



# **Education & Learning Directorate**

## **Professional Learning Strategy for Teachers & Associated Professionals**

(including Professional Review &  
Development and Professional Update  
Procedures)

2021

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## Context

### ***Successful schools are those which promote a culture of learning.***

The vision of Dumfries and Galloway Education and Learning Directorate is to improve outcomes for all children and young people and to give the best start in life.

Education and Learning has a talented and committed workforce. This document sets out the professional learning arrangements which are in place to develop the skills and build capacity in our teaching staff to deliver excellent services to children and families, be a learning organisation and an employer of choice. These arrangements reflect local and national guidance, including the General Teaching Council Scotland's Professional Standards 2021.

Our professional learning arrangements are in place to support all our teaching staff. This policy complements our Workforce Strategy for non-teaching staff.

### **What is Professional Learning?**

Professional Learning (PL) is anything which has progressed, assisted or enhanced a teacher's professional practice and might include issues of personal development as well as specific educational issues. This may include:

- discussing professional development issues in staff and team meetings
- coaching and mentoring
- peer working and peer observation
- involvement in networks, development groups or projects
- Self-evaluation exercise (e.g. 360, ESCI etc.)
- attending internal conferences, courses and events
- attending external conferences and courses
- attending online webinars, lectures or other digital opportunities
- discussions with colleagues to reflect on classroom practice
- research through professional reading and investigation
- skills-based training
- professional learning through professional associations (e.g. health & safety etc.)
- sharing of evaluations from instances of professional learning; and
- career long learning, not necessarily one-off.

### **How are Professional Learning Needs identified?**

Engaging with the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) Professional Standards and using them as tools for both reflection and development are key to the professional learning process for teachers. Whatever your role, the Standards are there to be used positively; to encourage you to think critically; to allow you to reflect on your professional practice and thinking and to consider and plan your

Professional Learning. This is supported by the Professional Review and Development (PRD) process (see page 7).

## Professional Learning Pathways for Teachers

The GTCS has provided an [interactive guide](#) for teachers to reflect against the Standards.

### Which Standard should I reflect against?

A teacher's professional learning pathway may be recognised in **three overlapping phases** depending on the needs of individual teacher. The pathways are supported by a suite of Professional Standards which have been developed to support the self-evaluation and professional learning of teachers. The pathway should be owned by the teacher and it is the teacher's responsibility to define their own pathway following the integrated early phase.

#### 1. Integrated Early Phase

The early phase of teacher education covers initial teacher education, induction and the early years of employment. We work in partnership with universities providing initial teacher education to ensure that all teachers at the beginning of their career develop a coherent and secure platform of knowledge and skills on which to build throughout their career. From their probationer year, teachers will record their personal, school and Local Authority professional learning alongside key areas of the Standards for Registration. They will be supported in identifying their needs by a dedicated Supporter.

Some teachers will undertake the Flexible Route to meet the Standard for Full Registration – this document applies to them as well.

These different elements in the early phase should be seen and operate as a single, planned early phase in career-long professional development. In practice, this means that Education Authority and University Partnerships will be jointly responsible for the following:

- providing student and newly qualified teachers with an appropriate context for an effective professional learning environment
- monitoring, evaluating and developing the early phase of teacher education within the partnership
- providing and implementing quality assurance procedures relating to the participation of schools in the early phase of teacher education
- working together on all aspects of the student and probationer experience from recruitment to meeting the Standard for Full Registration

- providing appropriate programmes of work for student and probationary teachers including support for students during school placements and for newly qualified teachers during the induction year; and
- the joint review and development of Initial Teacher Education provision and the student experience.

## **2. Career-Long Professional Learning**

Having attained the Standard for Full Registration, teachers will continue to develop their expertise and experience across all areas of their professional practice through appropriate and sustained career-long professional learning. The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning has been developed to support teachers choosing to reflect on this Standard as part of their professional learning. As they progress through their careers this Standard will help them to identify, plan and develop their own professional learning needs and to ensure continuing development of professional practice.

Teachers should utilise the Standard for Career Long Professional Learning in order to support their PRD process.

## **3. Educational Leadership**

GTCS Leadership Standards are found in the Standard for Middle Leadership and the Standard for Headship. These Standards have been developed to support the self-evaluation and professional learning of those in, or aspiring to, formal leadership roles in schools. The Standard for Middle Leadership and the Standard for Headship include a focus on leadership for learning, teacher leadership, and working collegially to build leadership capacity in others.

The Standard for Headship lays down the foundations for professionalism and leadership required by all Headteachers. It is a framework for aspiring Headteachers and identifies key qualities that are required to succeed as an experienced Headteacher. It is now a legal requirement as detailed in the Head Teachers Education and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2019 that all teachers appointed to their first permanent headteacher post in local authority or grant-aided school from August 2020 must have been awarded the Standard for Headship by the GTCS.

## **Expectations**

### **Teachers and School Leaders**

Teachers and school leaders must meet the expectations of the GTCS and to undertake career long professional learning by reflecting against the appropriate Standard(s). Every five years, all registered teachers must complete the Professional Update (PU) process.

The Professional Standards 2021 include a section called 'Being a teacher in Scotland' which highlights professional values and roots the Professional Standards as a framework that supports what it means to become, be and grow as a teacher in Scotland.

Having a strong focus on professional values helps teachers develop their professional identity and underpins a deep commitment to all learners' cognitive, social and emotional growth and wellbeing. They are integral to, and demonstrated through, teachers' professional relationships, thinking and actions in their professional practice. Teachers' commitment to reflecting on the connections between professional values and actions and career-long professional learning is a critical part of enhancing their professionalism.

### **Induction**

All teachers should receive induction when commencing employment with Dumfries and Galloway Council. Probationers who arrive as part of the Trainee Induction Scheme receive an annual tailored programme to meet their needs which is intended to complement the induction processes of our schools. All schools should ensure that they have relevant induction procedures for new staff.

All new Headteachers in Dumfries & Galloway are offered a mentor colleague and are encouraged to attend the Senior Leaders Professional Learning Programme as part of their induction to both the post and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

## Professional Review and Development (PRD)

PRD should be viewed as a process and is intended to engender a culture of professional learning. It should:

- Focus on the delivery of improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Be a continuous and ongoing process. It is systematically planned and supported.
- Involve an ongoing commitment to maintain professional expertise throughout a teacher's career, regardless of post.
- Be underpinned by professional learning.
- Be collaborative, where teachers are supported and feel valued.
- Be incorporated as part of the culture of the school which will include good leadership, collegiality, a positive ethos.
- Involve dialogue within a culture of improvement which recognises and celebrates success.
- Be based upon self-evaluation and personal reflection against the relevant Professional Standard(s).
- Support teachers to undertake professional learning.
- Identify professional learning needs and may link to school improvement plan objectives.
- Is central to raising attainment and achievement and improving the effectiveness of learning and teaching.
- Supports and challenges teachers, empowering them to seek out and engage in meaningful and transformative professional learning experiences.

It may help teachers to maintain a professional learning plan to support professional dialogue.

PRD is not just a meeting. It is a supportive process which needs careful preparation including:

- an emphasis on coaching and mentoring support.
- it should build on a teacher's self-evaluation; and
- helping teachers to:
  - identify constructive ways to update their skills.
  - gain access to opportunities which can address areas they have identified as requiring support.
  - manage change; and
  - focus on ways in which they can enhance their careers.

Guidance and documentation for PRD is available on GLOW.

## Climate for a Successful PRD

The annual PRD should be a supportive meeting, whereby teacher and reviewer are able to openly and confidently exchange views and thereby identify ways to strengthen professional practice for the reviewee.

All members of staff will be involved in a Professional Review that should focus on a teacher's current practice, the achievement of individual objectives and on areas of potential development. It should set new or revised objectives leading to each teacher undertaking a planned programme of continuous professional learning.

It is important that the reviewer is familiar with the work of the reviewee in order that quality productive dialogue can be engaged in, to support the professional learning of the teacher.

Effective PRD should take place within a culture of trust and professional integrity, supporting the maintenance of a collegiate organisation where morale is high.

## Commitment to PRD

PRD meetings will normally be conducted by the line manager on a one-to-one basis. However, a teacher can request an alternative manager as reviewer.

In certain circumstances e.g. parental leave, career break, long-term absence, the PRD process may be deferred for an appropriate period of time. On return to service, the reviewee and reviewer will agree a suitable date for the PRD.

Reviewers and Reviewees are encouraged to seek training in coaching and mentoring prior to engagement in the process.

Our commitment to PRD will ensure:

- All participants will fully understand the intentions and the operation of the process.
- Each teacher will access PRD documentation in advance and will be encouraged to take time to consider their views and ideas.
- The PRD will take account of appropriate GTCS Standard(s).
- Each person undertaking a PRD meeting will receive information and support as necessary.
- The PRD meeting will be part of an on-going process supporting Professional Update (PU).
- Headteachers/Line managers are responsible for ensuring that the PRD process is operated fairly and effectively within their establishments. Headteachers/Line managers are responsible for ensuring that alternative reviewers are provided at the request of individual reviewees. Headteachers/Line managers are also responsible for ensuring that all PRDs are recorded in iTrent.



- Line managers or reviewers are responsible for facilitating the PRD process for those staff who are assigned to them. They also have the responsibility of signing off those staff allocated to them undertaking PU in that year. Line managers and reviewers have the responsibility of ensuring, that where there may be potential issues regarding the PRD/ PU process, these are discussed at the earliest available opportunity.
- Line Managers are responsible for developing a coaching and mentoring approach to support the PRD/ PU process.

## Professional Update

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) introduced Professional Update (PU) for all fully registered teachers in 2014. PU should not be considered as separate from the PRD process. All teachers are required to complete the PU process every five years. The local authority is required to have their PU procedures validated by the GTCS every 5 years.

Any teacher retiring from the profession can request that their PU process is brought forward and completed prior to them leaving the service.

## Roles and Responsibilities

GTCS maintain the national Professional Update validation guidelines and criteria for local authorities. They have the responsibility for validating local authority Professional Update policy and procedures.

Registered teachers have the responsibility of updating their personal details every year, engaging in the ongoing PRD process and every five years, completing the PU process. In addition, teachers have a contractual requirement to complete a maximum of 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per annum.

The key principles guiding PU are that teachers will have:

- a responsibility to consider their own professional learning needs;
- an entitlement to a system of supportive PRD; and
- confirmation that they are maintaining the high standards required of a teacher.

This will be achieved by:

- an annual update, involving submission to GTCS of changes in personal details;
- continuing engagement in the PRD process and professional learning; and
- a five yearly professional update procedure.

Dumfries and Galloway Council work with our Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) and the GTCS to validate and deliver our local Professional Update system.

Reviewers and Reviewees must ensure that PU is completed within the appropriate academic year.

## Declaration of Engagement

The completion of the five yearly PU sign-off process is the responsibility of the individual teacher.

The line manager has responsibility for confirming this requirement by signing off the individual teacher's declaration of engagement.

## **Support**

Line managers and reviewers will be offered information, support and training as appropriate prior to undertaking the PU process with teaching staff.

The information, support and training on the PRD/PU process will emphasise the need for self-evaluation by reviewees and the use of coaching and mentoring approaches by reviewers.

## **Appeals and Deferrals Procedure**

In certain circumstances e.g. parental leave, career break, long-term absence, the PRD/PU process may be deferred for an appropriate period of time in line with the GTCS Professional Update Deferral Processes. Any requests for a deferral should be made in writing to the Schools' Manager who will notify GTCS of their decision.

On return to service, the reviewee and reviewer will agree a suitable date for the PRD/PU. Those seeking deferral should seek guidance from the GTCS website.

In PRD/PU, any aspect of the process can be subject to appeal. In the first instance, any appeal should be made to the Headteacher. Where a Headteacher wishes to appeal any part of this process, this should be made to the Head of Education (Learning and Resources).

In the unlikely event of an appeal being lodged in relation to Professional Update, advice should be sought from the GTCS.

## **Monitoring and Quality Assurance**

This document has been agreed with the teachers' unions, through the LNCT and is subject to regular revision.

The collective impact of PRD and PU will be evaluated on a regular basis as one element of each school's self-evaluation processes. This document will be reviewed every two years by the Professional Learning Reference Group.

**Rodger Hill**  
**Schools' Manager**

31 August 2021

Ratified by the LNCT 5 October 2021

## PRD/PU for Supply Teachers, Temporary Teachers and Central Staff

### Introduction

Supply teachers, teachers on short-term temporary contracts and central staff all play an important part in the delivery of Education and Learning in Dumfries and Galloway. Temporary staff provide much needed stability in times of long or short term absence and the flexibility to respond to immediate requests for class cover.

### Professional Review and Development (PRD)

For all registered teachers, the Professional Review and Development (PRD) process for Teaching Staff should be undertaken on an annual basis. For teachers on fixed term contracts, PRDs will take place during their normal working week.

Central Staff wishing to retain registered teacher status must engage with the PRD/Professional Update process using the relevant GTCS Standard(s).

### Professional Update (PU)

All registered teachers, Supply Register and Central Staff, must participate in the Professional Update process to ensure that their registration with the GTCS remains current.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Supply Teachers, Teachers on Short-term Temporary Contracts and Central Staff have the responsibility:

- To ensure that their personal details held on the GTCS online system are updated on an annual basis.
- To ensure that they participate in the PRD process and maintain a portfolio of impact of their professional learning.
- To engage in the 5 yearly Professional Update process. The annual Professional Learning Record will be a key component of their portfolio.
- To update the GTCS system, with a record of their professional learning and their annual PRD objectives. It is good practice to upload any documentation to the teacher's GTCS account.
- To contact their nominated reviewer, to organise their PRD, giving at least two weeks' notice.
- To participate in relevant professional learning activities.

Education and Learning Directorate has a responsibility:

- To maintain a register of teaching staff who can undertake PRDs for Supply/Temporary staff.
- To offer each Supply teacher a nominated reviewer for PRD purposes.
- To maintain central records of PRD completion.

Within Clusters, named Managers have the responsibility:

- For conducting the PRD/PU process with allocated Supply staff.
- To organise an alternative reviewer to conduct a PRD, where requested.
- To ensure that any completed PRDs are recorded on iTrent.

## Professional Learning Reference Group

### Purpose and Aims

To advise and respond to the Headteacher Strategy Groups in relation to the development of a culture of ongoing Professional Learning (PL) for all teachers and associated professionals to maximise the learning and the life chances of all learners.

The aims of the group are as follows:

- Increase the understanding of PL expectations for all teaching staff at all levels across Education & Learning.
- To develop consistency across all Education & Learning in the understanding of the purpose, process and procedures in relation to the expectations of PRD/PDR/PL/PU. Further exploration around relevant aspects of PRD/PDR/PL/PU to guide and influence the implementation and next steps.
- Review the systems in place and analyse the emerging trends in relation to PRD/ process and engagement.
- Further develop a culture of Coaching and Mentoring across Education & Learning.

### Key Objectives for Professional Learning

- To improve the effectiveness of learning, teaching and leadership at all levels and ultimately to improve outcomes for children and young people and give the best start in life.
- To create a supportive learning culture which encourages staff to see their own learning and development as a lifelong process based on self-evaluation.
- To address the professional and personal needs of staff by the provision of a wide range of opportunities to maintain and develop their professional expertise and competence to achieve service and improvement plan aims.
- To implement national and local authority policies and priorities.
- To encourage staff to reflect on and share their own good practice.
- To create a climate of continuous support for staff and respect for individuals within and across services.
- To maintain and enhance staff motivation, job satisfaction and confidence.
- To ensure a suitable balance among personal, school and local priorities when reviewing each teacher's commitment to their own Professional Learning.
- To contribute to career development as a classroom teacher or school leader.

- To provide opportunities for all staff, as appropriate, to contribute to the development of departmental and school priorities and to the professional development of colleagues.

### **Membership**

This group will have representation from key staff from each of the main policy areas i.e. Curriculum for Excellence, Quality Improvement, Leadership Development, Additional Support Needs, Recruitment, Early Years and non-teaching staff as appropriate.

## Conducting the PRD Meeting

### 1. Before the PRD Meeting

Prior to a PRD meeting, the line manager will inform the teacher that their PRD meeting is due. Everyone will be given at least two weeks' notice prior to the mutually agreed review date.

All teachers will have access to the PRD documentation. Teachers will also have access to the School's Improvement Plan(s) and the Education and Learning Directorate Objectives for the year ahead.

Before the meeting, the teacher will be expected to have:

- Reflected against their previous year's objectives.
- Considered potential objectives for the next year in relation to the Standard(s).

PRD is based on professional self-evaluation. This self-evaluation will help:

- Identify areas of success and improvement.
- Identify specific objectives for development.
- Incorporate development needs into a Professional Learning Plan.

The discussion of the self-evaluation will enable the reviewer to:-

- Acknowledge all that is good in their work.
- Note achievements and successes.
- Identify areas for further development.

### 2. Conducting the Review

It is good practice for the PRD to be a culmination of several prior coaching conversations. Between 1 to 2 hours should be set aside for a PRD meeting to ensure that there is adequate opportunity to cover all matters in sufficient depth. **All PRD meetings will take place in private and should not be interrupted.**

During the PRD meeting, the teacher and the reviewer should discuss the teacher's self-evaluation. The year's objectives should then be agreed. In summary, the PRD meeting should include the opportunity for the teacher and the reviewer to discuss and agree:

- Progress with professional learning and reflection based on the GTCS Professional Standards.
- The progress towards achieving last year's objectives.
- Objectives for the coming year.

An exemplar agenda for the meeting is shown below:

#### Agenda

- General Introduction
- Consideration of self-evaluation within the relevant Standard(s).
- Consideration of progress made towards development objectives from the previous review.
- Agreement on development areas and related professional learning activities for the coming session, within the context of the school's improvement agenda and the relevant Standard(s), Service Objectives and areas of professional development the teacher would benefit from. The support required should also be noted.

### 3. Concluding the PRD

The Teacher should finalise their Professional Learning Plan and share a copy with the reviewer. This document is confidential to the two participants. Reviewers are responsible for communicating any identified professional learning needs to the Headteacher/Professional Learning Coordinator.

The completed Professional Learning Plan should be viewed as a working document and as such be reflected on throughout the year. The reviewer will arrange for the date of the PRD meeting to be recorded in iTrent. Line managers are responsible for facilitating support and development opportunities informally, through regular communication and more formally through regular support and advice, and the formal PRD meeting. This is best supported by the development of a coaching and mentoring approach. Completed PRD documentation can be uploaded to each teacher's GTCS account. This will ensure the retention of each teacher's Professional Learning records and PRD documentation regardless of the teacher's school or authority. **Teachers can alternatively input their PRD information directly to their GTCS account electronically.**



## Professional Review and Development (PRD) Preparation Form

(Optional – teachers may wish to use the tools available within [MyGTCS](#) instead. This form can also be uploaded to MyGTCS)

### 1 Information

<b>Name</b>		<b>Post / School</b>	
<b>Reviewer</b>		<b>Date of last PRD Meeting</b>	
<b>Date of PRD Meeting</b>		<b>Next PRD meeting due (month)</b>	

### 2 Last Year's Development Objectives

<b>Details of Objectives</b>	<b>Summary of Progress</b>
<b>Overall Achievements</b>	

## Professional Learning Record

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Session: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Type of PL</b> <i>(meeting, visit, reading, observation, etc.)</i>	<b>Details of PL</b> <i>(provider, lesson observed, where visited etc.)</i>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Impact of PL</b>

## PRD Summary – Reflecting against the Standards

Name:	
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Date:	
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In preparation for the PRD you should reflect against the Standard(s) which meet your professional learning needs. Consider where you are now, where you want to go and how you want to get there. You may wish to focus on 2 or 3 of these in more detail for the coming year. These can be within or across the Standard for Full Registration, the Standard for Career Long Professional Learning, the Standard for Middle Leadership or the Standard for Headship. You are encouraged to use the relevant **self-evaluation wheels** to support you in your meeting with your Reviewer. The [GTCS website](#) contains support materials to assist you in evaluating against the [Standards](#).

**Standard:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please add the relevant Standard)

**Standard:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please add the relevant Standard)

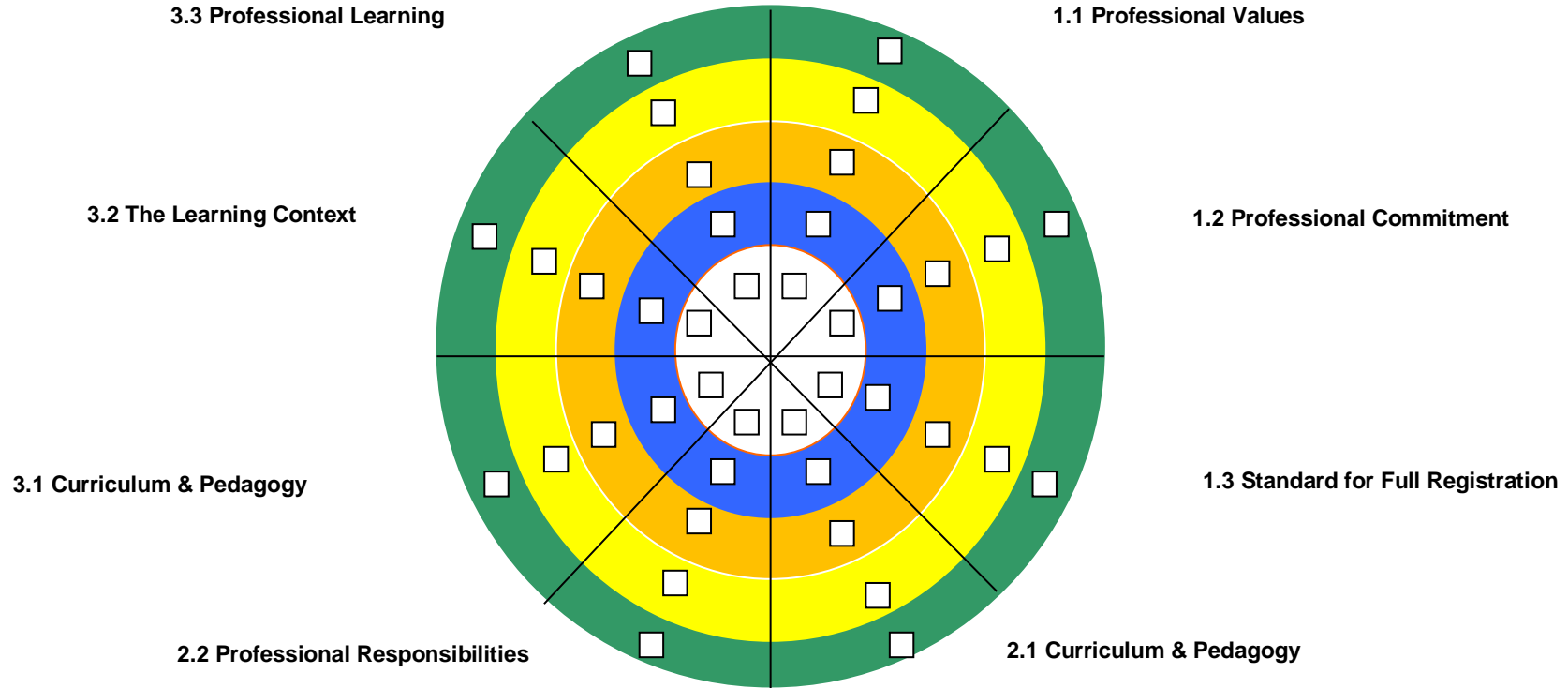
**Standard:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please add the relevant Standard)

**Standard:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please add the relevant Standard)

Professional Self-Evaluation Wheel – [Standard for Full Registration](#)

Name:

Date:

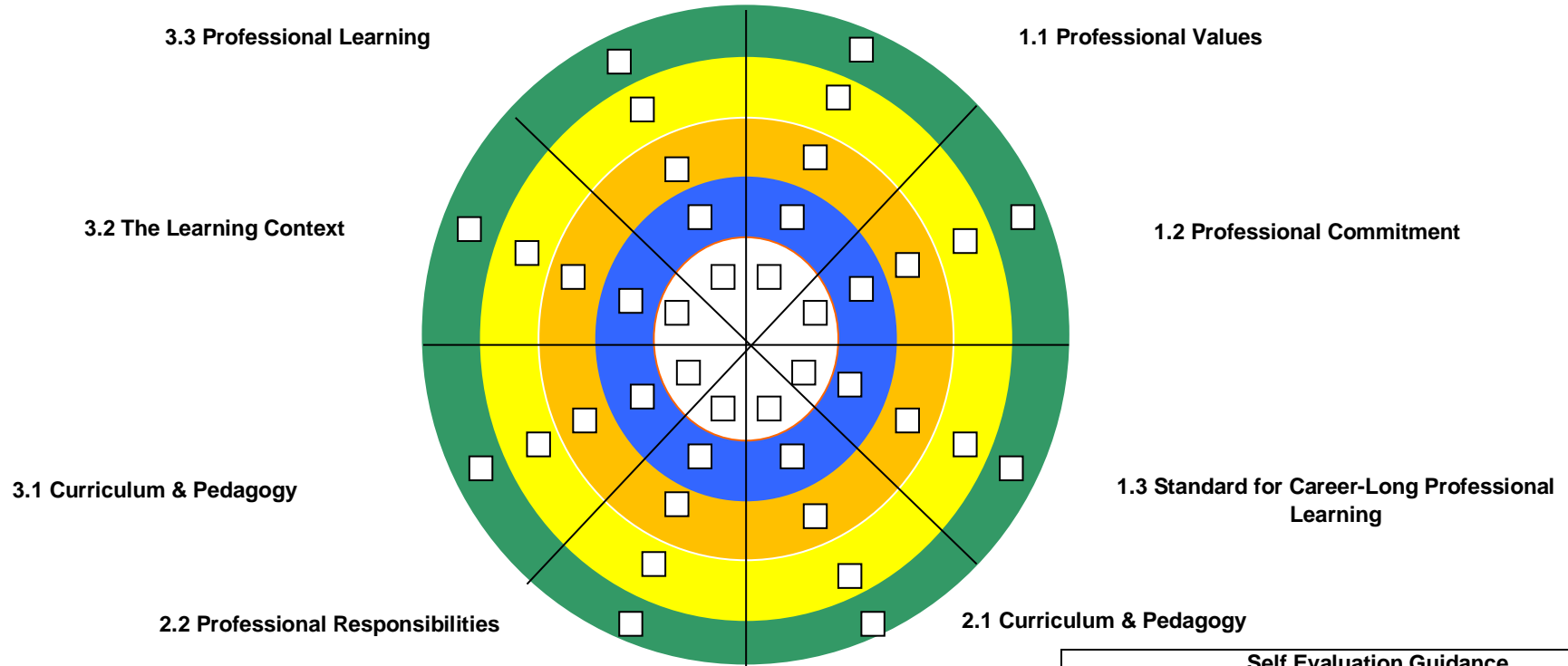


Self Evaluation Guidance		
	Green	Excellent knowledge and skills
	Yellow	Very good knowledge and skills
	Orange	Good knowledge and skills
	Blue	Developing knowledge and skills
	White	Basic knowledge and skills

Professional Self-Evaluation Wheel – [Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning](#)

Name:

Date:

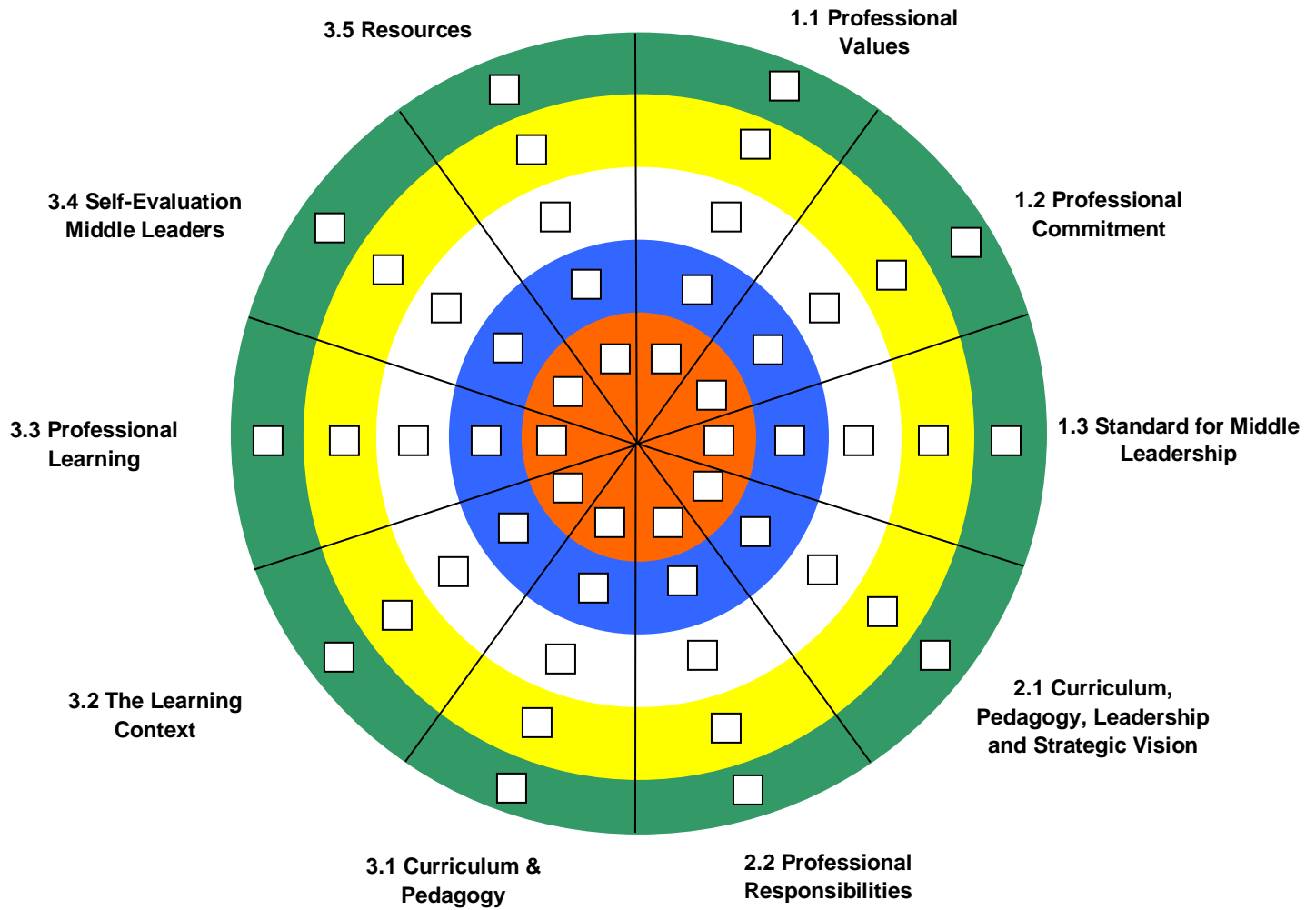


Self Evaluation Guidance		
	Green	Excellent knowledge and skills
	Yellow	Very good knowledge and skills
	Orange	Good knowledge and skills
	Blue	Developing knowledge and skills
	White	Basic knowledge and skills

Professional Self-Evaluation Wheel - [Standard for Middle Leadership](#)

Name:

Date:

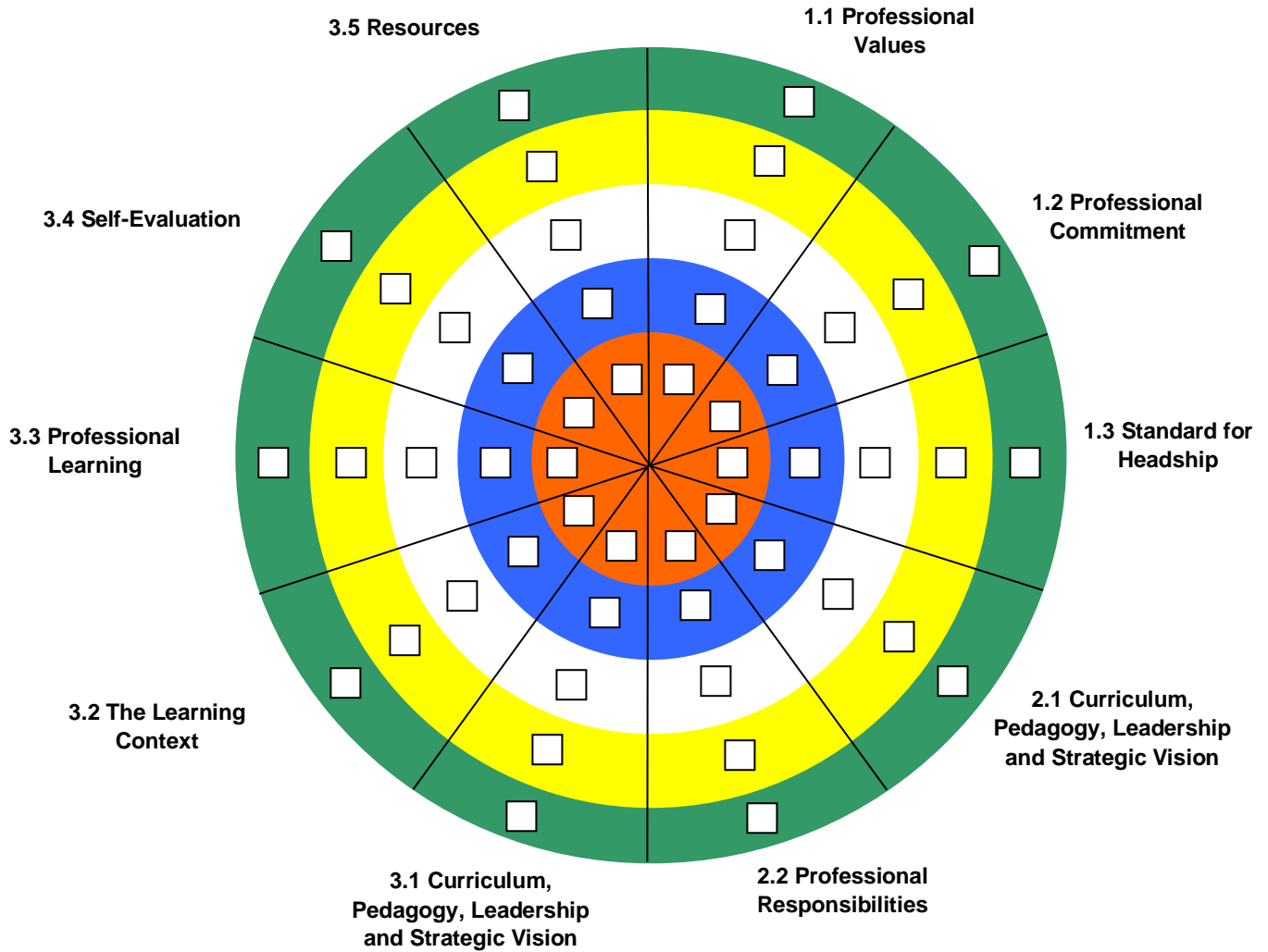


Self Evaluation Guidance		
	Green	Excellent knowledge and skills
	Yellow	Very good knowledge and skills
	Orange	Good knowledge and skills
	Blue	Developing knowledge and skills
	White	Basic knowledge and skills

Professional Self-Evaluation Wheel - [Standard for Headship](#)

Name:

Date:



Self Evaluation Guidance		
	Green	Excellent knowledge and skills
	Yellow	Very good knowledge and skills
	Orange	Good knowledge and skills
	Blue	Developing knowledge and skills
	White	Basic knowledge and skills

**Professional Learning Plan** (optional - you may prefer to log this on your GTCS account)

AGREED OBJECTIVES FOR CURRENT YEAR			
Objective	Professional Learning / Development Support	Evaluation: How will we know?	Link to SIP / Service Objectives ( <i>where appropriate</i> )

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Logged on iTrent: \_\_\_\_\_



**Professional Learning Needs** *(to be forwarded to the PL Coordinator)*Name: 

Objective No.	Professional Learning – Identified Needs	Link to SIP or Service Objectives

Reviewer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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