SOAR Overview Video transcript

*http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk/help-me-with/soar/overview.aspx*

[00:00 - Introduction]

Welcome to this introduction of SOAR. Scottish Online Appraisal Resource.

This overview describes the appraisal process on SOAR for doctors working in NHS Scotland.

SOAR is an online system used to aid the appraisal process, managed locally by the territorial health boards, and supported nationally by NHS Education for Scotland.

We also have the Medical Appraisal Scotland website, used as a portal for all relevant information regarding appraisal and revalidation for those working in NHS Scotland.

To visit this website, or to access SOAR, please visit www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk, and follow the appropriate links.

[00:49 - Medical Appraisal Scotland website]

The Medical Appraisal Scotland website provides a lot of useful resources.

The range includes appraisal tool kits; various reflective templates to guide the reflection on particular domains' Supporting Info; as well as sample Quality Improvement Activities submitted by colleagues in different specialties, giving others ideas on what they can submit to their own appraisal.

Should you have queries about your appraisal, please liaise with your local Health Board Admin teams in the first instance, whose contact details are on the website.

For technical issues with SOAR, please contact the helpdesk either by emailing SOAR@nes.scot.nhs.uk; or submit a helpdesk ticket via the Help box on SOAR.

As agreed nationally at Scottish Government level, all appraisals in Scotland are to be undertaken by a NES-trained Appraiser to ensure consistency in approach and quality. If you are interested in becoming an Appraiser, please liaise with your Appraisal Lead first before submitting your application.

[02:06 - Overview of SOAR]

Let's take a look at the overview of the appraisal process on SOAR.

There are three key user roles on the system:

* The Local Admin teams,
* The Appraisee, and
* The Appraiser.

The key tasks for the local admin teams are:

* Assign Login requests as they come in; and
* Allocate Appraisers to Appraisees.

In Scotland, you cannot pick and choose your own Appraisers. This is all managed by the Admin teams in collaboration with the Local Appraisal Leads.

Admins can also create interviews on SOAR, but due to resources this is normally done by the Appraisers after they have arranged the interview meeting, outside of the system.

Once the interview is added, the Appraisee has three very important tasks they must do prior to the appraisal:

First, they need to complete the Appraisal Forms 1, 2, and 3.

Appraisal forms can be completed throughout the year in preparation for the appraisal, they just cannot be shared with the Appraiser until an interview is created first.

Once the documentations are ready, including the uploading of relevant supporting information, the Appraisee is asked to go to the interview page to:

* Agree the Confidentiality Statement (the opening chat before every appraisal); and to
* SUBMIT the completed Appraisal Forms in order to share it with the Appraiser

When submitted, the system will send out relevant automated email notifications to confirm, inviting the Appraiser to review the submitted documents prior to the Appraisal meeting.

After the Interview – it is the Appraiser’s job to draft and forward the Appraisal Form 4 (Summary) to the appraisee.

The Form 4 process is as follows:

* The Appraiser completes and forwards the Form 4 to the Appraisee for their review;
* If the Appraisee does not agree with the content, whether it’s a typo or incorrect detail, they make a change request and the Form 4 is returned to the Appraiser for editing. The Appraiser will re-forward the edited Form 4 back to the Appraisee when finished.
* The change request cycle goes back and forth until the Appraisee is happy with the content, and signs it off.
* Once both Appraiser and Appraisee have approved the Form 4, the system will send automated emails to confirm that the process is completed on SOAR.

That, is the overview of the appraisal process on SOAR.

Now, let's take a look at SOAR in action.

[04:53 - Login to SOAR]

SOAR is the online tool used for Medical Appraisal in Scotland. Access to it is gained via the Medical Appraisal Scotland website: [www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.appraisal.nes.scot.nhs.uk)

Follow the links for SOAR and you will be redirected to the login page.

If you are a new user, please complete the Login Request form. This triggers an email to the appropriate health board's admin team for actioning.

Once logged in, the Appraisee can access the appraisal forms from the menu on the left; if logged in as the Appraiser, functions to create new appraisals can be found on the timeline function, but also available from the menu. Detailed Appraisee and Appraiser functions are described on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website.

[05:52 - Key steps]

Let's recap the appraisal process on SOAR.

* First, the Appraiser creates the interview
* The Appraisee completes the appraisal forms
* The Appraisee submits the completed forms for sharing with the Appraiser
* After the appraisal, the Appraiser drafts and forwards the Form 4 to the Appraisee
* The Appraisee reviews the Form 4 and approves, or makes a Change Request

Primary and Secondary Care appraisal forms are slightly different, but the overall processes are exactly the same. For the purposes of this video, we will be using the Secondary Care setup on SOAR.

[06:35 - Appraiser creates Interview]

Once it has been agreed with the Appraisee outside of the system, the Appraiser is normally the one who enters the interview meeting details on SOAR. To create an interview, the Appraiser clicks on Interviews - from the menu - and then click on NEW INTERVIEW.

The Appraisee to be appraised is selected via the dropdown. Populate the rest of the fields on the page, and click Save when finished.

[06:59 - Appraisal Period]

The appraisal period on SOAR uses the fiscal period - April to March - and is determined by the meeting date; rather than what materials were discussed.

Anecdotally we would expect ALL appraisals to discuss and review materials either since the last meeting, or materials collected in the last 12 months. The appraisal period on SOAR is used for reporting purposes, such as the annual Medical Revalidation Quality Assurance Report, or ad-hoc reports to the Scottish Government or the GMC, where we are asked for example, "how many appraisals took place in a given fiscal period?" or, "how many doctors were revalidated in a given fiscal period?"

Once the interview is created, it will appear on the Appraisee's dashboard as a timeline.

[08:02 - Appraisee functions]

The Appraisee’s timeline function is designed to help keep track of their appraisal progress.

Now, a very important tip... SOAR was designed to handle one appraisal at a time.

So, please ensure you do NOT have multiple open appraisals. It causes confusion and wrong forms could get submitted to wrong appraisals; or wrong Form 4’s drafted for wrong appraisals... worse still, un-submitted forms could be lost, if appraisals were to be signed-off in the wrong order.

If, for whatever reason, you have more than one appraisal ongoing – which can be indicated if you have more than one timeline on your dashboard – please contact the helpdesk for further assistance.

[08:56 - Completing Appraisal Forms]

You can proceed to complete your forms at any time throughout the year, irrespective of whether you have an appraisal scheduled or not.

SOAR is designed so that you can upload your supporting information or complete your forms on the go. The only thing you won’t be able to do is submit your forms for sharing with your Appraiser. This HAS to be done via an appraisal interview.

To complete your forms, navigate to it via the menu on the left.

We will start by looking at Appraisal Forms 1 and 2.

[09:33 - Forms 1-2]

Appraisal Form 1 is your general background information; and Form 2 details the job you do.

Unless you change specialty or roles, it is unlikely the information on these forms will differ year-on-year. So the information entered here are retained for future appraisals; and all you do is review and amend as needed.

The formatting tool bar is very generic and very similar to most popular word processing software. Simply highlight the text you wish to format; and click on the required buttons.

If you are unsure about each button’s function, mouse-over each one and you will see the corresponding popup description.

Within each page on SOAR, you can access the Information icon near the top right of every page, for additional guidance and description of the page you are in.

There is also a system-wide auto save function that is triggered every 60 seconds, indicated by a brief message that appears near the top right of the screen.

If you are using Internet Explorer as your web browser, the autosave can cause SOAR to slow down. If this is the case, the autosave function can be disabled. Simply click on the icon near the top, and select the option to disable in the Settings page.

If you tried to leave a page where the content has not been saved, you will be prompted accordingly. Simply click Cancel, and then click Save to proceed.

[11:22 - Form 3]

Form three, is split into the four GMC Domains:

* Domain 1: Knowledge, Skills and Performance
* Domain 2: Safety and Quality
* Domain 3: Communication, Partnership and Teamwork
* Domain 4: Maintaining Trust

Within all four domains, the key section is the “Supporting Info” section, where you upload the relevant supporting information, and add any comments or reflections as appropriate.

The key thing to note about this section is that you have to either upload something as your supporting information; or provide details of why you have no documents to upload.

**This page cannot be left blank.**

It might be that you have stacks of attendance certificates in paper format; in which case, scanning and uploading these, might not be the best use of your time.

Liaise with your Appraiser in the first instance. If it is acceptable, you can bring the documents with you on the day; but you should enter a list of documents that are to be presented.

This way – whilst no actual documents will be uploaded – there will be a note of what was presented and discussed at the appraisal.

There are some documents that are not appropriate to bring on the day. For example, things like complaints, Significant Event Analysis, Audit reports, or Prescription reviews. These should be uploaded and submitted to the Appraiser for sharing well in advance of the appraisal meeting; so that they have time to review and prepare for the appraisal.

[13:29 - Form 3 Domain 1 PDP]

Within Domain 1, you are also asked to review your Personal Development Plan; and any other learning you have done in the last year - or since the last appraisal.

Once reviewed and reflected, you are then asked to propose your PDP and possible learning needs for the year ahead.

Your learning will be discussed at the appraisal meeting, and when signed off - all learning items as agreed on the Form 4 will act as your PDP for the next year.

More on Form 4 later.

[14:06 - SOAR CPD Log]

You will also notice a CPD Log function within Domain 1.

Usage of this is optional; but you are required to provide evidence of a CPD log, as part of Domain One’s core element.

If you use a college or other online systems to record your learning, you can export it and upload the exported file onto SOAR.

If you use your own spreadsheet or other electronic learning logs, again, simply upload to Form 3 > Domain 1 > Supporting Info – as part of your documentation.

Detailed guidance on the SOAR CPD Log is available on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website.

[14:55 - Form 3 Domain 2]

Domain 2 is where you upload information relating to Quality Improvement Activities; such as Audits, or Review of Significant Events, or Prescribing reviews.

If you are short on ideas, there is a QIA library available on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website - all anonymised and submitted by colleagues in different specialties.

This is designed to give you an indication of what can be submitted for appraisal. If you have an interesting QIA that you wish to share, please visit the website for more information.

[15:37 - Form 3 Domain 3]

Domain 3 is where you upload Multi Source Feedback and Patient Survey Questionnaires.

Unlike other core elements where it is an annual requirement, MSF and PSQ are only required once in a 5-year Revalidation cycle.

You are not asked to do them both in the same year, but it is recommended that they are done within 3 years of the appraisee’s revalidation due date.

In the years where no MSF or PSQ is required, appraisees are asked to reflect in general how it has been working with their colleagues; and the relationship they have with their patients.

There are a number of reflective templates available on the Medical Appraisal Scotland website that can be used to aid the reflection.

Simply navigate to the Reflection tab and you will be redirected to the templates page.

Click to download the template you wish to use, find an appropriate place in your computer to save it and work on it. When ready, simply upload it to the Supporting Info page like your other documents.

[16:55 - Form 3 Domain 4]

In Domain 4, Appraisees are asked to complete the Health, Probity and Complaints & Critical Incidents declarations.

The questions and wording should not be new to Appraisees as it is what is asked of them from the GMC. All we have done is converted a paper process into an online system.

Within each domain’s Summary will be corresponding links to the GMC website should you require further information.

Let's take a look at the health statement declarations.

If you answer a question within the declarations that require additional information, it will be flagged for discussion with the Appraiser.

For example, if I was not currently registered with a GP, I will be asked to provide a reason why. Enter the information accordingly and proceed.

[17:54 - Submitting forms]

Once all the forms have been completed to your satisfaction, it is ready to be submitted to your Appraiser for sharing.

To do so, navigate back to the dashboard by clicking on “My Dashboard” from the menu, or the SOAR logo near the top left of the page.

From the timeline, you should see an option to submit your forms.

If there’s any sections missing, it will be highlighted in red for your attention and completion. But if all is ok, click on “Go to submit”, which will take you to the appraisal’s details page.

Click on the “Accept” button to accept the confidentiality; and then click on the “Submit” button to submit your completed forms.

Once submitted successfully, additional tabs will appear at the top of the page. An email will be sent to both the Appraiser and Appraisee to confirm the submission.

Details on the submitted forms are in read-only mode. Meaning, no changes can be made.

But… What if you need to make changes to your forms? For example, you missed a document for uploading; or you spotted a typo in your comments.

First, make the required changes on your draft forms from the menu.

You can add additional documents that might have been missed in your initial submission… Or, you can add any additional comments or reflections as required.

Once the forms have been amended, navigate to the interview details page where you had clicked the Submit button before. In its place now will be a Re-submit button. Click on this and the submitted forms snapshot will be deleted and re-created.

You can re-submit as many times as you need, until Form 4 has been forwarded by the Appraiser. At that point, re-submission is locked, unless Form 4 is rejected via a Change Request.

Let’s move on to Form 4.

[20:19 - Appraiser initiates Form 4]

In Scotland, the Appraiser is the author of the Form 4 summary document. On SOAR it is created by the Appraiser, who would forward their draft to the Appraisee for their review and sign off.

The Appraiser starts by navigating to the interview details, either via their dashboard link, or they can search for it manually by clicking on “Interviews” from the menu;

Then, search for the interview; click on the corresponding Edit icon in your search results to view that appraisal's details.

And then click on the “Create Form 4” button to initiate the Form 4.

Form 4 is the summary document of the appraisal process and is used as proof of appraisal.

If required, the Appraiser also has the option to create a Form 5.

[21:21 - Form 5]

Form 5A is used to log Exemption from Appraisal; for those who have legitimate reasons for not being appraised in that appraisal period.

Select the Appraisal Lead who needs to approve the Form 5A; then, select the reason for the Form 5A, and the dates of when the doctor will be off work.

For example, maternity leave, long term sick, sabbatical, etc.

Form 5B is used to log non-engagement, for those who - for whatever reason - refuse to engage with the appraisal process.

Similar to Form 5A, select the Appraisal Lead who needs to sign off this Form 5B; then, select the reason for the Form 5B.

Form 5C is used to log any Clinical Governance issues.

Before a Form 5 is created, the Appraiser is asked to liaise with their Local Admin team and Local Appraisal Lead in the first instance – **especially for Form 5B**.

[22:46 - Form 4 Section A]

Form 4 itself, is split into three main sections:

* Section A: Summary of discussion
* Section B: Summary Assessment of Supporting Information
* Section C: Personal Development Plan

Section A itself is further split by each of the four GMC Domains, where the Appraiser is asked to assign a “zero” or “one” score to each domain’s core elements.

“One” denotes that sufficient information has been submitted, discussed and reflected upon.

For example, it might be that this Appraisee did not receive any complaints this past year. However, a sufficient discussion was had around protocols should one arise, and the tools available to aid reflection and learning.

In this situation it is acceptable for the Appraiser to log this as a “one”.

“Zero” is only used if nothing was submitted and, or, the core element was not reflected upon.

It is very rare for a doctor to receive a “zero” scoring in the core elements - apart from MSF or PSQ, where a “one” scoring is required only once in a 5-year revalidation cycle.

[24:04 - Form 4 Section B]

Earlier on during the appraisal form completion, the appraisee declared that he was not registered with a GP. This has accordingly been flagged as “issues” on Form 4.

Any questions in the self-declarations where additional information is requested is flagged as “issues” on Form 4, to ensure a discussion is had with the Appraiser.

The Appraiser is required to add comments to the corresponding declarations and if appropriate, they can mark the “issues” to “resolved”.

There is a question in Section B that asks, whether the Appraisee is on-track to provide sufficient information for Revalidation. This question is not as contentious as it appears.

It is designed to trigger a discussion with the Appraisee if the supporting information is not as comprehensive as it should.

For example - if an Appraisee had not provided an MSF or PSQ, but is aware that one needs to be completed in the next appraisal to meet revalidation requirements, then that would be acceptable to log as a “Yes”.

It is very rare for an Appraisee to not be on track for revalidation.

Despite this however – please note – Appraisers are NOT asked to revalidate the appraisees.

They are simply asked to facilitate the appraisal discussions and summarise them accordingly. Revalidation recommendations is the responsibility of the health board’s Responsible Officer.

We will revisit this shortly and explain how it all ties in with Revalidation. But for now, let’s move on to PDP.

[25:50 - Form 4 Section C]

In Section C, the Appraisee’s PDP from last year will appear at the top; and their proposed learning for the year ahead will appear underneath.

If required, the PDP items can be amended by the Appraiser following appraisal discussions.

For example, it might be that in the year before, the Appraisee had proposed five items but only managed to complete two. This year the Appraisee proposes another five items.

After the appraisal meeting it was agreed that five might be too much to achieve this year, and to remove a couple of them to focus on the rest.

The Appraiser can do this on the Form 4 by deleting the individual items. If needed, the Appraiser can also edit the items depending on the discussions, or even add new learning needs.

Like the Appraisees, there is an auto save function on Form 4 for Appraisers. Appraisers are not expected to complete the Form 4 in one sitting, it can be saved and returned to at any time for completion.

[27:15 - Appraiser forwards Form 4]

When ready, the Appraiser forwards it to the Appraisee for their review and sign off.

Once forwarded, SOAR will trigger an email to the Appraisee; and the Form 4 will be locked from further editing.

This guarantees that the version that the Appraisee reviews is the finalised one.

[27:39 - Appraisee signs off Form 4]

To approve the form 4, the Appraisee can either follow the link in the email, or login to SOAR and follow the link from the dashboard timeline.

Expand each section to review the draft and scroll to the bottom of the page to either approve the Form 4, or make a change request.

If a change request is made, the appraisee is asked to enter details of the request in the pop-up box. Form 4 is then returned to the Appraiser for further editing.

If Appraisee is happy with the Form 4, they click on the “Approve” button. And the appraisal is completed.

When completed, a notification email is sent to the Appraiser, Appraisee and Admin team to confirm completion of the appraisal.

And that, is the appraisal process considered complete on SOAR.

So… What happens next?

[28:40 - Post-Appraisal: Feedback Form 6]

With the appraisal completed, both Appraisers and Appraisees are asked to complete the Appraisal Feedback Form 6.

The form will consist of questions around the experience before, during, and after the appraisal.

For Appraisees, completion of 6A is required. The information provided is collated via an anonymised report for our in-house Quality Assurance purposes. The anonymised report is also used by the Appraiser as part of their own reviews.

Appraisers are asked to complete Form 6B. There are two versions of Form 6B for Appraisers. For the Appraisers’ first ten appraisals, they are asked to complete Form 6B1. This sets a benchmark for scoring comparison.

Thereafter, Form 6B2 is used, and is optional for Appraisers at this point – to be used as a reflective tool on particularly successful or challenging appraisals.

[29:58 - Post-Appraisal: PDP]

Before we conclude this presentation, let us revisit the Personal Development Plan section.

One thing to note about the appraisal forms is that when Form 4 is approved, Form 3 is reset, so that the Appraisee can proceed to prepare for their next appraisal.

Forms 1 and 2 will be retained as discussed earlier.

The PDP section is slightly different.

If we look at the approved Form 4 we just completed, we have these learning items not marked as achieved. As such, these will carry forward to the next year. Additionally, we also have these new items as agreed during the appraisal meeting.

If we check the PDP Review page, the appraisee will see that the unachieved items from Form 4 - including the proposed learning - now forms this year’s PDP.

All other sections will be re set and this PDP table is populated according to what was agreed at Form 4 sign-off.

[31:10 - Revalidation]

That’s almost it. But, how does appraisal relate to Revalidation?

Let’s take a look at the Revalidation page on the Appraisee profile.

There is a Revalidation widget on the appraisee dashboard. Click on it to view more details. Alternatively, you can click on “My Details” from the menu and then “Revalidation” from the tabs along the top, which will take you to the same page.

The Revalidation grid shows a summary of your past five appraisals and the various core elements scoring.

So how does this all marry up?

Medical Revalidation is a process that happens in the background, and unless requested by your Responsible Officer, there is nothing extra or special that you need to do or provide. You just need to continue with your mandatory or annual processes, such as mandatory training, and annual appraisals.

Appraisal is an annual process undertaken by a NES-trained Appraiser, assigned by the local health boards’ admin team.

SOAR provides the appraisal information that the ROs need in order to make the Revalidation recommendations.

The ROs alone are responsible for this task, aided by the health boards’ supporting teams.

The recommendations are made based on the satisfactory participation and completion of annual appraisals over a 5-year cycle, alongside any additional information the ROs may have access to.

Let’s say for example, that this Appraisee was being revalidated in the forthcoming appraisal period.

From the revalidation grid, SOAR automated functions will check a number of statuses against the latest Form 4, and against the last 5 appraisals.

On the latest Form 4:

* It checks if it has any zero scorings in any of the core elements
* Has any of the self-declarations been flagged as “issues”, and
* Is the Appraisee on track to provide sufficient information for Revalidation

The grid also checks the last five appraisals to see:

* if a scoring of “one”, was assigned to MSF and PSQ; and
* whether the Appraisee has had any Form 5B’s or 5C’s; and
* whether the appraisee has more than two Form 5A’s.

If all the criteria check out, the appraisee will be placed in a “ready” category for the RO to make their recommendations.

If not, then this appraisee will be flagged for the RO’s attention when the time comes for their revalidation review.

But just because the appraisee is flagged, it does NOT mean they will fail to revalidate.

When making their recommendations to the GMC, the RO will take all information available to them into consideration.

As explained before – if required – the RO will request additional information from the doctor before a recommendation is made, and it will differ and vary on a case-by-case basis.

[34:20 - Summary]

A quick recap.

* Normally it's the Appraiser and Appraisee who organises the appraisal meeting themselves.
* Once agreed, it is the Appraiser who creates the Interview on SOAR.
* The Appraisee completes their appraisal forms, including the uploading of relevant supporting information.
* When finalised, the Appraisee submits the forms to the interview for sharing.
* After the appraisal interview, the Appraiser is responsible for drafting the Form 4 summary.
* The Appraisee reviews and approves the Form 4.
* The Appraiser and Appraisee are then asked to complete the Feedback Form 6.

Thank you for watching, I hope this presentation has been helpful. For further information on appraisal or SOAR, please visit the Medical Appraisal Scotland website. If you require further assistance, please contact the helpdesk.

Thank you.