



EDUCATION SERVICES

Policy: Professional Update and Professional Review and Development

Authors: Geraldine Armstrong & Iain McDermott

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1. Introduction

Professional Review and Development (PRD) is the vehicle through which teachers' skills, knowledge and practice are developed and improved. It provides access to support, advice and professional development opportunities. Professional Update is now the overarching process, which supports teacher development.

2. The West Lothian Context

West Lothian Council values its staff and aims to ensure that staff can develop their skills, knowledge and expertise. The council understands that PRD is an important part of maintaining and improving professional standards for teachers which will result in improving pupils' experiences.

The PRD framework, in common with the Appraisal and Development Review (ADR) framework which applies to non-teaching staff and sets out the council's overall approach to the systemic review of employee performance and development, supports outcomes 1-3 of the council's People Strategy:

- Engaging and motivating our employees
- Ensuring the Council is recognised as a good employer
- Helping our employees to succeed

This policy provides information about PRD for all teaching staff, with the exception of probationers who take part in the Induction Scheme.

Time for PRD is incorporated into a teacher's working time agreement and, as such, all teachers are entitled to a review of their work on an annual basis. Through this process professional development needs are jointly identified with the reviewer, normally the teacher's line manager and corresponding professional learning is planned.

It should be noted that the PRD process should not be used to address concerns about a teacher's underperformance. Should such concerns arise, they should be addressed through existing and separate competence procedures ([Teacher Competency Framework for Managing under Performance](#)).

3. Principles of PRD

The following principles underpin [guidelines](#) for all GTCS registered teachers, including temporary and supply teachers:

- The Professional Update and Professional Review and Development Policy and principles are shared with all teaching staff.
- PRD is based on self-evaluation by individual teachers and other registered with GTCS.
- All teachers are committed to maintaining and improving standards throughout their careers.
- PRD is a continuing process. Professional dialogue should be on-going.
- An atmosphere of trust, support and challenge is developed between the reviewee and their reviewer.
- PRD is included in quality improvement processes particularly with a view to noting impact on learners.
- All teachers' needs are identified and supported and take account of the appropriate professional standard as well as relevant improvement plans.
- PRD is monitored and evaluated appropriately.
- PRD supports GTCS Professional Update processes.
- PRD is taken into account in the working time agreement.
- The reviewer is normally the line manager, who has knowledge of the reviewee's work. Line managers are encouraged to adopt a coaching and mentoring approach.
- PRD arrangements should be non-bureaucratic, supported by online technologies.
- Peripatetic teachers should have their review carried out by the Head Teacher of their base school.
- Temporary and supply reviewees should request their annual PRD meeting with a school that has knowledge of their practice. They should have access to the council's CPD Manager and can request engagement in professional learning through this online resource. Only permanent staff can attend university-based courses funded by West Lothian Council.

4. PRD Implementation

- PRD is part of a continuous process of support for all registered teachers including, supply, temporary and peripatetic staff. It involves ongoing discussion between teachers and their line manager in addition to an annual review. All Teachers (Reviewees) should take responsibility for recording and evaluating the impact of their professional learning and do not need to wait until a PRD meeting to record information relating to professional learning.
- Support and challenge should be provided within an atmosphere of trust and collegiality.
- It is important that all staff should prepare thoroughly for PRD reviews by evaluating their practice against the relevant GTCS standard. Self-evaluation tools to support the PRD process may be accessed through the following GTCS links:
 - [What is Professional Learning?](#)
 - [Professional Review and Development](#)

5. Requirements for PRD

- The reviewer and reviewee should jointly agree professional learning needs to support the individual PRD plan and specify action to be taken to meet these needs. Appropriate monitoring and evaluation with timescales should be detailed in the individual PRD plan.

- West Lothian Council's expectation is that staff will use MyPL to record PRD meetings and note their professional learning record and areas for development.
- Every 5 years (at the sign off year), the reviewee and reviewer should jointly confirm that the reviewee has engaged in on-going professional development and maintained a Professional Learning Record, as part of the PRD process.

6. Roles and responsibilities:

Head of Service should ensure that:

- GTCS Professional Update requirement and the authority's Professional Review and Development Policy are communicated throughout the education service.
- The policy is linked to the professional standards for teachers and there is an appropriate provision of professional learning opportunities and resources, including budgetary, to enable career-long professional learning.
- On-going evaluation and monitoring of the PRD process takes place.
- Reviews of head teachers and managers of teams are undertaken by appropriate officers.

Reviewers should ensure that:

- The Professional Update and Professional Review and Development Policy are communicated to all teaching staff in their establishment.
- The policy is applied consistently.
- Professional development is promoted for all teachers and they are involved in PRD.
- PRD is an integral part of the management of the establishment. It is crucial that they have personal knowledge of the work of the member of staff, through on-going dialogue, monitoring and support.
- PRD meetings take place within the working time agreement.
- When identifying a time for PRD, account is taken of other planning processes, priorities, staff availability, professional development opportunities and workload.
- Personal development priorities are based on the appropriate GTCS standard and linked to relevant improvement plans and priorities where relevant.
- Emerging professional development needs are identified, and action is taken to fulfil these, including individual, departmental, school and cluster level.

Reviewees should ensure that:

- PRD meetings are planned for in line with school calendars, working time agreements and request one if it has not.
- They engage in up to 35 hours of additional professional learning over the school session out with the contractual 35 hour working week. (*Pro-rata for part-time teaching staff*).
- They have maintained a reflective record of professional learning and evidence of its impact on thinking and professional actions
- Personal details on their MyPL account are kept up to date.
- They take full responsibility for their professional update, including informing their line manager of their sign-off year.
- The whole process should be completed by the end of June of their sign-off year.

7. Coaching approaches for PRD

Coaching approaches have been promoted for some time in West Lothian and are endorsed as an effective strategy for conducting productive PRD meetings between line managers and their staff.

A reviewer can use questions, discussions, guided activities and problem-solving tools to address issues and resolve problems. The purpose of this approach is to improve performance through empowering the reviewee to learn and develop.

The benefits of coaching can include:

- thinking more clearly about their own professional development
- feeling valued and listened to
- recognising and appreciating their skills and resources
- increasing their range of options
- clarifying how they'd like things to be as they get even better
- understanding what they need to do to get there
- becoming more creative and optimistic
- feeling more positive and confident about change.

Further information on coaching is available on the [GTCS](#) and [EDSPLL](#) websites.

8. Engagement in the Professional Update Process

West Lothian Council, in line with GTCS guidance and recommendations follows a structured approach towards Professional Update which maintains consistency and equity for all participants in the process. Instances of non-engagement in Professional Update and subsequent procedures for re-engagement will be supported through this process. (See appendix 1)

9. Deferrals and bringing forward Professional Update

There may be circumstances which may hinder the completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale including career breaks, extended illness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, and occasional supply work, for which extensions to the five year sign-off period may be required. If a teacher meets the specific criteria but is unable to complete the process in the designated year, then there will be an opportunity to make a deferral request. Deferrals will normally be granted for a period of one year. Line managers will complete the request for deferral and submit to the GTC Scotland.

There may also be occasion to bring forward a reviewee's Professional Update year, for example due to retiral, maternity leave or secondment. If this is the case, reviewees should inform their line manager in the first instance.

Guidance on the deferral process can be found [here](#) on the GTC Scotland website.

10. Appeals Process

Where there is any dispute or disagreement concerning any aspect of the reviewee PRD process, which cannot be resolved between themselves and their reviewer, the matter should be referred to the reviewer's line manager. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, then the council's normal grievance procedures should be followed. Further information on this process can be found in the HR Toolkit.

APPENDIX 1 - FLOW CHART FOR PROFESSIONAL UPDATE

September - HT receives email from Education Services notifying any teachers in the ir establishment who are due sign off by 1st July the following year. Individual staff members receive reminder email/letter from GTCS.

