



Policy - Provisional Registration and Probationary Teaching Service

To be enacted 1 August 2023.

This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with The General Teaching Council for Scotland Registration and Standards Rules as they may be amended, updated or substituted from time to time (the “Rules”).

1 Introduction

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) has a unique role in Scottish education. We are the teaching profession’s independent registration and regulation body. We were established to ensure standards for the teaching profession in Scotland. We work to maintain and enhance trust in teaching.

Our role is to register and regulate teachers and college lecturers. We do this by keeping a public register and setting and upholding the standards for entering and remaining in the teaching profession. Our role is set out in law.

To gain registration with GTC Scotland an individual must meet the relevant standard for registration. It is a legal requirement for any teacher employed in a Scottish school to be registered with GTC Scotland.

Registration is the first part of GTC Scotland’s regulatory function. Whether individuals are qualified inside Scotland or outside Scotland this process includes review of applications, determining that an individual is considered to meet the relevant standard for registration and reviewing all application declarations in relation to their character and conduct which includes Disclosure Scotland scheme checks.

In Scotland, teaching in a school or college is a profession. Registration with GTC Scotland is about meeting professional standards. High standards help instil trust in the profession and advance the status of the teaching profession by improving the quality of learning and teaching.

This policy sets out the requirements for moving from Provisional to Full Registration with GTC Scotland.

2 Application of this Policy

This policy applies to:

- Individuals applying for Provisional Registration in the category or categories of registration relating to their qualification and teacher education who have successfully completed a recognised (GTC Scotland accredited) programme of initial teacher education;
- Individuals who have qualifications in routes not accredited by GTC Scotland (for example those gained outside of Scotland) and are seeking entry to the Register of Teachers in Scotland; and,
- Fully registered teachers seeking additional registration in a further category or subject.

This policy therefore applies to all individuals who are seeking or have Provisional Registration as a teacher of school education on the Register of Teachers in Scotland.

Provisional Registration is awarded when an applicant meets the academic requirements for registration, as detailed in the Registration and Standards Rules 2015, but requires to complete a period of teaching service to meet the knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities outlined in the Professional Standard for Full Registration.

3 Registration with GTC Scotland

Qualification is an essential requirement of registration with GTC Scotland. Individuals who undertake a recognised teaching qualification in Scotland achieve Provisional Registration with GTC Scotland following the successful completion of their teaching qualification. This qualification demonstrates that they have met the mandatory Professional Standard for Provisional Registration. A recognised teaching qualification is defined as programme of initial teacher education formally accredited by GTC Scotland.

Registration also requires payment of the appropriate fee(s) as outlined in the current GTC Scotland Fee Policy and membership of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). From August 2023 overseas checks are also required for UK nationals and foreign individuals who have lived outside the United Kingdom for a period of more than six months within the last five years.

Once provisionally registered, individuals are then required to undertake a period of teaching service, commonly referred to as the probationary period, and demonstrate that they meet the mandatory Professional Standard for Full Registration in order to achieve Full Registration with GTC Scotland.

The minimum teaching service that leads to Full Registration for provisionally registered teachers with no pre-existing teaching service is one academic session (or its equivalent: approximately 190 days). This allows provisionally registered teachers the opportunity to gain experience, and further develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities, and ultimately achieve the Professional Standard for Full Registration. This is the benchmark of competence required of all fully registered teachers in Scotland.

It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that the correct information has been submitted in their application for registration.

4 Applying for Registration with a Teaching Qualification not Accredited by GTC Scotland

Individuals with qualifications not accredited by GTC Scotland, such as those qualified outside of Scotland, must present evidence of their qualifications and teaching experience as part of their registration application. GTC Scotland assesses each application on an individual basis.

Possible outcomes of our assessment, where individuals satisfy registration requirements set out in our Rules are:

- Full Registration - where applicants are assessed to fully meet GTC Scotland's Professional Standard for Full Registration);
- Provisional Registration - where applicants are assessed to meet our Professional Standard for Provisional Registration, but do not meet the Professional Standard for

Full Registration as, for example, teaching service requirements have not yet been met;

- Provisional (Conditional) Registration - where the Professional Standard for Provisional Registration has been met but a shortfall in qualification requirements has been identified;
- Refusal of registration - where the evidence presented does not meet GTC Scotland's standards and/or registration requirements.

Where an individual is assessed as being provisionally registered with GTC Scotland they will be required to complete teaching service in order to demonstrate that they meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration. The purpose of this period of teaching service, sometimes referred to as a probationary period, is for an individual to demonstrate that they have developed the expected knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities of what it means to be a teacher in Scotland, as outlined in the mandatory Professional Standard for Full Registration.

5 Additional Professional Registration

Additional Professional Registration allows individuals who already hold Full Registration in a category or categories of registration to add additional subjects or categories of registration.

In order to become fully registered in an additional subject or category of registration individuals are provisionally registered and required to undertake teaching service as set out in our information for Registration in an Additional Subject/Category.

To obtain Provisional Registration in an additional secondary education subject category, individuals must meet the academic requirements for registration in the additional subject.

To obtain Provisional Registration in a different category (primary to secondary or secondary to primary) applicants must complete a Professional Learning Plan and meet the Professional Standard for Provisional Registration in the subject and category in which registration is sought. This must be done with the support of a headteacher or other appropriate GTC Scotland registrant to oversee and assure the quality of the professional learning experience.

To obtain Provisional Registration in an additional secondary education Modern Foreign Language, meeting minimum foreign residency requirements must also be evidenced, as set out in the *Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland*.

Individuals awarded Provisional Registration for Additional Professional Registration are also required to complete a period of teaching service before being awarded Full Registration in the additional subject/category.

6 Achieving Full Registration

A provisionally registered teacher, where this is the only registration held, is required to complete a period of teaching service often referred to as probation, with the purpose of demonstrating that they meet the knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities outlined in the Professional Standard for Full Registration.

Teaching service must align with the individual's Provisional Registration category. That means, provisionally registered teachers of Primary Education must demonstrate that they meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration in the context of primary education.

Provisionally registered teachers of secondary subject education must demonstrate that they meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration in their registration subject category within a secondary education context.

Teacher service in order to achieve the Professional Standard for Full Registration can be undertaken in one of the following two ways:

- **The Teacher Induction Scheme**

The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) is a Scottish Government scheme which provides a guaranteed one year, full time placement to every eligible provisionally registered teacher with from one of Scotland's higher education institutes (HEIs). This route is therefore only available to provisionally registered teachers who qualified in Scotland. Eligibility for TIS is determined by the HEI. TIS is a structured programme of induction to the teaching profession which, provides: a minimum and maximum class time commitment, set time for professional learning and personal development and access to support throughout.

The Scottish Government, in conjunction with partners (including the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities), has set the employment and other conditions that apply to TIS. TIS is a training placement and is not indicative of future employment. Provisionally registered teachers who qualify in Scotland can choose to undertake this scheme or opt out and take the Flexible Route. TIS is not available for teachers who qualified outside Scotland. GTC Scotland administers some aspects of this scheme as a contracted service.

- **The Flexible Route**

The Flexible Route (FR) is an alternative way to complete teaching service in order to achieve the Professional Standard for Full Registration. Individuals who have withdrawn from or opted out of TIS, are not eligible to join TIS, or want to complete their probationary teaching service somewhere other than a Scottish local authority school (such as an independent school in Scotland) follow FR. Individuals qualified outside Scotland take this route as do fully registered teachers seeking to add further registrations. The responsibility for securing a position or placement to complete teaching service where FR is followed rests with the individual, not GTC Scotland or any other person.

7 Provisional Registration Teaching Service Requirements

Types of Teaching Service

To meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration, provisionally registered teachers require to undertake teaching service that aligns with their category of Provisional Registration.

- **Primary Education:** An individual who is qualified to teach the entirety of the primary education curriculum which in Scotland is referred to as 'broad and general' and usually applies in primary education contexts.
- **Secondary Subject Education:** An individual who is qualified to teach their specialist subject as part of the secondary curriculum which in Scotland consists of both a 'broad and general' and 'senior phase' of education and usually applies in secondary education contexts.

GTC Scotland must be satisfied that the type of teaching service provides a reasonable opportunity to meet the competencies set out in the Professional Standard for Full Registration in the context of the category of registration.

Place of Teaching Service

The teaching service of provisionally registered teachers must be carried out in an educational establishment. GTC Scotland interprets “educational establishment” as meaning:

- a school providing primary or secondary education (whether independent, grant-aided, self-governing or local authority);
- a local authority school providing early learning and childcare (ELC);
- an independent, grant-aided or self-governing school providing ELC in which allocation is to teach a timetabled ELC class;
- a local authority school providing additional support needs education;
- an independent, grant-aided or self-governing school providing additional support needs education.

In the main, it is expected that individuals with Provisional Registration will teach in an educational establishment that directly aligns with their provisional category of registration. For instance, individuals with Provisional Registration in Primary Education largely teach primary education in primary schools. It is recognised however that in some circumstances, particularly in educational transitional phases, there requires to be some flexibility. In these circumstances provisionally registered teachers will be asked to seek confirmation from a registered headteacher that their teaching experience has led to an assessment that they have met the Professional Standard for Full Registration in their category of registration.

In normal circumstances, teaching service requires to be completed through face-to-face teaching. However, where necessary, a maximum of 45% of the teaching service teaching timetable may be taught remotely. A minimum of 55% must be face-to face teaching.

Length of Teaching Service

The length of teaching service for a provisionally registered teacher with no previous teaching experience to be assessed to meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration is a minimum of one school (academic) year of approximately 190 days to a maximum of three years.

An exemption to this requirement applies to those qualified outside of Scotland or those qualified in Scotland who have been teaching outside Scotland. Where individuals with these circumstances meet the requirements for Provisional Registration there is a requirement to undertake teaching experience in order to be declared as meeting the Professional Standard for Full Registration by a registered GTC Scotland teacher, usually a GTC Scotland registered headteacher or school leader. This process is in place to ensure the maintenance of high standards in Scotland's teaching profession and recognises that for some individuals who qualified outside Scotland, teaching experience may not have aligned with their teaching qualification. In such circumstances, individuals must gain a declaration from a GTC Scotland registered school leader that they have been assessed to meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration in their category of registration. There is no minimum time period for this assessment and declaration. However, in circumstances where the existing teaching experience is less than one school (academic) year, it is expected that the total teaching experience gained in and out of Scotland be a minimum of one full year of teaching before such a declaration is provided.

In the case of any individual who has made a successful subsequent registration application (see section 5) and have been re-registered as a provisionally registered teacher, the length of teaching service to be assessed to meet the Professional Standard for Full Registration is a minimum of one school (academic) year of approximately 190 days to a maximum of three years. This time period applies from the date of their re-registration.

8 Time Limit for Achieving Full Registration

If you have successfully applied to a Fitness to Teach Panel (or, historically, the Disciplinary Sub-Committee or Professional Standards Panel) to have your Provisional Registration restored to you in any category of registration (see Subsequent Registration Applications section below for some examples of when this may be required), the time limit within which you must have completed your probationary service and obtained Full Registration will align with the requirements set out above.

If you believe that there are exceptional circumstances preventing your achievement of Full Registration within the time limit that applies to you in terms of the above, please notify GTC Scotland of these circumstances in full in writing and an extension of the time limit expiry date will be considered. You may make no more than two applications for such an extension. GTC Scotland's decision on these matters will be final.

If your registration has been removed because your time limit has expired, in accordance with the Rules, you have a right to ask for that removal decision to be reviewed. Please note from the Rules that you must have grounds to ask for such a review – in summary, these must be either that GTC Scotland has failed to act in accordance with the Rules, or has made an error in law or in fact, that has had a significant impact on the decision made.

If:

- a. your name has been removed from the Register because your time limit has expired; or
- b. your name has been removed from the Register for any other reason (for example, non-payment of the registration fee) and, in the meantime, the applicable time limit has expired,

and you then wish your name to be re-registered, you must make a “subsequent registration application” which will be subject to the provisions set out in part 6 above.

9 Recommendations for Full Registration

In order to be eligible for Full Registration at the end of the required period of teaching service, GTC Scotland must be satisfied that:-

- a. Progress through the period of teaching service has been appropriately recorded and monitored through GTC Scotland’s Probationer Profile System (or an equivalent method or system that has been approved by GTC Scotland) or in circumstances outlined in section 4 a declaration is logged.
- b. A Final Profile has been submitted (in the manner required by GTC Scotland) by a headteacher or school leader who holds full GTC Scotland registration recommending Full Registration because they are satisfied that the individual has met the Professional Standard for Full Registration. Any such recommendation must follow a face to face observation of teaching, in the category of registration relating to the individual’s Provisional Registration, by that headteacher (or approved registered individual) in whose educational establishment the provisionally registered individual has taught.

10 Subsequent Registration Applications

If you submit an application for registration subsequent to your Provisional Registration having been cancelled by order of a Fitness to Teach Panel (or, if this occurred in the past, a Professional Standards Panel) or as a result of a time limit having expired (see part 8 above), an application must be made in the form required by GTC Scotland. Subject to you being otherwise eligible for registration in accordance with the criteria set out in the Rules, the application must then be considered by a Fitness to Teach Panel at a hearing. The Panel’s role in considering any such application is to determine whether or not you are now fit to teach meaning that your registration may be restored. The Panel will hear submissions from you in making its decision and will expect to be provided appropriate evidence in support of the application.

Where your registration was cancelled by order of a Fitness to Teach Panel (or, if this occurred in the past, a Professional Standards Panel), the reasons why this decision was made will be relevant to the Panel in making its decision about whether you are now fit to teach but it must be emphasised that a subsequent registration application is not an appeal from, or review of, the original findings and determination. Panels will therefore not “go behind” the original finding and determination and, in making its decision, will instead focus on:

- The competence matters that led to the cancellation of Provisional Registration and the reasons given by the original Panel for the decision;

- Whether you accept and show insight into those matters;
- Whether the matters are capable of being resolved and, if so, whether you have done so or shown the willingness and ability to do so; and
- What steps you have taken to keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date.

Where you have submitted a subsequent registration application because your time limit has expired (see part 4 above), the Panel's focus will principally be on the last bullet above.

The Panel should be provided appropriate confirmatory evidence with regards to the last two bullet points listed above in particular.

If you are re-registered following the hearing, you will be required to complete a further period of probationary service in accordance with this policy. This period of probationary service will be subject to the terms of this policy. In order to be granted Full Registration, you will need to meet the requirements described in this policy and set out in the Rules.

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