



## Advice on Professional Review and Development (PRD)

### Advice Note 1

*This advice has been prepared as part of our thinking about Professional Update and how it will operate.*

## 1 Introduction

- (a) **PRD and Professional Update:** Where it operates successfully, professional review and development (PRD), is understood as an entitlement of all teachers which assists them to reflect on their practice and to consider how they can improve their professional skills and knowledge. Consequently, an ongoing process of PRD, supported by opportunities for continuous professional learning for all teachers, should be the core element in the development of a system of professional update.
- (b) **Policies and practices:** Current arrangements, policies and practices which have been developed by employers in association with their staff in respect of PRD are generally helpful. For example, national guidelines on professional review and development and several Council-led schemes already provide a sound basis for effective progress. Consequently, a revised statement can be built around existing good practice; and it seems unlikely that there will be any need for a significant redraft of policy papers.
- (c) **Ethos and Good Practice:** Where professional review and development is conducted well within a supportive context and environment, teachers are able to identify value to them which will have an impact on learning in the classroom and/or which helps them in the development of their professional career.
- (d) **Feedback from recent research:** The work of the National CPD team has identified the ethos of the school, encouragement and entitlement to open discussion, an emphasis on professionalism and an atmosphere of trust as key issues for successful professional review and development. Notwithstanding these positive comments, the team's report also noted that many teachers do not have experience of professional review and development meetings and that others do not value this process. Other reports have suggested that practice in schools is, at best, patchy and that views of professional review and development are often negative. It is therefore important that a more positive and consistent system is developed.

## 2 What is Needed to Develop a Positive System?

The introduction of Professional Update provides an opportunity to review current systems of PRD and to develop stronger and more effective PRD systems for the future.

The key strands identified above are important in planning for the future. The following key development issues should also be secured in local planning:

- An understanding that PRD is part of a **process** of support for teachers rather than just an annual interview.
- The availability of support and challenge within an atmosphere of trust and collegiality.
- An emphasis on teachers taking responsibility for their own improvement as life-long learners.
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- The need for appropriate training for those carrying out reviews, with an emphasis on coaching and mentoring approaches.
- Training for reviewees which emphasises the importance of their preparation for PRD reviews which are built on their own aspirations for the improvement of their professional skills.

### 3 Summary of Advice

The following advice is offered on the development of PRD within Professional Update:

- (a) The introduction of Professional Update provides an opportunity to make more effective use of PRD as a means of developing teacher expertise and professionalism. The success of this will depend on there being a partnership of responsibilities, together with recognition of the rights of the teacher and confirmation of the support available from employers.
- (b) There should be a clear expectation that PRD will be part of a supportive **process** promoted within a positive school culture. This process will include a number of features, including:
  - (i) a teacher's entitlement to an annual review meeting as one element of the support available;
  - (ii) recognition that individual teachers will accept the professional responsibility to lead their own improvement through self-evaluation;
  - (iii) encouragement of active professionalism (as recommended in *Teaching Scotland's Future*) as an aspiration for all teachers.
- (c) PRD is a normal and accepted part of the ongoing development of the professional skills of the teacher. The outcomes of PRD should be both significant to the teacher and have an impact on the learning of children.
- (d) The PRD process should be built on a personal review by the teacher. It should help to identify the professional learning needs of each teacher, the steps they intend taking to meet those needs and the support they might reasonably expect to help them do so.
- (e) The same broad approaches and principles should apply to all posts, including those occupied by the most senior staff. However, discussion would require to be tailored to suit the needs of individuals, the level of post they occupy and the professional standards relevant to those posts. PRD as part of Professional Update would therefore be a mechanism to assist the process of evaluating and meeting the needs of all staff.
- (f) To achieve this cultural change, it is important that emphasis is given to the development of a collegiate, distributive ethos in which trust and motivational support are developed and encouraged. The concept of an entitlement to support should be balanced by each individual's responsibility to seek opportunities for development. However, this process should be delivered in a manner which is not unduly bureaucratic.
- (g) There is a need for suitable programmes of professional learning for those involved in PRD. Training for those carrying out reviews should have an emphasis on coaching and mentoring styles.
- (h) Professional Update aims to improve professional standards rather than to address issues of competence. The PRD process should reflect this principle. Early

identification of support for teachers who are experiencing difficulties should help prevent these becoming more severe. Where problems do become chronic, they should be dealt with through existing competence procedures, drawing, where appropriate, on relevant information from the professional update process.

- (i) A successful system of PRD within Professional Update should help to confirm the high standing of the teaching profession and reinforce public confidence in the teaching profession.