**Inspiring world-class
teaching professionalism**

# Professional Update

# Quality Assurance

January 2021

# Contents

# 1    Introduction

This quality assurance policy outlines our commitment to ensure that ongoing improvement is an integral aspect of the work of GTC Scotland. The aim of this policy is to provide an outline of the quality assurance processes which are in place to support Professional Update (PU). GTC Scotland, through its quality assurance processes, seeks to explore, understand and evaluate the process of Professional Update for teachers and college lecturers. These processes require to be inclusive so that all registrants feel recognised and involved regardless of their educational setting.

# 2    Background

In March 2011, the Scottish Parliament approved the Public Services Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011 which set out the Government's plans for the granting of independent status to GTC Scotland from April 2012. As part of this legislation (Article 31), the Government placed GTC Scotland under a duty to introduce a scheme "*setting out measures to be undertaken for the purposes of allowing it to keep itself informed about the standards of education and training of registered teachers*".

Following a consultation exercise, and in discussions with national partners, GTC Scotland adopted the title "Professional Update" for this process. This sits within GTC Scotland Registration and Standards Rule, Item 6:

> *6    Professional Update*
> *A Registrant must participate in a system of ongoing professional learning and professional review and development in accordance with the terms of GTCS's Guidance on Professional Update*

Professional Update is premised on the impact of an individual's professional learning and how this contributes to the future quality of the education profession. This requires supportive and rigorous professional review and development (PRD) processes which support sustained professional learning.

PU confirms that registrants have maintained high standards and helps to ensure the future quality of professional learning and teaching skills across Scotland's schools, colleges and more widely across the education profession.

Engagement in the PU process has been a legislative requirement of registration for fully registered teachers since August 2014. It is also a requirement for college lecturers on the Register of Teachers.

As with all its functions, GTC Scotland is committed to working in the interest of the public in the development and implementation of the PU process.

# 3    Purposes and Principles

## 3.1    Key Purposes

The key purposes of Professional Update for teachers and college lecturers are:

❖    to maintain and improve the quality of our teachers and college lecturers as outlined in the relevant Professional Standards and to enhance the impact that they have on their learners;

❖ to support, maintain and enhance teachers' and college lecturers' professionalism and reputation in Scotland.

### 3.2 Key Principles

The key principles of Professional Update for teachers and college lecturers are:

❖ a responsibility to consider their own development needs;

❖ an entitlement to a system of supportive professional review and development (PRD) which can:
- − assist them to identify constructive ways to engage in self-evaluation and professional learning to maintain and enhance professional knowledge, skills and practice;
- − provide access to professional learning experiences which can develop and enhance professional practice as well as supporting next steps in professional learning identified through self-evaluation; help them to manage change; and
- − offer support and challenge through coaching and mentoring approaches;

❖ confirmation that they have maintained the high standards required of a teacher, college lecturer, or positions with responsibility for judging the quality of learning and teaching in Scotland's educational establishments.

# 4 Features of Professional Update

Scottish local authority employers, colleges, independent schools, national education organisations and universities have developed local systems to support employees with Full (General) registration through the Professional Update process. These local systems are subject to validation by GTC Scotland, with a further revalidation process five years thereafter.

Professional Update is a continuous process which builds on the key purposes outlined above and which includes the following interlinked features:

❖ An annual update of contact information by registered teachers and college lecturers;
❖ A career-long commitment to, and engagement in, professional learning, including continuing engagement in PRD;
❖ Opportunities for all teachers and college lecturers to engage in ongoing self-evaluation against appropriate GTC Scotland Professional Standards:
- − Professional Standards for Teachers;
- − Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges;
❖ Maintenance of a reflective record of professional learning and associated evidence of impact on thinking and professional actions, discussed with a line manager as part of the PRD process;
❖ 5 yearly confirmation of engagement in the Professional Update process with GTC Scotland.

# 5 The Process of Quality Assurance

### 5.1 Overall process

The quality assurance process should have a clear purpose and should be used to support continual improvement and provide assurance to GTC Scotland and stakeholders to:

❖ understand the experiences of registrants as they engage with and complete the Professional Update process;

- allow GTC Scotland to provide appropriate support and additional guidance for the Professional Update process;
- enable GTC Scotland, local authorities, employers and other stakeholders to have an informed understanding and gain insight into the emerging picture of the impact of Professional Update;
- identify levels of engagement across a range of sectors and identify emerging issues.

The quality assurance of the Professional Update process uses a range of qualitative and quantitative measures that are collected in a planned and managed way to ensure they provide evidence to support improvement.

GTC Scotland will make use of existing data capture as part of registrant records, this includes:

- Registrant data - Internal and External;
- Professional Update Annual Evaluation and five-year longitudinal evaluation;
- Professional Update Revalidation and Validation Reports;
- Effective communications with registrants.

## 5.2    Internal data capture – Registrants data

The internal data captured and held in Atlas, GTC Scotland's management information system, for all registrants is used to provide a comprehensive picture with regard to the number of registrants who have:

- completed the Professional Update Sign Off process;
- an outstanding Professional Update Sign Off;
- requested a Deferral;
- requested Associate Status Registration;
- made a Direct Submission.

## 5.3    External data capture – Registrant data

Further statistical information for those registrants within local authorities who use Gateway(CPD Manager) includes the number of registrants who have:

- completed the Professional Update Sign Off process;
- an outstanding Professional Update Sign Off;
- requested a Deferral;
- requested and Associate Status Registration.

In terms of accessing this information, part of GTC Scotland's validation and re-validation processes for local authorities, independent schools, colleges, universities and national bodies requires that quality assurance systems had been planned and/or were in place to support the effective implementation of Professional Update. It is on this basis GTCS will make any request for data.

## 5.4    Professional Update Annual Evaluation

This evaluation seeks to explore the Professional Update process to:

- understand the potential impact of Professional Update on the Scottish Education system and on the individuals engaged in the process;
- identify and address emerging issues that may challenge, limit or hinder progress;
- promote and further support positive developments and impact.

An online survey is issued to all registrants who complete PU by 31 October of each year. Three separate surveys are distributed: one for reviewees (EEs); one for reviewers (ERs); and one for

those registrants outwith a validated scheme who completed Professional Update by direct submission (DS); with the aim to evaluate their experience.

The survey is structured around the following key areas:

- ❖ brief details to determine the respondent population and essential demographic information;
- ❖ details relating to current knowledge of the PU system and the process of updating details annually;
- ❖ the PRD process:
- ❖ preparation for the PRD meeting,
- ❖ engagement with the GTCS Professional standards (PS) as part of the PU process,
- ❖ the professional discussion;
- ❖ professional learning and using associated evidence of impact;
- ❖ systems used for the PU process;
- ❖ the PU sign off process.

The data from the surveys is analysed and reported holistically to gain a full insight and understanding of the impact and progress of Professional Update.

## 5.5 Professional Update Revalidation Reports

The Revalidation process aims to ensure that the key purposes and principles of PU are still being followed and take account of the GTC Scotland Guidelines *Unlocking the Potential of Professional Review and Development (October 2019)*. The process aims to support quality assurance processes by reviewing educators' experience of PU and PRD.

Revalidation reports are collated and analysed to highlight emergent trends in the commendations, conditions and recommendations. A report will be created to share the learning across the education systems.

## 5.6 Communications

The number of unique views of the Professional Update pages on the GTC Scotland website will also be reported and will inform further developments.

Finally, Twitter is used extensively to communicate with registrants, stakeholders and the public. The metric collected from Twitter will be reported and will inform improvements of PU.

# 6 Timeline for Data Collection

The GTC Scotland Officer who is accountable for PU will lead the collation and analysis of data to create a report for GTC Scotland Council in June each academic session.

| Source | Data collected | Date for data collection |
|---|---|---|
| Internal registrant's data and external registrant's data for those using Gateway(CPD manger) for PU cohort | No. of registrants who have:<br>❖ completed the PU sign-off process;<br>❖ yet to complete PU sign-off process;<br>❖ requested a deferral;<br>❖ with associate registration;<br>❖ made a direct submission | 1 April |
| Website | The number of unique views of the Professional Update pages on the GTC Scotland website | 1 April |
| Twitter | The number of retweets and likes for tweets associated with PU | 1 April |
| Professional Update Annual Evaluation | The survey is structured to collect data in the following areas: The survey includes responses from reviewees, reviewers and those who complete PU by direct submission | 1 May |
| | brief details to determine the respondent population and essential demographic information; | |
| | details relating to current knowledge of the PU system and the process of updating details annually; | |
| | The PRD process:<br>❖ preparation for the PRD meeting,<br>❖ engagement with the GTCS Professional standards (PS) as part of the PU process,<br>❖ the professional discussion; | |
| | professional learning and using associated evidence of impact; | |
| | systems used for the PU process; | |
| Professional Update Revalidation Reports | Validation repots and re-validation reports comment on the following areas:<br>❖ Commendations<br>❖ Conditions<br>❖ Recommendations | On-going |

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# 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.

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