



GTC Scotland New Professional Standards: Implications for Probation and for Competence cases from August 2013

GTC Scotland (GTCS) has recently published a set of revised professional standards which will come into force from August 2013.

Although much of this change will simply be absorbed into the normal planning of authorities and schools, it is important to note that there are some differences between the standards which apply currently and those which will be introduced from August. Indeed, it is arguable that the baseline standards have been raised.

For the most part, the new standards will simply replace the existing standards in August and will govern all new processes after that date. Issues do arise, however, in respect of the transition between current and new standards, with particular reference to those who are seeking full registration and also to those who are subject to a process based on the Framework for Teacher Competence.

It is proposed that SNCT should endorse the following principles:

1 **Teachers on Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) or on Flexible Route during session 2012/13:**

- (a) Teachers on the Teacher Induction Scheme during session 2012/2013 will apply for full registration under the current Standard for Full Registration.
- (b) In the event that a teacher's probation is **extended** beyond the summer of 2013, he/she should seek to meet the current Standard for Full Registration during that period of extension rather than the new Standard.
- (c) Teachers who are following the Flexible Route can apply for full registration under the current Standard until 1 August 2013. In the event that application is made after that date, teachers will be required to apply under the new Standard unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been accepted by GTC Scotland as justifying an extension of the current Standard for a limited period.
- (d) Service accumulated on the Flexible Route before August 2013 will continue to be eligible to be counted as part of the 270 days required to gain full registration
- (e) With the exception of those covered by 1 (a-c)), the new Standard will apply to all those following the TIS and the Flexible Route with effect from August 2013.

2 **Teachers whose competence is subject to the Framework for Teacher Competence**

The following arrangements will apply to cases of teacher competence which are subject to process within a local authority or within GTCS:

- (a) Any competence case relating to a teacher which is referred by an employer to GTCS on or before 1 August 2013 will be assessed by GTCS against the current Standard for Full Registration.

- (b) In accordance with 2 (a), a competence case considered by an employer at **Stage 3** (an employer's formal Disciplinary Stage) of the Framework for Teacher Competence before the end of session 2012/2013 should be handled under the current Standard for Full Registration and then referred to GTCS by 1 August 2013 for processing under the same standard.

This approach is consistent with the Framework's philosophy that Stage 3 addresses long-running performance issues and that a referral indicates that any support offered at this point has not allowed the teacher to maintain the level defined in the current Standard for Full Registration (SfR).

It should be noted that one implication of this arrangement is that, in the event that long delays accumulate before a hearing can be arranged (for example, due to an extended illness, an employment appeal or tribunal), some cases may be heard under the current Standard some time after the new Standard is in place.

- (c) Any competence case which has been considered by a local authority and which has not reached Stage 3 by the end of school session 2012/13 will, in line with the definitions of Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Framework, be deemed to be still subject to the need for support associated with short-lived underperformance. In the event that any such case subsequently reaches Stage 3, the case should be assessed by the employer and, if subsequently referred, by GTC Scotland, against the new professional standard which comes into force in August 2013.
- (d) Any referral which does not meet the guidelines set out in 2a-c above will be assessed against the new professional standards which come into force in August 2013.

Anthony Finn
April 2013

Note from SNCT Handbook

*8.2 In accordance with a locally agreed disciplinary procedure, action may be taken by the authority where a teacher's performance or conduct causes serious concern. The General Teaching Council for Scotland's Framework on Teacher Competence is at **Appendix 2.12**.*