a school-level quota system for the top two classifications; a process internal to the school to conduct the appraisal including school-based peer evaluators; and consequences for career progression, contract renewal, monetary rewards and plan for professional development. Subsequently to the review visit and with the change of government in June 2011, a new teacher appraisal model was approved for implementation in 2012/13. The two models follow a similar approach even if there are a few fundamental differences, which are considered in this chapter. Particularly positive features of teacher appraisal include the political will and growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal; some good features such as the principle of career advancement on merit, the account of the school context and the variety of instruments and sources of information used; the development of teaching standards to support teacher appraisal; and the articulations between teacher appraisal and school evaluation. However, the development of teacher appraisal is faced with a number of challenges. These include the insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice; the limited externality in teacher appraisal; the tension between school-level teacher appraisal and national-level consequences; the incipient development of competencies for teacher appraisal; and the limited role of school leadership in teacher appraisal.

This chapter looks at approaches to teacher appraisal within the Portuguese evaluation and assessment framework. Teacher appraisal refers to the evaluation of individual teachers to make a judgement about their performance. Teacher appraisal has typically two major purposes. First, it seeks to improve teachers' own practices by identifying strengths and weaknesses for further professional development – the improvement function. Second, it is aimed at ensuring that teachers perform at their best to enhance student learning – the accountability function (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). An overview of the main features of the teaching profession in Portugal is provided in Box 4.1. This chapter draws partly on an OECD Review of Teacher Evaluation in Portugal which was undertaken in 2009 (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

By the time the review team visited (February-March 2011), a reformed teacher appraisal model launched in 2010 (thereafter referred to as the 2010 model) was in the course of being implemented. However, subsequently to the review visit and with the change of government in June 2011, a new teacher appraisal model was approved (thereafter referred to as the 2011 model). The new model will start operating in 2012/13 following the preparation for implementation by school agents planned for 2011/12. The two models follow a similar approach even if there are a few fundamental differences. In this chapter, the main reference for analysis is the model which was in place during the review visit. However, the chapter also considers the features of the new model and explains how it differs from the previous model. The substantive conclusions, while focussing on the model in place during the review visit, were adjusted to consider the new model.

Context and features

Teacher appraisal procedures

Teacher appraisal in its current form is relatively recent in Portugal. A first version of the current national appraisal model was introduced in 2007 and further amended in 2009 with a view to improving and simplifying the procedures (see Santiago *et al.*, 2009 for a comprehensive analysis). After completion of the first appraisal cycle over the years 2007-09, a revised teacher appraisal model was published in 2010. Subsequently to the review visit, the new government in office since June 2011 approved a new model whose actual implementation will start in 2012/13. While a number of aspects of teacher appraisal were changed in the successive amendments, the current teacher appraisal system maintains the objectives and guiding principles set out in the 2007 model and appraises teachers against similar dimensions and domains of performance.

The regulations regarding teacher appraisal are aligned with the Integrated System for the Evaluation of Performance in the Public Administration (SIADAP), a performance evaluation model introduced in the public sector in 2004. The teacher appraisal model thus reflects a broader trend towards performance appraisal as an instrument for managing human resources in the Portuguese public sector.

Prior to the 1990s, there was no formal or informal system to appraise the performance of individual teachers. A first appraisal model was introduced in 1992 but it remained a largely bureaucratic process “without any content or consequences, with career advancement fundamentally dependent on length of service” (Ministry of Education, forthcoming). The introduction of the new teacher appraisal system in 2007 thus involved an important shift from a system in which progress on the salary scale

depended mostly on length of service towards a model that recognises and rewards merit and excellence.

Objectives

The overarching aims of teacher appraisal have not changed since 2007. The system aims to improve the quality of education provision and students' learning, guide teachers' personal and professional development and acknowledge merit and excellence. To work towards these aims, nine specific objectives were defined in the original version of the national teacher appraisal model launched in 2007:

- Four of the objectives relate to **stimulating development and changing teachers' practices**: (i) contribute to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical practices; (ii) identify staff training needs; (iii) promote co-operative work by teachers, with a view to improving their performance; and (iv) promote making each teacher responsible for the exercise of his/her professional activity.
- Two of the objectives relate to **celebrating and rewarding merit and excellence**: (i) help attach greater value to teaching work and the teaching profession; and (ii) differentiate and reward the best professionals, within the scope of the teaching career advancement system.
- The remaining three objectives relate to the need for **gathering information that facilitates and forms a basis for better management decisions**: (i) identify the factors that influence professional output; (ii) provide management indicators concerning the teaching staff; and (iii) promote a monitoring and supervision process with regard to teaching practices.

It follows from these objectives that teacher appraisal in Portugal combines both summative and formative purposes: it is designed to serve as a basis for career progression and at the same time as a tool to identify teacher professional development needs and stimulate improvement.

Reference standards and regulations

The 2010 teacher appraisal model provided for teachers to be appraised against three types of performance objectives: (1) the performance standards set at the national level; (2) objectives and goals set by individual schools in their educational projects and plans; and (3) optional individual objectives to be submitted to the school director by the evaluatee.

The national standards for teaching performance were developed by the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP) and adopted by the then Ministry of Education in 2010. The standards refer to four key dimensions and provide a number of domains for each of the key dimensions (Table 4.1). For each of the key dimensions, there are a range of indicators, criteria and performance illustrations.

Table 4.1 Dimensions and domains of teaching performance standards, used in the 2010 teacher appraisal model

Dimension	Domain
Professional, social and ethical aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment to the construction of professional knowledge ▪ Commitment to the promotion of students' learning and personal and civic development ▪ Commitment to the peer group and the school
Development of education and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation and organisation of teaching activities ▪ Fulfilment of teaching duties ▪ Pedagogical relationship with students ▪ Student learning assessment process
Participation at school and relationship with the education community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fulfilment of the allocated teaching and non-teaching work ▪ Contribution to achieving the objectives and goals of the education project and of the annual and multiannual activity plans ▪ Participation in the organisational structures with responsibility for educational co-ordination and pedagogical supervision, and in the administration and management bodies ▪ Organisation and evaluation of research, development and educational innovation projects
Lifelong professional development and vocational training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-service training and professional development

Source: Ministry of Education (forthcoming).

The new 2011 teacher appraisal model establishes that teacher appraisal is to cover the following three dimensions of teachers' work: scientific-pedagogical; participation in school activities and links to the community; and professional development. However, at this stage, it does not plan to use national standards of teaching performance as a reference for teacher appraisal. Instead, it considers the following references:

- Objectives and goals set by individual schools in their educational projects and plans (school level);
- Evaluation parameters established by each school's pedagogical council for each of the three dimensions covered by teacher appraisal (school level); and
- Additional parameters established at the national level to apply only to classroom observation (undertaken by evaluators external to the school), which are yet to be fixed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Appraisal process and instruments

Performance appraisal is mandatory for all teachers, whether on probation, fixed-term contracts or permanent contracts, at all levels of education from pre-primary through to secondary school. Appraisal is obligatory for access into and advancement in the career and contract renewals. In the 2010 model, teacher appraisal results were also used in competitive recruitment processes and for performance awards. This is no longer the case in the 2011 model. For permanent teachers, performance appraisal was implemented on a two-year cycle in the 2010 model and will now be implemented on a four-year cycle in the 2011 model.

In the 2010 teacher appraisal model, there were four appraisal instruments and information sources that were used in teacher performance appraisal processes:

- **Self-appraisal.** Teachers being appraised were required to submit a self-appraisal report in which they assessed their own performance in relation to national-level standards.
- **Classroom observation.** Classroom observations were mandatory only in a number of specific cases: to gain access to certain career ranks (third and fifth ranks in the 10-rank single career ladder); to obtain the top-two classifications (“excellent” and “very good”) awarded in the process of teacher appraisal; and in the probationary year (more on this below). Classroom observations were undertaken by a school-internal “rapporteur” and based on procedures approved by the school’s pedagogical council.
- **Evidence of teacher performance in a range of areas.** Other record instruments were drawn up by the school Performance Evaluation Co-ordinating Commission and approved by the pedagogical council. They contained information that was considered relevant to provide evidence of the teacher’s performance in relation to the national teaching performance standards and the guidelines set by the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation.
- **An overall appraisal form.** It was mandatory for the rapporteur to complete the overall appraisal form that reflected the national dimensions and domains of teacher performance laid down by law.

In addition, the evaluatee also had the option to request an interview after being notified of his/her suggested classification. Such an interview allowed the evaluatee to jointly review the teacher appraisal documents together with the rapporteur.

The new model approved in 2011 seeks to simplify teacher appraisal procedures and it has two components: an appraisal internal to the school covering the three dimensions of teachers’ work considered by the model (but not involving classroom observation); and an appraisal external to the school exclusively focussed on the scientific-pedagogic domain, consisting of classroom observation, and only organised when such observation is part of the appraisal of a given teacher. The model relies on the following instruments:

- For the internal appraisal:
 - **Teacher’s project.** The teacher has the option to annually prepare a “teacher’s project” describing his/her contribution to the school’s educational project. This document cannot exceed two pages.
 - **Self-appraisal.** Teachers are required to submit annually a self-appraisal report in which they reflect on their practices in the following areas: teaching; activities promoted; analysis of results obtained; contribution to the objectives and goals set in the educational project of the school; and professional development undertaken and its contribution to their work. The self-evaluation report cannot exceed three pages.
 - **An overall appraisal form.** The internal evaluator records the teacher’s performance across the appraisal dimensions in a specific form.

- For the external appraisal:
 - **Classroom observation.** Classroom observations are mandatory only in a number of specific cases: for teachers placed in the second and fourth ranks of the 10-rank single career ladder; to obtain the top classification (“excellent”); in the probationary year; and for teachers who received a classification of “insufficient” in their previous appraisal. Classroom observations, of which a minimum of two are organised, are undertaken by evaluators external to the school.

The mark obtained by a teacher in his/her appraisal is weighted as follows in the 2011 model, across the three domains assessed: professional development – 20%; participation in school activities and links to the community – 20%; and scientific-pedagogical – 60% (if classroom observation takes place, the corresponding mark has a weight of 70% in the overall mark in this domain).

Following the appraisal process, the evaluatee is awarded one of five qualitative classifications: insufficient, regular, good, very good and excellent. Teachers’ career advancement is subject to obtaining at least the “good” classification in their appraisal (as well as the access to a permanent position following the probationary period). In addition, advancements to career ranks 5 and 7 are conditional on there being a vacancy in the school, except for teachers having obtained a “very good” or “excellent” classification who can advance to these ranks without having to wait for a vacancy. An important distinction between the 2010 model and the 2011 model is that, in the former, teachers could only obtain a “very good” or “excellent” classification if they requested a classroom observation to be part of their appraisal, while in the latter this is a requirement only to obtain the “excellent” classification. The possibility to award the two highest classifications is limited by a quota system, which is typically fixed at 5% and 20% of evaluated teachers for the “excellent” and “very good” classifications respectively. However, the law provides for the possibility that these quotas are affected by the results of the school’s external evaluation (see Chapter 5).

Responsibilities for developing the teacher appraisal system

While the appraisal process itself is largely school-based, a range of national education bodies also play a role in ensuring adequate appraisal processes:

- The **Ministry of Education and Science** provides national regulations, tools and guidelines to implement teacher appraisal, and training for evaluators. In the 2010 teacher appraisal model, it developed the performance standards for teachers, the models for performance appraisal forms, the calendar for appraisals and the standards for self-appraisal reports. In the 2011 teacher appraisal model, it establishes the national-level parameters for classroom observation (external appraisal), and organises the pool of external evaluators in charge of classroom observation.
- The **Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation** was a consultative body responsible for supervising and monitoring the implementation of teacher appraisal until it ceased its functions in late 2011, following the rationalisation of education services undertaken by the government which took office in June 2011. It provided recommendations and evaluation reports on the process.

- The **General Inspectorate of Education and Science** (formerly the General Inspectorate of Education) is responsible for monitoring schools' implementation of teacher appraisal, within the framework of its competences.
- The **Teacher Evaluation Support Office** is part of the Directorate General for School Administration (DGAE) (previously it was part of the Directorate General for Human Resources in Education) within the Ministry of Education and Science and holds responsibility for providing technical support and advice regarding teacher appraisal to schools. Support at the local level is provided by Regional Directorates for Education, which will be integrated in DGAE in January 2013.

Competencies to undertake teacher appraisal

Both the 2010 and 2011 appraisal models involve more teachers in the appraisal process than the original 2007 model, with a collegiate body within the school in charge of making the decision about the teacher's performance. Each school establishes a Performance Appraisal Co-ordinating Commission to co-ordinate teacher appraisal processes (in the 2011 model, it is called Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance and is part of the pedagogical council). The Commission/Section is made up of the president of the pedagogical council (the school director) and three teachers of the pedagogical council (increased to four in the 2011 model). The school director is responsible for ensuring that the schools' appraisal processes are in line with both national regulations and the schools' specificities.

In the 2010 model, each department co-ordinator used to appoint rapporteurs responsible for teacher appraisal within his/her department. The rapporteurs were responsible for proposing that a teacher be appraised and for monitoring his/her professional development process. Together, the Performance Appraisal Co-ordinating Commission and the rapporteur formed the "appraisal jury". In the 2011 model, the Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance implements teacher appraisal in the school including the development of the form to record the teacher's performance across the appraisal dimensions, the approval of the marks obtained by each teacher, the award of the qualitative classifications for each appraised teacher ensuring quotas are respected, the appreciation of complaints, and the approval of the professional development plan for teachers with an "insufficient" classification.

Teacher appraisal relies entirely on peer evaluation. All key roles in teacher appraisal, including performance evaluation as well as co-ordination, counselling and pedagogical supervision, are exercised by teachers. In the 2010 model, these roles were typically allocated to teachers in career rank 4 or above, *i.e.* teachers with 20 years or more of professional experience, with preference given to those who had a qualification (post-graduate education) for such specialised functions. Rapporteurs had to be from the same recruitment group (subject area) as the teacher to be appraised and had to have the same or a higher rank in the career ladder. In the 2011 teacher appraisal model, the internal evaluator is the department co-ordinator or a teacher designated by him/her. The external evaluator (for classroom observation) is a teacher external to the school who belongs to a pool of trained external evaluators organised by the Ministry. In both cases, evaluators have to: be from the same subject group as the teacher being appraised; have a qualification or experience in evaluation or pedagogical supervision; and have the same or a higher rank in the career ladder.

In the 2010 model, for teachers on the highest ranks, the rapporteur had to be the department co-ordinator provided that s/he was from the same recruitment group.

Rapporteurs themselves were appraised by the department co-ordinators, and department co-ordinators were appraised by the school directors. In the 2011 model, school directors appraise heads of department and teachers with roles in the management of the school.

The teacher appraisal system requires building the capacity of teachers to undertake effective appraisals of their peers. In order to prepare the implementation of the 2010 model, the then Ministry of Education took a range of initiatives. To enhance capacity at the school level, it entered into a contract with a higher education institution as the managing organisation responsible for launching an in-service training system for teacher appraisal. In the first half of 2011, 50 teachers with a Master's degree in the field of evaluation were identified from Portugal's five educational regions to participate in specialised training on teacher appraisal including classroom observation. In this post-graduate training, particular emphasis was placed on classroom observation, as this was seen as the area that could have the greatest impact on improving teaching and learning. Upon completion of the training, it was expected that this first group of highly qualified teachers would be able to act as multipliers and provide training in teacher appraisal to the rapporteurs in schools who were evaluating their peers. The new 2011 model proposes that the 2011/12 school year is used to appropriately prepare the implementation of the model in 2012/13 and it is expected that a range of training opportunities in teacher appraisal are offered.

Using appraisal results

A number of consequences are attached to teacher appraisal. The appraisal results are used to make decisions about career progression and monetary rewards for teachers (for the 2010 model only) as well as to identify individual professional development needs.

The teacher appraisal model, in both its 2010 and 2011 versions, strengthens the direct relationship between performance appraisal and career progression. The link, as determined by the 2010 model, was as follows (in brackets, the respective rule in the 2011 model) (see career structure in Box 4.1):

- The teacher receives a bonus of one year in the career progression (*i.e.* advances one extra step within a rank) if s/he obtained two consecutive “excellent” classifications or a sequence “excellent” and “very good” (regardless of the order) in two consecutive appraisals [for the 2011 model: the same reward if the teacher obtains the classification of “excellent” in the four-year appraisal cycle].
- The teacher receives a bonus of half a year in the career progression if s/he obtained two consecutive “very good” classifications in the two previous appraisals [for the 2011 model: the same reward if the teacher obtains the classification of “very good” in the four-year appraisal cycle].
- Advancement to ranks 5 and 7 is conditional on there being a vacancy in the school, except for teachers who received a “very good” or “excellent” classification in their performance appraisal [similar for both the 2010 and 2011 models].
- The teacher must have obtained at least the classification “good” in his/her previous two performance appraisals to have the corresponding time s/he worked taken into account for career progression (the “regular” step) [for both the 2010 and 2011 models]. This also applies for the conversion to a permanent post following a probationary period.

- The classifications of “regular” and “insufficient” implied that the respective time the teacher worked was not to be taken into account for career progression [in the 2011 model, for the classification of “regular”, the respective time is credited for career progression to the teacher only after the successful completion of a professional development plan; for the “insufficient” classification, there is no credit of the respective time for career progression, a new appraisal is initiated and the teacher must undertake a mandatory professional development plan].

In the 2010 model it was intended to award a monetary performance bonus to tenured teachers who received a “very good” or “excellent” mark in two consecutive or three non-consecutive performance appraisals (the amount of this monetary reward was still to be established). The 2011 model no longer provides for this possibility.

Both the 2010 and 2011 appraisal models aim to attach great value to the development dimension of teacher appraisal. The teacher appraisal process is intended to help identify areas for improvement and prepare individual improvement plans for teachers that should take into account the overall school development plan (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). In the 2010 model, the appraisal jury in each school was not only responsible for conducting teacher appraisal, but also for developing recommendations to improve pedagogical practices in the school. To this end, the jury approved individual training programmes for teachers having obtained a “regular” or “insufficient” classification in their appraisal. In the 2011 model, the Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance approves the individual training programme for teachers who obtained an “insufficient” classification in their appraisal. However, in general, the appraisal of teachers does not require the preparation of an individual professional development plan even if it is supposed to influence it.

Box 4.1 The teaching profession in Portugal – Main features

Employment status

Teachers with permanent tenure are civil servants and their employment conditions follow the general rules established for public sector workers. Teachers can secure a permanent post within a non-grouped school or a school cluster or within a pedagogical zone. Qualified teachers can also be hired on fixed-term contracts. In fact, beginning teachers almost always start with a fixed-term contract, with a view to the temporary substitution of teachers, in the context of the recruitment of trainers for vocational/professional areas, and for curricular enrichment activities and projects to combat school failure. Data from TALIS indicate that the proportion of lower secondary education teachers permanently employed stood at 67.6% in 2007/08, the lowest such proportion among the countries analysed.

Recruitment of teachers

Access to permanent positions is determined centrally through a public competition at the national level. Following their application, candidates are ranked on a list on the basis of the nature of their current link with the administration (permanent, temporary, or with no ties in the case of a first placement), the average grade obtained in their initial higher education studies and the length of service. The top candidates are then deployed to schools according to their preferences. This teacher placement model implies that the great majority of new teachers have to apply every year, in the hope of being placed closer to their place of residence. Since 2006/07, schools are allowed to hire contract teachers to meet their extra needs. Schools are responsible for the job offers and define the selection criteria according to national norms.

Box 4.1 The teaching profession in Portugal – Main features (*continued*)

As of the 2009/10 school year, the legally required qualifications to access the profession (through a permanent or a temporary post) consist of a teaching higher education degree with both scientific and pedagogical components. Definite qualified teacher status will only be reached upon the successful completion of a probationary period, which verifies if the teacher has the ability to adapt to the demands of professional performance. The probationary year corresponds to the first year in which the teacher obtains a position on the staff of a school.

Career structure

While there used to be two career categories (teacher and senior teacher) for the period 2007-10, there is currently only one category (that of teacher) with ten ranks. Each rank is associated with a distinct pay index. Each rank has a nominal duration of four years (*i.e.* there are four steps within each rank and, subject to certain conditions, teachers progress one step for each year of work), except for the fifth rank which has a duration of two years. Teachers in the higher ranks are allocated additional specialised functions.

Initial teacher education

Initial teacher education is a requirement to enter the profession. It is provided in (1) universities, which confer qualifications for all levels and areas of education; and (2) teacher education colleges (*Escolas Superiores de Educação*), which qualify pre-primary teachers and teachers for the first and second cycles of basic education. Initial teacher education typically includes the following components: (i) personal, social, cultural, scientific, technological or artistic training suited to future teaching; (ii) education sciences; (iii) teaching practice supervised by the training institution, in co-operation with the school where the teaching practice takes place. There are three major models: the integrated model (combining both disciplinary and pedagogical preparation), the sequential model (disciplinary preparation followed by pedagogical preparation) and the in-service professional model. Each of these models is organised with reference to the legal framework of teacher education and in accordance with the pedagogical autonomy granted to higher education institutions. A reform of initial teacher education was initiated in 2007/08. It essentially entails the reorganisation of the curricula, the extension of the scope of the training to encompass more than one level or cycle of education, mechanisms to provide incentives for quality and innovation, and qualifications by subject area.

Teacher professional development

Teachers in Portugal have access to a variety of professional development activities with more traditional forms, such as courses, modules, single subjects and seminars, coexisting with other forms that are provided in schools, such as training workshops, internship projects and study circles. Levels of participation are similar to the OECD average. In 2007/08, the percentage of lower secondary teachers who undertook some professional development in the 18 months prior to the TALIS survey was 85.8%, slightly below the TALIS average of 88.5%. A variety of providers exist, including: higher education institutions, municipally and inter-municipally-based training centres, made up of schools which are associated for this effect (Schools Association Training Centres, *Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas*, CFAE), professional and scientific association training centres, and central or regional educational administration services. Two recent developments are particularly noteworthy: professional development activities are no longer automatically associated with career progression; and it was determined that training plans (both individual and school ones) will need to be based on both school developmental needs and individual teacher needs identified through teacher performance appraisal.

Source: Santiago *et al.* (2009) and Ministry of Education (forthcoming).

Strengths

Strong political will and growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal

In less than five years since 2007, Portugal has come far in developing a comprehensive framework for teacher appraisal. With the launch of a new system-wide model for teacher appraisal in 2010, the national authorities clearly communicated the need to strengthen teacher appraisal as a priority for the education sector. The government in office since June 2011 confirmed the intention to establish teacher appraisal as a regular practice in the Portuguese school system with the approval of a new model to operate as of 2012/13. This is an ambitious policy given that there is little tradition of pedagogical evaluation in the Portuguese education system. The prevailing culture in Portuguese schools has not been one where school leaders or teacher peers could routinely be involved in the observation of teachers with an evaluative or developmental focus. The systematic introduction of appraisal for all teachers thus constitutes a break with established practice and requires a large culture shift in schools.

The development of a new system for teacher appraisal was needed to address a number of weaknesses in the organisation of the teaching profession in Portugal. It was perceived that the teacher appraisal model in place since the 1990s did not fulfil the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning. There had not been a well-established system to ensure that teachers' individual development needs were identified and followed up with adequate opportunities for continuous professional learning. In addition, there were few incentives for teachers to improve their practice as career progression was not related to enhanced competence as a teacher (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). The development of meaningful teacher appraisal has the potential to remedy these shortcomings by incentivising, supporting and rewarding high quality teaching, which in turn is likely to improve student learning and raise education performance.

As pointed out by Santiago *et al.* (2009), it took considerable political courage to place teacher appraisal, a highly sensitive policy area, at the heart of school reform. The implementation of the new teacher appraisal approach since 2007 was highly contested and led to a national protest movement by teacher unions (for a more detailed description of the implementation process, see Santiago *et al.*, 2009 and Ministry of Education, forthcoming). However, despite the highly contentious debate about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal, a general consensus appears to have emerged among teachers regarding the need for teachers to be evaluated, receive professional feedback, improve their practice and have their achievements recognised. The recognition of teacher appraisal as a positive and necessary process by most teachers is an important outcome of the process in itself. The OECD review team formed the view that there was indeed wide agreement about the necessity to grow and sustain a formative appraisal and support culture. While there are strong differences in views about the way teacher appraisal should be conducted, the idea and intention of creating an evaluation culture within schools and developing the professional capabilities of teachers appears widely shared.

Teacher appraisal procedures are rooted in some good principles

In a very short period of time, the Portuguese education system has developed a comprehensive teacher appraisal system that includes most domains of teacher performance and a wide range of instruments and data sources. As described in detail by

Santiago *et al.* (2009), the system as developed since 2007 is based on a number of good principles reflecting what has been identified as good teacher appraisal practice internationally:

- **A focus on improvement of teaching practice.** Appropriately teacher appraisal is intended to identify areas of improvement for individual teachers, and lead to the preparation of individual improvement plans (including professional development) which take into account the overall school development plan. While such an objective exists, it is not yet fully reflected in practice (see below). For both the 2010 and 2011 models, professional development plans are only required when the appraisal of a teacher results in a classification of “regular” or “insufficient”.
- **The principle of career advancement on merit.** With its consequences on career progression, the teacher appraisal model provides opportunities to recognise and reward teaching competence and performance, which is essential to retain effective teachers in schools as well as to make teaching an attractive career choice (OECD, 2005).
- **A process sensitive to the school context.** Teacher appraisal is organised at the school level, takes account of the school context, and is mostly a process internal to schools. As schools have to respond to different needs depending on local context, it is important that teachers are appraised in relation to reference standards that account for their school’s objectives and context. However, as planned in the 2010 model, it is important to establish standards at the national level so what is expected from a quality teacher is the same across schools in the country. The model approved in 2011, with the exception of the optional external classroom observations for which national-level parameters will be established, conceives teacher appraisal as a purely internal process with reference standards defined at the school level. This risks leading to very diverse practices across schools with different understandings of what constitutes quality teaching.
- **Some focus on classroom observation.** As teaching practices and evidence of learning are probably the most relevant sources of information about professional performance, the role given to classroom observation in the teacher appraisal model is appropriate. It is encouraging that at the time of the review visit 40% of teachers had requested a classroom observation (compared to only 16.5% in the first appraisal cycle). It is unfortunate that in the 2011 model, the role of classroom observation is reduced as, with the exception of teachers placed in the second and fourth ranks and those with an “insufficient” classification, it is required only to obtain the top classification of “excellent”.
- **The importance of self-reflection.** The increased focus on self-appraisal was a positive element of the revised 2010 teacher appraisal model, as well as the possibility to request an interview with the evaluator after the appraisal process. The perspective of the teacher being evaluated is essential, because it allows evaluatees to express their own views about their performance and reflect on the personal, organisational and institutional factors that had an impact on their teaching. The 2011 model reinforces the importance of self-appraisal but no longer provides for the possibility of a professional formal interaction between the evaluator and the teacher being appraised.

- **Multiple sources of evidence and multiple evaluators.** The teacher appraisal model is comprehensive, includes most domains of teacher performance, a range of sources of data, provides for more than one evaluator and is based strongly on peer review. All these elements contribute to meeting the need for accuracy and fairness in the appraisal process (Isoré, 2009). The 2011 model has the advantage of introducing an element external to the school, which has the potential to provide some consistency of judgment in classroom observation across schools.

There has been a commitment to building teacher appraisal on research evidence

The concern of the Portuguese authorities to build teacher appraisal on research evidence and recognised good practice has been a clear strength of the system. In 2007, the then Ministry of Education set up the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP) as a consultative body to supervise and monitor the implementation of teacher appraisal. As a result of the recent rationalisation of education services undertaken by the government in office since June 2011, the CCAP ceased its functions in late 2011. The CCAP brought together educational researchers and distinguished teachers and as such was in a good position to recognise good evaluation practices, be informed of relevant research developments and provide evidence-based advice (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

Since its creation, the CCAP followed the implementation of the first appraisal cycle (2007-09) and issued a range of research-based opinions and recommendations regarding the design and implementation of the system. In July 2010, it published an evaluation report about the first teacher appraisal cycle, drawing from a questionnaire-based survey of school professionals. The report provided a range of qualitative and some quantitative elements to describe the application of the model in 30 schools across Portugal. Its investigation pointed out strengths and weaknesses of the first appraisal model and suggested improvements to ensure that appraisal could be mainstreamed in the regular work of schools.

There is evidence that the results from CCAP's monitoring activities have been taken seriously and contributed to developing the revised 2010 model. The monitoring of the first appraisal cycle has allowed collecting a range of performance appraisal indicators from schools that have informed the standards and guidelines developed for the 2010 model. Based on findings from the first teacher appraisal cycle, the CCAP developed a set of draft standards for teaching performance in June 2010, a revised version of which was adopted by the Ministry of Education in October 2010 (more on this below). The CCAP also developed the Overall Appraisal Form to be used by rapporteurs in the 2010 model to report on the outcomes of the teacher appraisal process for individual teachers.

Teaching standards have been developed to guide the appraisal process

The establishment of teaching standards that provide a clear and concise profile of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do was a very positive development associated with the implementation of the 2010 teacher appraisal model. Prior to 2010, the Ministry of Education had provided key dimensions for teacher appraisal but the expectations for teacher performance were expressed in a rather general way and there were no indicators, criteria or performance illustrations. The framework allowed for diverse interpretations and schools were expected to develop their own forms for teacher appraisal, which proved to be a challenging task for many of them. Given these difficulties, the CCAP engaged in the preparation of a set of more comprehensive teaching standards.

The standards developed for the 2010 model provided indicators of the types of activities that should be considered when judging performance in a particular dimension of teaching practices. They also gave a list of descriptors of teaching practice at five different levels of performance corresponding to the five qualitative classifications ranging from “insufficient” to “excellent”. The fact that, at this stage, the 2011 appraisal model does not involve the use of national teaching standards is a source of concern. Teacher appraisal conducted within schools is to be based on references developed within each individual school with the clear risk that standards across schools will differ considerably, leading to diverse interpretations of quality teaching practice.

There are articulations between teacher appraisal and school evaluation

In Portugal, there is a clear intention to articulate teacher appraisal and external school evaluation. The Inspectorate holds responsibility for monitoring the teacher appraisal process, within the framework of its competences – the management of teacher appraisal is one area for inspection in the second cycle of school inspections initiated in 2011 (see Chapter 5). Also, the quotas for “very good” and “excellent” classifications that schools are allowed to award in teacher appraisal will be linked to the classifications schools receive in the external evaluation conducted by the Inspectorate. The articulation between teacher appraisal and school inspection can help ensure that all teachers are indeed appraised as part of school-based processes and that the school director is held accountable for the implementation of effective teacher appraisal practices.

Teacher appraisal is also linked to school self-evaluation and school development. The teacher appraisal process is strongly school-based and objectives set by schools in their education projects and plans are one of the key references guiding the teacher appraisal process. In theory, the appraisal model also emphasises that the professional development of individual teachers should be linked to the overall training plans established by schools to respond to school priorities while at the same time addressing identified professional development needs among the teaching staff. There are, however, challenges in implementing this articulation between teacher professional development and school development (more on this below).

Challenges

There is insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice

Despite the intention of the revised teacher appraisal models (both 2010 and 2011) to place greater emphasis on the developmental dimension, the review team formed the impression that, in practice, there was still insufficient focus on the improvement function of teacher appraisal. As described below, this is due to a range of factors including tensions between the career progression and improvement functions of appraisal, limited opportunities for feedback on teaching practices, and insufficient linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development.

Tensions between the improvement and career progression functions of teacher appraisal

Several teachers interviewed by the review team indicated that they perceived the appraisal model to be punitive rather than formative. This is closely linked to the fact that the Portuguese teacher appraisal model (in both its 2010 and 2011 versions) aims to combine developmental appraisal and career-progression appraisal in a single process. As

detailed by Santiago *et al.* (2009), combining these two functions in the same process raises a number of challenges. When teachers are confronted with high-stakes consequences of appraisal on their career and salary, they are likely to be less inclined to reveal weak aspects of their practice and focus on their own potential for development, which in turn jeopardises the improvement function. As such, self-appraisal of teachers (an important instrument in Portugal), might be less meaningful when it is associated with a process with high stakes for teachers. In the schools visited by the review team, there appeared to be an over-emphasis on assigning marks and classifying teachers for career progression, with less attention paid to genuine professional discussions about effective teaching. Hence, despite the policy focus on improving teaching practice, the perception of teacher appraisal in the education sector and society is still more strongly focused on the controlling and accountability aspects.

Teacher appraisal provides few opportunities for feedback on teaching practice

In its current form, the teacher appraisal model does not provide a consistent means to build a school-level professional development culture based on a thorough evaluation of teaching practices. Classroom observations are not a systematic part of the formal appraisal of each teacher – and even less so in the 2011 model – and there is little tradition for school leaders or teacher peers to conduct informal classroom observations with an evaluative focus. In Portugal, according to TALIS results, direct appraisal of classroom teaching received relatively little emphasis in assessing teaching and teachers' work (20th country among 23 TALIS countries according to teachers' perceptions, see Annex D). The Inspectorate does not conduct classroom observation either. Given that classroom observation as part of teacher appraisal is voluntary (with the exception of some specific cases), the teachers most in need of constructive feedback and professional development might not have their teaching practice observed as part of the appraisal process. The fact that the appraisal has high stakes for teachers' careers and salaries might discourage less confident teachers from requesting classroom observations. Teachers who do request classroom observation to be part of their appraisal are informed beforehand of the date of the observation. Hence, their teaching performance on this particular day is unlikely to be an authentic reflection of a regular lesson. Some teachers described to the review team that they spent much time preparing a sophisticated lesson for the observation, which creates extra work for them and reduces the relevance of feedback for their regular teaching practice. In addition, the teacher appraisal process does not generate professional discussions between the teacher being evaluated and the evaluator, especially following the elimination of the optional interview between the two parts by the 2011 model. Finally, the 2011 model introduces two features which might deserve further reflection: (i) in the internal evaluation, the scientific-pedagogic expertise of the teacher (one of three dimensions of teacher appraisal) is appraised with no classroom observation; and (ii) a teacher can actually move faster in the career structure with no classes observed.

Linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development could be further developed

Another key element in ensuring the effectiveness of the link between appraisal and improvement is whether adequate learning opportunities for teachers are available. Currently, it appears that many schools still struggle to connect the appraisal appropriately to professional development and improvement. The regulations and guidelines regarding teacher appraisal do not provide detailed indications about how the formative dimension of

teacher appraisal should be implemented. It is expected that schools take responsibility for managing whole-school strategies for professional development.

Schools are required to set up school training plans that are then considered by Regional Training Centres when developing the training offer for the region. However, teachers mentioned that the training offered by these centres was often insufficient or inadequate to meet their professional development needs. The review team formed the impression that the overall support and training structure for teachers had not changed enough to equip teachers with expertise on effective and innovative teaching practice necessary to respond to the diverse educational needs of 21st century learners. For example, the curriculum was described by several stakeholders as outdated and not providing guidance regarding principles of effective pedagogy and assessment to maximise learner success. There is also a lack of emphasis nationally on the dissemination of research and expertise on high quality teaching. For teachers to be able to use appraisal results to improve their practice, it is important that expertise on effective teaching practice is readily available and permeates all aspects of education policy.

Teachers expressed a strong need to have better access to professional learning regarding effective pedagogy. While the review team did not have the opportunity to observe any classes, from our discussions with students, teachers and other stakeholders, our impression was that the dominant teaching approach was a traditional one characterised by strong reliance on textbooks and knowledge transmission, and often driven by the preparation for paper-based examinations, which appears to have led to an under-emphasis on inquiry-based teaching and learner agency (Chapter 3). Several teachers interviewed by the review team voiced concern that their traditional teaching approaches appeared to “work” less well with an increasingly international and diverse student body. As compulsory schooling was just extended to 12 years, there will also be much greater diversity in student backgrounds and educational needs among students staying on in secondary education and some teachers expressed that they lacked effective strategies to motivate and engage all their students.

The review team also formed the view that the provision of professional development appears not systematically linked to teacher appraisal. This was certainly the case before the introduction of a formal model of teacher appraisal in Portugal. According to TALIS, in 2007/08, only 26.8% of teachers of lower secondary education reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received directly led to or involved moderate or large changes in a teacher development or training plan to improve their teaching (ninth lowest figure, against a TALIS average of 37.4%). Also, in 2007/08, only 11.3% of teachers of lower secondary education reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received led to a moderate or large change in opportunities for professional development activities (fourth lowest figure, against a TALIS average of 23.7%). The situation is likely not to have improved significantly with the introduction of formal teacher appraisal processes. In most cases, the identification of professional development needs is not a requirement of established teacher appraisal practices. In both the 2010 and 2011 models, a professional development plan which results from teacher appraisal is only a requirement for teachers classified as “regular” or “insufficient”. Without a clear link to professional development opportunities, the appraisal process is not sufficient to improve teacher performance and, as a result, often becomes a meaningless exercise that encounters mistrust – or at best apathy – on the part of teachers being evaluated (Danielson, 2001; Milanowski and Kimball, 2003; Margo *et al.*, 2008).

The extent of externality in teacher appraisal is limited

Teacher appraisal, according to the 2010 model, was school based and did not involve agents external to the school even if the existence of national standards of teacher performance sought to ensure consistency of appraisals across schools. Teacher appraisal was organised by the school Performance Evaluation and evaluators were teachers based in the school.

The limited extent of externality in teacher appraisal raises a number of challenges. Teachers are appraised according to local judgments and, when no national standards of teacher performance are used, according to local appraisal criteria. Teachers are also entirely dependent on local capacity and willingness to benefit from opportunities to improve their practice and see their professional development recognised. The involvement of some externality in teacher appraisal can provide an element of distance and rigour which can be particularly valuable in validating school-based approaches to teacher appraisal. It can also ensure some consistency of practices across schools and make appraisal fairer for teachers.

The 2011 model is mostly school based but has the merit of introducing an external component, associated with the observation of classes. It is planned to train external evaluators to undertake classroom observation according to national-level parameters, which serves the objective of ensuring greater consistency and fairness in judgment across schools and teachers. However, the internal component of teacher appraisal will be conducted using only internal references and criteria, which risks to bring incoherence of practices across schools.

There is a tension between school-level appraisal and national-level consequences

Since the teaching career, salary scales and competitions for permanent posts are defined at the national level, consequences of a school-based teacher appraisal model go clearly beyond the school. These include progression within the career, chances to access ranks 5 and 7 of the career with no need for a vacancy to be available, chances to access a permanent post upon completion of the probationary period, and chances to get the contract renewed for teachers on fixed-term contracts.

The 2010 model, while a school-based model in terms of its implementation, had the merit to be guided by national standards for teacher performance and used a minimum national core of evaluation items and criteria. The 2011 model provides for a dominant internal appraisal component, which is based on references determined at the school (school educational project; and evaluation parameters established by the pedagogical council for each of the three dimensions of appraisal). This risks a lack of consistency and equity in career progression as a result of different standards applied to teacher appraisal across schools. There is a clear tension between school-level standards for teacher appraisal and national-level consequences of teacher appraisal.

Competencies for teacher appraisal are still underdeveloped

While peer review can be an important source of feedback for teachers to improve their practice, the limited focus on developing the appraisal competencies of evaluators has raised a number of challenges. Most evaluators who undertook teacher appraisal in the implementation of the 2010 model had not been specifically trained for this function. In most schools, the existing expertise regarding teacher appraisal is limited. In particular, for the implementation of the 2010 model, by the time of the review visit, evaluators had

not yet received proper training to appraise teachers in relation to the then recently introduced teaching standards. Hence, the point of reference of the evaluator tended to be his/her own teaching practice rather than a deep understanding of the level of performance that can be achieved by the most effective teachers in relation to the dimensions set out in the teaching standards.

Given the limited experience and expertise regarding teacher appraisal in many schools, there were large variations in the quality and rigour of the process across schools during the implementation of the 2010 model. There was a tendency of evaluators to spend a large amount of time and effort to emulate the standard templates established by the Ministry of Education rather than engaging in reflective discussions. Several of the designated evaluators conveyed to the review team that they felt uncomfortable with their new role. A concern to ensure objectivity and fairness in appraisal had led some schools to develop highly complex procedures that ended up being more time-consuming and bureaucratic than intended. Given the lack of preparedness of many evaluators, there appeared to be a reluctance to exercise professional judgement, which may partly explain the overreliance on matrices, forms and paper-based evaluation. As there were variations in the appraisal capabilities of evaluators, the marks awarded to teachers across different schools were unlikely to be consistent. It will take time to develop the expertise and moderation arrangements to make comparable judgements and award fair marks in teacher appraisal across schools.

The then Ministry of Education recognised this challenge and had taken steps towards organising a structure to provide relevant in-service training for evaluators. However, it will take time to upscale a whole cohort of evaluators to ensure consistently effective practice. Higher education institutions in Portugal have only recently begun to offer Master's degrees related to educational evaluation, and there is only one institution offering a specific programme related to teacher appraisal. While there is political will to ensure a greater focus of initial teacher education on evaluation in education, it is a sensitive and difficult area because higher education institutions are autonomous and have their own culture and focus. As there are not enough individuals with the expertise to provide training, the available offer does not meet the strong demand for training in evaluation. Much of the existing professional development offer comes from private institutions where teachers need to pay to participate.

A related challenge is that, in the models implemented thus far, the evaluators did not have the needed legitimacy in the eyes of evaluatees to be perceived as a credible source of feedback. There are concerns about the objectivity and independence of evaluators who are, in fact, colleagues of the evaluatees and are not necessarily recognised by others as highly effective teachers themselves. While seniority is an important criterion to be selected as evaluator, length of service does not necessarily determine whether a teacher is well placed to evaluate others in a high-stakes context. In addition, in the system of quotas for the highest marks, evaluators might actually be competing with evaluatees for “very good” and “excellent” marks, which provide faster access to career progressions and salary increments. This context of competition undermines the possibility to create a professional culture where there could be genuine discussion and collective learning regarding pedagogical directions and high quality teaching strategies.

School leadership could play a stronger role in fostering teacher appraisal and feedback cultures

Given that teacher appraisal is relatively recent in Portugal, it is not surprising that the process still appears fragmented and *ad-hoc* in many schools, conducted largely to satisfy national requirements rather than an ongoing process that is mainstreamed into the work of the school. While some schools have collaborative structures and regular feedback mechanisms in place, whether such practice exists varies among schools, and largely depends on school leadership. In many schools, educational leadership practices are still incipient. There is no mandatory pre-service training for school leadership and many directors have not had professional development in teacher appraisal and feedback methods, which may reduce their willingness and capacity to engage in observing and guiding their teachers.

A major reform of school leadership policy was implemented in 2008, moving from a *primus inter pares* model to one where the school director is given greater responsibility for management and leadership (see Chapter 1). While the reform has given school leaders much greater powers and responsibilities, school directors do not yet appear to take responsibility for the leadership of pedagogy and for the quality of education at the point of delivery. School leaders interviewed by the review team explained that they had few opportunities to influence teaching quality because they cannot select their own teaching staff. Teachers are hired and allocated to schools in a national process and they are largely regarded as autonomous experts within their classroom. As there is little tradition of pedagogical leadership in Portugal, most school directors adopt an approach where teachers are largely left on their own unless major problems arise. There has not been a culture where school directors or teacher peers could routinely enter another teacher's classroom with a view to observe and provide feedback on the teacher's practice. There appear to be few interactions between teachers and school leadership regarding pedagogical directions and approaches.

The introduction of teacher appraisal could have been a possibility to provide greater leverage to school directors to engage in leading the core business of teaching and learning in their school. But, quite the contrary, the appraisal approach has taken the responsibility for teacher appraisal away from the school leaders. Neither the 2010 model nor the 2011 model grant the director an active role in the actual appraisal process, which appears to further weaken their pedagogical role. While school directors are responsible for ensuring that appraisal is in line with national and school objectives, in practice they play a limited role in the school-based appraisal processes. For example, during the implementation of the 2010 model in the schools visited by the review team, the school leader did not organise group meetings with the rapporteurs in the school so as to determine common approaches to appraisal or discuss the results with a focus on whole-school evaluation of teaching.

There are concerns about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal

While at the national level, a lot of effort has gone into conceptualising a comprehensive model for teacher appraisal, a number of elements have made implementation difficult. There appears to be insufficient ownership of the teacher appraisal model by school professionals. Beyond natural resistance to change in a highly sensitive area, there are a number of factors in operationalising the reforms that have created a sense of instability and frustration among stakeholders.

First, implementation has been rushed without planning for an adequate trial or pilot period. Key aspects of legislation and essential guidelines regarding the different aspects of teacher appraisal were developed only after the model was already in place. For example, the teaching standards were implemented only in 2010, after completion of the first teacher appraisal cycle. As a result of the model being implemented at a fast pace, many changes, adaptations and improvements were made to the model successively, leading to instability of approaches and frustration among professionals. The constant changes of key appraisal elements make it difficult to monitor the impact and effectiveness of different approaches. The new model approved in 2011 provides for a year of preparation before implementation in 2012/13. It is expected that school agents will engage for about a year in training and planning for the effective launch of the new model.

Second, challenges in the implementation of teacher appraisal are not only linked to its pace but also to the limited preparedness of schools. As mentioned above, there is little tradition or culture for ongoing teacher appraisal in Portugal and the capacity of evaluators still needs to be built for teacher appraisal to be effective and fair. In addition, many school directors and teachers felt overwhelmed by the introduction of teacher appraisal as it happened simultaneously to a range of other reforms including curricular changes and a reorganisation of school management structures.

Third, there have been a number of unintended consequences in the implementation of teacher appraisal. For example, while the model had intended to strengthen collaborative practice and peer learning in schools, the quota system for awarding marks has resulted in competition rather than co-operation. In the schools visited by the review team, professionals voiced concerns about the negative impact of teacher appraisal on the school climate and interpersonal relationships. Also, given schools' insecurity regarding teacher appraisal, processes in schools have often become more bureaucratic, paper-based and time-consuming than intended (see above). The model approved in 2011 seeks to address these issues by simplified processes and reducing the paperwork.

Fourth, due to the economic and financial crisis, the government has decided to freeze career and salary progression in the public sector. This undermines the career progression function of teacher appraisal that is so strongly emphasised. This might lead to a lack of motivation among teachers to take the appraisal seriously, including requesting classroom observation, and reduces incentives for teachers to improve their performance.

Policy recommendations

In a very short time span, Portugal has developed an ambitious and comprehensive model for teacher appraisal. To further develop the model with a view to maximise its positive impact on teaching and learning, the OECD review team proposes the following broad approach, which is in line with the suggestions made by the 2009 OECD Review of Teacher Evaluation in Portugal (Santiago *et al.*, 2009):

- Ensure the centrality of teaching standards.
- Refocus teacher appraisal on improvement, by supporting regular formative feedback and adequate professional development opportunities.
- Strengthen the appraisal model for career progression and enhance the capacity of evaluators to make reliable summative judgements.
- Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal.

- Develop longer term planning for the implementation of teacher appraisal, based on evidence from the first two appraisal cycles.

Ensure the centrality of teaching standards

Teaching standards are a key element in any teacher appraisal system as they provide credible reference points for making judgements about teacher competence (see discussion in Isoré, 2009, or Santiago and Benavides, 2009). As noted earlier, a very positive development of the 2010 model was the creation of national standards of teacher performance with a shared understanding of what counts as accomplished teaching to provide the basis for appraising teachers. The teacher appraisal model approved in 2011 has not included thus far national teaching standards among its features, which raises concerns about the lack of a solid reference against which teachers are appraised.

A framework of teaching standards is essential as a reference for teacher appraisal and therefore it should be given priority in the design of any teacher appraisal model. The standards are a key element to ensure that all evaluators across Portugal have a common understanding of different levels of teaching performance and help achieve greater consistency and fairness in evaluators' judgements. Further, the standards strengthen the capacity for educational authorities to effectively assess whether teacher performance meets the needs of school education and whether teachers have attained given levels of competence. They also offer the potential to frame and align the organisation of the key elements of the teaching profession such as initial teacher education, professional development, career advancement and teacher appraisal. This reinforces the effective use of standards as a lever for the improvement of teaching practices.

A reference contribution in this area is Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Danielson's Framework for Teaching

Danielson's *Framework* is articulated to provide at the same time “a ‘road map’ to guide novice teachers through their initial classroom experiences, a structure to help experienced professionals become more effective, and a means to focus improvement efforts”. It groups teachers' responsibilities into four major areas further divided into components:

- *Planning and Preparation*: demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy; demonstrating knowledge of students; selecting instructional goals; designing coherent instruction; assessing student learning.
- *The Classroom Environment*: creating an environment of respect and rapport; establishing a culture for learning; managing classroom procedures; managing student behaviour and organising physical space.
- *Instruction*: communicating clearly and accurately; using questioning and discussion techniques; engaging students in learning; providing feedback to students; demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.
- *Professional Responsibilities*: reflecting on teaching; maintaining accurate records; communicating with families; contributing to the school and community; growing and developing professionally; showing professionalism.

Source: Danielson (1996; 2007).

Danielson's framework has influenced a large number of teacher appraisal systems around the world. An example can be found in the *Professional Standards for Teachers in England* (TDA, 2007). These standards cover all aspects grouped into "professional attributes", "professional knowledge and judgment" and "professional skills". Moreover, the standards differentiate in several stages from what can be expected of the newly qualified teacher to the standard expected of excellent and advanced skills teachers. Other examples are provided in Isoré (2009).

Refocus teacher appraisal on improvement

Meaningful teacher appraisal should aim at teacher development and improvement in teaching and learning processes. It can help teachers develop their competencies by recognising strengths on which they can build and identifying weaknesses to be addressed by suitable professional development. To resolve tensions between the improvement function and the career progression function of teacher appraisal, the review team endorses the recommendations made by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009) to disconnect regular developmental appraisal somewhat from the more formal career-progression appraisal focus. While links between the two aspects should be assured, it is difficult to achieve both aims in a single process conducted only every two years (or every four years, following the approval of the 2011 model).

Embed appraisal for teacher development and improvement in regular school practice

If they are well designed, systems of teacher appraisal and feedback can be powerful levers to increase teacher effectiveness and achieve better student learning outcomes. However, if they are not linked to better classroom teaching and teacher development, teacher appraisal processes may become mere administrative exercises with little impact on education outcomes (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

As the current model may hamper the improvement function of teacher appraisal (see above), it would be desirable to develop a component of teacher appraisal fully dedicated to developmental appraisal. Such developmental appraisal would benefit from a non-threatening evaluation context, a culture of mutually providing and receiving feedback within the school, simple evaluation instruments, supportive school leadership, opportunities for professional development and close linkages to school self-evaluation (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). It should not be associated with a rating or labelling of teacher performance but should focus on identifying areas for improvement and follow-up with adequate learning opportunities. The point of such formative appraisal is that over time it becomes embedded and mainstreamed in regular school practice. According to Santiago *et al.* (2009, p. 45), "it can be low-key and low-cost, and include self-appraisal, peer evaluation, classroom observation, and structured conversations and regular feedback by the school director and experienced peers."

In the context of whole-school self-evaluation, a distinguishing feature of practices internationally is whether they are seen by school staff as an event or a habit (MacBeath and Dempster, 2008). Once self-evaluation becomes a habit and is fully embedded in schools' daily practice and teachers' thinking, the visit of an external body is neither disruptive nor unwelcome (Nusche *et al.*, 2012). The same can be applied to the appraisal of individual teachers. If teachers develop a culture of ongoing self-appraisal and engage regularly in peer observation and exchange with colleagues, then it will become more

natural and constructive for peers and the school director to enter classrooms and observe teaching practice with an evaluative focus.

Enhance opportunities for teachers to receive feedback on classroom practice

Regular, improvement-oriented appraisal and feedback approaches should involve both peer observation and observation of classroom teaching by the schools' pedagogical leaders. Peer observation can help teachers learn from each other, promote team teaching and build trust and mutual support among colleagues (Jensen and Reichl, 2011). Schools in Portugal are typically organised in departments bringing together several “subject groups”. In some schools, the subject groups provide a structure and forum to exchange good practice, share pedagogical directions and welcome new teachers. These subject groups seem well placed to organise teams for peer observation with swapping roles so that each teacher can both observe and be observed. Observation of classroom teaching by a member of the leadership team can further contribute to encouraging self-reflection, providing feedback, developing adequate improvement plans and recognising good teaching (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

Reinforce the linkages between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development

The linkages between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development need to be reinforced. Teacher appraisal is unlikely to produce effective results if it is not appropriately linked to professional development which, in turn, needs to be associated with school development if the improvement of teaching practices is to meet schools' needs. The results of teacher appraisal need to be more systematically linked to individual professional development plans as is currently the case (where only teachers appraised with “regular” and “insufficient” are provided with such a plan). Schools can learn from the strengths of effective teachers and implement professional development programmes that respond to their weaknesses.

Provide adequate professional development opportunities for teachers

While teachers requesting classroom observations are being appraised regarding the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, it appears that the opportunities for teachers to develop such strategies are limited. To shift the focus towards continuous improvement and reflective practice, the appraisal process needs to be embedded in a more general policy focus on disseminating evidence and expertise on highly effective teaching practice. Innovative, learner-centred teaching needs to be emphasised not only in a biennial feedback through teacher appraisal, but should be encouraged in a coherent way across the curriculum, initial education, induction, mentoring and professional development.

The focus of teacher appraisal should be to contribute to a knowledge-rich teaching profession in which teachers engage actively with new knowledge and benefit from support structures to generate improvement (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). International research has consistently emphasised that professional development is an essential component of successful school development and teacher growth, well-being and success (Day, 1999). Improving schools are able to invest in the development of their staff, and create opportunities for teachers to reflect, collaborate, access new ideas, experiment and share experiences and best practices within the school (Nusche *et al.*, 2011).

There is a need to envisage teachers' learning as something broader than participation in in-service training courses. According to Timperley (2011), the term “professional development” is now often associated with the delivery of some kind of information to teachers in order to influence their practice, whereas “professional learning” refers to a more internal process in which teachers create professional knowledge through interaction with this information in a way that challenges previous assumptions and creates new meanings. Such professional learning cultures need to be supported and sustained by effective pedagogical leadership providing adequate levels of challenge and support to teachers (this will be further explored below).

Connect teacher appraisal to school evaluation processes

To ensure that teacher appraisal processes are indeed conducted in a regular, systematic and coherent way across schools in Portugal, it is important that an external body provides a validation of school-level processes and holds the school director accountable for their effectiveness. To this end, the role of the Inspectorate in Portugal to monitor teacher appraisal processes is a very positive feature that needs to be maintained and strengthened.

To strengthen linkages between teacher appraisal and school improvement, it is also important to include a strong focus on the quality of teaching and learning in school self-evaluation processes. Currently, the focus of teacher appraisal is clearly on individual teacher performance and individual career progression. However, for the school as a whole to improve practices, it would be crucial to establish stronger links between teacher appraisal and school self-evaluation. For example, it would be helpful for evaluators to meet and discuss the outcomes of appraisal processes as well as to share ideas and review appraisal practices. This would allow school professionals to engage in discussions regarding how they want to develop as a teaching body, rather than just as individual teachers. School leadership can play a strong role in encouraging such practices and ensuring that evaluators are allocated time and space for such meetings to take place.

Strengthen the appraisal model for career progression and enhance the capacity of evaluators to make reliable summative judgements

The teacher appraisal model that has been introduced and adapted since 2007 forms a good basis for summative appraisal of teachers at key stages of their career. Such summative appraisal (or career-progression appraisal) should serve to maintain the principle of career advancement on merit, hold teachers accountable for their practice and complement the regular formative appraisal by providing an account of the ways in which it has contributed to professional development and improvement. It can provide incentives for teachers to perform at their best, bring recognition to effective teachers and help recognise and spread good practice more widely. It should also offer possibilities to move on consistently underperforming teachers who have not responded to development opportunities (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

The review team endorses the recommendation by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009) to simplify the 2010 model (and previous versions of the model) so as to reduce the administrative and organisational burden on schools, as long as the suggested developmental appraisal of teachers is introduced. As a first step to lighten the model, the Ministry should consider reducing the frequency of appraisals, depending on the career stage of the teacher. This has now been done with the approval of the 2011 model which has a cycle of four years. We would also suggest reconsidering the distribution of

responsibilities for appraisal within schools. In the 2010 model, a high number of people were involved in the appraisal process and the different steps to be taken were perceived as overly bureaucratic. The 2011 model has attempted to address these concerns in particular by reducing the number of instruments and limiting the evidence to be collected by the teacher being evaluated. However, it would be important to keep key features of an effective teacher appraisal model such as meaningful self-evaluation, classroom observation for each teacher appraised, opportunities for teachers to demonstrate their competence in individual portfolios (*e.g.* it is debatable whether limiting the self-appraisal report to three pages allows teachers to cover the wide range of aspects requested in the current 2011 model), and opportunities for professional discussions with evaluators during the appraisal process. More specifically, given the centrality of teaching and learning, a faster progression in the career should not be possible with no observation of classes; and the assessment of the scientific-pedagogic skills of teachers should involve classroom observation.

As will be explained in more detail below, we would suggest giving a greater role in teacher appraisal to the school leadership team, which would provide them with a much-needed opportunity to exercise pedagogical leadership and support improvement of teaching across the school. It would also help define a smaller group of people responsible for summative appraisal to whom professional development in this area should be targeted. This should go in line with a larger distribution of school leadership within schools, where deputy directors and middle leaders can hold specialised functions for areas such as evaluation, appraisal and assessment. To ensure their credibility, it is crucial that individuals with such leadership and evaluation responsibilities have priority in receiving adequate learning opportunities.

Given the high stakes that the formal appraisal is intended to carry for teachers in terms of career and salary progression (defined at the national level), it is essential that the judgements made by evaluators are reliable and fair within and across schools. In addition, given the national-level consequences of teacher appraisal in Portugal, it is essential that teachers are appraised against reference standards of teaching performance which are common across schools. To this end, it is crucial to further invest into building a solid professional development structure with a range of offers to develop the skills of evaluators, including their ability to appraise against national standards of teaching performance. As pointed out by Santiago *et al.* (2009), summative appraisal should include a school-external component to ensure the moderation and fairness of appraisals across schools. The appraisal could be undertaken jointly by a school-based evaluator, together with an accredited evaluator, typically a teacher from another school with expertise in the same subject area as the evaluatee. The active involvement of competent practitioners from another school can help make the process more efficient while at the same time fostering peer learning and knowledge sharing. The 2011 model introduces an external component to teacher appraisal, but limited to the application of classroom observation which is only a part of the appraisal and does not involve all teachers.

Ensure links between developmental appraisal and career-progression appraisal

Developmental appraisal and appraisal for career progression cannot be disconnected from each other. Designing a sound basis for their interface is of major importance. An immediate link is that career-progression appraisal needs to take into account the qualitative assessments produced through developmental appraisal, including the recommendations made for areas of improvement. This might also include an interaction between the external evaluator and internal evaluators in charge of developmental

appraisal. Similarly, results of career-progression appraisals can also inform the professional development of individual teachers and provide useful feedback for the improvement of developmental appraisal internal processes.

Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal

School leaders can play an essential role in making performance improvement a strategic imperative and to promote teacher appraisal as being key to teacher development and broader school policies. Research from different countries indicates that school leadership focused on monitoring teachers, giving feedback, planning teacher professional development and supporting collaborative work cultures can help improve teaching and learning approaches (Pont *et al.*, 2008; Robinson, 2007; Marzano *et al.*, 2005; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). But school leaders need to be prepared and supported in their educational leadership role in order to develop the necessary competencies and be credible in promoting teacher appraisal and improvement.

The role and function of the school director is a very new one in Portugal and most directors are still inexperienced in providing educational leadership. Prior to the 2008 reform, schools were led by teachers elected by their peers who hardly had any decision making powers and whose role was conceived as a largely administrative one (Ministry of Education, 2007, and Chapter 1). Hence, there is a need to build the capacity and credibility of the new school directors as educational leaders. School directors need to be equipped to focus thoroughly on the quality of teaching and learning and help set up the collaborative and trusting work environment necessary to embed a focus on continuous evaluation and improvement in the everyday work of teachers. The following elements could be part of a national strategy to strengthen the educational leadership role of school directors, with a focus on teacher appraisal and improvement (the following suggestions are based on Pont *et al.*, 2008):

- Redefine school leadership as educational leadership and provide refined statements of the core competencies expected of school directors, with recruitment directly targeted on those competencies (Nusche *et al.*, 2011). Evaluating and supporting teaching quality should be among these core competency areas.
- Develop a national education programme for school leaders targeting different stages of the career such as pre-service education, induction, in-service training as well as coaching and mentoring so as to professionalise leadership practice with a focus on evaluating and improving teaching and learning.
- Distribute leadership among several professionals in the school to reduce the burden on school directors and foster leadership capacity across the school. To this end, offer training related to appraisal and evaluation to a wider group of school staff including deputy principals and members of the leadership team.
- Enhance the performance appraisal of school leaders to provide them with external feedback on their leadership performance, identify areas of needed improvement and target support to improve practice (see Chapter 5). Staff within Regional Directorates (and, as of 2013, within the Directorate General for School Administration) need to be trained in undertaking effective performance reviews of school leaders against relevant core competencies.

- Connect teacher appraisal more closely to school evaluation. External evaluations conducted by the Inspectorate should validate the school level processes in place to appraise teachers and improve performance (the developmental appraisal recommended above), holding the school director accountable. The Inspectorate can also spread good practice and provide advice to school leaders on setting up effective teacher appraisal and peer evaluation practices. Schools should also be encouraged to focus their self-evaluation strongly on teaching and learning quality, which requires the school leader to take stronger pedagogical leadership responsibilities.
- Draw on the expertise of directors from highly effective schools and engage them as change agents working with other schools to build good practice across the system. Support networks and peer learning platforms for school leaders to collaborate beyond their own school borders.

In broader terms, to establish and embed an appraisal and evaluation culture in the mainstream work of schools, the “culture” of school leadership needs to be shifted significantly. It needs to change in a way as to ensure that school directors grasp the new autonomy and responsibility accorded to them to provide effective educational leadership, support continuous improvement of classroom teaching practice and thereby optimise opportunities and outcomes for all learners (Nusche *et al.*, 2011).

Develop longer term planning for the implementation of teacher appraisal, based on evidence from the first two appraisal cycles

This chapter has made a range of suggestions for further development of the teacher appraisal model. However, in further developing the teacher appraisal approach, it is essential to recognise that changes will take time and require long-term planning. Adjustments should be made incrementally so as to build some stability and credibility in the sector. Rather than adding on new elements to the formal teacher appraisal model, the review team recommends strengthening the career-progression appraisal model and focussing attention on reducing excessive formality and administration. In addition, considerable investment on competencies for teacher appraisal should be made along the lines suggested by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

A range of evidence is emerging from the first two teacher appraisal cycles to assist national authorities in this process. The Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation, while it was in operation, continuously monitored and evaluated the implementation of teacher appraisal. Evidence from the Council’s evaluation reports provide valuable insights about strengths and challenges of the previous models. Schools themselves have developed practice-based expertise that should be consolidated and fed into the national strategy. The further development of the model should continue to build on consultation and collaboration with stakeholders, giving teachers and teacher organisations a voice. The model approved in 2011 provides the opportunity during 2011/12 to consolidate the knowledge and experience with teacher appraisal before full implementation in 2012/13.

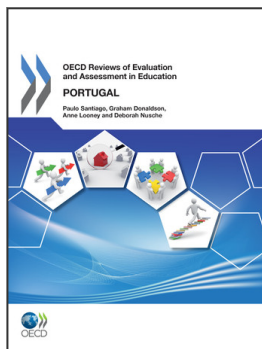
Alongside adjustments to the career-progression appraisal model, it is of key importance to strengthen and embed developmental appraisal of teachers in the regular functioning of schools. While there is a risk that the current freeze on career progressions in the public sector might undermine the implementation of appraisal and de-motivate staff, this economic context also provides a window of opportunity to focus more fully on

establishing developmental teacher appraisal practices. Creating an appraisal culture in schools is a long-term process that will take time and substantial investment in professional development. It also requires an environment of trust, collaboration and mutual feedback in schools. The key policy implication is to focus strongly on building capacity for educational leadership in schools.

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