Professional Update - Annual Evaluation
Session 2016/17

April 2018
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Executive Summary

This evaluation seeks to explore the Professional Update process to:

- understand the potential impact of Professional Update on the Scottish Education system and on the individuals engaged in the process.
- identify and address emerging issues that may challenge, limit or hinder progress.
- promote and further support positive developments and impact.

An online survey was an effective way of gathering and collating the views of participants. Three separate surveys were created: one for reviewees (EEs), one for reviewers (ERs) and one for those registrants outwith a validated scheme who completed Professional Update by direct submission (DS). The aim was to evaluate their experience of taking part in the PU process.

Professional standards

There were a number of positive messages arising:

- The Standard for Career-long Professional Learning is perceived most useful and most used by teaching staff.
- Professional standards are generally perceived positively as supporting self-evaluation, reflective practice and identifying strengths and areas for future development.
- The Standard for Leadership and Management is used extensively to support those in school management roles.
- Respondents most identify that they used professional standards to consider my development needs in relation to enhancing my subject content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and evidence the impact on improved outcomes for all learners, linking their own learning to the needs of their children and young people.
- Professional standards are identified as being very useful in preparation for the PRD process; this has remained consistent across the three years of Professional Update.

Overall the main emerging issues are:

- Professional standards are not always seen as helpful, they can be viewed as bureaucratic, complex and repetitive.
- Competing demands in the education system reduces the time available for teacher learning.
- Misconception about the purpose of Professional Update as teachers are conflating policy with professionalism.
- Consideration should be given to a System Leader Professional Standard

Further support for registrants to engage with different type of professional learning linked to professional standards would be appreciated by registrants, particularly in using professional standards for those in non-teaching roles.

Within the review of the professional standards it may be worth considering the development of a Systems Leader Professional Standard.

Professional learning and evidence of impact

Overall, there were a number of positive messages arising:

- Self-evaluation is the most cited factor informing professional learning.
- Both reviewees and direct submission respondents feel that their professional learning is challenging, relevant and they have ownership of this.
- Collaborative learning with others was the most popular and valuable approach to professional learning.
- For those who did collect evidence of impact, this was found to have a positive influence on their self-evaluation and supported their own professional learning journey.
The main issues emerging are:

- Collaborative learning although cited as the most valuable aspect of professional learning does not correlate with the impact of teacher professional learning on colleagues.
- Practitioner enquiry remains an activity that is not widely used as a mode of professional learning.
- Evidence used is dominated by course notes/handouts and evaluations, logs of courses/PL attended, record of working groups/focus groups than analysis of student work.
- There is still a lack of understanding about what is meant by and how to gather evidence of impact.

Further guidance and support may be useful about what makes for meaningful, relevant and appropriate professional learning with a strong focus on the evidence of impact of professional learning on pupil outcomes.

**PRD**

Overall, the emerging positive messages are:

- Most respondents had been involved in the PRD process, with only a small number yet to complete their PRD
- Professional learning records were most valued by respondent in preparation for their PRD
- Most individuals have had opportunities for ongoing professional dialogue with their line manager.
- Most respondents discussed evidence of impact during their PRD
- Overall it is believed that the PRD has the right balance of support and challenge.
- The percentage of reviewees who reported that their line manager used coaching and mentoring shows an upwards trend.
- Significant majority believe they have ownership of the process.
- The data suggests that the PRD is meeting the majority of individuals’ needs.

The emerging issues relating to the PRD process include;

- Time and workload continue to be barriers for engagement with the PRD process
- Just under a fifth of reviewees reported that they did not have opportunities for on-going discussions with their line manager.
- Although there is an overall upward trend, there are still a significant number of reviewees who reported that their line manager did not use coaching and mentoring during their PRD
- There are concerns that Professional Update is perceived as bureaucratic

Employers should continue to offer professional learning opportunities for reviewers to upskill in coaching and mentoring to provide support for professional dialogue through the PRD process.

**Charlaine Simpson**
Senior Education Officer (Accreditation & ITE)

**Patricia Morris**
Research Officer
1 Introduction

Professional Update is now in its fourth full year of national implementation. It is important that GTCS knows and understands the experiences of registered teachers as they engage with and complete the process of Professional Update (PU).

This evaluation seeks to explore the Professional Update process to:

- understand the potential impact of Professional Update on the Scottish Education system and on the individuals engaged in the process.
- identify and address emerging issues that may challenge, limit or hinder progress.
- promote and further support positive developments and impact.

The data from this evaluation informs on-going development of the procedures, processes and supporting systems for Professional Update. It enables GTCS to build an informed understanding of the needs of the profession, gain an insight into the emerging picture of the impact of PU and the nature of professional learning (PL). The evaluation is also shared with employers so they are best informed of any emerging issues.

Throughout this report, the focus is on the purposes, principles and key features of Professional Update. All data has been analysed thematically and emerging issues identified. It is reported collectively thus removing the risk of individuals being identified. The views reflected in this report from those registrants who have signed off their PU session 2016-17 and line managers who have supported registrants to sign off PU session 2016-17.

2 Professional Update: purpose, principles and key features

Purpose: Professional Update is premised upon two key purposes for teachers:

- To maintain and improve the quality of teachers, as outlined in the relevant professional standards, and to enhance the impact that they have on pupils’ learning.
- To support, maintain and enhance teachers’ professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland.

Principles: The following three key principles for teachers provide the foundation for Professional Update:

- A responsibility to reflect upon and identify their professional learning needs.
- An entitlement to a system of supportive professional review and development (PRD) which can:
  - help to identify constructive ways for registrants to engage in self-evaluation and professional learning in order to maintain and enhance professional knowledge, skills and practice;
  - support professional learning activities which can develop and enhance professional practice; and
  - offer support on ways in which registrants can enhance their careers.
- Confirmation that they have maintained the high standards required of a teacher in Scotland’s educational establishments.

Key features: The Professional Update process is based around the following interlinked key features, which outline the core aspects of the process that an individual will engage in:

- a career-long commitment to, and engagement in, professional learning including continuing engagement in PL and the PRD process;
- on-going self-evaluation against appropriate professional standards;
- maintenance of a professional learning record and associated evidence of impact on thinking and professional actions, discussed with a line manager as part of the PRD process;
- an annual update of details held on the GTCS Register;
- a 5-yearly confirmation of engagement in the Professional Update process (also known as the PU sign off).
An individual’s on-going professional learning and the impact of this on their practice sits at the heart of Professional Update. The professional standards provide the backdrop for professional practice and offer a coherent framework for individuals to consider their professional actions and on-going professional learning journey. The PRD process is a significant mechanism to enable and promote professional dialogue to support this process.

The procedures and systems that support Professional Update should enable individuals to engage in, reflect on and have dialogue about their professional learning and its impact on them and their practice and, perhaps more importantly, the impact of this on children and young people. It must not become a bureaucratic process but support improvement in practice.

3 Evaluation Methodology

An online survey was an effective way of gathering and collating the views of participants. Three separate surveys were created: one for reviewees (EEs), one for reviewers (ERs) and one for those registrants outwith a validated scheme who completed Professional Update by direct submission (DS). The aim was to evaluate their experience of taking part in the PU process.

The reviewee survey was structured around the following key areas:

- brief details to determine the respondent population and essential demographic information;
- details relating to current knowledge of the PU system and the process of updating details annually;
- the PRD process:
  - preparation for the PRD meeting,
  - engagement with the GTCS Professional standards (PS) as part of the PU process,
  - the professional discussion;
- professional learning and using associated evidence of impact;
- systems used for the PU process;
- the PU sign off process.

The reviewee survey link was embedded within the confirmation email for those registrants who use the MYGTCS portal to sign off PU. Some local authorities elect to use an alternative system to record PU, the reviewees within these local authorities who had confirmed their sign off before 31 October 2017 were sent an email with an embedded link to the online survey 6 November 2017. It is important to note that participants were only invited to complete the survey if they had completed the Professional Update sign off.

The reviewer survey was structured around the following key areas:

- brief details to determine the respondent population and essential demographic information;
- the PRD process:
  - preparation for and experiences of,
  - the professional discussion;
- professional learning and evidence of impact;
- systems used for the PU process and sign off.

The reviewer survey was sent on 6 November 2017 to registrants who had engaged in the PU process in their role as a Line Manager/Reviewer and confirmed sign of for their reviewee(s) for PU year 2016-17, up to and including 31 October.

NOTE – The respondent populations are not necessarily connected. This means that the reviewers who responded to this survey may not necessarily be those who reviewed the reviewee respondents.

The direct submission survey was structured around the following key areas:

- brief details to determine the respondent population and essential demographic information;
- details relating to current knowledge of the PU system and the process of updating details annually;
- the PRD process:
  - preparation for the PRD meeting,
  - engagement with the GTCS Professional standards as part of the PU process,
• the professional discussion;
   professional learning and using associated evidence of impact;
   systems used for the PU process;
   the PU sign off process.

The direct submission survey was sent on 6 November 2017 to all those who had engaged in the PU year 2016-17 and confirmed sign off, up to and including 31 October.

Participants were invited to complete a balance of closed and open questions, with a mix of mandatory and non-mandatory questions. These took the following formats:

   either specifying their level of agreement or selecting a response from a set of statements;
   selecting appropriate criteria/categories from a specified data-set;
   some open ended responses;
   the opportunity to comment after each section of the survey, should they wish to do so.

The data from each survey was analysed separately. This final evaluation reports pulls on all three data sets and relevant connections are drawn between these to gain a full insight and understanding of the implementation of Professional Update.

For clarity, all tables and graphs are labelled as EEs for reviewees, ERs for reviewers and DS for direct submissions. Please note where direct quotes have been provided, in the form of speech bubbles, they have been colour coded to correspond with either the reviewee, reviewer or direct submission as follows:
4 Respondent Population

4.1 Response rates

The response rate for each of the online surveys is outlined below;

- 1053 reviewees responded from a sample of 10019, giving a 10.5% response rate;
- 518 reviewers responded from a sample of 6007, giving a 8.6% response rate;
- 21 direct submission registrants responded from a sample of 107, giving a 19.6% response rate;

The graphs 1a-c, illustrate an overview of the response rates for reviewees, reviewers, and direct submission groups.

Graph 1: Overview of reviewee respondent population by employer

Graph 1b: Overview of reviewer respondent population by employer
Graph 1c: Overview of direct submission respondent population by employer

For the purposes of analysis, all respondents were given the opportunity to categorise their post from the following employment groupings:

- Teaching staff (including Peripatetic, Classroom Teachers, Chartered Teachers and Principal Teachers).
- School management (including Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers).
- LA centrally based staff and ‘Other’ (including Support for Learning and Community based staff).
- University.
- National Body (including Education Scotland, SQA, etc.).
  Colleagues from these organisations were categorised together given the nature of their role working externally from schools and local authorities but supporting and working with staff at local authority and school level.
- Other (please specify).

Graphs 2a-c show the analysis of the post categories for each respondent population, which have been summarised to teaching staff, school management, non-school bases and other for comparison.

Graph 2a: Overview of reviewee respondent population by category

Graph 2b: Overview of reviewer respondent population by category
4.2 Demographics

Although the survey was anonymous, participants were requested to supply some brief details to enable us to differentiate between the responses of different groups i.e. gender and age-range, type of post/contract, sector and employer. Tables 1a-c illustrate the demographics of the respective populations.

**Table 1a: Reviewee respondent population by gender and age profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age-range</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>Over 60</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1053</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1b: Reviewer respondent population by gender and age profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age-range</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>Over 60</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1c: Direct submission respondent population by gender and age profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age-range</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>Over 60</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Teacher Induction Scheme**

Within the reviewee population, 34.3% had participated in the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS). Only 21.2% of the reviewer population participated in the TIS. For the direct submission population the percentage who participated in TIS was 23.8%.

**Protected Characteristics**

Data relating to disability and protected characteristics was also gathered to help identify or gain insights into any possible issues that may arise for individuals affected by these. With no declaration of disability from the direct submission respondent population, the following applies to the reviewee and reviewer respondent populations.

Respondents were asked to identify if they considered themselves to have a disability, 2.6% (n27) reviewees and 2.1% (n11) reviewers responded that they consider themselves to have a disability.

A larger proportion, 8.4% (n88) of reviewees and 4.6% (n24) of reviewers, stated some form of ‘protected characteristic’ impacted on their ability to complete PU. The breakdown of these is shown in table 2:

**Table 2: Q18 – Protected Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected characteristic</th>
<th>Reviewee</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Direct Submission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired (from fulltime)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 26 ‘Other’ responses, many reported circumstances that would not be considered ‘protected characteristics’ e.g. personal circumstances including family issues, physical and mental health issues, retirement, change of position within school or local authority, working outwith local authority and workload.

For Professional Update it is important that we continue to understand the diverse circumstances of individual teachers and continue to develop appropriate supports to ensure we meet the needs of all individuals. This is part of GTC Scotland’s on-going commitment to ensuring equality and diversity in all of its work and in line with its shared values.

**4.3 Employment Status**

It was important for GTCS to have an understanding of the employment status of the respondent populations. This information helps us to understand and recognise any issues unique to particular groups of teachers. As can be seen from the following tables, there is a wide range of posts within sectors from the reviewees, reviewers and direct submission respondent populations.

Graphs 3a-c provide a detailed overview of the reviewee, reviewer and direct submission populations by their position/contract type.
Graph 3a: Reviewee respondent population by the type of position/contract held:

As can be seen from the above, that Classroom Teachers make up the overall majority of posts, however, a wide range of other posts are also represented.

Graph 3b: Reviewer respondent population by the type of position/contract held:

Principal Teachers, Depute Head Teachers and Head Teachers make up the overall majority of the reviewer posts.

Graph 3c: Direct submission respondent population by the type of position/contract held:

The majority of respondents held a permanent contract. Those employed on a temporary, supply and seconded contract were in the minority. It is important that we hear the views and perceptions of those employed on this basis.
5 Professional Update and the Annual Update of Details

5.1 Current knowledge of PU and what is involved

As Professional Update is still a relatively new initiative in Scotland, it was recognised that individuals would be at very different stages of engagement with Professional Update. For that reason, this survey focuses on engagement with the professional standards and professional learning.

One of the requirements of Professional Update is to ensure the details held on the register are correct and registrants are advised to create and use a MyGTCS account for this purpose. Only 5 (0.5%) of reviewees respondents reported they did not have a MyGTCS account, 50 stated they either had checked but not yet updated or had not yet checked their details. All (100%) direct submission respondents have a MyGTCS account, 2 (9.5%) stated they had not yet checked their details.

It was also important for us to ascertain current levels of knowledge about Professional Update. GTCS, employers and other partners (such as the EIS and SCIS) offer a wide range of supporting resources and guidance to help teachers as they engage with PU. We asked people which sources of support were of most value to them. Graph 4, a shows the order from most valued source to least valued source for reviewees. Graph 4b follows the same order to allow direct comparison.

Graph 4a: (EEs) Q20 – Which of the following, if any, have you used to keep informed about PU and to what extent were they helpful? (Please select all that apply)

Graph 4b: (ERs) Q20 – Which of the following, if any, have you used to keep informed about PU and to what extent were they helpful? (Please select all that apply)

There appears to be only one area in which reviewees and reviewers have a difference of opinion. This difference in regard to the support and advice from the EIS journal is probably due to a number of reasons and although interesting it is not particularly significant as registrants have access multiple sources of information and will use the ones that is most useful to them.
Further analysis of reviewee respondents by category show differences in the top three sources each group found most helpful.

**Table 3: (EEs) Sources respondent groups found most helpful**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Managers</th>
<th>Non-school based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GTCS website</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended staff briefing session (own school/org)</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information materials from LA/sch/org</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Scotland magazine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is encouraging to note that the GTCS website is rated as the most highly valued resources for Professional Update for staff in schools followed by attending staff briefing session. The Teaching Scotland magazine is also well regarded as a valuable source of information. It may be useful to continue to develop and maximise these resources to have greatest impact, as they are available and accessible to all, regardless of where they are working in the system.

For those respondents who completed PU by direct submission reported that they valued the GTCS website and Teaching Scotland magazine most. This is perhaps unsurprising as most are teaching abroad and therefore have limited access to other sources of information.

It is important to ensure that high quality, consistent and coherent support and guidance is available for all. It may be useful, as part of on-going quality assurance processes by employers, to review the quality of information and support available.
6 Using Professional Standards

The use of professional standards is a key part of the PU process with teachers reflecting against aspects of the professional standards as appropriate to their own role, context and professional development. GTCS are interested in how teachers use professional standards to signpost their learning and prepare for their PRD meeting. This section reports on how respondents used professional standards to prepare for their PRD.

6.1 Engagement with the Standards

The professional standards are a useful tool to support self-evaluation, particularly prior to a PRD meeting.

Of the 999 reviewee respondents who found that professional standards are useful in preparing for their PRD, 88.7% (n=886) indicated they agreed to a large/some extent.

Whilst PU has impacted on teachers’ engagement with the professional standards, in comparison with respondents in other surveys, the respondents in this survey have reported a slight decrease from in the extent to which they used and found professional standards useful as part of the PRD process, graph 5.

Graph 5: (EEs) Q26 – To what extent did you use the professional standards for your self-evaluation in preparation for your PRD meeting?

![Graph 5](image)

Interrogating the data further by category, respondents reported greater use of and value for the Standard for Career-long Professional Learning in preparing for their PRD, graph 6.

Graph 6: (EEs) Q27 – Which Standards did you use for this (preparation for PRD meeting) and to what extent did you find these Standards useful for this process? (Please select all that apply) (All categories n=999)

![Graph 6](image)

Further analysis by category shows a more nuanced picture as seen in graphs 7a-c.
Those respondents who completed PU by direct submission reported that the CLPL standard was most used and most useful.

Participants were asked how useful they found professional standards for particular purposes, the five purposes being:

- To critically reflect on my own assumptions, beliefs, values and influences and how these are demonstrated through my professional actions.
- To consider my development needs in relation to enhancing my subject content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and evidence the impact on improved outcomes for all learners.
- To consider ways in which I engage in professional literature, theory, research and policy to challenge and inform my thinking and practice.
- To critically reflect on my own learning and to consider what professional learning would support my personal development e.g. master level learning.
- To reflect on areas of accomplishment/expertise and consider how to share this with colleagues, lead developments within and beyond the school community.
As can be seen from graph 8, of the 5 main purposes identified, reviewees consider professional standards most useful to help consider development needs in relation to enhancing subject content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and evidence the impact on improved outcomes for all learners.

**Graph 8:** (EEs) Q30 – How useful did you find the Professional standards for the following purposes? (Please select all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To critically reflect on my own assumptions, beliefs, values and influences and how these are demonstrated through my professional actions</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To consider my development needs in relation to enhancing my subject content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and evidence the impact on improved outcomes for all learners</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To consider ways in which I engage in professional literature, theory, research and policy to challenge and inform my thinking and practice</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To critically reflect on my own learning and to consider what professional learning would support my personal development, e.g. Master level learning</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reflect on areas of accomplishment/expertise and consider how to share this with colleagues, lead developments within and beyond the school community</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very useful / Useful</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not very useful / Not used</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the same question, the majority of direct submission respondents reported that they had found the professional standards *very useful/useful* for the all of the purposes outlined above.

Reviewees were offered the opportunity to give more information about how professional standards were used and what impact they had on their practice. The responses were coded into positive and negative statements, resulting in 179 positive and 45 negative statements.

The positive statements were further coded. The following categories emerged as ways in which professional standards were used:

- They provided a focus.
- They served as a reminder of professional values, commitments and behaviours.
- As a self-reflective and self-evaluation tool.
- As guidance and a benchmarking tool.
- To support preparation for PRD.
- To mentor and coach colleagues.
- To challenge my thinking and practice.

The emerging themes from the negative comments were:

- Using professional standards is time consuming.
- There are competing demands i.e. my own learning and demands of the education system.
- These can be restricting and repetitive.
- These are complex and frustrating to use.

---

*As a teacher, I find that any value in professional review is overtaken by the widespread and unceasing demands of the job on a daily basis. It is a luxury to be able to analyse professionalism in any structured and formal way.*

*The whole process can be very time-consuming, though its importance is appreciated.*
For direct submission respondents, there were only 3 responses, which were all positive and reflected that using professional standard helps registrants to focus their learning and they were also used as a reflection tool to interrogate their practice.

They serve as a focus and the honing in to certain standards was useful. Less scattered and broad.

In considering engagement with professional standards, respondents were asked to share what factors have helped/support their engagement with professional standards to self-evaluate and plan their professional learning, graph 9.

**Graph 9: (EEs) Q32 – Considering the following factors, which, if any, have helped/supported your engagement with the PS to self-evaluate and plan your PL (please select all that apply)**

- **PRD meeting** (81.0)
- **Professional dialogue with colleagues** (67.2)
- **Time to read and reflect on the PS** (56.4)
- **In-service session** (27.8)
- **GTCS support materials** (26.3)
- **School/LA/Organisation support materials** (22.0)
- **I have not engaged with the PS to help me self-evaluate or plan my PL** (5.3)
- **Other (please specify)** (3.8)

For reviewee’s, the factors that help/supported their engagement with professional standards were;

- PRD meeting (809),
- Professional dialogue with colleagues (671),
- Time to read and reflect on the Professional standards (563).

For direct submission respondents, the factors that help/supported their engagement with professional standards were;

- Time to read and reflect on the Professional standards (6),
- GTCS support materials (5),
- Professional dialogue with colleagues (4)

To give a fuller picture of engagement with professional standards, respondents were also asked to identify factors that limit/hinder their engagement, graph 10.
There has been a decrease of 6.1% in the percentage of respondents who indicated that they had no factors limiting/hindering their engagement with professional standards from 52.2% (2014-15) to 46.1% (2016-17), therefore more respondents have reported that they are being limited/hindered.

There has also been a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who indicated that they have not had time to engage with professional standards from 19.1% (2014-15) to 20.9% (2016-17).

From the longitudinal data, there is an improving trend for both professional dialogue with colleagues and PRD meeting. This is a positive step towards teachers working collaboratively and supporting each other’s learning.

Some of the negative perceptions about the professional standards relate to a misconception about the purpose of Professional Update. This is demonstrated by the number of respondents who indicated that other factors that are more relevant/appropriate for my self-evaluation. The examples given e.g. school improvement plan/ HGIOS/ organisational are linked to policy rather than teacher professionalism. Therefore, it is important that clear messages about the requirements of Professional Update and how this enhances teacher professionalism are reinforced and appropriate support, guidance and information is available at all levels of the system. Some of the issues raised may be overcome in the review of the professional standards (2017-2019). However, it may be useful in the meantime for GTCS to further develop guidance and support to help individuals meaningfully engage with and use professional standards to support their own professional learning journey.
In the final question in this section regarding the use of professional standards, respondents were given an opportunity for further comment on their engagement with professional standards as part of the PU process.

The responses were categorised as follows:

- Professional standards were very useful in helping teachers to reflect on and work out their next steps in learning.

  This was carried out in different ways with some using professional standards proactively to signpost their learning, whereas, others used the professional standards retrospectively and matched their professional learning activities to the professional standards.

- Teachers who work in ASN and Pupil Support indicated that they find it difficult to find specific aspects that relate to their professional learning in the professional standards as ASN and Pupil Support is not explicitly mentioned.

- Recording professional learning and referencing professional standards can seem bureaucratic and time consuming for some teachers.

- A System Leader Professional Standard may be of help to those who work in education but outwith schools

6.2 Main messages and emerging issues

There were a number of positive messages arising:

- The Standard for Career-long Professional Learning is perceived most useful and most used by teaching staff.
- Professional standards are generally perceived positively as supporting self-evaluation, reflective practice and identifying strengths and areas for future development.
- The Standard for Leadership and Management is used extensively to support those in school management roles.
- Respondents most identify that they used professional standards to consider my development needs in relation to enhancing my subject content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and evidence the impact on improved outcomes for all learners, linking their own learning to the needs of their children and young people.
- Professional standards are identified as being very useful in preparation for the PRD process; this has remained consistent across the three years of Professional Update.

Overall the main emerging issues are:

- Professional standards are not always seen as helpful, they can be viewed as bureaucratic, complex and repetitive.
- Competing demands in the education system reduces the time available for teacher learning.
- Misconception about the purpose of Professional Update as teachers are conflating policy with professionalism.
- Consideration should be given to a System Leader Professional Standard
7 Professional Learning and Evidence of Impact

The purpose of recording professional learning is to help focus on the importance of considering the value and impact of professional learning and the difference this makes to professional practice and, ultimately, the learning experiences of children and young people. To help minimise any possible bureaucracy and maximise the value of this, it is important that individuals are asked to record their significant pieces of professional learning and the impact of this and how it connects with the relevant aspect of the professional standards.

7.1 The nature and focus of professional learning

The emergent picture shows variation across the three cohorts who have taken part in Professional Update.

In looking at the nature and focus of professional learning, there are no significant trends or patterns emerging in how registrants record their professional learning, graph 11. This will be an aspect for closer interrogation for the Professional Update for 2017-18.

**Graph 11**: (EEs) Q48 – Which one of the following best describes the way in which you have recorded your PL?

Respondents were asked to identify what had informed their professional learning this year. It is a promising sign that most have identified that their own self-evaluation has informed their professional learning for the year, graph 12.
Respondents were asked to identify the main focus and the secondary focus of their professional learning. The majority (569) identified that curriculum area/development was their main focus, followed by subject knowledge (419). Although of only some focus, it is interesting to note that just over a third of registrants had some focus on professional values. This supports the main messages of professional values being the heart of teacher professionalism and fundamental aspect of Professional Update.

Professional learning needs to be relevant, challenge thinking and practice and it is also important that individuals have ownership of this process. The picture for this remains positive with:

- 90.3% reviewees and 90.5% of direct submission respondents stating that their PL has challenged them to a large or some extent;
- 95.0% reviewees and 95.2% of direct submission respondents stating it has been relevant to a large or some extent;
- 93.4% reviewees and 90.5% of direct submission respondents stating they have had ownership to a large or some extent.

The impact of registrants’ professional learning on themselves, pupils, colleagues and their school are important indicators that their professional learning has been worthwhile and relevant. There has been a slight overall increase in those reporting impact to a large extent across each area. In particular, reviewee respondents reported the impact of their professional learning on pupils, to a large extent, has shown an increase from 44.0% (14/15) to 47.3% (16-17), a 3.3% increase.

In comparing the responses from reviewee’s and direct submission respondents, graphs 13-14, it is interesting to note that direct submission respondents report that their own professional learning has more impact on their colleagues to a large extent, (DS) 52.4% compared with (EE)18.6%. Although the overall positive responses i.e. to a large extent and to some extent, are comparable (DS) 81.0% and (EE) 80.0%.

**Graph 12: (EEs) Q49 – Please tell us what has informed the focus of your PL this year (please select all that apply) (% of respondents)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>(% of respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRD discussion</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School improvement plan</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections on impact of PL from previous year</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National /LA initiative</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graph 13: (EEs) Q57 – To what extent do you think your PL has had an impact on self, pupils, colleagues or school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yourself</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your pupils</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your colleagues</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your school</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the PRD process, there is an opportunity for reviewees to discuss the impact of their professional learning on themselves, pupils, colleagues and school.

Reviewers reported that they had discussed the impact of their reviewees’ professional learning on themselves (99.1%) and their pupils (90.7%) to a large extent/some extent, graph 15.

NOTE – The respondent populations are not necessarily connected. This means that the reviewers who responded to this survey may not necessarily be those who reviewed the reviewee respondents.

Reviewee reported that the impact of their professional learning was less on colleagues and this was also discussed least frequently with reviewers.

The professional learning that teachers undertake should impact positively on their own learning and the learning of children and young people. With this in mind, respondents were asked to identify the kind of professional learning they engaged in to help address their focus and to comment on the perceived value of this, graph 16-17.
Collaborative Professionalism is an interactive and active process, where teachers as learners reflect on, in and about their practice, professional learning and student learning. Collaborative learning with others is perceived as being one of the most valuable types of professional learning, graph 17. However, as with last year, the number of respondents who report that their professional learning had an impact on colleagues is lower in comparison to the other measures, graph 13. This appears contradictory that a high value is placed on this type of professional learning yet it has least impact on colleagues.
Those respondents who completed Professional Update by direct submission also identified *collaborative learning with others* as the main focus of their professional learning and this was also considered the most valuable, closely followed by *further academic study*.

The types of collaborative learning that reviewees engaged with most were as follows:

- *School based working groups*;
- *Teacher/professional learning community*;
- *Classroom/school visits (with follow up professional dialogue)*;
- *Mentoring/supporting a colleague*.

For direct submission respondents, *professional/academic conferences* were identified as the main approach used to engage in collaborative learning.

Of those reviewee respondents who reported that they had engaged in leadership activities, *leading the development of new initiatives/curriculum/development programmes* remains the most reported activity and the most valued, this pattern has remained unchanged from previous surveys.

It is worth noting that leading an enquiry remains very low with only 64 (6.1%) reviewee respondents indicating they have engaged in this type of activity. In a culture of teacher leadership and the policy agenda of enquiring practitioners, this is perhaps an area that merits further attention to ascertain why teachers are not engaging in enquiry to interrogate their own practice.

For direct submission respondents, *coaching and mentoring course/staff development* was identified as the main leadership activity.

### 7.2 Evidence of impact of professional learning

Part of the requirement of Professional Update is that individuals maintain a reflective record of professional learning and evidence of its impact on thinking and actions. This does not require individuals to keep ‘lots of stuff’ to prove what they have done. Rather, it is much more about using relevant evidence to understand the impact of professional learning and reflecting on this. It is about really knowing what value professional learning has for the individual.

Looking across the longitudinal data, graph 18, there is an improving picture with small incremental gains in those reviewees reporting they have gathered evidence of impact.

#### Graph 18: (EEs) Q59 – Have you gathered evidence of impact?

![Graph showing percentage of reviewees who have gathered evidence of impact]

However, there are still just over a fifth of reviewee respondents who have not done so. Only 17.1% of reviewees feel well prepared to a *large extent* in terms of gathering evidence and 19.8% report they are *not at all prepared or not very much*.

There are a range of reasons cited for not gathering/using evidence of impact, these include:

- The significant majority of respondents stated ‘time’ as a prohibitive factor.
Other influencing factors included:

- workload;
- change in circumstances;
- not feeling appropriately prepared/knowledgeable to develop evidence of impact;
- being a supply teacher.

For the direct submission population, only one respondent identified that they had not gathered evidence of impact of their professional learning, and commented that “it was difficult to find the time”. Of the remaining 20 respondents, 18 identified that they felt appropriately prepared/knowledgeable to develop evidence of impact to a large extent/to some extent, with the remaining respondent reporting that they did not feel very prepared to collect evidence.

When asked to comment about what would help to develop knowledge/practice on evidence of impact reviewees commented on the following aspects:

- There were a significant number of comments about not having ‘time’ to gather and analyse evidence of impact.
- More exemplification would be well received by respondents to understand what is evidence and how to analyse evidence to show impact.

A positive suggestion from a respondent was to update the current website to include a video to show how to gather evidence and analyse the evidence to show impact.

However, some respondents felt confident in collecting evidence of impact, as shown in their comments below.

Findings from previous annual evaluations indicated that evidence of impact was problematic; this still appears to be the case, however, it is showing an improving trend.

Reviewers were asked to comment on their own preparedness, knowledge and confidence in discussing evidence of impact, Graph 19.
Graph 19: (ERs) Q44 – To what extent do you feel appropriately prepared/knowledgeable and confident to discuss collecting evidence and the impact of evidence?

The confidence level of reviewers appears to be greater than reviewees, with 90.2% of reviewers reporting that they are appropriately prepared/knowledgeable and confident to discuss collecting evidence and the impact of evidence.

Similar to reviewees, reviewers reported issues such as the time to collect and analyse evidence to show impact is an issue. It can be perceived as a bureaucratic process that has implications for workload and there are still some concerns around what counts as evidence. Some comments from reviewers are shown below.

- Measuring impact properly requires time and resources which are in short supply. In a company, measuring impact would be a job in itself. It would be useful to have a quick list of impact measures. Which I know is nearly impossible.
- Some teachers still focus on the impact on learners rather than the impact on themselves. I include myself to some extent in this.
- Reviewees tend not to have baseline data which makes demonstrating impact difficult (impossible?)
- Evidence and impact is very difficult to quantify statistically…we are dealing with mainly pupil confidence and well being - these can't be easily measured.

There are some important points raised by reviewers with regard to evidence of impact. Evidence of impact should be part of the daily practice of teachers and is a fundamental aspect of improvement. However, evidence of impact may take time to become apparent and can be context specific. Evidence of impact can be gathered in a number of ways and does not have to be numerical or statistical in nature. Some comments from reviewers are shown below.

- It is fundamental that evidence of impact is key to professional learning as is staff working collegiately to bring about improvements in teaching and learning.
- There can be a danger of feeling that there needs to be dramatic evidence for impact to the extent that smaller impacts on individual pupils can get overlooked.
- I think having to analyse the evidence of impact of every PL activity can make some PL look like it is not worthwhile as it can be hard to define what impact something has.
- Impact of evidence is the most difficult aspect of this. Teaching staff often find it difficult to identify, measure and evaluate evidence of impact. Greater work is required on the use of data at classroom teacher level to allow teachers to really reflect on any impact of their practice.
Respondents were asked to identify, from a wide range of options, the evidence they would most likely to use to ascertain impact of their professional learning, graph 20.

**Graph 20:** (EEs) Q62 – Thinking about your planned PL for this year; please tell us about the kinds of evidence you have used/will use to ascertain the impact of your PL on your thinking and practice.

As we can see from the above graph, the kinds of evidence that dominate are: course notes/handouts and evaluations, logs of courses/PL attended, record of working groups/focus groups. This picture remains constant across the longitudinal data.

Whilst all of the above may provide useful records of activity, there is a danger they become list of ‘things’ kept to ‘prove’ engagement in an activity. This may well contribute to the negative perceptions about the value and workload relating to the use of evidence.

The kinds of evidence that were rated lowest were those which have a focus on analysis (i.e. analysis of piece of work, survey, photo etc.). Again, the perceived time implications for doing this may well be an influencing factor. However, if the purpose of referring to evidence is to ascertain impact of professional learning it is difficult to do this meaningfully without engaging in some form of analysis and critical reflection.

The direct submission respondents indicated that the evidence they would most likely to use to ascertain impact of their professional learning was:

- log of courses/PL attended,
- course notes/handouts and evaluations,
- copies of readings/reading lists.

Below are a selection of comments from registrants about the value of evidence and how evidence can be used to show the teachers learning journey.
As a reflective practitioner it is important to me that I feel confident in continually improving my practice ensuring that the impact of any activity ultimately benefits the pupils. Keeping track of how this happens in a realistic, practical, integral and meaningful way has not been easy in the past, however, I feel encouraged and well supported to do this more effectively by the advice offered via the GTC website.

As Head of an SEBN centre I will be assessing the impact of our pedagogical approaches on our pupils successful reintegration to mainstream schools. By reflecting on these outcomes I will be able to evaluate the impact of our interventions and hence my PL as these interventions and how the centre functions are all underpinned by my PL.

We can reflect on our photo evidence, our planning and self evaluation notes and by sharing course notes and new knowledge with colleagues we can see what progress we have made and how the new knowledge we have gained has impacted on the pupils.

Evidence helps provide perceptions from other viewpoints rather just my own which can inform dialogue on impact and future development needs. Provides record of improvement within identified areas and at times comparative study/results to highlight progress or otherwise.

As Head of an SEBN centre I will be assessing the impact of our pedagogical approaches on our pupils successful reintegration to mainstream schools. By reflecting on these outcomes I will be able to evaluate the impact of our interventions and hence my PL as these interventions and how the centre functions are all underpinned by my PL.

We can reflect on our photo evidence, our planning and self evaluation notes and by sharing course notes and new knowledge with colleagues we can see what progress we have made and how the new knowledge we have gained has impacted on the pupils.

Evidence helps provide perceptions from other viewpoints rather just my own which can inform dialogue on impact and future development needs. Provides record of improvement within identified areas and at times comparative study/results to highlight progress or otherwise.

It is my best attempt at detailing the development of my thinking.

I am not involved directly in school nor am I employed by a Local Authority with access to a wide variety of CPD opportunities so I collect what evidence I am able for the sort of activities that I am able to undertake.

The more variety in how I collect evidence, the more useful it is. To me, there is zero value in simply collecting evidence without analysing what has happened, why it has worked or not worked and what can be done to improve the work covered.
7.3 Emerging issues, main messages

Overall, there were a number of positive messages arising:

- Self-evaluation is the most cited factor informing professional learning.
- Both reviewees and direct submission respondents feel that their professional learning is challenging, relevant and they have ownership of this.
- Collaborative learning with others was the most popular and valuable approach to professional learning.
- For those who did collect evidence of impact, this was found to have a positive influence on their self-evaluation and supported their own professional learning journey.

The main issues emerging are:

- Collaborative learning although cited as the most valuable aspect of professional learning does not correlate with the impact of teacher professional learning on colleagues.
- Practitioner enquiry remains an activity that is not widely used as a mode of professional learning.
- Evidence used is dominated by course notes/handouts and evaluations, logs of courses/PL attended, record of working groups/focus groups than analysis of student work.
- There is still a lack of understanding about what is meant by and how to gather evidence of impact.
8 The Professional Review and Development (PRD) Process

One of the key principles of Professional Update is an entitlement to supportive PRD. An effective PRD process is essential to successful engagement in the Professional Update process. Current national guidance on PRD identifies the following six key features of effective PRD:

- It is an entitlement and responsibility of all registered teachers to commit to professional learning and to engage in the process of Professional Update.
- It should impact positively on planning for and engagement in professional learning, practice and development.
- It is an on-going process, which takes place within a supportive, challenging and collegial culture.
- It is based on robust, evidence-based self-evaluation.
- It involves focused professional dialogue on a regular basis.
- It requires all registered teachers to maintain a reflective record of professional learning and evidence of its impact on thinking and practice.

PRD is most successful when it is underpinned by a coaching and mentoring approach.

8.1 Engaging in a PRD meeting as part of the PU sign off process

In considering registrants engagement in the PRD processes, reviewees were asked to reflect on their engagement in, experience of, and perceived value of PRD for them.

Whilst the vast majority of respondents (94.9%) had a PRD, it is a concern that 5.1% (n54) reported they had not yet had a PRD meeting. The total number of respondents engaging in the PRD process has shown a very slight decline in the last three years from 96.0% (2014/15) to 94.9% (2016/17) and 1.1% decrease, this trend will be monitored by GTCS and shared with employers.

The reasons cited for not having had a PRD meeting were as follows:

- PRD was organised but has yet to take place yet;
- PRD was cancelled due to:
  - lack of time;
  - staffing;
  - workload (my own and/or my line manager);
  - illness or long term absence.

Some individuals stated they had not been invited for a PRD by a line manager or had been given no opportunity for this. This may indicate that there is still a perception by some, that they should not be taking responsibility for this or feel they are not ‘permitted’ to take ownership of the process.

Of the 54 reporting no PRD, 44 were teaching staff based in a local authority, 6 of whom are supply teachers. Respondents who indicated that they were working as supply teachers reported difficulties in terms completing the process when their position changed frequently i.e. short-term contracts.

8.2 Preparing for the PRD meeting

One key element in preparation for the PRD meeting involves reflection against professional standards (see section 6 for data relating to engagement with professional standards). However, there are a number of other policies and documents that registrants use to prepare for their PRD meeting. When asked to indicate which documents were most useful to prepare for their PRD, 85.1% of reviewees and 85.7% of direct submission indicated that they used their professional learning record to prepare for their PRD meeting.

For registrants who are engaged in PRD discussions, it is important that records of significant professional learning activities are shared with the reviewer to inform the professional dialogue. Reviewers reported that 94.4% of reviewee had shared their professional learning record. Reviewers also reported that 92.8% of reviewees professional learning record was discussed to a large extent/some extent.
**Table 4: Reviewers – sharing/discussion of Reviewee’s reflective record of PL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(ERs) Q38: To what extent did you discuss the reviewee's reflective record of their PL?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For those reviewer respondents who indicated that their reviewee had not shared their professional learning record, the reasons given were as follows:

- Capacity issues of the reviewee.
- The professional learning record was not shared but was discussed during the PRD.
- Professional learning record was shared as part of normal practice.
- Some reviewees shared their professional learning record, but others had not kept a detailed record.

There are still some concerns around the expectation and understanding of reviewers about sharing records, see comments below.

**I was unaware that recording professional reflections and discussing them was necessary.**

**It is their record and up to them to share or not.**

### 8.3 The professional discussion

Professional dialogue is a critical element of the PRD process. Whilst the formal PRD meeting provides a clear and focused opportunity for this, professional dialogue should be part of an on-going process to support and encourage individuals’ professional learning and their reflections on the impact of this.

Table 5 shows the comparison between reviewees, direct submissions and reviewers in regard to on-going discussion. Although the percentage of respondents is fairly comparable across the three groups, it is important to note that almost one fifth of reviewees reported that they did not have opportunities for on-going dialogue.

**Table 5: Opportunities for on-going discussion, over the course of the year, about PL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee %</th>
<th>Direct Submission %</th>
<th>Reviewer %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of reviewee respondents (82.0%) did have opportunities over the course of the year for on-going professional dialogue. These opportunities were mainly a mix of both informal and formal (48.4% reporting both) with 35.0% reporting just informal opportunities for dialogue and 15.8% just having formal dialogue sessions.

In looking closer at the data that relates to the types on opportunities for on-going dialogue, again the trend in both reviewee and direct submission groups is similar with a mixture of formal and informal being most reported, graph 21. However a different picture can be seen in the reviewer data, graph 22, where informal discussions occurred more than the formal and informal – the opposite to that of the reviewees.
Of those reviewees and direct submission respondents who reported that they had no opportunity for on-going dialogue the following were cited as reasons for this.

- Time and workload issues for on-going professional dialogue.
- Staffing issues.
- Supply teacher on short term contracts.
- Absence due to illness.
- Other priorities.
- Changes in situation.

Reviewer respondents also cited time as a major factor that prevented engagement with on-going dialogue. Other factors reported were:

- Staffing;
- Changes in context;
- Workload;
- Further training needs.

Graphs 23-24 compare the reviewees and reviewers responses to the areas addressed in the PRD meeting. As can be seen, the areas of main focus or some focus are different between the groups.

Graph 21: (EEs) Q3: Were these (please select all that apply)

- Formal + Informal: 48.4
- Informal: 35.0
- Formal: 15.8
- Formal + Informal + other: 0.5
- Informal + other: 0.4
- Other: 0.0
- Formal + other: 0.0

Graph 22: (ERs) Q2: Were these (please select all that apply)

- Informal: 43.8
- Formal + Informal: 35.6
- Formal: 17.7
- Formal + Informal + other: 1.5
- Other: 0.9
- Formal + other: 0.6
- Informal + other: 0.0
Graph 23: (EEs) Q38: Thinking about the focus of your PRD discussion what, from the following, did you address? Please rate as appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee</th>
<th>Direct Submission</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My PL and future development needs</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of my PL on me and my practice</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs of pupils</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/dept/org priorities/issues</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The direct submission respondents reported that all PRDs addressed school/dept/org priorities/issues, with most also addressing the other areas to some extent.

Graph 24: (ERs) Q28: Thinking about the focus of the PRD discussion what, from the following, did you address? Please rate as appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee</th>
<th>Direct Submission</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewee’s PL and future development needs</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of reviewee’s PL on them and their practice</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs of pupils</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/dept/org priorities/issues</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning for the reviewee</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main differences between reviewees and reviewers are within the areas of school/dept priorities/issues and career planning. In both areas, reviewees reported no focus in greater numbers than reviewers, e.g. for school/dept priorities/issues reviewees reported 92.9% no focus at all compared with reviewers 96.1%. This is more marked in the area of career planning with only 60.8% of reviewees reporting that this was a main focus/some focus compared with reviewers reporting main focus/some focus at 91.5%.

NOTE – The respondent populations are not necessarily connected. This means that the reviewers who responded to this survey may not necessarily be those who reviewed the reviewee respondents.

In discussing professional learning it is important that registrants consider the impact of their professional learning and can discuss this during their PRD. Table 6 shows the comparison across reviewees, direct submissions and reviewers in the extent to which they discussed evidence of impact of their professional learning during their PRD.

Table 6: Extent referred to/discussed evidence of impact of PL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee</th>
<th>Direct Submission</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a large/ some extent</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much/ at all</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From this table it can be seen that the majority of reviewees are being supported to discuss the evidence of impact of their professional learning with their line manager. To a lesser extent direct submission respondents are also supported to discuss evidence of impact of their professional learning.

It is important that professional learning is more than an activity but that it is recorded and analysed to inform future professional learning and practice. Reviewers were asked to comment on whether their reviewee shared any evidence of impact of their professional learning during their PRD, and whether this was useful to inform the professional dialogue. 91.3% of reviewers stated that their reviewees had shared evidence of impact of their professional learning; 94.9% of reviewers found this helpful to inform the professional dialogue as part of the PRD process.

For those reviewer respondents who indicated that their reviewees had not shared any evidence of impact of their professional learning, the reasons given were as follows:

- Collecting evidence of impact is time consuming and so was not completed/considered.
- There is a lack of understanding/some staff find this challenging.
- This was discussed but evidence was anecdotal/limited/not paper based.

The comments below, illustrate some of these findings.

Evidence of what was done was shared but limited measure of impact

They were able to discuss their impact in the classroom as a result of professional learning through discussion which correlated with the practice which has been observed in their classroom and also through planning documents, attainment information etc.

Reviewers were asked to comment on what evidence was most useful to show impact of professional learning and/or inform the professional dialogue as part of the PRD process, their responses were coded into the following themes:

- Attainment/assessment data.
- Sharing practice with colleagues through classroom observations/professional dialogue.
- Self-evaluation, reflection and recording professional learning e.g. learning log/action plans.
- Formal professional learning opportunities.
- Pupil confidence data.

Reviewees were asked how useful they thought their PRD was in helping them to reflect on last year’s professional learning and its impact. As can be seen from graph 25, this year the majority (86.1%) reported that their PRD meeting was helpful to a large extent/to some extent and the majority of reviewee respondents. (90.4%) believe they now have appropriate plans for their professional learning in place as a result of the PRD, graph 26.

**Graph 25: (EEs) Q40 – Overall, how useful was your PRD meeting in helping you to reflect on previous year’s PL, its impact and plan your PL for next year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual PU 14/15</th>
<th>Annual PU 15/16</th>
<th>Annual PU 16/17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a large/ some extent</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>86.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much/ at all</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph 26 (EEs) Q41 – To what extent do feel you have appropriate plans/ steps for PL and & development from the PRD discussion?

![Bar graph showing responses to Graph 26 (EEs) Q41](image)

However, there is no trend in the longitudinal data, GTCS will continue to work in partnership with employers and monitor closely through the next iteration of this survey.

For direct submission respondents 85.7% reported that their PRD meeting was helpful to a large extent/to some extent and 85.7% reported they now have appropriate plans for their professional learning.

The professional dialogue within the PRD meeting should be both supportive and challenging. All groups were asked to report on the balance between support and challenge in the PRD meeting. A significant majority believe the balance of challenge and support is right, this is also reflected across the longitudinal data, table 7.

Table 7: Reflecting on the balance of support and challenge at the PRD meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee</th>
<th>Direct Submission</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much support and not enough challenge</td>
<td>25 2.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>156 30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much challenge and not enough support</td>
<td>104 10.4</td>
<td>1 14.3</td>
<td>7 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the right balance of support and challenge</td>
<td>870 87.1</td>
<td>6 85.7</td>
<td>355 68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>999 100.0</td>
<td>7 100.0</td>
<td>518 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One reviewer was very honest in their reflection in commenting on their need to become more confident in order to provide the best support for their reviewees.

As my experience in the PRD process grows, I feel I will be more confident in providing appropriate challenge.

PRD is most successful when it is underpinned by a coaching and mentoring approach. When reviewees reflect on the use of coaching approaches, there is a positive trend in relation to the extent individuals believe their reviewer takes a coaching approach, graph 27.
It is interesting to compare across the three data sets the perception of the use of coaching and mentoring, table 8. As from previous surveys the percentage of reviewers who report that are using coaching and mentoring is greater that the number of reviewees who feel they are being coached and mentored. This remains an area for development for employers to upskill all reviewers in coaching and mentoring.

Table 8: Extent coaching and/or mentoring approaches were used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reviewee %</th>
<th>Direct Submission %</th>
<th>Reviewer %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a large/ some extent</td>
<td>729/73.0</td>
<td>5/71.4</td>
<td>426/82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much/ at all</td>
<td>270/27.0</td>
<td>2/28.6</td>
<td>92/17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>999/100.0</td>
<td>7/100.0</td>
<td>518/100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One reviewer offered insight into their approach, comment below.

The secret to making this whole process success is effective training of reviewers with coaching and mentoring skills.

An individual’s experience and perceived value of Professional Update is influenced by their experience of the PRD process related to the knowledge, understanding, expertise and/or relationship with their line manager. If their line manager had professional learning in how to conduct a coaching conversation, the reviewees reported that had a positive experience.

Whereas, some reviewees reported a negative experience due to lack of coaching during the PRD meeting. One reviewee respondent reported that their line manager did not use coaching and was instead being driven by an accountability agenda rather than a developmental agenda as illustrated by the following comments.

All professional discussions can differ. As a manager some staff need much more support and the challenge must be tailored to what is needed. As a manager it can be difficult to cater for the different learning curves of individuals especially with the attainment agenda constantly driving forward

I’m still inclined to problem solve and suggest too much, rather than using questioning to enable the review to find their own answers - I am improving at this
8.4 General reflections on the PRD process

The majority of respondents reported a positive experience of the PRD process. There is an improving picture with reviewees reporting it has met their needs to some/large extent, 87.4% (16-17), in comparison to previous years, 82.7% (15/16) and 76.0%, (14/15), an increase of 11.4%. They also believe they have ownership of this process (90.8%), graph 28; this figure has remained relatively constant across the longitudinal data.

Graph 28: (EEs) Q46: To what extent do you feel you have ownership of and responsibility for the PRD and PU process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are still some competing views on the value and purpose of the PRD purpose. Some views expressed by reviewees and reviewers include that the process is bureaucratic and that schools have a lack of cover and funding for professional learning activities and thus they do not feel they have ownership, contradictory to the above. These views are supported by the following comments.

If PRD is to be done properly then we need time and space to think about and plan our professional development.

I think most people see the PRD system as something that takes up valuable time and simply identifies all the things we already know need to be done.

My experience of PRD over the last 9 years is that there have been too many national developments driving us. This means that, once teachers have incorporated these developments there is very little room/time for them to focus on their own needs.

In the current climate the PRD process is hard to complete in a worthwhile manner

It hasn't been easy to collate and classify due to my lack of familiarity with the professional standards and lack of discussion with what was required.

Some respondents were more positive in their views of the PRD process, see comments below.

As a school we also use the reflective wheel, which I feel gives you a richer picture to start a quality discussion with rather than the professional update.

This is an invaluable tool. Schools remain the busiest of environments ever changing and the PRD process is essential in maintaining and developing expertise to fulfil our commitments as effective teachers.

It is important that the PRD process itself doesn’t become the focus, rather the basis of professional discussion touching on the best way to develop as a teacher in order to have the maximum impact on learners.

Some reviewees also commented on ownership of their PRD, as shown below.

In my school, we are supported by the headteacher and we are encouraged to have ownership.

I am very sure of where I want to go within education and reflect regularly on my practice and development therefore I was able to play a lead and key role within my PRD to ensure the ownership of the plan was mine - as I fully believe it should’ve been.
8.5 Main messages and emerging issues

Overall, the emerging positive messages are:

- Most respondents had been involved in the PRD process, with only a small number yet to complete their PRD.
- Professional learning records were most valued by respondent in preparation for their PRD.
- Most individuals have had opportunities for ongoing professional dialogue with their line manager.
- Most respondents discussed evidence of impact during their PRD.
- Overall it is believed that the PRD has the right balance of support and challenge.
- The percentage of reviewees who reported that their line manager used coaching and mentoring shows an upwards trend.
- Significant majority believe they have ownership of the process.
- The data suggests that the PRD is meeting the majority of individuals’ needs.

The emerging issues relating to the PRD process include:

- Time and workload continue to be barriers for engagement with the PRD process.
- Just under a fifth of reviewees reported that they did not have opportunities for on-going discussions with their line manager.
- Although there is an overall upward trend, there are still a significant number of reviewees who reported that their line manager did not use coaching and mentoring during their PRD.
- There are concerns that Professional Update is perceived as bureaucratic.
9 Systems used and the Professional Update Sign Off Process

As well as ensuring that the underpinning principles and processes of Professional Update are meaningful and relevant, it is also important to ensure that the IT systems that support the process are meeting the needs of the users.

9.1 Systems used to support Professional Update

There are a number of systems in use across Scotland for registrants to record their professional learning, PRD and PU sign-off. Reviewees were asked to report whether they felt that the system they used had met their needs for recording their PRD. As can be seen from table 9, the majority indicated that they system had met their needs to a large extent/some extent across all systems.

Table 9: (EEs) System used to record PRD meeting & Extent system met needs for this purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EEs Q64 How did you record your PRD meeting?</th>
<th>EEs Q65 To what extent did your system meet your needs for recording the PRD meeting?</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA/org online system (e.g. Gateway, CPD Manager, CPD Online, org's own system)</td>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyGTCS</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic document (e.g. Word)</td>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper only</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A similar positive response was also reported by all respondent groups for the extent the system used met respondents needs for recording their professional learning and evidence of impact of that professional learning.

Reviewee and direct submission respondents were offered the opportunity for comment further on any aspect of the systems used. The responses were coded into the following categories:

- MyGTCS/Gateway are clunky and unresponsive.
- The GTCS website is difficult to navigate and unhelpful.*
- PU is time consuming.
- Uploading (paper PDR, PL records) has been difficult at times.
- A confirmation email after sign off would be appreciated.**
- Double entry is time consuming (LA paperwork then uploading to MyGTCS).

*This is contrary to the response to the sources which helped registrants to be informed and support them in PU where the website was rated most highly and very helpful (see page 9).

**For MyGTCS users a confirmation email is sent to the reviewee when PU is confirmed by the line manager.

9.2 Final reflections from respondents on Professional Update

Perhaps unsurprisingly there are mixed responses from respondents in relation to their perceptions about Professional Update. These range from individuals who perceive little or no value in the whole process to those who have found it to be a professionally meaningful and an important part of their ongoing development.
There are recurring themes that seem to emerge that influence the experience and perceptions. These include issues relating to time and workload and perceptions about what is actually required for Professional Update. These continuing misconceptions about the requirements of PU, include respondents believing they have to record everything on-line, a perceived lack of communication/support from GTCS for PU and a lack of information for retiring teachers/supply teachers.

The final question of each survey gave respondents a final opportunity to share their experience of PU, as would be expected there were mixed opinions, some respondent had a very positive experience and others did not.

I don't see the impact intended in this process. For many it's an afterthought, a task to be done. It doesn't make for more reflective practitioners and for the already reflective practitioners it is seen as a chore they must do to maintain registration.

I felt this process was unnecessarily lengthy, significantly added to workload, added to my stress levels and felt it was not of enough value to justify the amount of time and effort I put in to completing it. I felt a lot of it was stating the obvious. More meaningful to me is having time to meet with my very supportive and helpful PT and the informal support and advice of my colleagues.

I felt insecure with my knowledge of the standard so was not confident in signing off. The MyGTCS tool did help however.

Good to have the opportunity to discuss my professional learning with my line manager. Although, unfortunately this opportunity is not available often, this is a result of unavailability due to staffing issues.

A key aspect of professional learning which enables the employee to actively engage in a dialogue that is meaningful and important to them.

The process is very important and relevant. It is vital that quality time is set aside to ensure that staff feel valued and that the process is carried out in a professional manner.

I found the process to be clear and worthwhile. My Reviewer was extremely supportive and gave sound advice and direction where there was any confusion. I feel that it will serve me well to record my PL more regularly on MyGTCS throughout subsequent sessions, rather than keeping a log on paper and then inputting into MyGTCS.

With the correct training/guidance to Senior Managers and a robust system using GTCS guidelines this system was excellent. It provided opportunity for good professional dialogue and assisted colleagues to support each other in developments on a personal, departmental, school and community level. I found this system to be extremely productive for me personally and for me to confidently support and encourage my linked curriculum.

While the professional update process is necessary and certainly provokes more self-reflection and self-awareness than probably happened in the past, maintaining records and evidence can be quite time-consuming.
10 Summary of main messages and possible next steps

The overall messages and possible areas for development identified are summarised below.

10.1 Main messages

Using professional standards

Standards are generally perceived positively as supporting self-evaluation, reflective practice, identifying strengths and areas for future development. The Standard for Career-long Professional Learning is used by most teachers and is considered the most useful professional standard. Registrants indicate that competing demands limit the time they have to dedicate to their own professional learning.

There are mixed perceptions regarding the structure and use of professional standards. This will be addressed through the review of the professional standards, which is currently in progress. Within this review it may be worth considering the development of a Systems Leader Professional Standard.

Professional Learning and Evidence of Impact

Registrants reported that their professional learning was informed mostly by their own self-evaluation. As with the previous report, collaborative learning with others was the most popular approach to professional learning and was also perceived as being the most valuable. However, this does not correlate with the reported impact of teacher professional learning on colleagues, which remains low.

There appears to be a continuing issue with evidence of impact with a quarter of respondents reporting that they believe they are not all or not very well prepared when it comes to using evidence of impact. For those who did collect evidence of impact, this was found to be a positive influence on their self-evaluation and supporting their own professional learning journey.

PRD

Within the PRD process, most individuals have had opportunities for ongoing professional dialogue with their line manager and overall it is believed that PRD has the right balance of support and challenge. More respondents discussed evidence of impact during their PRD and a significant majority of respondents believed they have ownership of the process and it is meeting their individuals’ needs.

Concerns were raised from respondents about the bureaucratic nature of some PRD, particularly where coaching and mentoring was not being used to support the professional dialogue. There is also remains a disconnect between the perception of reviewees and reviewers in respect to the coaching and mentoring, with reviewees reporting that this occurs less frequently that is reported by reviewers.

10.2 Possible areas for future development

Opportunities to share coherent and consistent messages about the requirements, expectations and purposes of Professional Update should continue to be sought.

Professional standards

Further support for registrants to engage with different type of professional learning linked to professional standards would be appreciated by registrants, particularly in using professional standards for those in non-teaching roles.

Within the review of the professional standards it may be worth considering the development of a Systems Leader Professional Standard.

Professional learning and evidence of impact

Further guidance and support may be useful about what makes for meaningful, relevant and appropriate professional learning with a strong focus on the evidence of impact of professional learning on pupil outcomes.
PRD

Employers should continue to offer professional learning opportunities for reviewers to upskills in coaching and mentoring to provide support for professional dialogue through the PRD process.
GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities