

Information for Media Attending a Fitness to Teach Hearing



Members of the media are asked to note and respect the following key points:

- 1. Always alert the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) at least one working day in advance if you plan to attend a hearing. Failure to do so may result in access being refused.**
- 2. The hearing day usually starts at 1000 hours. You should arrive at least 15 minutes in advance. Any media arriving after proceedings have started will not be allowed access to the hearing until a natural break occurs.**
- 3. All media must be signed in and will be given visitor badges which must be worn at all times while in the building. Media will be accompanied by a GTCS staff member at all times.**
- 4. Photographers are not permitted to take photos anywhere on GTCS property, including the car park.**

Further information

GTCS is the world's first independent, self-regulatory body for teaching. In order to be employed in a local authority school, teachers must be registered with GTCS.

There are three types of Fitness to Teach Panel hearings which are held in public:

1. Procedural Hearing
2. Full Hearing
3. Subsequent Registration Application Hearing

You can find out more about the hearings process on our website.

Fitness to Teach Panel hearings are held at the GTCS Headquarters, Clerwood House, where there is a loop system for people with hearing impairment, and also wheelchair access. Anyone attending hearings who may require other assistance should contact GTCS in advance.

Pre-hearing

Hearings will be publicised on the GTCS website no more than seven calendar days in advance. This is the first public notification of a hearing. Media will not be notified about hearings in any other way.

Out Fitness to Teach Publication Policy sets out what we will publish in advance of hearings. The policy can be found at:-

http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/FormUploads/FtT%20Publication%20Policy107909_2817.pdf

The pre-hearing website notice will not contain the name of the teacher involved but will outline the referral or the procedural application to be considered.

Members of the media are expected to give notice to GTCS if they wish to attend a hearing. At least one working days' notice is required prior to the hearing date that they wish to attend in order to allow staffing arrangements to be put in place.

Failure to advise GTCS in advance may result in access to the hearing being refused.

The hearing

On the day of the hearing, members of the media are required to arrive at GTCS reception no later than 15 minutes before the start of the hearing. The hearing day normally starts at 1000 hours. Any media arriving after proceedings have started will not be allowed access to the hearing until a natural break occurs.

All media must be signed in and will be given visitor badges which must be worn at all times while in the building. Media will be accompanied by a GTCS staff member at all times.

No photography, recordings or interviews are permitted within the GTCS building.

The hearing

Restrictions on photography, recordings and interviews may differ for any hearings held outwith the GTCS building (for example, in a hotel). These restrictions are determined according to the arrangements at the premises where the Fitness to Teach hearing is taking place.

Photographers are not permitted to take photographs inside the GTCS building or in its car park area. We cannot prevent photographs being taken from beyond GTCS premises. Media attending must notify the GTCS Media Officer if there is a photographer in attendance and he/ she will advise on the GTCS premises boundary.

Media attending a hearing should not direct questions to any of the Panel Members, parties or hearing staff on a hearing day. These should instead be directed to the Media Officer in attendance at an appropriate time. However, it should be noted that no information will be released during a hearing to members of the media not in attendance at the hearing.

The written decision of the Panel will be published as soon as is reasonably practicable (usually within 28 days) after the Panel has made its decision.

Media must abide by any directions made by the Panel or its Convener. For example, if the Panel decides that part of a hearing should be held in private, this should be respected.

At no time should members of the media interject or engage in discussion during a hearing unless they are invited to do so by the Convener of the Panel.

It is possible that the names of children, pupils and other vulnerable witnesses may be mentioned during the course of hearings. The media is requested not to report the names of children, pupils or vulnerable witnesses or any other references which might identify the people concerned.

You can find out more about what hearings involve and why on our website.

Any media not acting in accordance with these guidelines will be asked to leave the premises and may be refused access to future hearings.