

Shetland Islands Council



Children's Services

Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development of Teaching Staff

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Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development (PRD) of Teaching Staff

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1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

- 1.1 Continuing professional learning is fully recognised as an essential element within Children's Services to ensure outstanding outcomes for all. It enables the continuing development of knowledge and skills for all staff at all stages in their career.
- 1.2 The SNCT Handbook states that 'every teacher will agree an annual CPD plan with his/her immediate manager and every teacher will be required to maintain an individual CPD record'. In addition, teachers have a contractual requirement to complete a maximum of 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per annum. Teachers on part-time contracts will complete CPD per annum on a pro rata basis, in accordance with the pro rata contractual arrangements that apply to the working week.
- 1.3 '*Teaching Scotland's Future*' (Graham Donaldson, 2011) included specific recommendations on the provision of CPD linked to Professional Review and Development (PRD) as a continuous process throughout the career of a teacher.
- 1.4 Advancing Professionalism in Teaching (The McCormac Review, Sept 2011) recommended that all teachers should be engaged in a revitalised process of PRD in a consistent way and on a national basis.
- 1.5 Following the 2011 Public Services Reform Order, requiring that teachers be re-accredited on a regular basis, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) has introduced the Professional Update Scheme which began in August 2014. The Professional Update scheme requires that teachers update their details on the GTCS register and lays out principles for the PRD process. It makes continuing engagement in PRD and Professional Learning a requirement of every registered teacher in Scotland with a 5 yearly signing off process to confirm this engagement with GTCS. In accordance with this Education Scotland has published revised national guidance on PRD. In addition, the PRD scheme of every local authority will require validation by GTCS every 5 years.
- 1.6 Professional Update is based on effective, consistent PRD and high quality professional learning which will enhance teacher's skills and knowledge with the potential to bring about significant improvements to the education of young people in a rapidly changing society.
- 1.7 The term 'professional learning' is being widely used at a national level in place of 'Continuing Professional Development' to describe activities which contribute to a teacher's personal professional development. This term reflects the shift towards teachers taking increased ownership of their own individual learning. The term 'Professional Learning' will be used throughout this document.
- 1.8 Shetland Islands Council, Children's Services, takes account of the newly published GTCS guidelines "Unlocking the Potential of Professional Review and Development, 2019, and believes that these guidelines for PRD will facilitate a fair, transparent and consistent approach to managing PRD planning. This should apply to all teachers, including all centrally employed teachers, probationers, supply and peripatetic teachers.

2 AIMS

2.1 These operational guidelines endorse the following aims for all teachers in order to ensure a positive impact on teaching and learning:

- enhancing continued professionalism,
- sustainable career long professional learning,
- supporting evidence based self-evaluation and ongoing reflection,
- building capacity within schools and the local authority,
- engaging in PRD and professional learning as part of the GTC Scotland Professional Update process.

3 PRINCIPLES

3.1 Professional review and development will have a significant outcome on teachers and a positive impact on pupil learning if the following principles apply:

- PRD is an ongoing, supportive and challenging process which allows teachers to identify existing needs and explore ways of updating their knowledge and skills in order to maintain the high standards required of teachers in Scotland's educational establishments;
- teachers take responsibility for their own development as life-long learners;
- the process is founded on, robust, evidence-based self-evaluation and ongoing personal reflection against the relevant GTCS professional standard(s);
- the process is straightforward with minimal bureaucracy that is built on and develops a culture of trust;
- teachers balance individual and personal development priorities with those relating to the appropriate professional standard and the school improvement plan/service plan;
- teacher empowerment is enhanced and opportunities for leadership and career development are explored;
- by fully engaging in the ongoing PRD process, including associated professional learning, all teachers will be fulfilling the requirements of Professional Update.

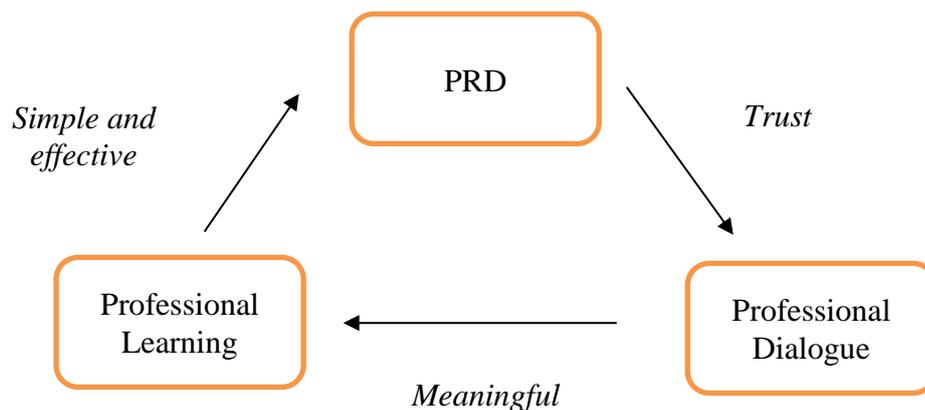
4 Key Features of the Process

“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)

4.1 Application of the following key features should ensure that the PRD process is a high quality and meaningful experience where staff feel valued:

PRD as an Ongoing Process:

- the PRD process continues across the year, and is based on a culture of trust,
- the arrangements are simple, effective, understood by all parties and not constrained by bureaucracy,
- the PRD meeting does not stand alone but concludes the previous year’s PRD process and begins the next,
- teachers and line managers must engage in ongoing professional dialogue throughout the year which includes the opportunity to discuss professional learning opportunities or needs.



Teacher Ownership:

- teachers take responsibility and ownership of their own PRD experience ensuring professional learning is broad based. Managers support and facilitate the experience.

Self Evaluation/Reflection:

- ongoing reflection and collegiate working practices are encouraged and supported,
- the relevant GTCS professional standard(s) are embedded into self-evaluation.

Identified Needs/Professional Learning Priorities:

- professional learning activities are effectively evaluated in relation to individual practice, impact on colleagues and the impact on young people’s learning and progress,
- teachers existing professional expertise is built on and developed throughout each stage of their career,
- the professionalism and commitment of all teachers is recognised and acknowledged.

Examples of appropriate professional learning are provided in Appendix 8.1b. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, rather some examples to help stimulate dialogue when considering appropriate professional learning.

All Teachers have access to the PRD Process:

- it is a requirement that all GTCS registered teachers engage in PRD and maintain their GTCS registration through Professional Update,
- supply teachers, peripatetic staff, Head Teachers and central staff will have access to the PRD process including an annual PRD review meeting and access to Professional Learning.

Recording System:

- the recording system for the PRD process, while important, is secondary to the quality of engagement of the teacher and manager. Therefore records should be a summary and aide memoire to the process, with a focus on ongoing engagement and discussion throughout the year.
- the recording system will be straightforward, meaningful, minimise workload, and consistent for all teachers therefore the MyPL online recording system will be used. This is found within each individual's MyGTCS account.

Competency:

- professional update is a completely separate process from that of teacher competency and capability information gained from the PRD process will not be used for these purposes

PRD Handbook:

- further details of the PRD process are explained in the handbook (Appendix 8.1) and it is expected that all teachers and managers will follow the advice provided in the handbook.

Deferrals or requests to bring PU year forward:

It is recognised that there will be a number of circumstances which may make completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale difficult. This may be in the following circumstances:

- career breaks,
- extended illness,
- maternity/paternity/adoption leave,
- occasional supply work.

Under these circumstances extensions to the 5 year sign-off period may be required. Similarly, a teacher may wish to bring forward their PU year. If a teacher is unable to complete the process in the designated year they can make a request to bring forward or defer their PU year by contacting their line manager. The line manager will review this request, and if agreed, contact the PU Link Officer who will notify the GTCS. The PU Link Officer is the Workforce Development Advisor.

Deferrals will normally be granted for a period of one year.

Where a teacher knows in advance that a deferral period greater than one year will be required, e.g. an extended career break, the teacher should discuss this with his/her employer in the first instance, who will liaise with the PU Link Officer after which the GTCS will be contacted.

If a teacher is unable to instigate a request for a deferral of the Professional Update sign off process, for example during a period of extended absence through ill health, the teacher's line manager can discuss with the PU Link Officer who will contact the GTCS.

Non-engagement in PU and PRD processes:

Where a registered teacher consciously does not engage with the PRD or PU process, Shetland Islands Council would discuss this with the teacher in the first instance to try to seek informal resolution, exploring the challenges and barriers that they may be facing in order to assist the teacher to engage with the process. If all reasonable assistance has been explored and the teacher still does not engage with the process, Shetland Islands Council will deal with this under Disciplinary Procedures in liaison with the GTCS. Line managers must make their Quality Improvement Officer or Executive Manager aware at the earliest opportunity. Teachers can be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative at such meetings. If a teacher on the supply list does not engage with either process, they will be removed from the supply list.

Appeals Process:

The right to appeal will apply in 2 areas:

- failure to agree the sign off for a plan in the annual PRD process;
- failure to agree the sign off for the 5-yearly Professional Update process.

Experience with the PRD process suggests that such appeals will arise only in very exceptional circumstances and efforts should be made to address issues early and informally to avoid getting to this stage, in a similar vein to the last section. However, should a difficulty be encountered in either of the two areas above, the appeals process within the council's Disciplinary Procedures should be followed, which is set out broadly below:

- the teacher appealing should approach a senior manager in the establishment or central service, and set out in writing the reasons for appealing,
- once the senior manager has considered all the relevant facts relating to the appeal, the senior manager will arrange to meet with the line manager and the teacher (separately and/or together) to discuss the matter, following which the senior manager will come to a decision,
- the teacher can be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative,
- following the decision of the senior manager, appropriate action will be taken, e.g. a further review meeting, amendment to the plan,
- if, following the decision of the senior manager, the matter remains unresolved, the teacher may choose to initiate a grievance under the Council's Grievance Procedures for Teachers.
- If at the end of any grievance procedure the matter remains unresolved or either party is unsatisfied, the matter will be referred to the GTCS for a final decision regarding the employee's registration.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Executive Manager, Quality Improvement, has a responsibility to:

- In discussion with Shetland Islands Council's Workforce Development, ensure that suitable policies and support materials are in place which reflect national guidance and local priorities (including GTCS Professional Standards, Education Scotland PRD Guidance, the Schools and Quality Improvement Service Plan and Children's Services' School Improvement Framework);
- communicate the policy, support materials and any changes to them, to all teachers;

- ensure the provision of professional learning opportunities based on teacher, local and national priorities, as informed by ongoing evaluation of staff development and appropriate information from the PRD process;
- ensure ongoing evaluation, monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the PRD process and the level of engagement;
- ensure that the PRD process meets GTCS requirements for Professional Update.
- monitor deferrals through information provided by GTCS

5.2 Head Teachers and other relevant managers and Quality Improvement Officers will promote a culture of professional learning linked explicitly to improved outcomes for children and young people by:

- promoting ongoing professional learning for all teaching staff to ensure that all teachers are involved in the PRD process leading to Professional Update;
- integrating the PRD process in a consistent and fair way as part of the normal life and management of the school/establishment;
- ensuring that the process is linked to the GTCS Professional Standards for teachers and to the school improvement plan/service plan;
- identifying trends in professional learning needs and taking appropriate action to address them at, for example, individual school level, cluster group level, or through the authority's Workforce Development Advisor.

5.3 Promoted Teachers (including Head Teachers and other managers and Quality Improvement Officers) with staff management responsibilities, have a responsibility to:

- ensure that the annual PRD meeting is arranged for each teacher, or respond to a request to arrange it from a teacher;
- arrange PRD meetings so as to comply with the establishment working time agreement;
- facilitate the PRD meeting using coaching and mentoring approaches which places the emphasis on the quality of the professional dialogue;
- ensure that the meetings take place in an atmosphere of trust and collegiality;
- ensure that staff are supported constructively during the PRD discussion, providing challenge where appropriate;
- ensure that the PRD discussion allows for individual and personal development priorities based on the appropriate GTCS Professional Standards and on the school and, where appropriate, Children's Services service plan;
- agree and sign off the professional learning plan, and validate the GTCS Professional Update requirements at the appropriate time;
- To provide continuing support for Professional Learning in order to meet identified needs.

5.4 All GTCS registered teachers are responsible for the following in order to engage in Professional Update:

- ensure that an annual PRD meeting has been arranged for them by their manager or request that one is arranged in line with the establishment working time agreement;
- prepare for the annual PRD meeting by completing their professional learning plan and identifying professional learning areas which:

- are to be continued or developed from the previous year depending on evidence of impact,
- will enable them to contribute to any relevant improvement/service plans,
- address individual professional needs arising from self-evaluation against the appropriate GTCS professional standards.
- engage in professional dialogue at the PRD meeting;
- construct their professional learning plan based on the PRD meeting and have this agreed and signed off by their manager;
- identify, request and arrange professional learning opportunities in agreement with their manager as the year goes on, and seek their manager's assistance in doing so if required;
- engage in 35 hours of additional professional learning over a school year which is undertaken out with the contractual 35-hours working week;
- maintain and complete their professional learning plan including evidence of impact as the year continues and have this agreed and signed off by their manager at the next PRD meeting;
- ensure that their contact details with GTCS are up to date;
- undertake the 5-yearly Professional Update sign off process.

5.5 Centrally based staff who are registered teachers

If centrally based staff wish to continue to be registered teachers, they should request to use these PRD procedures for teachers alongside of the Council's Personal Development Plan Policy (PDP), where appropriate. In order to achieve the five-yearly update, staff need to demonstrate that they have linked their self-evaluation and professional learning plan to the appropriate standards in the GTCS suite of Professional Standards. Examples of these staff may include the Quality Improvement Manager and Officers, Education Support Officers, and Educational Psychologists.

5.6 Supply Teachers

Shetland Islands Council will undertake to communicate training opportunities to all supply teachers on their list. They may join such activities free of charge. They may be able to join school-based activities at the discretion of Head Teachers. It will remain the responsibility of each supply teacher to keep records of their professional learning and to self-evaluate using the standards.

It is the responsibility of each supply teacher to request a PRD meeting with a suitable reviewer. Normally this will be at a school where they have provided regular supply cover for the previous year. At the five-yearly declaration, then the current reviewer should be asked to provide confirmation. Should any supply teacher have difficulties, they should contact central Children's Services.

5.7 Temporary Teachers

It is the responsibility of each teacher employed on a temporary basis to request a PRD meeting with a suitable reviewer. Normally this will be at a school where they have worked most as a temporary teacher during the previous year. At the five-yearly declaration, then the current reviewer should be asked to provide confirmation. Should any temporary teacher have difficulties, they should contact central Children's Services.

5.8 Categories of Full Registration – General and Associate

Teachers who retire and who wish to stay on the GTC Scotland Register will have the option of retaining their pre-retirement category of Fully Registered (General) or moving to the category of Fully Registered (Associate). Engaging in supply work requires the maintenance of Fully Registered (General) status. Retired teachers who decide not to engage in supply work but wish to remain on the Register may opt for the Fully Registered (Associate) category. The Associate category is not appropriate for those wishing to do classroom teaching. For retired teachers choosing the Fully Registered (Associate) category, the requirement to engage in the Professional Update process involves updating details annual on the register and adhering to the values in the Standards, although other aspects are encouraged where possible and appropriate.

Teachers planning to retire who wish to undertake supply work can choose to engage in the Professional Update sign off in the school session during which they retire, effectively bringing their sign off year forward.

5.9 Teachers contracted to work in more than one school

Each teacher is allocated a base school and line manager who will facilitate the teacher's PRD experience and sign off their Professional Update when required. In exceptional circumstances, a teacher may request that another manager facilitates the PRD process (see Handbook for further information) It is the responsibility of the teacher to evidence professional learning undertaken in all schools and set appropriate targets in conjunction with their line manager.

6 OUTLINE OF THE PROCESS FOR PROFESSIONAL REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Timing

At a time of year identified by Head Teachers (or other relevant managers) for PRD meetings, teachers and managers will ensure that meetings have been scheduled. However, schools should also accommodate temporary/supply teacher PRDs, this may have to fall out with the school's normal PRD period depending on working patterns.

6.2 Before the PRD meeting

In preparation for the PRD meeting, teachers will reflect on the impact of the previous years' professional learning activities. This will include impact on self, on colleagues and on young people's learning and progress. Teachers will also undertake self-evaluation against appropriate GTCS professional standards. This information should be shared with the reviewer one week prior to the PRD meeting either through MyPL or on the PLP.

6.3 At the PRD Meeting

The manager will use a coaching and mentoring approach to discuss the professional learning plan from the previous year (which should be signed off and agreed) and the plan for the year ahead. The professional learning plan should take into account any actions still needed from the previous year, the school improvement plan/service plan and the teacher's own self-evaluation.

6.4 After the PRD meeting

The professional learning plan should be written up by the teacher within a week of the meeting and submitted to the manager for signing off. In some cases, it may be necessary to have further discussion before this is agreed. The signing off by the manager allows the teacher to go ahead with the new plan. The teacher will update the professional learning plan as required.

There will be continuing professional dialogue between the teacher and manager, for example when the teacher identifies professional learning opportunities, when there are cover or budget implications, if priorities change, or if the teacher needs assistance in securing development opportunities.

Engagement in Professional Update is an ongoing process, with professional learning and PRD at the heart. Every five years teachers will be required to confirm their engagement in this process with GTCS. It will be the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the sign off process for Professional Update is completed and the manager's responsibility to validate the teacher's declaration. The timescales for this, as defined by the GTCS, is that Professional Update should be completed in line with the PRD cycle, so in the May or June of the individual's sign off year. There is allowance for late sign off in the following October, but this should be the exception, not the norm.