

1 Introduction

GTC Scotland has established a process called Professional Update, the development of which was required by an act of the Scottish Parliament in 2011.

The **key purposes** of Professional Update are:

- to maintain and improve the quality of our teachers as outlined in the appropriate professional standard and to enhance the impact that they have on pupils' learning.
- to support, maintain and enhance teachers' continued professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland.

The **key principles** of Professional Update are that the scheme will ensure that teachers have:

- a responsibility to consider their development needs
- an entitlement to a system of supportive Professional Review and Development (PRD) which can:
 - assist them to identify constructive ways to update their skills;
 - provide access to opportunities which can address those areas identified as requiring support;
 - help them to manage change;
 - offer a focus on ways in which they can enhance their careers.
- confirmation that they have maintained the high standards required of a teacher in Scotland's educational establishments. (The Standard for Full Registration is the baseline standard for all fully registered teachers. It is now normally attained at the end of the Teacher Induction Scheme but is maintained thereafter throughout a teacher's career.)

GTC Scotland also recognises the need to ensure that processes are practicable, are supportive of teachers, are not constrained by bureaucracy, and allow individual teachers the opportunity to identify and meet their future needs.

Professional Update has the following **key stages**:

- Universities apply the principles and criteria of Professional Update to quality assure and to revise aspects of their Professional Review and Development processes relevant to registered teachers as appropriate. This is the focus of a validation event initiated by GTC Scotland.
- Teachers keep their registration details updated annually with GTC Scotland and also update them when any relevant data changes.
- Teachers engage in ongoing professional review processes, self evaluate using appropriate GTC Scotland Professional Standards, engage in professional learning, keep a record of their professional learning and a portfolio of evidence of impact, and discuss the impact of their professional learning with their line manager/senior member of staff, as part of the ongoing Professional Update process.
- Every/...

- Every 5 years, teachers declare their ongoing engagement in this process to GTC Scotland, and their line manager is asked to confirm this. This confirmation is recorded as part of teachers' registration details on the GTC Scotland Register of Teachers.

2 Validation Events

2.1 The Purpose of the Validation

GTC Scotland seeks to ensure that the key purposes, principles and features of the Professional Update process are applied consistently across Scotland for all registered teachers. Each university has its own PRD system, and so validation criteria have been established to clarify how those key purposes, principles and features should be applied to local PRD processes. The criteria are listed in the Appendix.

A validation panel will look at each university's processes by examining documentation and visiting the university to hold a validation event. From the evidence gathered, the panel will decide to what extent the criteria have been met. The panel may then decide to validate fully or with conditions.

Any conditions must be addressed by the university before full validation can be given. Each condition will be discussed with the university and the steps to be taken to meet the condition agreed within an identified time. When this process is complete, full validation will be confirmed in writing by GTC Scotland. From experience in previous validation events, examples of conditions attached have included issues such as the need to further develop monitoring procedures, develop specific processes to support reflection against GTCS Standards and recording systems for professional learning, the absence of and the need to raise awareness of Professional Update amongst teachers.

For both full and conditional validation outcomes, the panel may make recommendations which provide advice on further steps the university should take. Examples of recommendations regarding Professional Update have included how associate staff can access the process.

Further support for universities is available on the GTC Scotland Professional Update web pages. Copies of validation reports and examples of case studies of practice are available. These have been made available by universities who have participated in the Professional Update pilots.

A GTC Scotland officer will meet with or contact the university staff member responsible for Professional Update for a pre-validation briefing at least a month before the validation event as part of the ongoing programme of support. At this meeting the university documentation or links will be mapped onto the validation criteria and this document, with others, will be submitted electronically 10 days in advance of the validation event.

2.2 The Validation Panel

The Validation Panel will be arranged by GTC Scotland. It will normally comprise 2-3 members, 1 drawn from GTC Scotland's Education Committee or Professional Update Working Group, a university representative, and a GTC Scotland officer.

2.3 Location of the Event

The event will be held in the university..

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2.4 Documentation in Advance of the Validation Event

The university will send any relevant documentation electronically to GTC Scotland for distribution to the panel (or to provide online links if the panel can access these) 10 working days before the validation event. The documentation must include the policy on Professional Update and PRD and the mapping of documentation to the validation criteria prepared at the pre-validation meeting. In addition, the following items should be submitted where available, plus any other relevant documents:

- A list of the documents submitted
- A summary of work done to date on PRD and Professional Update
- An implementation plan and timeline for revised PRD and Professional Update
- Staff guides to PRD / Professional Learning Programmes / Professional Update / types of professional learning
- Recording materials for the process (or online links if the panel can access these)
- Statistics regarding the level of engagement in the PRD process in recent years
- Surveys of staff regarding PRD / Professional Learning

Where a university is in the process of revising PRD / Professional Learning policies, both the previous and proposed sets of documentation should be submitted.

2.5 The Programme for the Validation Event

In advance of the event, panel members will have read any documentation sent to them by the university. The event itself will normally take around half a day. Although it may vary according to local circumstances, a typical programme would be:

09:00 - 09:30 Private meeting of the panel
09:30 - 10:30 Meeting with university strategic staff
10:30 - 11:00 Panel discussion
11:00 - 11:45 Panel divides to meet focus groups 1 and 2
11:45 - 13:00 Panel discussion
13:00 - 13:30 Panel gives decision and verbal report to strategic staff

A written report from GTC Scotland will follow, normally within 2 weeks.

2.6 Focus Groups

To gather as wide a range of opinion as possible, it is requested that 2 differently composed focus groups, as appropriate to context, of 6 to 8 staff are invited to meet with panel members:

Group 1 – unpromoted registered teachers/reviewees
Group 2 – promoted registered teachers/reviewers

Other notes regarding focus groups:

- The inclusion of some part-time and/or associate staff would be helpful where possible
- Issues of equality and inclusion should be considered when forming focus groups

Examples of focus group areas for discussion can found in Section 4.

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3 Validation Criteria for Universities

The panel will seek evidence that the validation criteria have been met. Some of the evidence will come from the documentation submitted in advance of the validation event and other evidence may be sought during meetings with university strategic staff and focus groups on the day of the event. The criteria are given in the Appendix.

4 Possible Areas for Discussion with Focus Groups

The areas below give an indication of the kinds of issues that may be raised with focus groups, but the exact nature of the discussion will vary according to local circumstances.

- How information on Professional Update has been distributed.
- Training, briefing, support and other professional learning provided for reviewers and reviewees.
- Types of professional learning opportunities engaged in and how these address professional needs.
- How professional learning is recorded and evidenced.
- How professional learning impacts on self, colleagues and students.
- How self evaluation is engaged in using the GTC Scotland Professional Standards.
- Additional information that would be helpful regarding Professional Update.

5 Possible Areas for Discussion with University Strategic Staff

The areas below give an indication of the kinds of issues that may be raised with local authority managers, but the exact nature of the discussion will vary according to local circumstances.

- Criteria which appear not to have been met from the panel's reading of the documents submitted in advance of the event.
- How policies on PRD and Professional Update link with other relevant university policies.
- Monitoring processes for the engagement of teachers in the process and their perception of its quality.
- Arrangements to engage specific groups of staff such as associate tutors..
- How recording systems align with other paperwork / materials and facilitate sign off.



GTC Scotland: Professional Update

Validation Criteria for Universities – National Rollout

1	Partnership with Employees	Notes	
1.1	The university has engaged with employees in developing the Professional Update process.		
1.2	Consultation with staff associations/unions has taken place at both university and school level as appropriate.		
2	Annual Update		
2.1	The university process includes a procedure to prompt teachers to update their registration details annually with GTC Scotland. (Note – this can be done by registering for a MyGTCS account at http://www.gtcs.org.uk/mygtcs-application-form.aspx)		
3	Ongoing Engagement in PRD and Professional Learning		
3.1	The process is ongoing rather than just an annual interview.		
3.2	The process is based on support and challenge within an atmosphere of trust and collegiality.		
3.3	Teachers take responsibility for their own development and professional learning as lifelong learners.		
3.4	Training, briefing, support and other professional learning on the PRD/PU process is available for both reviewers and reviewees. It includes an emphasis on the use of self-evaluation by reviewees and the use of coaching and mentoring approaches by reviewers.		
3.5	Teachers have opportunities for continuing engagement in professional learning at individual, establishment and national levels which are relevant to their needs, aligned to university targets/ HEA roles as appropriate and the GTC Scotland Professional Standards.		
3.6	University PRD and Professional Update policies, guidelines and related materials are shared with all teachers.		

3.7	Teachers record and evidence their PRD and professional learning activities. The recording system is simple to use and meaningful, and includes a portfolio of evidence of the impact of professional learning.		
3.8	The university process includes teacher engagement in ongoing self-evaluation using the relevant GTC Scotland Professional Standards.		
3.9	All teachers have access to the PRD process. There are specific arrangements for groups such as associate tutors.		
3.10	Quality assurance processes are in place to monitor the engagement of teachers in the process, their perception of the quality of the process, and the impact of the process.		
4	Five Yearly Sign Off		
4.1	Completion of the five yearly sign off is the responsibility of the individual teacher and the line manager.		
4.2	All teachers are provided with guidelines on the completion of the sign off process.		
4.3	Line managers are given guidance to enable them to confidently confirm a teacher's sign off.		
4.4	Line managers and reviewees are aware that competence procedures are not part of the Professional Update process.		
4.5	Line managers and reviewees are aware that there is a need to discuss any potential issues <i>regarding the Professional Update process</i> with teachers early in the cycle.		
5	Appeals and Deferral Processes		
5.1	There is an appeals procedure as part of Professional Update / PRD process and policy and this is shared with all teachers.		
5.2	The appeals process is consistent with existing complaints and grievance procedures.		

5.3	There is a deferral process which is based on GTC Scotland guidelines with clear criteria and lines of communication between all parties.		
6	The Key Purposes of Professional Update		
6.1	The process as a whole is likely to maintain and improve the quality of teachers as outlined in the appropriate professional standard, and to enhance the impact that they have on students' learning.		
6.2	The process as a whole is likely to support, maintain and enhance teachers' continued professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland.		