

- 1 The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) is the independent professional body which maintains and enhances teaching standards and promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. We strive to be a world leader in professional education issues.
- 2 We are committed to dealing with all stakeholders and individuals who use our services and who liaise with us fairly and impartially and to providing a high quality service.

We will make every effort to ensure that our service is accessible to all individuals. To achieve this outcome wherever possible we will make reasonable adjustments to meet the individual and particular needs of anyone who contacts us.

This policy sets out our approach to the relatively few individuals whose behaviour or actions we consider unacceptable.

- 3 As part of the service we provide, we do not normally limit the contact individuals have with us. However we do not expect our staff to tolerate behaviour which we consider to be unacceptable – for example, communication which is abusive, offensive, aggressive or threatening, or which is unreasonably persistent or demanding, taking up what we consider to be a disproportionate amount of time and resources and preventing us from carrying out our work. We will therefore take action to protect our staff from such behaviour.
- 4 When we consider that an individual's behaviour is unreasonable, we will tell them why we find their behaviour unreasonable and we will ask them to change it. If the unreasonable behaviour continues, we will take action to restrict the individual's contact with our office.
- 5 The decision to restrict access to our office will only normally be taken after we have considered possible adjustments to our service which may help the individual to avoid unreasonable behaviour. The decision will be taken at Director level or above. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options we are most likely to consider are:
 - requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only);
 - requiring contact to take place with a named member of staff;
 - restricting telephone calls to specified days and times;
 - asking the individual to enter into an agreement about their future conduct; and/or
 - asking the individual to contact us through an advocate.
- 6 We will write to tell the individual why we believe their behaviour is unacceptable, what action we are taking and the duration of that action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it and we will consider any challenge under our Complaints Procedure.
- 7 Where an individual behaves unacceptably during a telephone conversation, we may as a last resort terminate the call.
- 8 Where, despite any adjustments we have made, an individual continues to behave in a way which we consider to be unacceptable, we may decide to terminate contact with them.
- 9 Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of our staff, we will consider other options – for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the individual prior warning of that action.
- 10 This policy and its use will be reviewed on a regular basis.

April 2012