

DRIVING FORWARD PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS



Professional Learning Award for Organisations

Application and Panel Guide

January 2018

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Professional Learning Award for Organisations	1
3	Application for the Professional Learning Award	1
4	GTCS Professional Learning Awards Panel Processes	3
4.1	Panel composition and application submission	3
4.2	Panel process	3
4.3	Quality Assurance processes	3
4.4	Costs	3

Appendix 1 - GTCS Professional Learning Model Outline

Appendix 2 - Professional Update – professional learning planning cycle

1 Introduction

GTC Scotland offers a suite of Professional Learning Awards which celebrate, promote and encourage teacher professionalism and professional learning at all stages of a teacher's career. The Awards recognise and celebrate the impact of teacher professional learning along with the leadership of learning cultures in which teacher professionalism can thrive and bring about real impact.

The Scottish Government's Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education 2016 clearly identifies that:

'...the quality of teaching and school leadership are the most important in-school factors in a child's outcomes.' (Scottish Government, 2016:10)

The GTCS suite of Professional Learning Awards place a spotlight on the excellent work taking place in our classrooms, schools, colleges, universities, local authorities, education organisations and across a range of partnerships. The Awards help to celebrate, share and promote the ways in which the professionalism and professional learning of our teachers delivers the best outcomes for all our learners.

2 Professional Learning Award for Organisations

This Award is about the Organisation as a learning provider for teachers. The award celebrates Organisations which support and promote teacher professional learning. This GTCS award identifies organisations which aim through their work:

'to develop and enhance teachers' knowledge, expertise and skill; develop their professionalism, and to impact positively on learning experiences and outcomes of children and young people' (GTCS Professional Learning Model 2017).

The GTCS Professional Learning Model provides coherent guidance on what high quality, effective professional learning looks like. It identifies the core purposes and principles of learning and offers strategic guidance for teachers and leaders on how to support, structure and plan for professional learning. It requires learning for teachers to be:

- ❖ Purposeful and focused on outcomes and impact
- ❖ Be aligned to the needs of the children and young people and their context
- ❖ Be sustained and high quality
- ❖ Be flexible and diverse
- ❖ Be relevant and meaningful for the individual
- ❖ Develop knowledge & expertise, enhance practices, build on strengths & pursue interests

3 Application for the Professional Learning Award

The Award provides the GTCS quality mark of professional learning to successful Organisations to use to promote their work. Teachers and leaders can then be confident that through a rigorous application process the key features of high quality, effective professional learning have been clearly demonstrated and are embedded into the principles of programme design and the programmes on offer.

The application for this Professional Learning Award requires the Organisation to demonstrate how they support the professional learning for teachers in order to assess its suitability for the award.

GTC Scotland requires a number of key features from the Professional Learning Model to be demonstrated as part of the application process for the award (see appendix 1 Professional Learning Model outline). The Professional Learning Award Organisations application form should be completed and submitted electronically to education.support@gtcsc.org.uk

The application includes the following:

- ❖ Background to the organisation and a clear rationale for the professional learning offered
- ❖ Articulation with the GTCS Professional Learning Model where relevant (see Appendix 1)
 - Importance of **leadership of and for learning** to create the culture and ethos of learning:
 - Professional Learning is informed by **Professional Standards** and other educational policy:
 - The professional learning focus is on the **teacher-as-learner** and how this relates to, and impacts on, **the learning of children, young people and adult learners**:
 - **Learning as collaborative** – interactive, reflective and involves learning with and from others
 - **Learning by enquiring** – underpinned by and developing skills of enquiry and criticality
 - **Learning that deepens knowledge and understanding** – challenging and developing thinking, knowledge, skills and understanding
- ❖ Links to the key feature of Professional Update (see appendix 2):
 - Ongoing professional dialogue about the professional learning and as an integral part of PRD
 - Enquiry dispositions required as outlined in the appropriate Standard, for example how is the learning informed by the relevant literature
 - Understanding and evidence of the impact of learning and development on professional practice (self, colleagues and learners)
 - Support for recording and reflecting on evidence of impact of learning
 - Evidence of how the GTCS Standards are used to inform and support the professional learning
- ❖ Examples of programme(s) offered to support submission
- ❖ Quality Assurance processes, including how teachers feedback and evaluation has contributed to shaping the learning provided, evidence of impact and evaluation of the programmes offered
- ❖ Brief professional profiles of the staff responsible for the professional learning strategy and the development and delivering of programmes

4 GTCS Professional Learning Awards Panel Processes

4.1 Panel composition and application submission

GTC Scotland's Education Committee delegates the scrutiny and evaluation of the Professional Learning Award for Organisations to the Professional Learning Award Panels. The Professional Learning Award Panel consists of a minimum of one GTC Scotland Council member and two external experts drawn from the relevant educational context. The Panel has the authority to make decisions about the Award and to advise the organisation of their decision. The panel is supported by a GTCS Senior Education Officer who acts in the capacity of servicing officer for the panel.

The Award Panels take place six times a year and a calendar of panel dates is published on our website. A GTCS Senior Education Officer can discuss and support the organisation in making an application. The Organisation will inform GTCS of the intention to submit to a panel to book a place on the required panel. The application form must be submitted electronically at least 5 weeks in advance of the panel in order for this to be shared with the panel members.

4.2 Panel process

The Professional Learning Award Panel will review the application submitted by the organisation and they will be offered a timeslot on the panel date to come and speak in support of their application. This takes the form of a short 10 to 15 minute presentation from the organisation team followed by a professional dialogue with the panel.

The panel will decide if the Award criteria have been met (see Application guidance) and will either award fully or not award on this occasion. A follow up email communicating the panel decision will be sent to the organisation within one working day.

Within two working weeks, a letter will be sent to each organisation noting the panel decision and any recommendations from the panel which provide advice on further steps the organisation might take. Organisations that have been given the Award will also be sent the GTC Scotland Professional Learning Quality Mark for this Award along with the terms of use. The Organisation will be invited to submit a short paragraph about their work along with relevant contact details and links which will be placed on the GTCS website. The award will be held for 3 years.

While it is recognised that if an application is refused the award, Organisations have an opportunity to submit a revised proposal, it is also appropriate for there to be the possibility of appealing against a GTC Scotland panel decision. Any such appeal will follow GTC Scotland processes and be heard by the GTCS Professional Standards Panel.

4.3 Quality Assurance processes

GTC Scotland will, as part of due process, conduct a sampling of successful applications on a twice-yearly basis to ensure consistency of standards within the assessment process. Organisations as part of the award agree to inform GTCS of any significant changes to their learning provision e.g. changes in staff responsible for the professional learning strategy and the development and delivering of programmes.

4.4 Costs

An administrative fee of £250 is charged for each application and panel validation.

GTCS Professional Learning Model Outline

The GTCS strategic approach for Professional Learning provides coherent guidance on what high quality, effective professional learning looks like. At the heart of this approach is the professional learning model, which outlines the core purposes and principles of learning. Strategic guidance is offered for teachers and leaders on how to support, structure and plan for professional learning. Engagement in Professional Update is supported through the model for professional learning.





Professional learning must focus on the teacher-as-learner and how this is related to and impacts upon the learning of children and young people.

Professional learning should be:

- Challenging, and develop thinking, knowledge, skills and understanding (the teacher-as-learner)
- Underpinned by and developing skills of enquiry and criticality
- Interactive, reflective and involve learning with and from others

Professional learning is informed and supported by Professional Standards and other educational policy.

Leadership of and for learning is essential to ensure it is well supported, promoted and sustained.

Learning that deepens knowledge & understanding:

- Understand and develop self as a learner & as a professional
 - what informs & influences you?
 - How do you examine your own assumptions, beliefs and values?
 - Develop depth of knowledge about:
 - Learning
 - Teaching and pedagogy
 - Subject, curriculum, policy
 - Own assumptions, values and beliefs
 - Develop skills, expertise & experience
 - Regard problems and failures as learning opportunities
- Learning that deepens knowledge and understanding is about the teacher-as-learner and develops our 'human capital'**

Teacher & student learning:

- At the centre is the deeply interconnected relationship between the teacher-as-learner and the learning of children and young people
- Teacher learning should impact positively on learning experiences and outcomes for children and young people



Professional Standards & Policy

Professional Standards and educational policies both support and inform professional learning. It is important to examine and consider them in action and understand the connections and coherence across policies such as HGIOS 4, GIRFEC, CfE, NIF and the Standards.

Should be used:

- To ask critical questions of self, school and system
- To self-evaluate & engage in critically reflective dialogue about practice as part of ongoing PRD process
- As a catalyst for learning
- To frame & support thinking & practice
- As a way to signpost & plan learning
- To challenge and consider beliefs, values and professional actions
- To explore professional identity

Learning-as-collaborative:

- Learning is an interactive and active process
 - Teacher as learner reflects on, in and about their professional practice, learning and students' learning
 - Teacher as learner self-evaluates and considers own assumptions, context, relationships with others and is self-aware
 - frequent and prioritised
 - productive & focused
 - based on feedback loops between & for teachers, students, colleagues, leaders
 - Knowledge is developed by and with teachers, students, family/carers & learning community
 - Engaging learners & their families/carers
 - External knowledge & other expertise & perspectives
 - Learning with and from colleagues, pupils and others
 - Teachers part of an active learning community
- 'learning-as-collaborative' is about developing and enacting 'social capital' and being a collaborative professional**

Learning by enquiring:

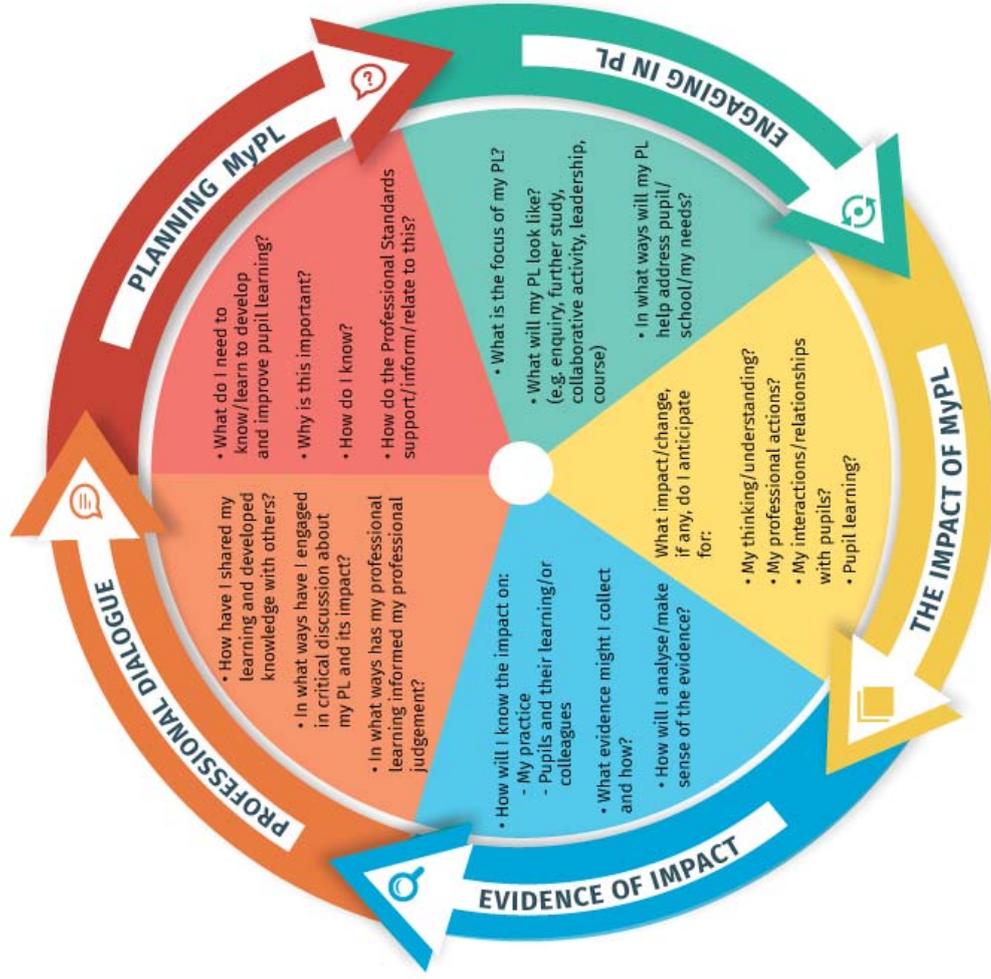
- Asking critical questions about self, students, school, system
- Teacher-as-learner reflects on, in and about their professional practice, learning and students' learning
- Take risks, be open to change and ready to innovate
- Really know & understand impact through critical examination of a wide range of sources of information
- Ask questions about the progress of learners and their learning
- Develop agency and use critically informed judgement to make informed decisions about the 'so, what?' and 'what now?'
- Develop professional voice and teacher agency – teachers as leaders of change

Learning by enquiring develops our professional judgement or 'decisional capital'

Leadership of & for learning

- Develop the strategic vision to lead and support learning for all
- Develop a learning culture & ethos based on trust, honesty, challenge & support; one which supports & promotes growth of professional capital through professional learning.
- Enact collaborative & enquiring approach to practice
- Support & provide time for meaningful engagement in sustained professional learning with opportunities to share
- Lead learning conversations underpinned by coaching approaches to stimulate, challenge & support thinking
- Have courage to act on knowledge & impact
- Have understanding of and adopt an enquiring mindset
- Encourage challenge & question to ensure development & progress
- Be committed to and recognise importance of developing collective knowledge

Professional Update – professional learning planning cycle



The planning cycle:

- provides a scaffold to support teachers in planning and reflecting upon their professional learning
- is based on an enquiring approach to professional learning
- identifies key stages of the professional learning process

This is Professional Update in action

GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities

GTC Scotland

Comhairle Choitcheann Teagaisg na h-Alba

The General Teaching Council for 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.

Clerwood House

96 Clermiston Road

Edinburgh EH12 6UT

Tel: 0131 314 6000

Fax: 0131 314 6001

E-mail: gtcs@gtcs.org.uk

Website: www.gtcs.org.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Scotland

Scottish Charity Number SC006187

© GTCS 2014

Direct web links

Professional Update:

www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update

Fitness to Teach:

www.gtcs.org.uk/fitness-to-teach

Probation site:

www.in2teaching.org.uk

Latest news:

www.teachingscotland.org.uk

Twitter feed @gtcs