Shetland Islands Council

Policy for Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Children’s Services

Children’s Service (Schools) Approach
February 2012

Appendix 3 Amended September 2012
Appendix 8 Amended June 2015
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1. **Introduction**

The Children’s Service (schools) Quality Assurance Policy is set within the legislative framework (Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000), with the purpose of assuring that the Service is achieving its aims.

Children’s Service’s (schools) vision and aims are:

2. **Vision: Outstanding Outcomes for All**

3. **Aims**

   To be responsible for the creation and promotion of policy and direction for the whole Service, which takes into account local and global culture and values.

   To provide opportunities for staff and pupils to learn continuously, and to become confident in their work.

   To provide vigorous, effective Quality Assurance, which acknowledges and encourages self-evaluation, with a commitment to improvement.

   To work together as a Service, and in partnership with other organisations, to be successful and effective, thus ensuring outstanding outcomes for all.

4. **Rationale**

   All staff and service users share a responsibility for Quality Assurance and continuous improvement.

   This policy briefly outlines the principles of Quality Assurance. The detail of Quality Assurance practice is described in the appendices.

5. **Principles of Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

   The following statements outline the principles that underpin quality assurance and continuous improvement:

   1. That any quality assurance processes are manageable and proportionate.

   2. That quality assurance focuses on our delivery of the six entitlements for all children and young people as appropriate to the stage of the school.

   3. That quality assurance is embedded in schools’ own self-evaluation, valuing staff working together to support improvement.

   4. That quality assurance processes from outwith the school are thorough and rigorous and contribute to the school’s self evaluation and school improvement.

   5. That quality assurance at a local level reflects the thinking of education at a national level, with all parties being up to date with information found on the HMie website: [http://www.hmie.gov.uk/AboutUs/InspectionResources/](http://www.hmie.gov.uk/AboutUs/InspectionResources/).
6. **Appendices:**

1. Legislative and Planning framework (quote from Standards in Schools Act and Single Outcome Agreement).


4. Quality Assurance Visits by Quality Improvement Officers (description of Attainment, Self Evaluation, Improvement Planning and Focussed Visits and a brief description of reporting on these and feedback).

5. Improvement Team Visits.

5a Monitoring Proforma.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of school staff and central staff during Quality Improvement Visits.

7. Complaints.

8. Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development of Teaching Staff.
Appendix 1

Legislative and Planning Framework

The duties of a local education authority in respect of assuring quality in its schools and its other educational establishments are part of the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000, which sets out the following relevant legislative requirements of a local authority and the schools it manages.

The Local Authority must:

- endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education with a view to raising standards of education;

- prepare and publish (after consultation) an “annual statement of education improvement objectives”. This should include (a) the ways in which the authority will seek to involve parents (b) the ways in which they will encourage equal opportunities;

- ensure that each school has a development plan which takes account of the objectives in the authority’s annual statement of education improvement objectives, shows wide consultation and sets objectives for the school;

- ensure that there is a report as to what was done, during those twelve months, in implementation of the plan;

- define and publish measures and standards of performance for the schools managed by them;

- from time to time review the quality of education which its schools provides;

- take such steps as appear to be appropriate to remedy a matter if it concludes in a review that a school is not performing satisfactorily.

Planning Framework

Shetland’s Community Planning Framework is now an integral part of Shetland’s Single Outcome Agreement. The Single Outcome Agreement encapsulates Shetland’s response to the commitments in the Concordat (the partnership agreement with the Scottish Government) and includes the policy development work to be undertaken by all lead agencies. This, in turn, is reflected in Shetland Islands Council’s Corporate Plan and the Children’s Services Improvement Plan.

Key priorities and targets for Children’s Services are now determined through the indicators within the Single Outcome Agreement.

The shared vision statement in Shetland’s Single Outcome Agreement is that:

“We shall work together for a future that’s better and brighter. In particular we aim to create a secure livelihood, look after our stunning environment and care well for our people and our culture.”
The agreed shared national and local outcomes are:

- **Wealthier and Fairer** – Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that.
- **Smarter** – Expand opportunities for Scots to succeed from nurture through to lifelong learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements.
- **Healthier** – Help people sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.
- **Safer and Stronger** – Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.
- **Greener** – Improve Scotland’s natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it.

Annually schools are advised by Children’s Services, which of these priorities they should take account of in determining the priorities for their School Improvement Plan.
Curriculum for Excellence: Entitlements

Children’s Services, in its aims, is committed to providing quality assurance which evaluates the standards of Children’s Services delivery and drives continuous improvement.

The focus of this work in education should be on improving the experience of the learner, and ensuring the highest quality learning and teaching for all. In this respect the Children’s Service’s (schools) policy on quality assurance also takes account of the national entitlements for all learners in Curriculum for Excellence, Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching:

1. Every child and young person is entitled to experience a curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18;
2. Every child and young person is entitled to experience a broad general education;
3. Every young person is entitled to experience a senior phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications;
4. Every child and young person is entitled to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing;
5. Every child and young person is entitled to personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence can provide;
6. Every young person is entitled to support in moving into a positive and sustained destination.

Rigorous, evidenced, self-evaluation using appropriate quality indicators is at the heart of directing and securing such improvement. Evaluative judgements about the quality of education provided should be based on evidence of outcomes, qualitative as well as quantitative. Self-evaluation must involve gathering the views of all stakeholders and involving them in the process of improvement to ensure their needs are met.

Improvement is most effective when it is part of a shared enterprise, with agreement about targets and outcomes, and expectations that improvement work will directly impact on the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom which in turn impacts upon the attainment and achievements of the pupils in the school.
Planning for Improvement: The School Improvement Plan and the School Standards and Quality Report

Deadline for Submission and Format

The final Improvement Plan and the Standards and Quality Report should be ready by 30 September each year. A copy of each should be submitted to Children’s Services by that date. They may be presented as separate documents or as one single document.

The Improvement Plan

The guidance which follows is drawn from Part Four of ‘Journey to Excellence’ (HMIe 2007), which is entitled ‘Planning For Improvement’. This document provides clear guidance on the content of a School Improvement Plan. The guidance below is taken either directly from, or is written in, the spirit of the document.

The School Improvement Plan is the key driver for all development activity being undertaken by a school. It will be for schools to decide exactly how developments are taken forward however there is an expectation that the contents of the plan be achieved within the timescales stated in within the plan.

Schools are likely to have a planning pro forma in place for recording the outcomes of their planning discussions and their plans for improvement. If this documentation works, there may be no reason to change it. If it is too lengthy, detailed or complicated you should slim it down and limit it to the essential elements. Two sample School Improvement Plan templates are attached.

Essential Elements of an Improvement Plan

- The school’s clearly stated and aspirational vision and values, developed by, and shared with, children and young people, parents and those with whom the school works in partnership.
- A small number of improvement priorities, informed by facts, intelligence or research and expressed as outcomes for learners. The priorities will have been identified through the school’s self-evaluation process. The number of priorities must be realistic and achievable.
- Outcomes which focus on learning and achievement, are based on evidence and data, and are observable and, if possible, measurable. Anticipated impact for pupils should be clearly identified within the plan.
- Clearly identified responsibilities for implementation linked to named individuals and/or teams.
- Details of resources requirements, staff time, estimated costs, specialist support etc.
- Clear timescales extending to more than one school session, as necessary, and with milestones and deadlines.
- Measures of success which include performance data, quality indicators and stakeholders’ views.

The planning process goes from the high strategic level – the improvement plan itself – all the way to the professional development plans for individual staff.
Ensuring Impact

After you have taken the action you have planned, you will need to evaluate its overall success, using the relevant quality indicators. In this way you can measure progress. Evaluation involves analysing performance data, sampling people’s views and observing directly the quality of practice to determine what difference you have made.

The outcomes evaluated will be outcomes for children. These activities are likely to be in detailed action plans, and are means to more important ends: improvements in the learning and achievements of pupils.

Evaluation is a dynamic process which goes on throughout the year, not at set times. If you notice difficulties, you will need to take appropriate action, if necessary adjusting your plan.

The ‘maintenance agenda’

The ‘maintenance agenda’ is the normal work of the school, your school’s important day-to-day business. Sustaining the improvements already made will become the job of named members of staff or teams, and be built into their remits and ongoing responsibilities. Your arrangements for staff review and your ongoing self evaluation will keep a check on whether quality is maintained.

Whilst work or tasks considered as maintenance are clearly essential to the smooth running of the school these should not feature in the improvement plan. It is important however that time and resources required for such maintenance should be considered when deciding whether the improvement plan priorities are achievable.

Two blank sample School Improvement Action Plans are attached here. Further completed Plans can be found on Glow and on the Shetland Islands Council Education webpage.

The Standards and Quality Report

The key national advisory document in this area is again Part Four in HMIE’s series of publications ‘Journey to Excellence’, entitled ‘Planning for Improvement’. This document does not refer specifically to the Standards and Quality Report in the same way that it does the Improvement Plan. However it does emphasise the approach that is required in order to produce an effective standards and quality report. That approach should be an evaluative one. Evaluation should be carried out using the relevant quality indicators from How Good Is Our School? and should be based on valid evidence.

Gathering valid evidence will involve: “analysing performance data, sampling people’s views and observing directly the quality of practice to determine what difference you have made.” (Journey to Excellence, Part 4) In terms of how the evidence can be gathered systematically, How Good Is Our School? (Appendix 6) suggests that the individual activities involved in routine monitoring are linked to quality indicators, thus making it simpler to pick out evidence for the report.

‘Planning For Improvement’ goes on to emphasise that: “The outcomes evaluated will be outcomes for children. They will not relate to the writing of policies or the production of teaching materials.”
The following paragraphs provide more detail on how the Standards and Quality Report should be constructed. They draw on advice from HMIe given in their publication ‘Advice for schools and education authorities on school-based standards and quality reports’ (HMIe, 1999).

**Purpose**

Standards and Quality Reports allow a school to report its performance briefly and succinctly and to evaluatively report to a range of audiences such as:

- parents;
- the Parent Council;
- staff;
- pupils;
- the local community;
- the education authority;
- others, including HMIe.

**Criteria**

In writing Standards and Quality Reports, the following criteria should be borne in mind.

Standards and quality reports should be:

- part of the process of self-evaluation and planning for improvement;
- periodic and in line with the development planning cycle, linked to appropriate self-evaluation of all the key areas over a three-year cycle;
- concise - perhaps no more than 2500 words;
- easy to read - appropriate for a wide audience;
- well laid out;
- consistently evaluative;
- descriptive when necessary;
- informative about trends in performance;
- written to provide brief details of the school's context;
- focused on evaluations of performance in the nine key areas: key performance outcomes; impact on learners; impact on staff; impact on the community; delivery of education; policy development and planning; management and support of staff; partnerships and resources; and leadership.

**Structure**

This section outlines a recommended structure for a full standards and quality report which would ensure that it meets the criteria specified above:

- background information;
- statement of school aims;
- priorities and targets from previous report;
- how evidence was gathered;
- key performance outcomes;
- impact on learners;
- impact on staff;
- impact on the community;
- delivery of education: this should be organised to report on the delivery and impact of the six entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence;
- policy development and planning;
• management and support of staff; partnerships and resources;
• leadership;
• other achievements;
• priorities and targets for the coming session.

It is important that the evaluations in the report should be concise. The overall length of the report should not normally exceed 2500 words.

Content

It is important that statements about performance in the nine key areas are consistently evaluative and only descriptive when necessary.

Photos contained in the Standards and Quality Report should be saved in jpg format. This makes it easier to make use of them in the authority Standards and Quality Report.
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Quality Assurance Visits

A programme of Quality Assurance visits to schools will be agreed and arranged by Children’s Services (schools) and Head Teachers. Quality Assurance of the work of Shetland’s Schools is a joint responsibility and will build upon good professional relationships and a commitment to systematic self-evaluation.

Quality Assurance Visits to schools will consist of two types:

1) Focussed visits by individual Quality Improvement Officers to their allocated schools;

2) Quality Assurance Team Visits to individual schools.

The purposes of these visits are to:

- moderate collaboratively the schools’ own approaches to self-evaluation and, where appropriate, to enhance their capacity to improve;
- identify and disseminate good practice;
- identify and address development needs;
- audit specific aspects of the work of schools across the local authority;
- monitor the implementation and impact of Shetland Islands Council policy;
- inform policy making across Children’s Services;
- foster good two-way communication between schools and the central staff of Children’s Services.

Members of the Quality Improvement team will keep in close touch with schools to promote good practice and collaborative working. Prior to each focussed visit, an appropriate schedule of activities will be agreed. Information gathered during the visit will help over time to build a profile of each school.

Focussed Visits

The school’s Quality Improvement Officer will carry out four Quality Assurance visits to their schools each year. Each term a circular with guidance will be issued on the particular aspect of the visit. These will cover the following topics:

- Term 1 – A focus identified as relevant to Children’s Services
- Term 2 – Attainment and Achievement
- Term 3 – Self-evaluation
- Term 4 – Improvement Planning

Focussed Visits will be a standing item on the agenda of Head Teachers’ meetings. This will be to:

- agree the theme for the focussed visit in the first term;
- share good practice arising from visits;
- discuss the action points from the outcomes of visits;
- report progress on action points from previous visits.
Almost all of the visits will involve the Quality Improvement Officers meeting with groups of staff and pupils and familiarising themselves with learning and teaching. Head Teachers will be expected to liaise with their Quality Improvement Officer to facilitate this.

The Quality Improvement Officer and the Head Teacher will share the responsibility to record the findings from the visit on a predetermined visit form. This may be in the form of a template (the themed visit) or a visit form which records good practice and points for action. In all cases consideration of appropriate reflective questions that are adapted from “How Good is Our School?” Part 3 will provide the basis for the visit. In each case a summary of good practice and pertinent action points will be shared with all Head Teachers.

**Term 2. Focussed Support Visit**

**QI 1.1: Improvements in Performance**

Each year during Term 2 Quality Improvement Officers will visit schools to consider the range of evidence that supports QI 1.1: Improvements in Performance. They will consider attainment and achievement, with an emphasis on tracking of pupil progress.

Quality Improvement Officers will view the evidence that demonstrates how schools are improving performance in pupils’ attainment and achievement both in the Broad General Education and in the Senior Phase.

There will be an expectation that the school has robust procedures for:

- tracking the coverage of outcomes and experiences;
- tracking individual pupil progression of assessment of the outcomes and experiences;
- setting individual targets in and monitoring progression in literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing;
- individual learning planning which demonstrate progression;
- pupil profiles at P7 and S3;
- moderating activities which demonstrate impact on future learning and teaching;
- appropriately using standardised testing (optional: a decision for each school), for example, PIPS at P1, P3, P5 and P7, to provide additional comparative information;
- collecting and recording evidence of wider achievement of pupils individually and as a school.

Quality Improvement Officers will also discuss statistical information with regard to pupil achievement in national qualifications in the Senior Phase.

**Term 3: Focussed Support Visit**

**QI 5.9: Improvement through Self Evaluation**

Each year during Term 3 Quality Improvement Officers will visit schools to consider the range of evidence that supports QI 5.9 “Improvement through self evaluation”. Quality Improvement Officers will view the evidence that demonstrates how schools are using self-evaluation to decide the priorities for school improvement on a rolling three year basis.

They will discuss a range of evidence related to self-evaluation in the following areas:

- feedback from parents;
- staff views;
- views of pupils;
• feedback from partners;
• school Quality Assurance processes;
• data, for example standardised testing, qualifications;
• previous Improvement Plan priorities;
• feedback from Quality Improvement Officers (focussed and team visits).

**Term 4: Focussed Support Visit**

**QI 6.3: Planning for Improvement**

Each year during Term 4 Quality Improvement Officers will visit schools to consider the range of evidence that supports 6.3: “Planning for Improvement.”

Quality Improvement Officers will discuss the following areas:

• progress towards the current session’s priorities;
• impact of the developments;
• priorities for next session’s improvement plan, based on self-evaluation discussed during last term’s visit;
• the structure of the improvement plan;
• the involvement of school staff and partner organisations in writing the action plans.

At the end of each visit a summary of the main findings will be produced highlighting good practice and agreed points for action.

Please also see Appendix 3 Planning for Improvement: The School Improvement Plan and the School Standards and Quality Report.
Improvement Team Visits

Purpose

To validate a school’s self evaluation, through support and challenge, in order to assist the school to secure continuous improvement.

Process

The Quality Improvement Team will identify schools to visit. The main considerations will be proportionality and support for schools.

Personnel

The lead officer will be the Quality Improvement Officer for the school, who will identify the appropriateness of, and the number of, team members (the Quality Assurance team). These will be drawn from managers within the service and will nearly always include a Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher.

Activities Prior To The Visit

All members of the team will read and discuss the following documentation prior to the visit:

- current and previous year’s School Improvement Plans;
- current and previous year’s Standards and Quality Reports;
- details about the school’s stages of education, pupil numbers and staff from the annual return;
- any other relevant information.

From their discussions the team members will identify possible areas of focus and activities which will allow the team to find evidence of performance.

The Quality Improvement Officer will discuss and agree these with the Head Teacher. Where possible, arrangements will be made to give staff the opportunity to meet the team and ask questions about the process prior to the visit.

Activities During The Visit

Activities will be proportionate to each school and are likely to include:

- discussions with the Head Teacher, management team and staff focussed on the school’s self evaluation;
- engaging with pupils;
- talking with the Parent Council Chair and/or a group of parents;
- familiarisation with learning and teaching;
- reading relevant documentation;
- professional dialogue.
Familiarisation with learning and teaching could include the following:

- assemblies;
- cross-curricular activities;
- outdoor education;
- group work;
- extra-curricular activities;
- classroom visits;
- classroom observations;
- and any other suitable activity agreed with the head teacher.

In the event of a classroom observation the following principles will apply:

- It will be within the context of teaching and learning;
- The purpose, method and timing of the observation will be agreed between the classroom teacher, head teacher and observer before any observation takes place;
- An agreement will be reached beforehand regarding when the feedback will be provided and in what form;
- Any notes taken or records of the observation made will be shared with the classroom teacher as previously agreed and will not form part of the written report;
- Observers will be selected from the Quality Improvement Team; they will be currently employed in a school and qualified in the sector they are observing, i.e. nursery, primary or secondary. This will normally be a head teacher or depute-head teacher of a school that includes the sector being observed.

Framework for Evaluations

The following Quality Indicators (from HGIOS 3) are used as a framework for evaluations, but are not considered in isolation. They will be cross-referenced to each other according to the evidence.

1.1 Improvements in performance.
2.1 Learners’ experiences.
5.1 Curriculum.
5.3 Meeting learners’ needs.
5.9 Improvement through self evaluation.

All visits should consider collegiality, Continuing Professional Development and its impact, assessment and moderation within and across schools and clusters.

Feedback

Detailed verbal feedback on findings followed up by a one-page feedback which bullet-points the strengths and main points for action.

The written report should be sent to the school within two weeks of the visit.

Follow-Up

The Quality Improvement Officer will make a follow-up visit to the school one year later to view and discuss evidence of improvements as a result of the visit.
## Monitoring Proforma

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**Focus:**

**Prompts:** learning climate and teaching approaches, curriculum content, teacher-pupil interaction, clarity and purposefulness of dialogue, judgements made in the course of teaching, equality and fairness, lesson aims shared with pupils, explanations and instructions, skilled use of questions, pace, resources, praise and feedback, use of ICT, expectations of staff and pupils, pupil involvement in learning/decision making, behaviour and motivation of pupils, homework, pupil responsibility, independent learning skills, group/collaborative working.

**Seven principles:** breadth, depth, personalisation and choice, progression, relevance, coherence, challenge and enjoyment.

**Description:** I observed...

**Questions asked of the teacher during post-class discussion:**

**Responses to the questions:**

**Impact:**
Roles and Responsibilities of School Staff and Central Staff during Quality Improvement Visits

Quality Assurance is the responsibility of all within the service, and a collegiate approach is always encouraged. For the sake of clarity, the roles and responsibilities of the following staff or groups of staff are outlined. The points are not exhaustive or prescriptive, but provide an indication of where responsibilities lie.

Executive Manager, Quality Improvement

Focussed Visits:

- To work with the central Quality Improvement Team and Head Teachers to decide the focus of the officer visit during Term 1;
- To consider the feedback from the four focussed visits per year and agree verbal and written feedback;
- To agree channels to communicate the summary of findings and action points to Head Teachers.

Improvement Visits:

- To work with the central Quality Improvement Team to decide the schools that will be visited each session;
- To agree the team members for each visit;
- To support the officers when required at any stage of the visit.

General:

To maintain an overall picture of school improvement and feed points for action into the Children’s Service’s annual cycle of self evaluation and improvement planning.

Quality Improvement Officers

Focussed Visits:

- To work with Head Teachers to identify suitable times and dates for focussed visits;
- To plan the nature of the visits and involvement of school staff and pupils with the Head Teacher;
- To discuss, agree and record findings and points for action;
- To provide an overall summary of general findings and points for action for the schools that they visit;
- To discuss channels to communicate the summary of findings and action points to Head Teachers.

Improvement Visits:

- To work with the central Quality Improvement Team to decide the schools that will be visited each session;
- To agree the team members for each visit;
To work with Head Teachers and the team members to identify suitable times, dates and a schedule of activities for the team visit, planning the involvement of school staff, pupils and parents with the Head Teacher;

To ensure that their team members have appropriate pre-reading documents;

To discuss, agree and record findings and points for action with Head Teachers.

**Head Teachers, Deputes, School Management Teams and Principal Teachers**

The collegiate approach should encourage a culture where central staff work with school staff to identify areas within the school’s self-evaluation that they would like to share with the team.

Head Teachers, Deputes and School Management Teams have a responsibility to work with the staff, pupils and parents in their school to communicate the aims and activities of the focussed visits and the team visits.

Where class visits are planned these may be joint visits between a member of the school management team and a member of the quality team.

They also have a responsibility to make themselves available, where possible, to discuss evidence with the team members.

Each focussed visit and each team visit will be different, depending on the agreed focus. However, it will have similar features of practice. (see Appendix 5 Improvement Team Visits).

**Teachers**

Teachers have a responsibility to share their practice and demonstrate pupil learning during focussed and team visits. In this way teachers are able to demonstrate a philosophy where quality assurance is a shared responsibility, and self evaluation is the key to quality improvement.

**Support Staff**

Support staff in schools may be asked to assist with support services for the visiting team, and may be asked to take part in group discussions. For the most part they will be expected to carry out their normal duties. They should be aware of the visits and any improvements that may involve them.

**Pupils**

Pupils may be required to take part in observed group work and in group discussions. They may be asked to show some of their work to team members.

**Parents**

The Parent Council Chair, members of the Parent Council and members of the Parent Forum may be asked to meet with a team member in order to discuss parental involvement and the work of the Parent Council and any other points that arise.
Complaints

Introduction

This policy is the complaints procedure for any concerns raised about a school and the delivery of school education by Children’s Services.

It is essential that all complaints are dealt with promptly and courteously and that complainants are listened to.

The aim of the complaints procedure is to deal with parental concerns informally and at the earliest possible stage.

Roles and Responsibilities

In order for Children's Services (schools) to deal with complaints effectively, it is essential that everyone involved understands their roles and responsibilities within the Complaints Procedure.

When a complaint is received by the central Children’s Services (schools), whether by telephone, in writing, e-mail or verbally, the details should be passed to the Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) who is linked with that school as soon as possible.

The QIO should always direct the complainant to the Head Teacher in the first instance, who should always be the first point of contact for parental concerns and complaints.

1. **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher, as manager of the school, is responsible for the effective running of the school. As such, he/she has the responsibility for dealing with parental concerns – this will usually involve, for example, explaining reasons for decisions. There may be occasions when a parent will disagree with the school and will wish to take their concerns further. In such cases the Head Teacher should ensure that the parent understands the Complaints Procedure and encourage the parent to contact the school’s Quality Improvement Officer to discuss the matter. The Head Teacher will assist them with contact details.

2. **Quality Improvement Officer**

The overall role of the QIO is to support and challenge schools – this extends to all areas of school life and their role within this procedure is to try to deal with parental concerns at an informal level that maintains good relationships.

When a concern is referred to the QIO, he/she should contact both the parent and the Head Teacher to try to find a way to resolve the situation to the satisfaction of all parties.

The QIO ensures that the Children’s Services (schools) complaints log is completed.

If this approach is unsuccessful, and the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant will be asked if they wish the complaint to become formal. A formal complaint needs to be in writing to the QIO and will only be accepted provided that the matter has firstly been
raised with the relevant school but has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

The QIO will then write a short account of actions taken so far. This account, along with the complaint itself will be presented to the Executive Manager, Quality Improvement, who will consider what options are available to achieve a resolution.

3. **Executive Manager – Quality Improvement**

Upon receipt of an unresolved complaint relating to a school, the Executive Manager, Quality Improvement, in consultation with the QIO will consider what options are available to achieve a resolution.

These may include one or more of the following:
- Further internal investigation by the QIO;
- An investigation by the Executive Manager, Schools;
- The offer of mediation.

This list is not exhaustive, as each case is different, and there may be different ways of seeking resolution.

Should the Executive Manager, Quality Improvement directly receive a complaint in writing about a school, the details will normally be passed to the appropriate QIO to try to seek a resolution at an informal level (as above).

If however, the complaint is of a serious nature and concerns a potential breach of a separate Shetland Islands Council Policy, the Executive Manager, Quality Improvement may arrange for an investigating officer to be appointed. The outcome of the investigation and any action taken as a result would normally be explained to the parents at a meeting.

4. **Strategic Director of Children’s Services**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may write to the Strategic Director of Children’s Services who will deal with the complaint under Shetland Islands Council Complaints Procedure. This will be at the Formal Complaints – Stage Two part of this procedure. More information about the Shetland Islands Council Complaints Procedure can be found at [www.shetland.gov.uk](http://www.shetland.gov.uk).

5. **Local Government Ombudsman**

Complainants may take a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at any time, who has to give Shetland Islands Council an opportunity to seek a local solution within a reasonable time period.

6 **Care Inspectorate**

If the complaint is about nursery or residential accommodation, complainants may take a complaint to the Care Inspectorate at any time. They will also normally give Shetland Islands Council an opportunity to seek a local solution within a reasonable time period.
7. Other Information

Some Links to other relevant SIC policies and legislation (this is not an exhaustive list):

- The Shetland Island’s Council’s Complaints Procedure;
- Code of Conduct for Employees;
- Disciplinary Procedures Policy;
- Training and Development Policy;
- Child Protection Guidance for Managers;
- Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006;
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004;
- Shetland Children’s Services Managing Inclusion Guidelines.

The Executive Manager, Quality Improvement monitors the Children’s Service (schools) complaints log on an annual basis to identify possible training needs or policy review.

It is good practice for those staff who have been involved in handling the complaint to meet to discuss ways of improving the service where relevant.

This Complaints Procedure about schools is supported by a leaflet for parents/carers. The text of this leaflet follows here.

Parents’ Leaflet Text

Introduction

Most concerns and complaints can be dealt with by talking to your child’s teacher or the Head Teacher at an early stage and at an informal level. However, if you are not able to resolve the matter in this way, you may want to use this complaints procedure.

Children’s Services in Shetland strives to provide a very high standard of education for all children and young people in Shetland. We value feedback and complaints as an opportunity to improve our service.

We are aware that we can only achieve this by working closely in partnership with parents and carers.

Nevertheless we appreciate that there may be occasions when parents/carers will be dissatisfied with particular aspects of the service offered. Hopefully, following the procedures outlined in this document will help to resolve any difficulties as quickly and effectively as possible.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint, however made, is an expression of dissatisfaction, and is when a parent/carer feels that a school has in some way failed to meet his or her expectations. It is not a routine enquiry, for example about a pupil’s progress or a school’s approach to a particular curricular or similar area, such as reading or homework. Such enquiries should usually be made by simply contacting your child’s school.
It is easier for complaints to be dealt with and rectified as near to the time when the dissatisfaction occurred as possible. If you wait for months or years to pass it will be very difficult to conduct an investigation satisfactorily.

Please note that Children’s Services is unable to investigate anonymous complaints.

**Making a Complaint**

The contacts for complaining are:

1. Head Teacher at your child’s school;
2. Quality Improvement Officer at Children’s Services (tel 01595 744000);

Local Government Ombudsman Advice Line: 0800 37773300  
Care Inspectorate in the case of pre-school: 0845 6030890

1. **Head Teacher: Informal Process**

Inform the Head Teacher of your concern. He or she will do their best to address any issues and should be given the opportunity to do so. The vast majority of issues are best resolved informally, and locally. In almost all cases, if the Head Teacher has not been given the opportunity to address any issues, parents or carers will be referred to the school before any further steps are taken. The school will take a note of complaints in a complaints log, which is monitored on an annual basis for any patterns of overall dissatisfaction so that improvements can be considered.

2. **Quality Improvement Officer (QIO): Informal Process**

If the Head Teacher has been unable to address your concerns, you may wish to involve the QIO with responsibility for the school. The QIO can be contacted at Hayfield House, tel 01595 744000. Inform the member of staff who answers your call that you wish to make a complaint, and tell them which school is involved. This approach means that your concerns can be dealt with at a reasonably informal level, and will usually involve a discussion with the QIO and the Head Teacher. Your complaint will be logged for reasons stated above. If the issue continues to remain unresolved you may choose to make your complaint formal.

3. **Formal Process**

If you remain dissatisfied, the complaint should be formalised in writing, to Children’s Services, Hayfield House. Your complaint will be discussed by the Executive Manager Quality Improvement and the relevant Quality Improvement Officer, who will consider the actions already taken and will arrange for you to be contacted to discuss the options for finding a resolution, which may include:

- Further internal investigation by the QIO;
- An investigation by the Executive Manager, Schools;
- The offer of mediation.

If the complaint is of a serious nature and concerns a potential breach of a separate Shetland Islands Council policy, the Executive Manager Quality Improvement may arrange
for an officer from a different Shetland Islands Council department to investigate the complaint.

4. **Strategic Director of Children’s Services**

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation, you may write to the Strategic Director of Children’s Services who will deal with your complaint under the Shetland Islands Council Corporate Complaints Procedure. This will be at Stage Two of that process. Copies of the Corporate Complaints Procedure can be found at www.shetland.gov.uk

5. **Local Government Ombudsman and Care Inspectorate.**

Complainants may take a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at any time, who has to give Shetland Islands Council an opportunity to seek a local solution within a reasonable time period.

In the case of pre-school provision complaints can also be taken to the Care Inspectorate.

**Principles of the Complaints Procedure**

The complaints procedure is built upon the following principles:

- Confidentiality for all involved;
- Fairness;
- Openness;
- Partnership;
- Recognition of Legal Rights;
- No fear of repercussions/discrimination as a result of making a complaint.

These principles are embodied in the Children’s Services Complaints System. They demonstrate our commitment to high standards of public service, and protect the interests of all concerned. All complaints and concerns will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken as a result.

**Who else can help?**

Most schools have a Parent Council. The chair or members of the Parent Council may be able to offer advice. They may be able to raise an issue at a Parent Council meeting if your point is a general one, but are unable to discuss individual complaints.

Information about Scottish Education can be found on the Parentzone website: [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

**Access to Complaints Procedure**

Copies of this leaflet and of Shetland Islands Council’s Complaints Procedure are available at all schools and offices, The Town Hall, local libraries and on the Shetland Island Council’s Website, as well as at The Welcome Point, via Adult Services at The Old Library Centre, Hillhead, Lerwick.
A translation service and support is available for service users with English as a second language and for those with additional support needs. Large print copies and Braille copies are also available on request.

If you have any queries about this process, please contact Hayfield House Reception on 01595 744000 and ask for a representative from Children’s Services.
Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development of Teaching Staff

June 2015
Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development (PRD) of Teaching Staff

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Appendix 8.1 Handbook for Teachers and Managers on Professional Review and Development (PRD) and Professional Update (PU)
1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1.1 Continuing professional learning is fully recognised as an essential element within Children’s Services to ensure outstanding outcomes for all. It enables the continuing development of knowledge and skills for all staff at all stages in their career.

1.2 The SNCT Handbook states that ‘every teacher will agree an annual CPD plan with his/her immediate manager and every teacher will be required to maintain an individual CPD record’. In addition, teachers have a contractual requirement to complete a maximum of 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per annum. Teachers on part-time contracts will complete CPD per annum on a pro rata basis, in accordance with the pro rata contractual arrangements that apply to the working week.

1.3 ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ (Graham Donaldson, 2011) included specific recommendations on the provision of CPD linked to Professional Review and Development (PRD) as a continuous process throughout the career of a teacher.

1.4 Advancing Professionalism in Teaching (The McCormac Review, Sept 2011) recommended that all teachers should be engaged in a revitalised process of PRD in a consistent way and on a national basis.

1.5 Following the 2011 Public Services Reform Order, requiring that teachers be re-accredited on a regular basis, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) has introduced the Professional Update Scheme which began in August 2014. The Professional Update scheme requires that teachers update their details on the GTCS register and lays out principles for the PRD process. It makes continuing engagement in PRD and Professional Learning a requirement of every registered teacher in Scotland with a 5 yearly signing off process to confirm this engagement with GTCS. In accordance with this Education Scotland has published revised national guidance on PRD. In addition, the PRD scheme of every local authority will require validation by GTCS every 5 years.

1.6 Professional Update is based on effective, consistent PRD and high quality professional learning which will enhance teacher’s skills and knowledge with the potential to bring about significant improvements to the education of young people in a rapidly changing society.

1.7 The term ‘professional learning’ is being widely used at a national level in place of ‘Continuing Professional Development’ to describe activities which contribute to a teacher’s personal professional development. This term reflects the shift towards teachers taking increased ownership of their own individual learning. The term ‘Professional learning’ will be used throughout this document.

1.8 Shetland Islands Council, Children’s Services, believes that these guidelines for PRD will facilitate a fair, transparent and consistent approach to managing PRD planning and should apply to all teachers, including all centrally employed teachers, flexible route probationers, supply and peripatetic teachers, with the exception of probationers on the Induction Scheme.
1.9 It links to the following National legislation and SIC policies:

Employment Rights Act 1996 as amended;
Employment Rights Act 2004;
Employment Rights Dispute Resolution Act 1998;
Employment Relations Act 1999;
Data Protection Act 1998 as amended;
Human Rights Act 1998;
Equality Act 2010

Training & Development Policy;
Capability Policy;
Equality & Diversity Policy;
Code of Conduct for Employees;
Career Grading Policy;
Recruitment & Selection Policy (probationary periods);
Redeployment Policy (probationary periods);
Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy;
Employee Review & Development Policy (operational date 1 April '13).

2 AIMS

2.1 These operational guidelines endorse the following aims for all teachers in order to ensure a positive impact on teaching and learning:

- enhancing continued professionalism,
- sustainable career long professional learning,
- supporting evidence based self-evaluation and ongoing reflection,
- building capacity within schools and the local authority,
- engaging in PRD and professional learning as part of the GTC Scotland Professional Update process.

3 PRINCIPLES

3.1 Professional review and development will have a significant outcome on teachers and a positive impact on pupil learning if the following principles apply:

- PRD is an ongoing, supportive and challenging process which allows teachers to identify existing needs and explore ways of updating their knowledge and skills in order to maintain the high standards required of teachers in Scotland’s educational establishments;
- teachers take responsibility for their own development as life-long learners;
- the process is founded on, robust, evidence-based self-evaluation and ongoing personal reflection against the relevant GTCS professional standard(s);
- teachers balance individual and personal development priorities with those relating to the appropriate professional standard and the school improvement plan/service plan;
- by fully engaging in the ongoing PRD process, including associated professional learning, all teachers will be fulfilling the requirements of Professional Update.
Key Features of the Process

“Professional dialogue within PRD is most effective when it is both supportive and challenging and signals practical steps towards improved practice. It can help to stimulate and sustain the development of individual teachers as well as helping them to manage the demands of the dynamic contexts in which they work.” (Donaldson, 2011)

4.1 Application of the following key features should ensure that the PRD process is a high quality and meaningful experience where staff feel valued:

PRD as an Ongoing Process:
- the PRD process continues across the year,
- the arrangements are simple, effective, understood by all parties and not constrained by bureaucracy,
- the PRD meeting does not stand alone but concludes the previous year’s PRD process and begins the next,
- teachers and line managers must engage in ongoing professional dialogue throughout the year which includes the opportunity to discuss professional learning opportunities or needs.

Teacher Ownership:
- teachers take responsibility and ownership of their own PRD experience ensuring professional learning is broad based. Managers support and facilitate the experience.

Self Evaluation/Reflection:
- ongoing reflection and collegiate working practices are encouraged and supported,
- the relevant GTCS professional standard(s) are embedded into self-evaluation.

Identified Needs/Professional Learning Priorities:
- professional learning activities are effectively evaluated in relation to individual practice, impact on colleagues and the impact on young people’s learning and progress,
- teachers existing professional expertise is built on and developed throughout each stage of their career,
- the professionalism and commitment of all teachers is recognised and acknowledged.

Examples of appropriate professional learning are provided in Appendix 8.1b. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, rather some examples to help stimulate dialogue when considering appropriate professional learning.

All Teachers have access to the PRD Process:
- it is a requirement that all GTCS registered teachers engage in PRD and maintain their GTCS registration through Professional Update,
- supply teachers, peripatetic staff, Head Teachers and central staff will have access to the PRD process including an annual PRD review meeting and access to Professional Learning.

Recording System:
- the recording system for the PRD process, while important, is secondary to the quality of engagement of the teacher and manager,
- the recording system will be straightforward, meaningful, minimise workload, and consistent for all teachers therefore the MyGTCS online recording system will be used.

Competency:
• professional update is a completely separate process from that of competency or fitness to teach as defined by GTCS; information gained from the PRD process will not be used for these purposes

PRD Handbook:
• further details of the PRD process are explained in the handbook (Appendix 8.1) and it is expected that all teachers and managers will follow the advice provided in the handbook.

Deferral Process:
It is recognised that there will be a number of circumstances which may make completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale difficult. The right to defer may apply in the following circumstances:

• career breaks,
• extended illness,
• maternity/paternity/adoption leave,
• occasional supply work.

Under these circumstances extensions to the 5 year sign-off period may be required. If a teacher is unable to complete the process in the designated year the following steps should be followed:

• the teacher should submit a request to their line manager to defer their professional update sign off through MyGTCS
• the line manager will receive an email containing their details and the details of their request and they will consider all the relevant facts relating to the deferral, come to a decision and notify the employee of the outcome. The line manager may ask for further evidence if appropriate.;
• Professional Learning and Development Department at GTC Scotland will then amend the teacher’s record held on the Register
• If the deferral request is unsuccessful, the teacher will be given the option to complete the Professional Update sign off process or have their details removed from the GTC Scotland register of teachers;
• existing employers’ grievance procedures should be implemented if an individual teacher disagrees with a decision regarding Professional Update deferral.

Deferrals will normally be granted for a period of one year. Please refer to the Handbook for further information.

Where a teacher knows in advance that a deferral period greater than one year will be required, e.g. an extended career break, the teacher should discuss this with his/her employer in the first instance, and notify GTC Scotland of the planned deferral period and the related reasons. This should be done by sending an e-mail to professional.update@gtcs.org.uk

If a teacher is unable to instigate a request for a deferral of the Professional Update sign off process, for example during a period of extended absence through ill health, the teacher’s line manager can notify GTC Scotland directly of the requirement for a deferral. This should be done by sending an e-mail to professional.update@gtcs.org.uk
Appeals Process:
The right to appeal will apply in 2 areas:
- failure to agree the sign off for a plan in the annual PRD process;
- failure to agree the sign off for the 5-yearly Professional Update process.

Experience with the PRD process suggests that such appeals will arise only in very exceptional circumstances. Should a difficulty be encountered in either of the two areas above, the following steps should be followed:
- the teacher appealing should approach a senior manager in the establishment or central service, and set out in writing the reasons for appealing,
- once the senior manager has considered all the relevant facts relating to the appeal, the senior manager will arrange to meet with the line manager and the teacher (separately and/or together) to discuss the matter, following which the senior manager will come to a decision,
- following the decision of the senior manager, appropriate action will be taken, e.g. a further review meeting, amendment to the plan,
- if, following the decision of the senior manager, the matter remains unresolved, the teacher may choose to initiate a grievance under the Council’s Grievance Procedures for Teachers.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Executive Manager, Quality Improvement, has a responsibility to:
- ensure that suitable policies and support materials are in place which reflect national guidance and local priorities (including GTCS Professional Standards, Education Scotland PRD Guidance, the Children’s Services Service Plan and Children’s Services Quality Assurance Policy);
- communicate the policy, support materials and any changes to them, to all teachers;
- ensure the provision of professional learning opportunities based on teacher, school, service and national priorities, as informed by ongoing evaluation of staff development and appropriate information from the PRD process;
- ensure ongoing evaluation, monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the PRD process and the level of engagement;
- ensure that the PRD process meets GTCS requirements for Professional Update.
- monitor deferrals through information provided by GTCS

5.2 Head Teachers and other relevant managers and Quality Improvement Officers will promote a culture of professional learning linked explicitly to improved outcomes for children and young people by:
- promoting ongoing professional learning for all teaching staff to ensure that all teachers are involved in the PRD process leading to Professional Update;
- integrating the PRD process in a consistent and fair way as part of the normal life and management of the school/establishment;
- ensuring that the process is linked to the GTCS Professional Standards for teachers and to the school improvement plan/service plan;
- identifying trends in professional learning needs and taking appropriate action to address them at, for example, individual school level, cluster group level, or through the authority’s Training and Development Officer.
5.3 Promoted Teachers (including Head Teachers and other managers and Quality Improvement Officers) with staff management responsibilities, have a responsibility to:

- ensure that the annual PRD meeting is arranged for each teacher, or respond to a request to arrange it from a teacher;
- arrange PRD meetings so as to comply with the establishment working time agreement;
- facilitate the PRD meeting using coaching and mentoring approaches which places the emphasis on the quality of the professional dialogue;
- ensure that the meetings take place in an atmosphere of trust and collegiality;
- ensure that staff are supported constructively during the PRD discussion, providing challenge where appropriate;
- ensure that the PRD discussion allows for individual and personal development priorities based on the appropriate GTCS Professional Standards and on the school and, where appropriate, Children’s Services service plan;
- agree and sign off the professional learning plan, and validate the GTCS Professional Update requirements at the appropriate time;
- To provide continuing support for Professional Learning in order to meet identified needs.

5.4 All GTCS registered teachers are responsible for the following in order to engage in Professional Update:

- ensure that an annual PRD meeting has been arranged for them by their manager or request that one is arranged in line with the establishment working time agreement;
- prepare for the annual PRD meeting by completing their professional learning plan and identifying professional learning areas which:
  - are to be continued or developed from the previous year depending on evidence of impact,
  - will enable them to contribute to any relevant improvement/service plans,
  - address individual professional needs arising from self-evaluation against the appropriate GTCS professional standards.
- engage in professional dialogue at the PRD meeting;
- construct their professional learning plan based on the PRD meeting and have this agreed and signed off by their manager;
- identify, request and arrange professional learning opportunities in agreement with their manager as the year goes on, and seek their manager’s assistance in doing so if required;
- engage in 35 hours of additional professional learning over a school year which is undertaken out with the contractual 35-hours working week;
- maintain and complete their professional learning plan including evidence of impact as the year continues and have this agreed and signed off by their manager at the next PRD meeting;
- ensure that their contact details with GTCS are up to date;
- undertake the 5-yearly Professional Update sign off process.
5.5 Centrally based staff who are registered teachers.

If centrally based staff wish to continue to be registered teachers, they should request to use these PRD procedures for teachers alongside of the Council’s Employee Review and Development Policy (ERD), where appropriate. In order to achieve the five-yearly update, staff need to demonstrate that they have linked their self-evaluation and professional learning plan to the appropriate standards in the GTCS suite of Professional Standards. Examples of these staff may include the Quality Improvement Manager and Officers, Education Support Officers, and Educational Psychologists.

The SIC current ERD Policy recognises this, and says, at 1.6 of the policy:

“It is acknowledged that many Council employees are required to work within codes of practice governing their work area and specific performance management processes have been developed to support employees in this regard..............This policy seeks to complement these schemes”.

5.6 Supply Teachers:

Shetland Islands Council will undertake to communicate training opportunities to all supply teachers on their list. They may join such activities free of charge. They may be able to join school-based activities at the discretion of Head Teachers. It will remain the responsibility of each supply teacher to keep records of their professional learning and to self-evaluate using the standards.

It is the responsibility of each supply teacher to request a PRD meeting with a suitable reviewer. Normally this will be at a school where they have provided regular supply cover for the previous year. At the five-yearly declaration, then the current reviewer should be asked to provide confirmation. Should any supply teacher have difficulties, they should contact central Children’s Services.

5.7 Temporary Teachers

It is the responsibility of each teacher employed on a temporary basis to request a PRD meeting with a suitable reviewer. Normally this will be at a school where they have worked most as a temporary teacher during the previous year. At the five-yearly declaration, then the current reviewer should be asked to provide confirmation. Should any temporary teacher have difficulties, they should contact central Children’s Services.

5.8 Categories of Full Registration – General and Associate

Teachers who retire and who wish to stay on the GTC Scotland Register will have the option of retaining their pre-retirement category of Fully Registered (General) or moving to the new category of Fully Registered (Associate). Engaging in supply work requires the maintenance of Fully Registered (General) status. Retired teachers who decide not to engage in supply work but wish to remain on the Register may opt for the Fully Registered (Associate) category. The Associate category is not appropriate for those wishing to do classroom teaching. For retired teachers choosing the Fully Registered (Associate) category, the requirement to engage in the Professional Update process involves updating details annual on the register and adhering to the values in the Standards, although other aspects are encouraged where possible and appropriate.
Teachers planning to retire who wish to undertake supply work can choose to engage in the Professional Update sign off in the school session during which they retire, effectively bringing their sign off year forward.

5.9 Teachers contracted to work in more than one school

Each teacher is allocated a base school and line manager who will facilitate the teacher’s PRD experience and sign off their Professional Update when required. In exceptional circumstances, a teacher may request that another manager facilitates the PRD process (see Handbook for further information). It is the responsibility of the teacher to evidence professional learning undertaken in all schools and set appropriate targets in conjunction with their line manager.

6 OUTLINE OF THE PROCESS FOR PROFESSIONAL REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Timing

At a time of year identified by Head Teachers (or other relevant managers) for PRD meetings, teachers and managers will ensure that meetings have been scheduled. However, schools should also accommodate temporary/supply teacher PRDs, this may have to fall out with the school’s normal PRD period depending on working patterns.

6.2 Before the PRD meeting

In preparation for the PRD meeting, teachers will reflect on the impact of the previous years’ professional learning activities. This will include impact on self, on colleagues and on young people’s learning and progress. Teachers will also undertake self-evaluation against appropriate GTCS professional standards. This information should be shared with the reviewer one week prior to the PRD meeting either through MyGTCS or on the PLP.

6.3 At the PRD Meeting

The manager will use a coaching and mentoring approach to discuss the professional learning plan from the previous year (which should be signed off and agreed) and the plan for the year ahead. The professional learning plan should take into account any actions still needed from the previous year, the school improvement plan/service plan and the teacher’s own self-evaluation.

6.4 After the PRD meeting

The professional learning plan should be written up by the teacher within a week of the meeting and submitted to the manager for signing off. In some cases, it may be necessary to have further discussion before this is agreed. The signing off by the manager allows the teacher to go ahead with the new plan. The teacher will update the professional learning plan as required.

There will be continuing professional dialogue between the teacher and manager, for example when the teacher identifies professional learning opportunities, when there are cover or budget implications, if priorities change, or if the teacher needs assistance in securing development opportunities.

36
Engagement in Professional Update is an ongoing process, with professional learning and PRD at the heart. Every five years teachers will be required to confirm their engagement in this process with GTCS. It will be the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the sign off process for Professional Update is completed and the manager's responsibility to validate the teacher's declaration.
Shetland Islands Council

Children’s Services

Handbook for Teachers and Managers on Professional Review and Development (PRD) and Professional Update (PU)

June 2015
The Core Elements of the Standards for Full Registration for Teachers in Scotland

- Learning and Teaching
  - Classroom Organisation and Management
  - Pupil Assessment

- Pedagogy and Professional Reflection
  - Professional Reflection and Communication

- Curriculum
  - Education Systems and Professional Responsibilities

- Social Justice
  - Trust and Respect

- Integrity
  - PV & PC

- PK & U
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<td>Where can I get further information and advice?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendices

- 8.1a Professional Review and Development Cycle
- 8.1b Professional Learning
- 8.1c Self Evaluation
- 8.1d Professional Learning Plan (PLP)
- 8.1e Exemplar PLP & Evaluation
- 8.1f Agenda template
- 8.1g Professional Review and Development Meetings Confirmation
- 8.1h Staff Development Needs
- 8.1i GTCS PU System Submission Process Guidance for Teachers
- 8.1j GTCS PU System Submission Process Guidance for Managers
What is the aim of the PRD and PU handbook?

This handbook aims to provide teachers and managers with a clear guide to the continuous PRD cycle (Appendix 8.1a) and its link to the GTCS PU sign-off process. It should be read in conjunction with Shetland Island Council Children’s Services Operational Guidelines for the Professional Review and Development of Teaching Staff, which forms part of the Children’s Services Quality Assurance Policy.

What is PRD?

Professional review and development is the process whereby the development and training needs of all staff are identified and agreed in relation to their current practice, the requirements of the school or authority improvement plan, the wider and longer-term needs of the education service, and national priorities. The process also includes making suitable arrangements to meet professional development needs, so far as possible, within available resources. The PRD process is an ongoing, year round process which is reflected in the diagram in Appendix 8.1a. Some of the activity will take place at set times in the year and others will be happening continually throughout the year, whenever a teacher takes part in a professional learning activity. Spreading PRD activity across the whole year and integrating it into normal everyday practice should help reduce the amount of time required for a teacher to prepare for their annual PRD meeting.

What is Professional Learning?

Career-long professional learning is an on-going process from the early phase of teacher education through to the end of a teacher’s career.

High impact professional learning:
- Is supported by effective self evaluation processes
- Means teachers are enquiring professionals who critically examine attitudes and beliefs, explore and challenge assumptions and engage with new and emerging ideas about learning and teaching
- And is integral to and not separate from
  - Schools/service improvement
  - Effective professional review & development
  - Professional Update

It will lead to improved professional practice and outcomes for the individual, their colleagues and children and young people. Examples of different kind of professional learning are given in Appendix 8.1b.
Why is PRD important?

To enable the profession to cope with change and keep professional standards high as well as creating the potential to bring about significant improvements to the education of young people, it is important that teachers have the opportunity to reflect, plan and engage in professional learning at all stages of their career.

Who has access to the PRD process?

It is a requirement that all GTCS registered teachers engage in PRD and maintain their GTCS registration through Professional Update. Supply teachers, peripatetic staff, Head Teachers and central staff will have access to the PRD process including an annual PRD review meeting and access to Professional Learning. Detailed guidelines particularly for supply teachers and central staff (Education Senior Manager/Officer/QIO) can be found under the Professional Update section on the GTCS Website (www.gtcs.org.uk)

What is the GTC Scotland Professional Update scheme and what difference does it make to my PRD?

From August 2014, engagement in the Professional Update process became a requirement for registration with GTC Scotland. Professional Update is based on effective, consistent Professional Review and Development and high quality professional learning focused on the outcomes for a teacher’s own development as well as aiming to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Professional Update is a completely separate process from that of Competency or Fitness to Teach as defined by GTC Scotland; information gathered from the PRD process will not be used for these purposes.

Participation in Professional Update will involve three main parts:

Part 1: An annual update of basic personal information to the GTCS. All teachers will be required to check their personal records held by the GTCS on an annual basis, using the GTCS website, and to update these records to reflect any changes in their circumstances (e.g. home address, school at which they work, etc.). A reminder will be issued at the PRD meeting.

Part 2: Active engagement in Professional Learning and PRD; ensuring that their MyGTCS Professional Learning Record and portfolio of evidence is kept up-to-date and that they have been self-evaluating against the Professional Standards. (Appendix 8.1c).

Part 3: Completing a five-yearly Professional Update Declaration to the GTCS. All teachers will be required to complete a declaration, every five years, confirming that they have actively engaged in an annual PRD process over the previous five years, and that they have maintained an up-to-date portfolio of evidence of the impact of their professional learning.

The declaration will be made online, using the GTCS website, and this will be required to be verified by each individual’s PRD reviewer, also using the GTCS website.
Access to GTCS records

Teachers will be able to check and update their personal records annually, and also complete their five-yearly Professional Update Declaration, by logging in to their MyGTCS account on the GTCS website.

When colleagues have made their Professional Update Declaration via MyGTCS, this will be required to be verified by their PRD reviewer. Reviewers can complete this verification by logging in to their own MyGTCS account, where they will see details of all teachers for whom they are responsible, and where they can confirm that the individual(s) concerned has/have fulfilled all of the requirements of Professional Update.

Where teachers do not already have access to MyGTCS, they can create an account by completing the following steps:

1. Go to the main homepage of the GTCS website: www.gtcs.org.uk/home/home.aspx
2. Select “Sign Up” from the top right of the homepage.
3. Complete and submit the online sign up form.

When teachers first use MyGTCS, their user name and password will be their GTCS registration number without the forward slash. Once logged on, they will be asked to create a password which they will then use for any subsequent log-ins. Their username will always be the GTCS registration number.

Annual selection of staff for Professional Update

Whilst all GTCS registered staff will be required to carry out parts 1 and 2 above on an annual basis, part 3 will only be carried out every five years. In order to ensure that there is an adequate spread of resources and support for the process, Teachers will be asked to carry out this aspect of Professional Update in a specific five-yearly cycle, according to the second digit of their GTCS registration number (the first two digits relate to the year in which the individual was first registered with the GTCS).

Professional Update Declarations will be made in the school session:

- 2014/15 – teachers with second digit GTCS registration numbers 9 or 4
- 2015/16 – teachers with second digit GTCS registration numbers 0 or 5
- 2016/17 – teachers with second digit GTCS registration numbers 1 or 6
- 2017/18 – teachers with second digit GTCS registration numbers 2 or 7
- 2018/19 – teachers with second digit GTCS registration numbers 3 or 8

Teachers will then continue to complete their declarations every five years after their initial declaration.

Teachers will be asked to endorse the following statement:

• I confirm that I have engaged in ongoing professional learning and reflected against the appropriate GTCS Professional Standards. I have maintained a reflective record of professional learning and evidence of its impact on my thinking and professional actions. I have discussed this with my line manager as part of my PRD process.
Managers will be asked to endorse the same statement about staff. When this is done a message is automatically sent to GTC Scotland and stored with a teachers’ registration details that continuing registration is confirmed. Appendices 8.1i & 8.1j have clear instructions for the submission process.

Managers should remember that the 5 yearly sign-off process is confirmation of a teacher’s engagement in the Professional update process and is not an indication of their competency as a teacher. If they have not line-managed a particular member of staff for the full 5 years they must trust the professional judgement of the previous manager/s.

**Deferral Process:**

It is recognised that there will be a number of circumstances which may make completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale difficult. Any potential issues should be discussed between reviewers and reviewees early in the cycle. The right to defer may apply in the following circumstances:

- career breaks
- extended illness
- maternity /paternity /adoption leave
- unemployment
- engagement in only occasional supply work

If a teacher is unable to complete the PU process in the designated year the following steps should be followed:

- The teacher requesting a deferral should submit a request to their line manager to defer their PU sign off through MyGTCS
- The line manager will receive an email containing the employee’s details and the details of the deferral request and they will consider all the relevant facts relating to the deferral, come to a decision and notify the employee of the outcome. The line manager may ask for further evidence if appropriate.

Professional Learning and Development Department at GTC Scotland will then amend the teacher’s record held on the Register

- If the deferral request is unsuccessful, the teacher will be given the option to complete the Professional Update sign off process or have their details removed from the GTC Scotland register of teachers.
- Existing employers’ grievance procedures should be implemented if an individual teacher disagrees with a decision regarding Professional Update deferral
- Registered teachers not currently in employment will be required to notify GTC Scotland directly, outlining the reasons for the proposed deferral. This should be done by sending an e-mail to professional.update@gtcs.org.uk

Deferrals will normally be granted for a period of one year. If a deferral request is successful the teacher will normally be expected to complete the Professional Update sign-off process during the following academic session. Only in exceptional circumstances, and where there is just cause, will more than one application for deferral be granted. If a subsequent deferral is required the teacher must submit a fresh deferral request, detailing the reason for granting the second request. (See Appendix 8.1i for guidance or GTCS website for most up to date advice)
The PRD meeting

All teachers will have at least one PRD meeting with their immediate manager (or designated person). This should focus on the teacher’s PLP (Appendix 8.1d) which is a summary of the teacher’s Professional Learning targets and impact for the year, evidenced through the MyGTCS PL record. The meeting should focus on the professional learning that the teacher has undertaken and consideration as to whether the learning has resulted in a positive impact on pupils’ learning, based on the evidence that has been collected over the year. Links should be made between achievements and professional learning and the specific elements of the relevant professional standard(s), which the teacher has been working, to address.

Attention should then turn to plans for the coming year, by agreeing which elements of the professional standard(s) the teacher will focus on through their professional learning. The professional learning activities to be undertaken should be agreed, along with any specific support which is required for these. These activities should be aimed at balancing the needs of the teacher, the school and the local authority. The intended impact of planned activities on pupils’ learning should also be discussed and recorded.

Within a week after the PRD meeting the teacher should provide the Reviewer with a copy of their new PLP showing target(s) and intended impact as agreed at the meeting. The PLP should be seen as a working document, however, and should be continually reviewed and updated throughout the year. An example of a completed PLP and evaluation is included in Appendix 8.1e.

An agenda for the PRD meeting can be found in Appendix 8.1f.

Roles and Responsibilities within the Teacher PRD scheme

Role of the Manager (reviewer)

To support and facilitate the PRD experience, using a coaching and mentoring approach.

1) Ensure that you have set dates for PRD meetings for the staff you are reviewing, and that these dates have been shared with the reviewee.
2) Set aside adequate time (approximately 1 hour) to undertake each review meeting, which should be held in an appropriate venue (where you are not likely to be disturbed).
3) Before a review meeting consider the draft Professional Learning Plan (PLP) submitted to you by your reviewee. Refer to the agenda template for discussion topics and share these with the reviewee in advance.
4) In the meeting, discuss with each reviewee their professional learning and other success’ and achievements over the past year. A reviewee may wish to share their PL Record on their MyGTCS account. Ensure that discussions focus on the impact of the reviewee’s learning activities on their practice, and draw links with aspects of the relevant Professional Standards.
5) At the end of the meeting, discuss with the reviewee their professional learning next steps for the following year and reach agreement. These should link to specific aspects of the relevant Professional Standards, and where appropriate specific areas of the School Improvement Plan and Children’s Services Plan.
Where this is difficult, both parties may take some time to consider the other’s point of view with a view to reaching an agreement. If the matter remains unresolved, then the teacher may opt to pursue a grievance under the Council’s Grievance Procedures for Teachers.

6) After the meeting, the reviewee should provide the reviewer with a new PLP showing the targets and intended impact, as agreed at the PRD meeting. This should be submitted to the reviewer within one week of the PRD meeting and signed by you and the reviewee when agreed. You should both keep a copy.

7) Keep a record of the PRD meetings using Appendix 8.1g or school spreadsheet.

8) This information should be submitted bi-annually (June & December) to the School’s Clerical staff for input into the HR Management System for Council wide record-keeping.

9) Complete the Staff Development Needs record; Appendix 8.1h. Email to SIC Training and Development Officer.

Role of the Teacher (reviewee)

To take responsibility and ownership of their own PRD experience ensuring Professional Learning is broad based.

1) Agree a date with your reviewer for PRD meeting.

2) Make sure your Professional Learning Record (PL Record) on MyGTCS account is up to date with details of the significant professional learning you have undertaken in the last year. Make sure you have linked your learning with the relevant aspects of the Professional Standard/s which you are following.

3) Collect together evidence of the impact on practice of your professional learning activities. (You don’t need evidence for every professional learning activity but try to gather evidence which shows the impact of your professional learning over the year as a whole).

4) Evaluate and reflect on the professional learning you have undertaken in the last year, focussing on the impact this has had on your practice. Make brief notes in your Professional Learning Plan (PLP) Appendix 8.1d to take to your professional review meeting. (an example of a completed PLP & Evaluation can be found at appendix 8.1e.)

5) Either allow your reviewer access to your MyGTCS professional learning record or submit (email) a copy of your draft PLP to your reviewer a week before the meeting. At the meeting discuss with your reviewer any key achievements and successes you have had as well as the professional learning you have undertaken in the last year, and share any relevant evidence from your PL Record (you can log into MYGTCS during the meeting to refer to your PL Record).

6) During the meeting agree and note down new target(s) or continuing targets and intended impact for the following year, to help you create a new PLP. Remember it is your responsibility to inform your reviewer of your professional update sign-off year.

7) Within a week after the meeting, submit the new PLP to your reviewer to check. The final PLP should be agreed and signed by you and your reviewer. You could also upload the details of your PLP into your PL Record within your MyGTCS account.

8) Remember to update contact details, if necessary on your MyGTCS account.
9) Throughout the next year, ensure you keep your **PL record** up to date, with details of your learning activities, your reflections on these and the impact they have had on your practice. As and when appropriate – you may discuss your Professional Learning progress with your reviewer and update your PLP.

**Who should review the reviewee?**

The facilitator of a teacher’s PRD experience should be the person who line manages the teacher on an ongoing basis and who is familiar with their work. In exceptional circumstances, a teacher may request that another manager facilitates the PRD process.

To do so, the teacher would approach an alternative manager in the same establishment or a Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) at Children’s Services and present their reasons. The alternative manager or QIO would reach a decision on the matter after due consultation. If another manager is appointed to facilitate the teacher’s PRD, it is essential that they know the work of the teacher concerned and has at least the same level of post as the original manager. If the matter remains unresolved, then the teacher may opt to pursue a grievance under the Council’s Grievance Procedures for Teachers.

**Appeals Procedures**

The right to appeal will apply in 2 areas:
- failure to agree the sign off for a plan in the annual PRD process,
- failure to agree the sign off for the 5-yearly Professional Update process.

Experience with the PRD process suggests that such appeals will arise only in very exceptional circumstances. Should a difficulty be encountered in either of the two areas above, the following steps should be followed:
- the teacher appealing should approach a senior manager in the establishment or central service, and set out in writing the reasons for appealing,
- once the senior manager has considered all the relevant facts relating to the appeal, the senior manager will arrange to meet with the line manager and the teacher (separately and/or together) to discuss the matter, following which the senior manager will come to a decision,
- following the decision of the senior manager, appropriate action will be taken, e.g. a new review meeting, amendment to the plan,
- if, following the decision of the senior manager, the matter remains unresolved, the teacher may choose to initiate a grievance under the Council’s Grievance Procedures for Teachers.

**Where can I get further information and advice?**

Scottish College for Educational Leadership – [www.scelscotland.org.uk](http://www.scelscotland.org.uk)
GTCS – [www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk) – MyGTCS – see Professional Update and The Standards tabs
Education Scotland – [www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk) – Professional Learning tab:
PRD, Career Long Professional Learning, Mentoring Matters, Framework for Educational Leadership, Journey to Excellence
Teaching Scotland’s Future – [www.teachingscotlandsfuture.org.uk](http://www.teachingscotlandsfuture.org.uk)
Tab Nabs fae Nesting - Facebook page
Quality Assurance Monitoring

For example:

- Classroom observation organised relating to areas for development outlined in PLP
- Attainment information
- Monitoring of planning & jotters
- Quality Improvement Officer Visits

Optional interim meeting reviewing the PLP

Annual Review Meeting, the development of a Professional Learning Plan (PLP)

Completion of PLP – copy to line manager to be discussed at next annual review meeting

Self Evaluation referring to the GTCS Professional Standards

Update PLP (if appropriate, share with line manager)

Carry out professional learning activities

Gather evidence of impact of professional learning (if appropriate, share with line manager)
Appendix 8.1b

Professional Learning

There are many ways in which teachers might choose to engage in and pursue professional learning. It is most likely that teachers will engage in a multi-layered approach to professional learning throughout their careers.

Teachers may wish to consider the following questions when considering their professional learning:

- What is the focus of my professional learning and why is that important for me? For my pupils? For my colleagues? For my school/establishment?
- How will I know the impact of my professional learning in the short term? Medium term? Long term?

What is an enquiring professional?

[Diagram of Professional Learning]

Model of Professional Learning
The following model places the practitioner at the centre where the focus is on self-directed learning:

A model of Professional Learning (Education Scotland)
Appendix 8.1b

What is self-directed learning?

In self-directed learning, teachers map out their own development and work individually or collaboratively with colleagues to reflect on and evaluate their practice. They identify learning goals and opportunities for learning, participate in professional learning and enquiry and evaluate outcomes. This could be informed by their own context, experience, expertise and areas of interest, the needs of learners/colleagues, the evidence they have about impact (on them as an individual and on others), ongoing professional dialogue.

Research into professional learning suggests there are four interrelated processes that support professional growth of teachers and transformation of practice. The table below provides some more details about the 4 areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Reflection on practice</th>
<th>2) Experiential learning</th>
<th>3) Cognitive development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking questions, being curious and looking closely at practice; Developing skills in observing what is happening; Developing skills in analysing and evaluating what is happening; Exploring roles and approaches in professional practice.</td>
<td>Trying out and exploring the impact of approaches; Experimenting and taking risks with innovative practice; Examining outcomes and identifying learning from innovative practice; Building new ideas into practice in structured ways.</td>
<td>Being open to and seeking new ideas and practices; Questioning assumptions about practice; Using different sources to critically examine experience and practice; Testing ideas and exploring the implications for practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) Collaborative learning

- Working collaboratively to support each other in changing practice
- Sharing ideas and experiences through professional dialogue
- Seeking constructive feedback on practice and the impact on pupil learning
- Providing constructive feedback on practice and the impact on pupil learning

Examples of Collaborative Learning:

- Learning Rounds
- Teaching/Professional Learning Communities
- Subject Development Groups
- Schools based working groups
- Local authority/external working groups (including inter-agency colleagues)
- Co-operative/Team Teaching
- Mentoring/supporting a colleague
- Lesson observation & analysis (of self/other)
- Online learning community/discussion/blog
- Professional/Academic conference/seminar
- Reading group
- Classroom/school visits (with follow up professional dialogue)
- SQA Assessor development/meetings
Appendix 8.1b

Teachers may also choose to undertake leadership activities:

- Leading a working group (internally/externally)
- Leading the development of a new initiative/curriculum/development/programme
- Leading an enquiry

GTC Scotland’s Professional Recognition process provides the opportunity for teachers to focus on and develop their professional learning in particular areas of interest and/or expertise and gain recognition for enhancing their knowledge, understanding and practice.

How will I know if my professional learning is making a difference?

Professional learning experiences will be different for everyone. It will be about trying things out and seeing what works for you. In broad terms your professional learning should:

- Enable you to progress, enrich, develop and enhance your practice and knowledge
- Be about advancing professional skills and knowledge
- Develop your pedagogical expertise
- Allow you to develop a critical and informed understanding of educational contexts and current debates in policy, education and practice
- Allow you to develop your career pathways through planned, sustained and significant professional learning.

Impact of Professional Learning

The process of gathering evidence of impact is a crucial part of professional learning. Evidence is wide ranging. It should be useful, meaningful and relevant for you. It need not always be a written record. It could be part of your ongoing critical reflection and dialogue. What is key is that, whatever you use, it must be analysed, reflected on and used to inform next steps.

Examples of Evidence

Reflections on and analysis of lessons and/or discussions with learners
Reflections on professional dialogue with learners, peers, colleagues and parents
Individual critical reflections on practice including reflective journals
Quantitative data
Samples of pupils work to show progression and development
Analysis of surveys taking account of the views of children and young people, parents and colleagues
Analysed pupil interviews/group discussion, pupil talk (individual, group and pair), teacher talk (from audio and/or video recording)

http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-development/professional-learning.aspx

Professional learning should provide opportunities for all forms of learning experience to be combined and sustained as the new practice becomes fully integrated into professional action.
**Self-evaluation of learning and teaching should be simple and manageable.** It should be based on ongoing reflection through which teachers get to know themselves better in terms of their strengths and areas for development. It should be robust and evidence based derived from a number of sources including reflective questions (see example below), direct observation, information and data and people’s views, including those of children and young people, parents and carers and others linked to the school community.

Self-evaluation processes for learning and teaching range from reflection on daily practice to significant areas of professional development when a more structured approach may be required. Self-evaluation can be carried out on an individual basis by teachers or in collaboration with others: for example, a critical friend, coach, mentor or line manager; or in groups: for example, whole school, associated schools group or learning communities.

**The most effective approaches to self-evaluation are often:**
- precise and focused on improving the experiences of and impact on self, colleagues and young people’s learning and progress
- practice-based rather than just paper-based - there is clear action taken as a result of self-evaluation activities
- able to generate specific strengths and areas for improvement
- detailed and searching in the analysis of young people's learning and progress
- comprehensive in gathering evidence, including from young people and the wider community.
Appendix 8.1c

Effective professional learning is the result of a cycle of self-evaluation:

GTCS Professional Standards

Self evaluation using the GTC Scotland Standards is an integral part of Professional Review and Development leading to the Professional Update process for all teachers. Teachers should use their MyGTCS account to explore the standards (for example viewing a complete standard, comparing two standards side by side or focusing on themes within a standard) in order to self evaluate against them. Through your MyGTCS account, you will be able to interact with the Standards by, for example, highlighting on screen where you feel you meet the Standard (referring to evidence sources) and where there are areas for development. You will be able to update your self evaluation and send it or print it off as a basis for discussion with your line manager.

Possible Reflective Questions (teachers will develop reflective questions appropriate to their own targets and development needs)

Where am I now in relation to the professional knowledge and skills of my current role?

What evidence do I have which supports this and what am I going to do next?

How broad a range of strategies/resources do I currently use to support my self evaluation activities, for example, do I use feedback from colleagues, young people and their families?

How could I make self-evaluation a more central part of my daily activities?

Further information/resources

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningteachingandassessment/professionallearning/clpl/selfevaluation.asp
www.gtcs.org.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets/Areas of Development</th>
<th>Links to:</th>
<th>Professional Learning Activities</th>
<th>Intended Impact</th>
<th>Timescale (if appropriate)</th>
<th>Support, resources &amp; staff development required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) To have more opportunities to take part in ongoing moderation activities</td>
<td>Moderation framework 2.1.5 3.3.1 (P/I/S)</td>
<td>Participate in school working group Research information on Education Scotland Website Work collegiately with colleagues on moderation activities</td>
<td>Clear understanding of practices and principles of moderation (S) Staff feeling reassured of shared standards (C) Shared standards throughout the school. High expectation. (YP)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education Scotland website Cluster schools NAR BTC5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) To gain further knowledge of GIRFEC</td>
<td>2.1.5 2.2.1 CfE entitlement 5 (S)</td>
<td>Attend local training Personal reading – Local authority documentation</td>
<td>Increased knowledge &amp; understanding of GIRFEC (S) Confidence &amp; reassurance (C) Early intervention and appropriate support (YP)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shetland GIRFEC guidance SIC website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Professional Update</td>
<td>3.4.2 (P/I/S)</td>
<td>Become familiar with all areas relating to PU (MyGTCS) through personal reading and attending GTCs October In-service event</td>
<td>To become familiar with all standards, consistently reflecting on my own teaching. Tying all PL to the standards which will lead to improved teaching within the classroom and so improve outcomes for learners. It will also flag up any areas which require further attention allowing me to target these</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shetland PRD guidelines and PU handbook GTCs website PRD preparation and meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8.1e  Shetland Islands Council – Children’s Services - Quality Improvement -Schools  
Professional Review & Development (PRD)  
Professional learning Plan (PLP)

It is the reviewee’s responsibility to decide how many targets/areas of development to take on.

**Evaluation Phase**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Evidence of Impact</th>
<th>Any further development required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>See attached MyGTCS word document</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2)  | I have read the latest information on the web page: [http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children_and_families/GIRFEC.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children_and_families/GIRFEC.asp) and attended the ‘Girfec in Shetland Revised’ 2 day course. I found all the information interesting and I understand and agree with the 10 core components and principles and values behind Getting it Right for every Child. It was useful to work through scenarios with colleagues from other agencies. However, I think that the amount of paperwork required is overwhelming and I’m finding it difficult to keep up with the amount of updates.  
I attended the Girfec Quality Assurance training session. I understand that each service area will carry out quarterly quality assurance checks on random open Girfecs, using survey monkey but that I can also use the quality assurance questions to self-evaluate the Girfecs in my school. | I will need more time and much more practise in the Girfec Process before I feel confident in using this and in supporting other colleagues.  
It will also take time to evaluate the impact on the pupils with Girfecs although I can see the potential of having all agencies working closer together and sharing relevant information. | Yes – working through real life scenarios with ASN teacher and requesting further support from central staff. |
| 3)  | See attached MyGTCS word document | |  |

For reflection and evidence of impact teachers may wish to print information from their MyGTCS online profile

It is the reviewee’s responsibility to type or write up the PLP after the meeting and ensure that a copy has been passed to the reviewer

Signature of Reviewee: ___________________________  Signature of Reviewer: ___________________________  Date: __________________
## Standard for Career Long Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>03/02/2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Details of Activity</strong></td>
<td>Become more familiar with all areas relating to the Professional Update (My GTCS) through trying out the website and attending the GTCS In-service event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Focus 1</strong></td>
<td>3.5.2 Commit to on-going career-long professional learning, including postgraduate study as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Focus 2</strong></td>
<td>1.4 Professional Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection / Impact of Activity</strong></td>
<td>It was good to attend the In-service event, as it gave me a really clear understanding of what the Update is all about. I have been using the website much more and am becoming familiar with the standards; this has also made me think about the standards that I need work on in future and how I can improve my practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>02/12/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Details of Activity</strong></td>
<td>During the Winter term I taught data handling to my P6/7 maths group and devised a final assessment / moderation task. This was then used for a moderation activity with other members of staff in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Focus 1</strong></td>
<td>2.1.1 Develop deep, critically informed knowledge and understanding to enhance skills and abilities in relation to pedagogy, learning and subject knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Focus 2</strong></td>
<td>2.1.2 Develop deep, critically informed knowledge and understanding to enhance skills and abilities in relation to curriculum and assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection / Impact of Activity</strong></td>
<td>This was a really useful activity. I became much more familiar with the SAoLs in maths and was able to plan an effective assessment to show the learners' level of understanding. It was also great to work with colleagues to share examples of learners' work at different levels and to have in-depth discussions about the standards and expectations within and across levels. This experience has made me more confident in being able to assess a learners' work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agenda for Professional Review & Development (PRD) Meetings

1. Review of previous professional learning linking to GTCS Professional Standards
   - Summarise professional learning activities undertaken.
   - Review evidence of impact of professional learning on self, colleagues and young people’s learning and progress.

2. Other successes and achievements linked to GTCS Professional Standards
   - Discuss other key achievements of the teacher and the school as a whole.

3. Plans for the coming year
   - Identify elements of Professional Standards to focus on.
   - Identify professional learning requirements – to meet the needs of the teachers, school and local authority.
   - Agree professional learning activities to be undertaken.
   - Agree support required to carry out professional learning activities.
   - Agree intended impact of planning activities. These could include impact on self, colleagues and young people’s learning and progress.

4. GTCS Requirements
   - Reminder about updating details through MyGTCS account.
   - If appropriate, discussion about date for Professional Update sign off.
Professional Update System

Submission process – guidance for teachers

August 2014
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1 Introduction

This document provides guidance on how to record your professional learning and submit your record for Professional Update sign-off using the secure personalised on-line web based system called MyGTCS.

Professional Update was launched on 18 August 2014 and all fully registered teachers are required to maintain a reflective record of professional learning on an ongoing basis.

Using MyGTCS will allow you to maintain a professional learning record and share this on an ongoing basis with your line manager as part of a system of professional review and development and Professional Update sign-off every 5 years.

MyGTCS has the facility to allow a teacher to share their record by “switching on” or “switching off” which allows their line manager to view their record as part of an ongoing system of professional review and development. The teacher can choose when to share on/off their professional learning record on an ongoing basis and also when to submit their professional learning record as part of the sign-off 5 year process.

MyGTCS Professional Update contains 5 sections:

- Professional Update home page and submission screen
- Professional learning record
- PRD meetings
- Reflective Journal
- Evidence Library

The Professional learning record is all that is shared with a line manager as part of the “share on” process and when submitted for sign-off. All the other screens are personal to the teacher.

On the teacher’s Professional Update “sign-off” year, MyGTCS has a different process from the sharing on/off record which allows the teacher to sign (tick box) a statement confirming they have maintained a reflective record of professional learning and evidence of its impact on thinking and professional actions as part of a PRD process which then sends their professional learning record to their line manager (reviewer) for “sign-off”.

Some employers are using their own systems to record professional learning and if your authority is not using MyGTCS to record professional learning, you will receive a message when you log into MyGTCS to tell you this. You can still use MyGTCS for your own purposes if you wish.

The rest of the guide explains each section in detail.

2 Accessing the System

MyGTCS can be accessed via this link: [www.gtcs.org.uk/GTCS-login](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/GTCS-login)

If you do not have a MyGTCS account, you can apply for one here: [www.gtcs.org.uk/mygtcs-application-form](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/mygtcs-application-form)

Once logged in to MyGTCS, you can access the Professional Update system using the ‘Professional Update’ icon in the top level navigation (Fig 1).
3 Your Professional Update Homepage

This is where you submit your Professional Learning Record for PRD and the Professional Update sign-off process. On the right hand side of the screen you will see a section called ‘My Reviewer’. This displays the details of your line manager / reviewer (the person responsible for confirming your Professional Update), and the status of your submission.

You will need to request a reviewer. Your reviewer will then need to confirm this request and create an association with you.

Once the association has been created between you and your line manager, you can choose whether to give your line manager access to your Professional Learning Record (by choosing to switch on), or remove access to your record by your reviewer (by choosing to switch off).

4 Overview of the Professional Update 5 Yearly Sign-off Submission Process

The following steps outline the basic submission process. More detail for each stage is available in section 5.

1) Teacher completes Professional Learning Record in MyGTCS (as part of ongoing PRD process)

2) Prior to the Professional Update submission being made, the teacher requests an association with their reviewer (or checks that their reviewer is correct). The teacher can request an association by entering their reviewers email address in the My Associations section of their Professional Update homepage.

3) Reviewer associates themselves with the teacher they are confirming Professional Update for by entering the registration number of the teacher into the box in the My Associations section of the Professional Update landing page.
4) Teacher submits their Professional Learning Record as part of Professional Update.

5) Reviewer logs in to MyGTCS, confirms the teacher’s engagement in the Professional Update process, following the discussion with the teacher, which takes place as part of the PRD process.

6) GTC Scotland is notified of the date of Professional Update 5 yearly sign-off and the information recorded is against the teacher’s Register record.

5 Your Reviewer

Your reviewer (line manager) is responsible for confirming your ongoing engagement in professional learning as part of Professional Update and your 5 yearly sign-off. Reviewer details are displayed in the ‘My Reviewer’ section of your homepage (Fig 2).

Fig 2: My Reviewer section

Before you can submit (or share your record) for Professional Update you need to be linked to your reviewer. To do this click the ‘Request Association’ button and enter the name and email address of your reviewer then ‘submit’.

This will send an email to your reviewer asking them to login via a link in the email and link themselves to you (this is shown as ‘create association’). When they have done this their details will display in your ‘My Reviewer’ section (Fig 3).

Fig 3: My Reviewer section with reviewer details

When the share option is off, your reviewer is not able to view your professional learning record.

When the share option is on, your reviewer is able to view your professional learning record. Please note that once “share on” your reviewer can only view your professional learning on screen (reviewer cannot download a word version of your record). As a reviewee, you can download a word document of your professional learning record.
You can also remove the association with a reviewer and create a new association if your line manager changes.

6 Submitting your Professional Record for Professional Update Sign-off

You can submit your Professional Learning Record for Professional Update at any point during your Professional Update year. In practice this will likely take place around the time of the annual Professional Review and Development meeting. The year of your Professional Update together with the year of the last Professional Update (if applicable) is displayed in the Registration Details section of your MyGTCS homepage.

Once you have completed your Professional Learning Record you can choose to submit it to your line manager/reviewer for confirmation, as part of the ongoing PRD process.

**Note:**
You must be associated with a reviewer before you can submit for Professional Update.

The landing page of Professional Update allows you to submit for Professional Update (see Fig 4).

**Fig 4: Submitting for Professional Update Sign-off**

This section asks you to confirm if you wish to submit for Professional Update sign-off using the Professional Learning Record that is part of this system, or using another Professional Learning Record (your local authority for example). Once you have confirmed this, you will have the option to submit for Professional Update using the ‘Submit Professional Learning Record for Professional Update’ button.
Once you have submitted your Professional Learning Record you will notice a status bar along the bottom of the screen indicating that your records have been submitted and the date this was done (see Fig 5).

Fig 5: Submission screen showing status and date of submission

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**Deferring your Professional Update**

You can submit a request to your line manager to defer your Professional Update sign-off. This functionality is only available when you have a reviewer associated and can be found in the bottom right hand section of your Professional Update homepage (See Fig 5). Applying to defer your Professional Update sign-off is only required via MyGTCS if it is your sign-off year.

Clicking the ‘Request Deferral’ button will present a pop-up box asking you to provide a reason for your request. Enter the details and select the ‘Confirm’ button.

Your reviewer will now receive an email containing your details and the details of your request and they will action this. You will receive an email advising you whether your request has been authorised or rejected and the Professional Learning and Development Department at GTC Scotland will then amend your record held on the Register.

Further information about the deferral process can be found in the Professional Update Guidance Notes [www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/professional-development/professional-update-guidance-notes.pdf](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/professional-development/professional-update-guidance-notes.pdf)
8 Feedback

We welcome your feedback on using the system, what issues you’ve experienced and where you think it could be improved. Please email PLD@gtcs.org.uk

9 GTC Scotland Contacts

For enquiries regarding the Professional Update process please contact:

GTC Scotland Professional Learning and Development Department
E: pld@gtcs.org.uk

For technical enquiries, e.g. system unavailable, technical errors etc please contact:

GTC Scotland Web Services
E: webservices@gtcs.org.uk
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.

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Direct web links

Professional Update: www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update

Professional Learning and Development: www.gtcs.org.uk/probation

Fitness to Teach: www.gtcs.org.uk/fitness-to-teach

Probation site: www.in2teaching.org.uk

Latest news: www.teachingscotland.co.uk
Twitter feed @gtcs
Professional Update System

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1 Introduction

This document provides guidance on the GTC Scotland on-line system of Professional Update and is aimed at Reviewers who are required to confirm a teacher’s Professional Update.

2 Accessing the System

The Professional Update system sits behind MyGTCS. MyGTCS is a secure personalised web space provided by GTC Scotland.

MyGTCS can be accessed via this link: www.gtcs.org.uk/GTCS-login

If you do not have a MyGTCS account, you can apply for one here: www.gtcs.org.uk/mygtcs-application-form.

Once logged in to MyGTCS, you can access the Professional Update system using the ‘Professional Update’ icon in the top level navigation (Fig 1).

The Professional Update system includes the following sections:

- Professional Update landing page and submission screen
- Professional Learning Record
- PRD Meetings
- Reflective Journal
- Evidence Library

Quick links to your Professional Update related tasks will also display under the ‘My Tasks’ section of your MyGTCS homepage.

![Fig 1: The Professional Update navigation](image)

You will also see an icon “Research” (which gives access to EBSCO online journals and e-books). You may also have other profile icons depending on your role in the school (such as access to student placement scheme, probationer profiles etc.)

3 Overview of the Submission Process

The following steps outline the basic submission process. More specific detail for each type of user is available in section 4.

| 1) Teacher completes Professional Learning Record in MyGTCS (ongoing). |
2) Prior to the Professional Update submission being made, the teacher requests an association with their reviewer (line manager or other) by entering their reviewers email address in the *My Associations* section of their Professional Update homepage.

3) Reviewer associates themselves with the teacher they are confirming Professional Update for by entering the registration number of the teacher into the box in the *My Associations* section of the Professional Update landing page.

4) Teacher submits their Professional Learning Record as part of Professional Update.

5) Reviewer logs in to MyGTCS, confirms the teacher’s engagement in the Professional Update process, following the discussion with the teacher, which takes place as part of the process.

6) GTC Scotland is notified of the date of Professional Update sign-off and the information recorded against the teacher’s Register record.

### 4 Confirming a Professional Learning Record for Professional Update

Teachers, line managers or others responsible for confirming a teacher’s engagement in the Professional Update process have access to the same screens as teachers, although the content and functionality of these screens differ.

**Note:**
If you are a teacher with responsibility for confirming Professional Update for others, you may also be in the process of confirming your own engagement in Professional Update. In this case you will be able to submit your own Professional Learning Record whilst also reviewing others.
Fig 1: Reviewer’s landing page (for a reviewer who is also completing the Professional Update sign-off process)

The screen is split into several sections:

1) This section provides information about the Professional Update process.
2) This section relates to your own Professional Update. You only need do anything here if you are submitting your own Professional Update and you wish to confirm your engagement in Professional Update using the Professional Learning Record that is part of this system, or using another Professional Learning Record. Once you have confirmed this, you will have the option to submit your Professional Learning Record using the ‘Submit my record for Professional Update’ button. Please note that this button will only be available during your year of Professional Update.
3) This section relates to your own Professional Update. It shows you the name of the person confirming your engagement in the Professional Update process (if applicable). This is likely to be your head teacher or line manager.
4) This section relates to you in your role as Reviewer. It shows you the names of the teachers whose engagement in the Professional Update process you are confirming.
5) This section relates to you in your role as Professional Update reviewer. It allows you to create associations with other teachers you are confirming Professional Update for.

4.1 People I am reviewing

This section shows the name, status and any action required by you in respect of the teacher(s) whose engagement in the Professional Update process you are confirming.

It is your responsibility to ensure the teacher’s Professional Learning Record has been shared with you as part of the Professional Update process, before you confirm Professional Update.

A status can either be:

- Ongoing – no action required by you
- Confirmed – no action required by you
- Submitted – you are required to confirm the teacher’s engagement in the Professional Update process
To view a Professional Learning Record, click the name of the teacher. To return to your Professional Update screen use your browser’s ‘back’ button. You will only be able to view a teacher’s professional learning record if they have either shared it with you using the switch on/off facility or if they have submitted it for sign-off as part of the sign-off process. Please note that once “share on” you can only view your reviewee’s professional learning on screen (a reviewer cannot download a word version of a reviewee’s record). A reviewee can download a word document of their professional learning record.

To confirm a teacher’s Professional Update submission, click the ‘Confirm’ link in the third column.

4.2 Create a new association

When a teacher has added you as their reviewer you will receive an email confirming this. This email contains an important link that you must click on in order to create this association with the teacher. Once you click on the link you must following these instructions:

- Click on the ‘Create new association’ link:

  PEOPLE I AM REVIEWING
  Name     Status     Action     Remove Association

  + CREATE NEW ASSOCIATION

- Enter the registration number of the teacher whose engagement in the Professional Update process you are confirming.

- Click the ‘Find’ button.

```
+ CREATE NEW ASSOCIATION
CREATE NEW ASSOCIATION
Registration Number: [ ] FIND
CONFIRM
```

The name of the teacher associated with that registration number will display as follows:

```
+ CREATE NEW ASSOCIATION
CREATE NEW ASSOCIATION
Registration Number: 940213 FIND
You have selected Joe Bloggs
CONFIRM
```

Hit the ‘Confirm’ button to make the association. This person will now appear in your ‘People I am reviewing’ list.
5  Deferral Requests

Teachers can submit a request to defer their Professional Update. This functionality is only available when they have a reviewer associated with them.

A deferral request only applies to a sign-off year in MyGTCS. Teachers who are not due to sign-off should apply for deferral through local authority guidance. Further information about the deferral process can be found in the Professional Update Guidance Notes (add web link).

When a teacher submits a deferral request you will receive an email advising of this. You are required to login to your MYGTCS account and the deferral request will show along with an ‘Action request’ link in your ‘People I am reviewing’ box.

Clicking the ‘Action request’ link will display a pop-up box with the following message:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHORISE</th>
<th>REJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

You are about to action the request from [teacher name] [registration number] to defer Professional Update until next year. The reason given for the request is:

[reason for request]

Clicking the ‘Authorise’ button will send a confirmation email to the teacher and notification of the deferral to the Professional Learning and Development Department at GTC Scotland. The teacher’s deferral status will also update to show as ‘Authorised’.

Clicking the ‘reject’ button will send a confirmation email to the teacher and the Professional Learning and Development Department and will update the teacher’s deferral status to show as ‘Rejected’.

Your reviewer will now receive an email containing your details and the details of your request and will action this. You will receive an email advising you whether your request has been authorised or rejected and the Professional Learning and Development Department at GTC Scotland will then amend your Register record.

6  Feedback

We welcome your feedback on how you’ve found the system, what issues you’ve experienced and where you think it could be improved. Please email PLD@gtcs.org.uk

7  GTC Scotland Contacts

For enquiries regarding the Professional Update process please contact:

GTC Scotland Professional Learning and Development Department
E: pld@gtcs.org.uk

For technical enquiries, e.g. system unavailable, technical errors etc please contact:

GTC Scotland Web Services
E: services@gtcs.org.uk
GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities

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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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Scottish Charity Number SC006187
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Direct web links

Professional Update: www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update

Professional Learning and Development: www.gtcs.org.uk/probation

Fitness to Teach: www.gtcs.org.uk/fitness-to-teach

Probation site: www.in2teaching.org.uk

Latest news: www.teachingscotland.co.uk

Twitter feed @gtcs