



# ABERDEEN

## CITY COUNCIL

### Education and Children's Services

## Teacher Professional Review and Development in Aberdeen City

### Guidance Materials

Version Date – revised 14 May 2015 (Final)

## Introduction and Rationale

Professional Review and Development (PRD) is a vital element of a teacher's professional learning, with the potential to bring about significant improvements to the education of young people. It features prominently in several of the recommendations made by Graham Donaldson in his report on teacher education, *Teaching Scotland's Future*<sup>1</sup>, and also in Gerry McCormac's review of teacher employment, *Advancing Professionalism in Teaching*<sup>2</sup>:

“We are firmly of the belief that developing the profession and continuing to improve the performance of teachers through career long Professional Review and Personal Development... is the surest way to improve educational outcomes.” (McCormac, 2011)

This document seeks to establish an up-to-date, revised and refreshed teacher PRD scheme for Aberdeen City, taking into account the recommendations made by Donaldson and McCormac, the views expressed by colleagues locally, and guidance provided by national working groups, in order to provide an effective, workable and realistic framework through which all of our teachers can undertake meaningful and valuable reflections, discussions and planning for their professional learning.

Throughout this document the term, 'professional learning' is used to describe activities which contribute to a teacher's personal professional development. The term is being used widely at a national level in place of 'CPD', and is intended to reflect the shift in focus towards teachers taking more ownership of their own individual learning, rather than seeing continuous professional development as something which is delivered to them on a larger scale, and over which they may have less direct control.

## Key Principles of the Teacher PRD Scheme

“Professional dialogue within PRD is most effective when it is both supportive and challenging and signals practical steps towards improved practice. It can help to stimulate and sustain the development of individual teachers as well as helping them to manage the demands of the dynamic contexts in which they work.” (Donaldson, 2011)

At a national level, a number of key features of a successful PRD system were highlighted in the recommendations made by Donaldson and McCormac. At a local level, a workshop was held in May 2012 with teachers and head teachers from Aberdeen City schools, to establish the elements that should be included in a PRD scheme for Aberdeen. Each of these reference points has been used to help create the following set of principles which should underpin all teacher PRD activity in Aberdeen:

### **1. PRD should be a positive and supportive process, whilst providing scope for challenge**

The PRD scheme should be seen by all concerned as a valuable and positive process, in which the successes and achievements of individuals, and of teams, departments and schools are recognised, recorded and celebrated. The scheme should be used to identify appropriate elements of support for teachers to help stimulate and sustain their development, and there should be opportunities to highlight practical steps which should be taken towards improving practice.

<sup>1</sup> Donaldson, G 2010, *Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland*, Scottish Government, Edinburgh, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/337626/0110852.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> McCormac, G 2011, *Advancing Professionalism in Teaching: The report of the review of teacher employment in Scotland*, Scottish Government, Edinburgh, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/920/0120759.pdf>

By striking an appropriate balance between recognising success, identifying appropriate support for professional development and providing challenge to improve practice, there should be clear benefits for all stakeholders in fully engaging with the process.

## **2. Clear links between professional learning and its impact on learners**

The ultimate aim of any professional learning activity should be to make a positive difference to the achievement and attainment of young people. When teachers embark on professional learning of any kind they should be very clear from the outset what impact their learning is intended to have on the pupils they work with.

When planning any future professional learning activity through the PRD process, therefore, the intended impact on pupils should be clearly identified. Similarly, when reviewing and evaluating previous professional learning, the extent to which this has impacted on young people should form the main focus of that evaluation.

## **3. An integrated, evidence based approach**

Regularly recording evidence of professional learning and its impact, and using this to identify areas for future professional development, should be at the heart of any PRD system.

The gathering and recording of evidence should be a continual process and should be an integral part of the day to day work of the teacher, school and local authority. The evidence collected throughout the year should be recorded in a Professional Learning Profile, which should be shared and reviewed at an annual review meeting between the teacher and their line manager or member of senior management. This annual meeting should be seen as just one element of an on-going, year-round PRD process.

The Professional Learning Profile, containing evidence of prior professional learning and its impact, should be continually updated and retained for future reference. As part of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Professional Update arrangements, teachers will be asked to confirm that they have kept their profile up to date.

## **4. Reflection, Review and Planning based on Professional Standards**

The GTCS Professional Standards provide a common set of expectations for teachers, with regard to the professional qualities and capabilities they should develop and maintain throughout their careers. The Standard for Full Registration applies to all fully registered teachers, regardless of what stage of their career they are at, and is the benchmark standard for all teachers. In addition, the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning helps teachers to further identify, plan and develop their own professional learning needs and to ensure continuing development of professional practice as they progress through their careers. Finally the Standards for Leadership and Management have been developed to support the self-evaluation and professional learning of those in, or aspiring to, formal leadership roles in schools.

Within the PRD process, any discussions about a teacher's professional development should begin with the relevant Professional Standard(s) to which they are working. The Standards should be used by individual teachers to help guide their professional learning and career development, through reviewing their own performance against the Standards and identifying the areas of the Standards where further support and professional development are required. The Standards provide a shared language which can be used by teachers and their reviewers to reflect on and evaluate their practice.



Where there is evidence that a teacher is not meeting all elements of the required Standard for their post, the PRD scheme should provide opportunities for the teacher and their line manager to jointly identify appropriate professional learning activities and support to help address this, within agreed timescales.

#### **5. Striking a balance between individual, school, local and national priorities**

An effective PRD scheme should help to address development priorities at individual teacher, school, local authority and national levels. Planning for future professional learning should take all of these priorities into account, and teachers' CPD plans should consist of an appropriate blend of activities aimed at establishing and contributing to improvements at all levels.

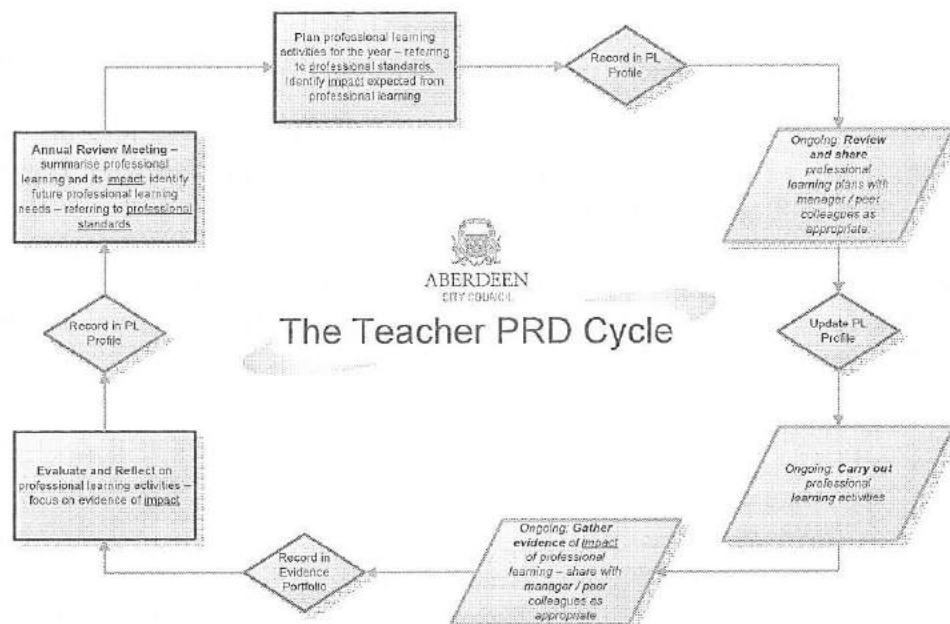
#### **6. Peer review and coaching/mentoring approaches**

A major element of the PRD process is the review of a teachers' prior achievements and professional learning. To assist with this part of the process, teachers should have the opportunity to gather feedback from their line manager or member of senior management, their peer colleagues and their pupils. This feedback should provide a rich source of evidence of recent success, and areas for potential further development. As part of the PRD process teachers should have regular high quality professional conversations with their line manager or member of senior management. In addition and where time and resources allow, teachers would also benefit from undertaking regular professional discussions with peer colleagues, in order to continually gather and record evidence of their professional learning and development. Coaching and mentoring approaches should be used to ensure that these conversations bring about the greatest benefits.

### **The Teacher PRD Scheme in Practice**

The revised teacher PRD scheme has been developed to reflect each of the above key principles. Care has been taken to avoid making the scheme too prescriptive; it is recognised that colleagues learn in different ways and schools will want to develop their own approaches based on the framework provided.

Teacher PRD should be seen as an on-going, year round process, and this is reflected in the diagram below. Some of the activity will take place at set times in the year, and should fit appropriately into the school's annual improvement calendar. Other elements of the cycle (shown in *italics*) will be happening continually throughout the year, whenever the teacher takes part in a professional learning activity. Spreading PRD activity across the whole year and integrating it into normal everyday practice should help to reduce the amount of time required for a teacher to prepare for their annual PRD review meeting.



A larger version of the Teacher PRD Cycle diagram can be found in Appendix 1.

### The Professional Learning (PL) Profile/Record

Every teacher should maintain a personal professional learning profile or record. Since all teachers have to maintain registration with the independent governing body General Teaching Council for Scotland teaching staff are strongly encouraged to use the facilities on MyGTCS to record their professional learning and supporting evidence and reflection. Throughout the year, the profile/record should be used to record planned professional learning activities, and the intended impact of those activities. Once the professional learning activities have been carried out, the profile should be updated to show evidence of their actual impact on pupils. The profile should be the main focus of the teacher's annual review meeting. A suggested format for a professional learning profile is suggested in Appendix 2. Teachers may choose to use this format, or MyGTCS, or they may prefer to develop their own, in consultation with their reviewer.

### Professional Learning Activities

Professional learning activities can take many different forms. Any activity undertaken by a teacher which contributes to their professional learning and development, and which impacts on pupils' learning, can be legitimately recorded on the professional learning profile. Activities may include, for example, undertaking professional reading, carrying out an action research project, sharing practice with colleagues, or attending a workshop or conference.

Whilst the local authority will continue to provide programmes of core professional learning opportunities, based on identified needs at all levels, these should be supplemented by other professional learning activities which are arranged and provided by individual colleagues, establishments, and associated schools groups, in order to meet more specific, individual needs. All teachers should be encouraged to take full control of their own professional learning, and to actively seek out appropriate opportunities for themselves wherever possible.

### Links with Professional Update arrangements

As part of the General Teaching Council's Professional Update arrangements, all teachers will be required to record evidence of the professional learning they have undertaken, and the impact that this has had on pupils' learning, in order to demonstrate that their teaching continues to be at the required standard. The PRD process provides a mechanism for teachers

to regularly record appropriate evidence of the impact of their professional learning. If evidence is gathered and recorded regularly for PRD, teachers should have little difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of Professional Update.

Professional Update will take effect for all teachers in Scotland from August 2014. A small selection of Aberdeen City schools and staff are participating in a pilot project to help develop the Professional Update procedures, from August 2013.

A separate document containing guidance notes on the Professional Update procedures is available, and can be downloaded from the Zone (visit the Education, Culture & Sport pages within the Directorate Zone), or from Glow.

#### Recording evidence of impact

Evidence of the impact of a teacher's professional learning on pupils' learning can take many forms. For example, samples of pupil work could be used to show progression and development. A brief written note summarising a significant event in the classroom or a conversation with a group of pupils may also demonstrate an advance in the pupils' understanding of a key concept. Where available, short questionnaires and video could also be used.

Teachers should build up and regularly maintain a portfolio of evidence, which can be added to throughout the year as professional learning activities are undertaken and the impact of these is identified. This could be an informal notebook or electronic file where significant events or observations are briefly noted, and copies of relevant paperwork inserted. The portfolio should be seen as a working document and should be set up in such a way to allow evidence to be added quickly and easily, in order to minimise the additional workload which is required to keep it up to date.

Where possible, specific pieces of evidence should be linked to individual professional learning activities, and references to the relevant evidence should be made in the teacher's professional learning profile.

To further minimise any additional work for the teacher, it would be helpful to identify in advance what evidence will be collected, so that this can be considered when planning the professional learning to be undertaken.

#### The annual PRD review meeting

Ideally, all teachers should have at least one annual meeting with their line manager. In some schools, however, it may be agreed that the senior management team will share the responsibility of undertaking these meetings, in order to ensure that time is available for all teachers to have access to a high quality review. In these cases it need not necessarily be the teacher's direct line manager who carries out their review meeting.

The annual review meeting should focus on the content of the teacher's professional learning profile. Discussions should begin with a review of the professional learning that the teacher has undertaken, and the positive impact that this has had on pupils' learning, based on the evidence which has been collected over the year. The teacher's successes and achievements should be highlighted, and links should be made between these achievements and the specific elements of the relevant professional standard(s) which the teacher has been working to address over the year.

Attention should then turn to plans for the coming year, by agreeing which elements of the professional standard(s) the teacher will focus on through their professional learning. The professional learning activities to be undertaken should be agreed, along with any specific

support which is required for these. These activities should be aimed at appropriately balancing the needs of the teacher, the school and the local authority. The intended impact of planned activities on pupils' learning should also be discussed and recorded.

A suggested template agenda for an annual PRD review meeting is shown in Appendix 3.

As a record of the meeting, a brief summary of the discussions should be written up and signed by the teacher and their reviewer. This should be kept with the teachers' professional learning profile. A suggested template for a meeting record form can also be found in Appendix 3.

After the meeting the teacher should compile a more detailed professional learning plan for the coming year, which should be recorded on their professional learning profile. The plans should be shared with the teacher's reviewer, and their line manager if their review meeting was with another manager. The professional learning profile should be seen as a working document, however, and should be continually reviewed and updated throughout the year.

#### Reviewing and sharing with senior managers and peer colleagues

In addition to the annual formal PRD review meeting, it is recommended that, where time and resources allow, teachers regularly meet with a senior manager or a peer colleague, to discuss and share recent additions to their professional learning profile and the impact of recent professional learning activity. This will provide teachers with an opportunity to gain direct advice, guidance and coaching from colleagues, and assist them in continually reviewing and refreshing their profile. A key recommendation in the *Teaching Scotland's Future* report is that all teachers should see themselves as teacher educators, and should be trained in mentoring. By taking an active role in their colleagues' PRD in this way and acting as a peer mentor or coach, teachers will have a valuable opportunity to contribute to the education of other teachers.

Where possible it is recommended that teachers should have the opportunity to meet a colleague to discuss their professional learning on at least two occasions, outwith their annual PRD review meeting.

The local authority is rolling out a programme of training opportunities in coaching and mentoring, so that teachers can be fully equipped to support their colleagues in this way. Training specifically aimed at line managers and senior managers is also available, to help build their skills in conducting effective review meetings using coaching and mentoring techniques.

#### Roles and Responsibilities within the Teacher PRD Scheme

The Education, Culture & Sport Service's Workforce Development and Continuous Professional Development Policy, approved by elected members in June 2012, sets out a number of responsibilities for both employees and managers. Some of these relate specifically to professional review and development:

##### *Employees will:*

- *Keep a personal record of all significant CPL activities they have undertaken*
- *Actively engage in the... teacher Professional Review and Development scheme... and take the opportunities provided by [the scheme] to share the professional development they have undertaken and their future aspirations with their line manager.*

##### *In addition, managers will:*



- *Actively engage in... teacher Professional Review & Development (PRD),... ensuring all team members have access to the appropriate process.*

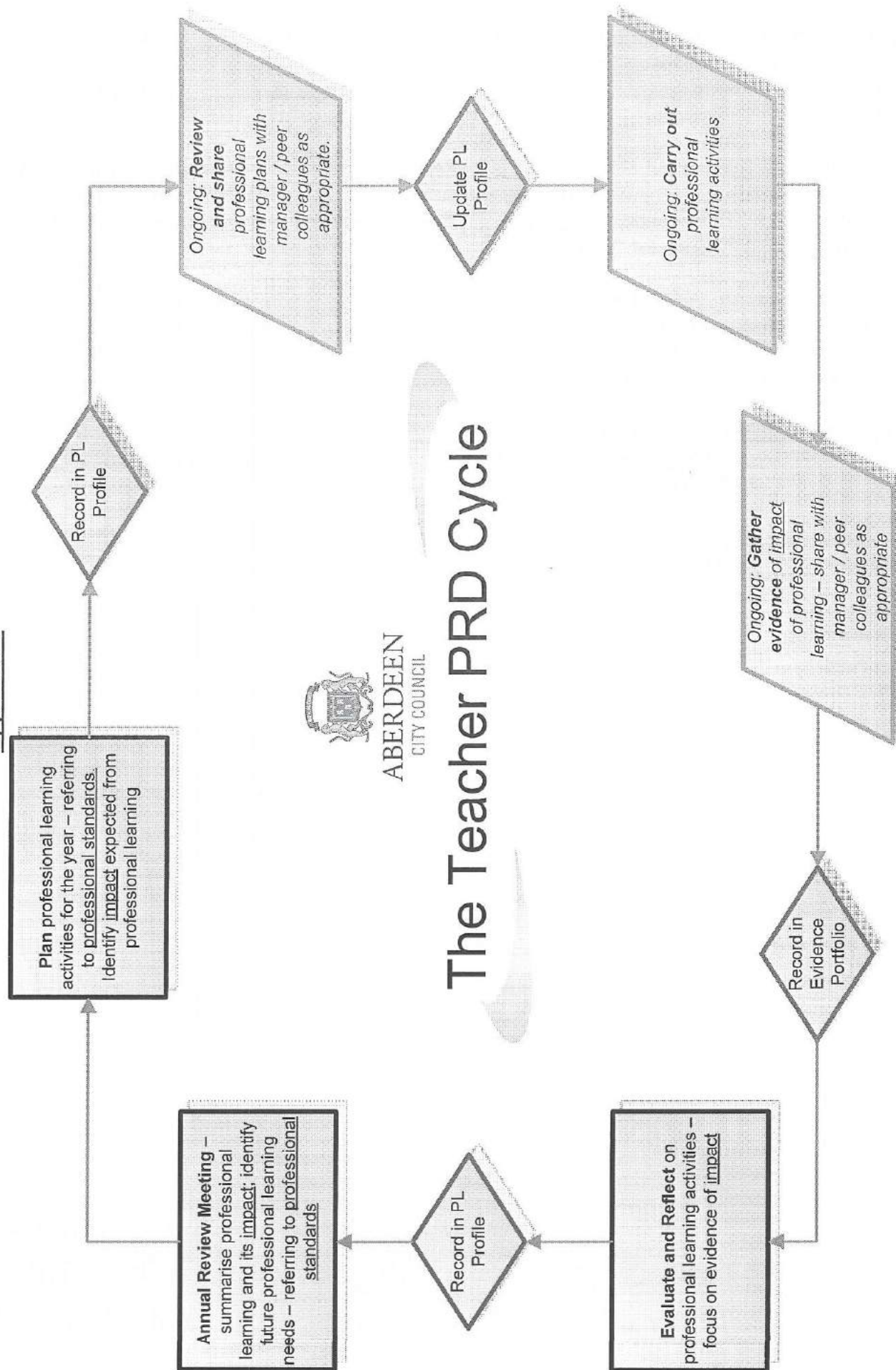
The full Workforce Development and Continuous Professional Development Policy can be downloaded from the Zone (visit the Education and Children's Services pages within the Directorate Zone), or from Glow.

### **Appeals Procedures**

Where there is any dispute or disagreement concerning any aspect of the teacher PRD scheme, which cannot be resolved between the teacher and their reviewer, the matter should be referred to the reviewer's line manager. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the Council's normal grievance procedures should be followed.



## Appendix 1



## Appendix 2 –Professional Learning Profile

A suggested format for an individual teacher's Professional Learning Profile is shown below. This can be adapted by individual teachers or schools to suit their needs, although the principal elements of referring to professional standards and gathering and recording evidence should be retained.

Regardless of the format of the document, it is highly recommended that teachers create and update their professional learning profile electronically, rather than on paper. An electronic version of the document will allow more detailed plans, reflections and evidence to be recorded, as there are no limitations on the available space for each entry.

MyGTCS also offers an accessible and easy to use system for teachers to electronically record, store and share information on professional learning and staff are encouraged to use the facilities on MyGTCS. Should staff choose to use the templates suggested below these should be uploaded to MyGTCS for ease of reference

The table shown below is an example of the column headings which could be used in a professional learning profile. An electronic version of this form, in Microsoft Excel format, is available to download from the Zone and from Glow.

As an alternative to this format, teachers may choose to make use of the "MyPL" tools within the Aberdeen City Professional Learning Portal on Glow.

Do we need this



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Aberdeen City Council  
Education, Culture and Sport  
Teacher Professional Review and Development Scheme  
**Professional Learning Profile**

Teacher's Name:	Teacher's Establishment:	Reviewer's Name:
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Planning Phase						Evaluation Phase		
Date of Entry	Planned Activity	Links to Professional Standards	Links to School Improvement Plan	Expected Impact on Learners	Timescale	Reflection	Evidence of Impact on Learners	Next Steps



### Appendix 3 – Suggested Templates

#### Agenda for PRD Review Meetings

[School Name]

#### Annual PRD Review Meeting

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Review of previous professional learning**

- Summarise professional learning activities undertaken
- Review evidence of impact of professional learning on pupils' learning

**2. Other successes and achievements**

- Identify and record other key achievements of the teacher and the school as a whole

**3. Links to Professional Standards**

- Identify elements of Professional Standards which have been addressed through professional learning and other achievements

**4. Plans for the coming year**

- Identify elements of Professional Standards to focus on
- Identify professional learning requirements – to meet the needs of the teacher, school and local authority
- Agree professional learning activities to be undertaken
- Agree support required to carry out professional learning activities
- Agree intended impact of planned activities on pupils' learning

**5. Set date for next review meeting**

PRD Review Meeting Record Form

[School Name]

Annual PRD Review – Meeting Record

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Part One – Review1. Achievements and Successes

*List here significant personal successes and contributions to the wider achievements of the school and local authority, in the period since the last PRD review. Make links to the relevant areas of Professional Standards which are shown to have been met through these achievements.*

Achievements	Links to Professional Standard(s)

2. Review of Professional Learning

*List below the significant professional learning activities undertaken in the period since the last PRD review. For each activity, briefly note the impact this has had on pupils' learning, referring to examples of evidence collected.*

Professional Learning Activities	Impact on Pupils' Learning

Continued overleaf...

Part 2 – Planning

Record below the elements of the relevant professional standards which will form the focus of professional learning for the coming period. Briefly note the significant professional learning activities to be undertaken to address each identified element, the expected impact of these activities on pupils' learning, and the support required to undertake these activities.

Elements of Professional Standard(s)	Professional Learning Activities	Expected Impact on Pupils	Support Required

After the meeting this information should be transferred to the teacher's professional learning profile, which should be maintained and updated throughout the period. A copy of this meeting record should be kept with the professional learning profile.

We confirm that the above is a true record of this review meeting:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Reviewee) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Reviewer) Date: \_\_\_\_\_