

## Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

On: 02 June 2020

Report by  
Joint Secretaries

### Professional Review and Development & Professional Update Guidance (Revised)

#### 1. Background

- 1.1. In response to the introduction of Professional Update from GTCS, Renfrewshire Council's original policy was developed in 2014 with minor amendments in May 2016. Following publication of updated GTCS guidance ***Unlocking the potential of Professional Review and Development (GTC Scotland 2019)*** a working group was convened to update Renfrewshire guidance to reflect national documentation.
- 1.2. Renfrewshire Council's approach to Professional Review and Development and Professional Update was revalidated by GTCS on 27 January 2020. The Revalidation panel considered the documentation from the local authority and reflected on the discussions it had with focus groups and strategic staff to inform and make their decision.
- 1.3. GTCS noted one condition in relation to the revalidation: The panel acknowledges the strong partnership with professional associations to enhance policy and practice. However, the revised agreement requires endorsement by the LNCT. It is anticipated that this process will be concluded by 30 June 2020. The lead officer for PU should advise GTCS servicing officer of progress accordingly.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. JNC is asked to:
  - approve the attached guidance and support pack



## **Children's Services (Education)**

### **Professional Review and Development & Professional Update Guidance**

**Revised  
January 2020**

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## Section 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Renfrewshire Council's Education Service

Renfrewshire Council is committed to providing an education service of the highest quality. An appropriately skilled staff is crucial to improving the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching and through appropriate professional learning and support, our teachers will be more confident to undertake the duties associated with their posts. The Council has the responsibility to implement and resource effective Professional Review and Development (PRD) and Professional Update (PU) for all teaching staff. To this end, Renfrewshire Council has engaged with the teacher trade unions and teaching staff, from a variety of roles, in reviewing this guidance which underpins the PRD and PU processes.

### 1.2 Professional Review and Development and Professional Learning

Professional Review and Development (PRD) is a vital element in a teacher's professional learning experience. Set within a culture and climate of trust, its aim is to support teachers to maintain and improve their skills with the ultimate aim of improving the learning experiences of the children and young people in their care.

- Teachers work in a complex, dynamic and changing society. This means that teachers need to be critically informed, have professional values and knowledge and take actions that ensure a positive impact on learners and learning. Teachers must be mindful of issues of bias, unconscious or otherwise, and be willing to challenge their own and others thinking to advance equality and prevent discrimination. Teachers therefore need opportunities to develop in order to address these changing demands.
- The teaching profession has risen to the challenge set out in Teaching Scotland's Future *G. Donaldson, Scottish Government (2011)*. Above all, evidence suggests there has been a significant shift in the culture of professional learning. This shift in culture can be demonstrated in four key areas of improvement:
  - **teachers are much more engaged in their professional learning**
  - **there is a greater focus on the impact of professional learning on pupils**
  - there is a consensus that **teachers are engaging in professional dialogue more often** and that there has been a cultural shift towards more openness, sharing of experience and willingness to talk about pedagogy
  - **there is a greater willingness to try new approaches***Evaluation of the impact of the implementation of Teaching Scotland's Future (TSF) – Scottish Government 2016*
- The need for continuing development of skills and knowledge is recognised as a key feature of success vital to any education system. Changes to curriculum and approaches to learning have always dictated the pace of change in education. In addition, the impact of modern technologies, including social media, and the constantly evolving role of schools require teachers to adapt to such change through skills and knowledge update, review and development.

- In order to meet the demands of change, PRD is the process whereby the professional learning requirements of teaching staff are identified, agreed and, to some degree, facilitated by the employer. The needs identified should strike a blend and balance between the requirements of the individual teacher, school and authority, the wider needs of the education service and national and legislative priorities.
- PRD will provide access to opportunities in those areas where teachers require support or the opportunity to further develop and help them enhance their careers and aspirations as empowered professionals.
- The National Model of professional Learning outlines the kinds of learning that will empower and enable teachers to best meet the needs of learners. We encourage all Renfrewshire staff to engage with the range of materials provided by GTC Scotland and Education Scotland to support their engagement with the model and plan their professional learning alongside reviewers.

## **Section 2 The National Context for Professional Review and Development and Professional Update**

### **2.1 PRD**

Professional Review and Development (PRD) has been an important and formal part of a teacher's working life since the early 1990s. Since then, various national developments have reinforced the significance of PRD and taken it in new directions, including:

- ***Advancing Professionalism in Teaching*** (The "McCormac Review", September 2011)
- ***Teaching Scotland's Future*** (The "Donaldson Report", January 2011)
- ***GTC Scotland Professional Update scheme established August 2014***
- ***Professional Review and Development*** (Education Scotland, 2014)
- ***Promoting and Supporting a High-Quality PRD Experience for All*** (GTC Scotland, 2019)
- ***Unlocking the potential of Professional Review and Development*** (GTC Scotland Guidelines, 2019)

### **2.2 GTC Scotland Professional Standards**

GTC Scotland acknowledges that teachers are already committed to maintaining high standards, as expressed in their suite of Professional Standards :

- **The Standards for Full Registration**  
Including the Standards for Provisional Registration and the Standards for Full Registration. The Standards for Full Registration are the gateway to the profession and the benchmark of teacher competence for all teachers.

- **The Standard for Career-long Professional Learning**

It enables teachers to identify, plan and develop their own learning needs thus ensuring a continuum in development of professional practice as they progress through their teaching careers. It will inform on-going dialogue between the reviewee and reviewer in the professional review and development process.

- **The Standards for Leadership and Management**

These include both the Standard for Middle Leadership and Standard for Headship. This benchmark of standards should be used to support self-evaluation and reflection for teachers in, or aspiring to, formal leadership roles in schools.

## 2.3 PU

On 17 March 2011, the Scottish Parliament approved the Public Service Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011 which set out the Government's plans for the granting of independent status to the GTC Scotland from April 2012. As part of this legislation (Section 31), the Government placed the GTC Scotland under a **duty** to introduce a scheme of re-accreditation for teachers.

Professional Update, introduced in August 2014, is based on the legislative requirement in the 2011 Public Services Reform Order. Engagement in the Professional Update process is a requirement for registration with GTC Scotland and will impact on all those who are currently registered with the General Teaching Council Scotland.

Professional Update has two purposes:

- *to maintain and improve the quality of our teachers as outlined in the appropriate GTC Scotland's Professional Standards and thereby enhance the impact they have on the learning of children and young people; and*
- *to support, maintain and enhance teachers' continued professionalism and the Professional Update of the teaching profession in Scotland.*

## Section 3 Key Features of Effective Professional Review and Development and Professional Update

### 3.1 Professional Review and Development:

PRD is an entitlement and the responsibility of all teachers, head teachers and system leaders as part of their commitment to career-long professional learning. As such it:

- has a positive impact on planning for and engagement in professional learning, practice and development and on outcomes for children and young people;
- is an on-going process which takes places within a supportive, trusting and collegial culture;
- is supportive and challenging but not threatening and is led by a teacher's self evaluation;

- involves focussed professional dialogue facilitated through the use of a coaching approach;
- requires teachers, head teachers and systems leaders to maintain a professional learning record (Renfrewshire Council recommends MyPL) supported by evidence of impact; and
- is accessible by all across the profession.

### 3.2 The Professional Review Process

GTC Scotland has identified ten key features of a high-quality PRD that should be set within a culture and climate of trust, with school readiness for PRD in place, and ongoing professional dialogue between colleagues happening regularly throughout the school session, together ensuring a positive experience for all.

The ten key features are:

- self-evaluation across the Professional Standards
  - ongoing engagement in meaningful professional learning & reflection
  - explore leadership opportunities
  - support strategic development
  - career conversations and next steps
  - coaching conversations to support and challenge
  - provide a reflective space to explore successes and challenges
  - celebrations of success and planning for future next steps
  - enable empowerment and develop teachers as agents of change
  - nurture teacher professionalism, building professional capital
- refer to GTC Scotland 'Key Features of High Quality PRD' Wheel within Renfrewshire Support Pack*

In addition, it is important to remember:

- Reviewees should take **responsibility for and ownership** of their own professional review and development experience. Reviewers should support, facilitate and resource the professional review and development process
- PRD discussions should take place with the **minimum of bureaucracy** and be **an integral part of school life** with minimal disruption to learning and teaching. Time should be allocated from local and school working time agreements to facilitate preparation for these discussions.
- The key participants in the professional review and development process are those staff identified as reviewers and the teaching staff they will review. The reviewer should normally be the person who is most familiar with the work of the person they are reviewing.
- In Renfrewshire, head teachers will be reviewed by link Education Managers or a Head of Service.
- Each reviewee will have a designated reviewer. The reviewee should know who the reviewer will be at the beginning of each session. In normal circumstances this will be the reviewee's line manager who is familiar with the work of the teacher being reviewed. There are occasions however when the line manager might not be the most appropriate person to review a teacher's work. It may be necessary to arrange for another reviewer to carry out the professional review. Schools should appoint alternative reviewers in such instances.

- Where a teacher is deployed in more than one department or has an additional remit in addition to that of class teacher, such as in pastoral care, each area of responsibility should be reviewed as part of the professional review and development process. Only one reviewer should review the work of a teacher in cases where there are additional remits to classroom teaching.
- In cases where teachers work in more than one establishment, only one reviewer should review the work of the teacher.

### 3.3 The Professional Learning Profile - MyPL

All teachers are required to maintain and update a professional learning profile (*within each individual's MyGTCS account*) which should include:

- reference to significant professional learning activities undertaken linked to professional standards;
- evidence of the impact of the professional learning activities on professional development and learners; and
- a professional learning plan indicating future goals agreed through the professional review meeting and the development activities to be undertaken to achieve these goals

In addition, MyPL offers a variety of functions to enhance a teacher's professional learning activities such as access to a library of links to professional learning advice and resources and the ability to tag learning in order that preferences will be remembered for future activities.

MyPL cuts down the time it takes to record professional learning. Entries should be kept **brief and concise** and considered only as a prompt for PRD discussion.

### 3.4 The Professional Review Procedure

The following should contribute to an effective and successful professional review and development meeting.

Before the review meeting:

- through a process of self-evaluation, the reviewee is required to complete their MyPL record on an ongoing basis, which refers to their last review and reflects on the appropriate GTC Scotland Standards. The MyPL record is where evidence of impact and progress of professional learning is recorded; and
- the reviewer invites the reviewee to the meeting. At least 10 working days notice should be given. The reviewee sets the agenda based on self-evaluation and it is shared with the reviewer 5 days prior to the meeting.

During the meeting:

- the reviewee/reviewer must be mindful of issues of bias, unconscious or otherwise, and be willing to challenge their thinking, and that of colleagues to advance equality and prevent discrimination;
- the reviewee should refer to professional learning which has had most impact on themselves, pupils, the school and/or the local authority;



- the dialogue should be carried out in an atmosphere of mutual trust and professional respect;
- goals agreed should impact on the teacher's professional development, the pupils in their care and the needs of the school and service improvement plan; and
- the reviewer should confirm with the reviewee the main points discussed which will be recorded by the reviewer and the meeting should be concluded within 1 hour.

After the review meeting:

- the reviewer will have the responsibility of taking a succinct note of the meeting agreed by both parties;
- the record of the meeting should be completed, agreed and signed off by both the reviewer and reviewee within 4 weeks of the meeting;
- the reviewee updates the Areas for Development section within their MyPL record;
- the reviewee passes a note of their professional learning requests to the Professional Learning Coordinator (where this is someone different to their reviewer, most likely in secondary schools) who may seek professional learning opportunities to meet their needs; and
- the original review meeting record will be retained by the reviewer and a copy given to the reviewee.

It is vital that **confidentiality** is adhered to at all stages in the process.

*Note: materials within the Renfrewshire Support Pack will support reviewees and reviewers with the professional review process*

### 3.5 Professional Learning Activities

When a wide range of high-quality, sustained professional learning experiences are undertaken, teachers are more likely to inspire pupils and provide high-quality teaching and learning experiences, enabling learners to achieve their best.

It is important that professional learning provides rich opportunities for teachers to develop and enhance their professional knowledge and practice, in order to progress the quality of learning and teaching and school improvement.

Professional learning can take many forms. Below are some examples:

- experiential, action or enquiry-based learning
- professional dialogue with colleagues, other professionals, parents and pupils
- online learning/blogs
- professional reading and research
- Masters study and qualifications
- leading or participating in a working group
- self-evaluation or critical reflection processes
- academic conferences
- secondments and acting posts
- probationer support

### 3.6 Professional Update

Professional Update seeks to ensure effective and consistent professional review and development and high-quality professional learning based on focused outcomes for a teacher's own development as well as on improving the learning experiences of children and young people.

GTC Scotland recognises Professional Update provides an opportunity to make more effective use of professional review and development as a means of developing teacher expertise and professionalism. The process is about improving teachers' skills and abilities rather than underperformance, which is dealt with under competency procedures.

All registered teachers in Scotland are required to participate in Professional Update. GTC Scotland registration will be renewed every five years, provided that the requirements of professional update have been met.

Participation in Professional Update requires:

- an annual online update of basic personal information on a teacher's MyGTCS account (e.g address and base school);
- continuing engagement in the professional review and development process and professional learning;
- reflection against the appropriate GTC Scotland Professional Standard;
- maintenance of a MyPL record; and
- a five yearly professional update declaration to the GTC Scotland by the end of the school session in the sign off year.

#### Professional Update Declaration

This will be completed online and will confirm:

- active engagement in the professional review and development process over the previous five years;
- maintenance of an up-to date portfolio of the impact of professional learning.

The declaration will be required to be verified by the reviewer on GTC Scotland website by the end of the school session in the sign-off year. Professional Update will take place on a five-yearly cycle.

### 3.7 Teachers unable to complete the Professional Update process in their designated year

GTC Scotland recognises that there will be a number of circumstances which may make completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale difficult. This may include career breaks, forthcoming retirement, extended illness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, and occasional supply work. If a teacher is unable to complete the process in the designated year, then the teacher should have the opportunity to request to bring forward or defer their PU year. Such requests should be made to reviewers/professional learning co-ordinators who should then notify the local authority/employer level and the decision notified to GTC Scotland. Deferrals will normally be granted for a period of one year. Reviewees should consult

GTC Scotland Professional Update Guidance Notes when considering requesting a deferral. Requests to bring forward the PU year will be considered on an individual basis.

## **Section 4 Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 Head teachers and other relevant managers will:**

- ensure the professional review and development policy is made available to **all staff**, and that the policy is followed and applied fairly;
- ensure that an annual professional review and development meeting is arranged for each teacher for whom they have responsibility;
- ensure that the meetings comply with the school's Working Time Agreement;
- ensure staff are involved in self-evaluation and have access to appropriate sources of support;
- provide opportunities for professional dialogue to facilitate the professional review and development process;
- sign off to validate professional update when appropriate;
- promote a positive climate and culture of trust;
- promote the importance of professional learning linked to improved outcomes for children and young people;
- provide access to professional learning at school/cluster/local authority/organisational levels;
- provide skills development opportunities for all staff including coaching/mentoring approaches;
- ensure the participation in professional review and development includes all staff;
- ensure the process is fit for purpose for staff at every stage of their career;
- appoint an appropriate member of staff as Professional Learning Coordinator;
- ensure resources are available for professional learning processes; and
- notify the local authority of any member of staff looking to defer or bring forward their PU year.

### **4.2 All teachers will:**

- familiarise themselves with local and national guidance on professional review and development;
- have an entitlement to, and responsibility for their own professional learning;
- undertake an annual update of contact details with the GTC Scotland;
- engage in self-evaluation against an appropriate GTC Scotland Professional Standard as an integral part of the PRD process;
- plan and undertake professional learning, completing 35 contractual hours per school year outwith the 35 hour working week (full time teachers);
- maintain a professional learning record including evidence of impact (MyPL);
- discuss the impact of professional learning as part of the PRD process including the annual review where a professional learning plan will be agreed with the reviewer and signed off;
- record agreed professional learning development goals in the PRD section of MyPL;

- confirm engagement with the PRD process in the 5 yearly declaration of Professional Update to GTC Scotland; and
- inform their reviewer/professional learning co-ordinator if they wish to defer or bring forward their PU year.

#### **4.3 Peripatetic, temporary and supply teachers**

GTC Scotland requires that all registered teachers, including peripatetic, temporary and supply teachers should engage in professional learning and complete the GTC Scotland 5 year cycle of Professional Update.

- **Peripatetic teachers**

Peripatetic teachers have an entitlement to access professional review and development processes and associated professional learning opportunities. This should be facilitated by their line manager although it is recognised that some professional learning opportunities may be planned for strategically by Renfrewshire Council. Peripatetic teachers work in a number of establishments but should have only one formal review meeting each session. The teacher should know who their reviewer will be at the beginning of each session.

- **Temporary and supply teachers**

Temporary teachers and supply staff must comply with the PU process in order to register for work in Renfrewshire. As for all teachers, they have an entitlement to access professional review and development processes and associated professional learning opportunities. For long term temporary teachers this should normally be afforded to them in the school they are in when their annual professional review and development cycle is due for review.

If temporary and supply teachers are not in employment when their professional review and development is due for review, they should request a review meeting in a school where they are known and have taught within the last six months. Where they are unable to identify a reviewer, they should contact business support at Renfrewshire House, who will pass this information to the link education manager who will discuss this with them and allocate a reviewer.

#### **4.4 Teachers working in education but out with schools and those not involved in education.**

Some teachers are employed in education linked posts but are not currently teaching. This includes:

- teachers on secondments, teachers working in quality improvement and systems leaders;
- qualified teachers who are employed outwith education or are currently not working; and
- teachers who are working across different authorities.

These teachers will be required to engage in professional update and to maintain registration with GTC Scotland. They should make arrangements with their current line manager to have their professional update validated.

## **Section 5 Training**

### **5.1 Training for Reviewers and Reviewees**

All members of staff should have access to appropriate training. This is necessary to ensure that both the reviewer and the reviewee derive maximum benefit from the professional review and development process.

Training should cover aspects of knowledge and understanding of:

- Renfrewshire Council's professional review and development guidance for teachers;
- the maintenance of the professional learning record;
- the use of an effective coaching approach; and
- the national standards toolkits including reflection against the Professional Standards and the support materials on GTC Scotland's website.

### **5.2 Coaching and Mentoring**

In the specific context of teachers' professional review and development, a coaching approach is most effective in ensuring the reviewee is appropriately supported and challenged in their professional learning conversations.

Coaching training will be offered on a regular basis to all those involved in the PRD process – both reviewers and reviewees.

## **Section 6 Resolving Disputes Involving Professional Review and Development and Professional Update**

Professional Update is intended to focus on a teacher's professional development and continuous improvement, and it should not be used to determine whether a teacher is, or has remained, competent. In instances of under-performance or where a teacher's competence is in question, GTC Scotland Framework for Teacher Competence should be used.

### **6.1 Dispute resolution**

It is the expectation of Renfrewshire Council that every effort will be made by all parties involved to resolve disputes informally and at as early a stage as possible. Disputes around the review and update processes should be rare and should only arise in cases where requirements as described in this document have not been met. All concerns should be addressed by the line manager at the earliest opportunity in the review cycle. It would be exceptional that disputes would arise where there has been effective management of the review process, and so most concerns will have been addressed well in advance of the point at which the employee is expected to be reviewed, but especially prior to making their five-yearly Professional Update declaration.

However, where disputes around Professional Update or any aspect of the review process arise, the following measures should be adopted as a means of achieving a resolution:

- A meeting should be arranged to focus on the area of disagreement between both parties. The reviewee may be accompanied by a representative at this meeting. At this meeting the reviewer should make clear the reason for refusing to sign off on the review or update;
- The outcome of this meeting will be an action plan which is agreed by both parties. This plan should stipulate the actions to be taken to allow the annual review or Professional Update to be achieved. There should be realistic timescales attached to enable the reviewee to achieve the goal or goals identified;
- Where there is a failure to agree an action plan, the reviewee may request that the matter be referred to an appropriate independent senior manager, who will convene a meeting with relevant parties, consider the facts and determine the action plan to be implemented in an attempt to reach a resolution;
- When all attempts to reach resolution have failed and the reviewer still cannot verify the online declaration the matter will be escalated to the Joint Secretaries of the JNC in an attempt to mediate a resolution;
- If at any time in the process the reviewee is not satisfied with the process or its outcome the reviewee may resort to grievance procedures to seek resolution. All employees have this right in accordance with their terms and conditions of employment; and
- If, at the end of the grievance and appeals process, a manager still feels unable to verify the online declaration then the matter will be referred to the GTCS for a final decision regarding the employee's registration renewal.

## **6.2 Failure to complete Professional Update**

In Renfrewshire, cases of teachers failing to complete Professional Update are very rare. For most teachers in this situation, it is due to valid reasons such as career breaks, extended periods of illness, maternity / paternity / adoption leave, engagement in only occasional and sporadic supply work or other exceptional circumstances. Where a registered teacher was to make a deliberate and conscious decision not to meet the requirements of Professional Update, through non-compliance with contractual requirements for continuing professional development or PRD, this would be dealt with in line with the council disciplinary process 'Procedures and Conduct of the Disciplinary Process for Teachers, Quality Improvement Officers, Educational Psychologists and Music Instructors'.

## **Section 7 Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

### **7.1 School level**

At school level, it is the responsibility of the head of establishment to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the establishment's PRD arrangements in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and the impact on attainment. Evaluation should also include how well identified professional needs have been met.

## **7.2 Authority level**

At authority level, the Education Manager with responsibility for professional learning will ensure that the PRD process and the quality of professional learning provision are monitored and evaluated. Strategies may include sampling, questionnaires, focus groups and quality audits with evidence scrutinised by the PRD/PU working group. Teachers will be surveyed periodically, the results analysed with a report on progress taken to the JNC. The working group will evaluate relevant information and contribute to this report.

These activities will not impinge on the confidential nature of the process between individual teaching staff and their line manager.

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