

DRIVING FORWARD PROFESSIONAL  
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS



## **The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning: supporting the development of teacher professional learning**

December 2012



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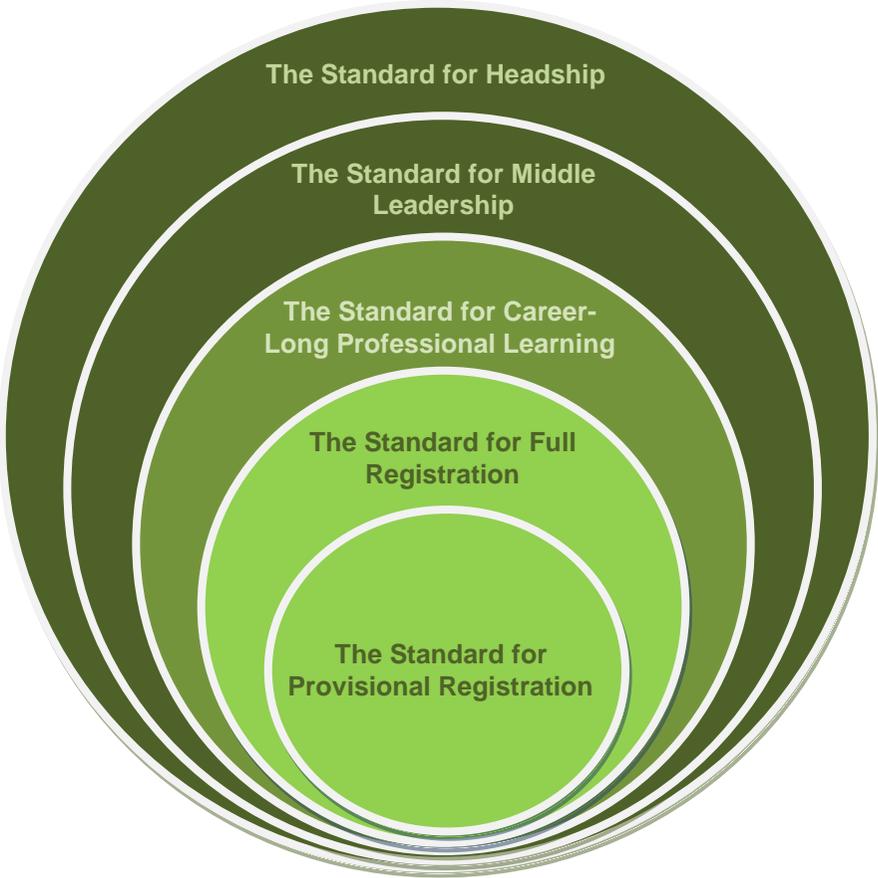
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# The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning



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## Introduction

The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning supersedes the Standard for Chartered Teacher (GTC Scotland 2009) and is part of the suite of GTC Scotland's Professional Standards which also includes The Standards for Registration and The Standards for Leadership and Management. The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning is based on sound national and international research, as well as on the successes of the Standard for Chartered Teachers and related programmes of professional learning.

Having attained the Standard for Full Registration, teachers will continue to develop their expertise and experience across all areas of their professional practice through appropriate and sustained career-long professional learning. The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning has been developed to support teachers choosing to reflect on this Standard as part of their professional learning. As they progress through their careers this Standard will help them to identify, plan and develop their own professional learning needs and to ensure continuing development of professional practice.

The standards are underpinned by the themes of values, sustainability and leadership. Professional values are at the core of the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning. They are integral to, and demonstrated through, all our professional relationships and practices.

'Learning for Sustainability' is a whole-school commitment that helps the school and its wider community develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and practices needed to take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable future in a just and equitable world. Learning for sustainability has been embedded within the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning to support teachers in actively embracing and promoting principles and practices of sustainability in all aspects of their work.

GTC Scotland recognises that effective leadership depends on the principles of collegiality. All teachers should have opportunities to be leaders. They lead learning for, and with, all learners with whom they engage. They also work with and support the development of colleagues and other partners. The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning includes a focus on teacher leadership and leadership for learning.



Elements of all of the Standards are organised into inter-related categories with Professional Values and Personal Commitment at the heart. These elements are inherently linked to each other in the development of the teacher, and one aspect does not exist independently of the others. It is this inter-relationship among all of the categories which develops the professionalism of the teacher and leads to appropriate professional action and growth.

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## The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning

Teachers work in a complex and dynamic society. This means that teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to be critically informed with professional values, knowledge and actions that ensure positive impact on learners and learning. Teachers therefore need opportunities to develop in order to address changing demands. Evidence from existing practice in Scotland, as well as national and international practice demonstrates that:

*“The most successful education systems invest in developing their teachers as reflective, accomplished and enquiring professionals who are able, not simply to teach successfully in relation to current external expectations, but who have the capacity to engage fully with the complexities of education and to be key actors in shaping and leading educational change.” (Teaching Scotland’s Future, Scottish Government, 2011, p4)*

To be effective and to develop areas of accomplishment and leadership throughout a career in this environment is dependent on a professional commitment to career-long learning. Scottish education is committed to supporting and advancing career-long professional learning for all teachers.

The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning describes the advanced professional knowledge and pedagogical expertise that registered teachers will develop and maintain as they continue to progress in teaching and the education profession. The standard provides an opportunity for teachers to progress, enrich, develop and enhance their practice, expertise, knowledge, skills and professional values. It will support teachers as they develop as reflective, accomplished, and enquiring professionals who are able to engage with the complexities of teaching and learning, the changing contemporary world of their learners, and the world beyond the profession and its institutions, in order to enhance the learning experiences for all learners.

Underpinning the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning are the core principles of practitioner enquiry. In practice, this involves teachers having an enquiring disposition at the core of their professional practice. This means thinking critically and questioning their own educational beliefs, assumptions, values and practices. They will create knowledge to enhance, progress and lead the learning experiences of all their learners and work collaboratively with colleagues. The teacher as an adaptive expert is open to change and engages with new and emerging ideas about teaching and learning within the ever-evolving curricular and pedagogical contexts in which teaching and learning takes place.

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## Purpose

The Standard for Full Registration is, and will continue to be, the baseline standard of professional competence which applies to teachers throughout their careers. The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning is not designed as a benchmark of teacher competence; rather it is distinctive in that it is designed to inform and support teachers to develop and improve their learning and practice in a systematic way which reflects their growing expertise and their ability to work in different contexts.

The focus should not be on teachers achieving the standard as the culmination of accomplishment but instead on teachers concentrating on developing particular specialisms leading to accomplishment in specific areas of pedagogical and subject expertise. Alongside the processes of Professional Review and Development (PRD) and Professional Update (PU), this standard, for those who choose to reflect against it, is for on-going, rigorous, critical and clearly focused professional discussions about professional learning, practice and career development. Teachers engaging with this standard may be engaging with Masters level learning and/or Masters Qualifications. GTC Scotland recommends that the GTC Scotland Professional Recognition Framework is used to identify and provide opportunities for receiving recognition for specific areas of accomplishment in teaching and learning or academic study linked to the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning.

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# 1 Professional Values and Personal Commitment

The Professional Values and Personal Commitment should be read in conjunction with the GTC Scotland Code of Professionalism and Conduct (COPAC).

Professional values are at the core of the Professional Standards. The educational experiences of all our learners are shaped by the values and dispositions of all those who work to educate them. Values are complex and are the ideals by which we shape our practice as professionals. Starting with us as individuals, values extend to all those for whom we are responsible and to the world in which we live.

They drive an unswerving personal commitment to all learners' intellectual, social and ethical growth and well-being. They are integral to, and demonstrated through, all our professional relationships and practices and all that we do to meet our professional commitments and obligations as teachers registered with GTC Scotland.

Professionalism also implies the need to ask critical questions of educational policies and practices and to examine our attitudes and beliefs. Values, and the connections between values and practices, need to be regularly re-appraised over the course of teachers' careers as society and the needs of learners change and as understanding develops. This is central to the adaptability, responsiveness and relevance of the profession.

The Professional Values and Personal Commitment core to being a teacher are:

## ❖ Social Justice

- Embracing locally and globally the educational and social values of sustainability, equality and justice and recognising the rights and responsibilities of future as well as current generations.
- Committing to the principles of democracy and social justice through fair, transparent, inclusive and sustainable policies and practices in relation to: age, disability, gender and gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion and belief and sexual orientation.
- Valuing as well as respecting social, cultural and ecological diversity and promoting the principles and practices of local and global citizenship for all learners.
- Demonstrating a commitment to engaging learners in real world issues to enhance learning experiences and outcomes, and to encourage learning our way to a better future.

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- Respecting the rights of all learners as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and their entitlement to be included in decisions regarding their learning experiences and have all aspects of their well-being developed and supported.

❖ **Integrity**

- Demonstrating openness, honesty, courage and wisdom.
- Critically examining personal and professional attitudes and beliefs and challenging assumptions and professional practice.
- Critically examining the connections between personal and professional attitudes and beliefs, values and practices to effect improvement and, when appropriate, bring about transformative change in practice.

❖ **Trust and Respect**

- Acting and behaving in ways that develop a culture of trust and respect through, for example, being trusting and respectful of others within the school, and with all those involved in influencing the lives of learners in and beyond the learning community.
- Providing and ensuring a safe and secure environment for all learners within a caring and compassionate ethos and with an understanding of wellbeing.
- Demonstrating a commitment to motivating and inspiring learners, acknowledging their social and economic context, individuality and specific learning needs and taking into consideration barriers to learning.

❖ **Professional Commitment**

- Engaging with all aspects of professional practice and working collegiately with all members of our educational communities with enthusiasm, adaptability and constructive criticality.
- Committing to lifelong enquiry, learning, professional development and leadership as core aspects of professionalism and collaborative practice.

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## 2 Professional Knowledge and Understanding, Professional Skills and Abilities

This section outlines the knowledge and understanding and skills and abilities of career-long professional learning. These can be used by all teachers as they develop through their careers and are in addition to those outlined in the Standards for Registration.

In defining the professional knowledge, skills and abilities and professional actions, consideration has been given to the construction of teaching as multidimensional which encapsulates a range of skills and dispositions. This requires the teacher of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be able to adapt to changing circumstances and to develop understandings in this dynamic context by building knowledge, enquiring into practice, leading and working with colleagues and adopting a critical stance to their own practice and learning.

### 2.1 Professional Knowledge and Understanding

Teachers working with this standard are expected to develop deep, critically informed knowledge and understanding to enhance skills and abilities in relation to the key areas of career-long professional learning:

- ❖ Pedagogy, learning and subject knowledge
- ❖ Curriculum and assessment
- ❖ Enquiry and research
- ❖ Educational contexts and current debates in policy, education and practice
- ❖ Sustaining and developing professional learning
- ❖ Learning for sustainability.

### 2.2 Professional Skills and Abilities

Teachers working with this standard are expected to develop and apply their knowledge, skills and expertise through enquiry and sustained professional learning to:

- ❖ deepen and develop subject, curricular, and pedagogic knowledge to be able to lead learners and the learning of colleagues;
- ❖ question, develop and account for practice in critically informed ways and provide an informed rationale for professional actions;
- ❖ systematically investigate, analyse and evaluate the impact of practice;
- ❖ critically question and challenge educational assumptions, beliefs and values of self and system;
- ❖ critically engage with a range of educational literature, research and policy to make meaningful links to inform and change practice, where appropriate;
- ❖ work to create, contribute to, and lead a collegiate culture, through collaborative enquiry, peer observation with constructive feedback, professional dialogue and debate;
- ❖ work collaboratively across disciplines, professions and communities, locally and globally.

### 3 The Professional Actions in Career-Long Professional Learning

The key areas of career-long professional learning are:

- (i) Pedagogy, learning and subject knowledge;
- (ii) Curriculum and assessment;
- (iii) Enquiry and research;
- (iv) Educational contexts and current debates in policy, education and practice;
- (v) Sustaining and developing professional learning;
- (vi) Learning for sustainability.

Key Area	Professional Actions
<b>Pedagogy, Learning and Subject Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• demonstrate deep subject knowledge and pedagogical leadership;</li><li>• lead curriculum development with a deep understanding of the place of subject knowledge and the wider purposes of education;</li><li>• demonstrate a critical understanding of approaches to teaching and learning, pedagogy and practice;</li><li>• deploy an enhanced understanding of pedagogy and how constructive relationships with learners can be developed;</li><li>• demonstrate a critical understanding of digital technologies and how these can be used to support learning;</li><li>• understand and develop the most appropriate contexts and environments for learning including outdoor learning, and be able to apply appropriate pedagogies for these environments.</li></ul>
<b>Curriculum and Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understand and apply the principles of curriculum and assessment design to address changing educational needs;</li><li>• lead and collaborate with others to plan innovative curricular programmes;</li><li>• lead and work with others to ensure effective practice in the assessment of learning, including a deep knowledge and understanding of the policies and practices of assessment as required by awarding bodies.</li></ul>

<b>Key Area</b>	<b>Professional Actions</b>
<b>Enquiry and Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop and apply expertise, knowledge and understanding of research and impact on education;</li> <li>• develop and apply expertise, knowledge, understanding and skills to engage in practitioner enquiry to inform pedagogy, learning and subject knowledge;</li> <li>• lead and participate in collaborative practitioner enquiry.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational contexts and current debates in policy, education and practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and explore the contexts and complexity in which teachers operate and the dynamic and complex role(s) of professionals within the educational community;</li> <li>• actively consider and critically question the development(s) of policy in education;</li> <li>• develop culture where learners meaningfully participate in decisions related to their learning and school;</li> <li>• develop and apply political literacy and political insight in relation to professional practice, educational change and policy development.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustaining and Developing Professional Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop skills of rigorous and critical self-evaluation, reflection and enquiry including how to investigate and evidence impact on learners and professional practice;</li> <li>• commit to on-going career-long professional learning, including postgraduate study as appropriate;</li> <li>• lead and contribute to the professional learning of all colleagues, including students and probationers.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning for Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the environmental, social and economic conditions of learners to inform teaching and learning;</li> <li>• have a critical understanding of and engage with the ways in which natural, social, cultural, political and economic systems function and are interconnected;</li> <li>• develop the knowledge, skills and practices needed to take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable future in a just and equitable world;</li> <li>• connect learners to their dependence on the natural world and develop their sense of belonging to both the local and global community.</li> </ul>

*GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities*

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## Direct weblinks

**Main site:**

[www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk)

**Probation department:**

[www.gtcs.org.uk/probation](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/probation)

**Probation site for teachers:**

[www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk](http://www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk)

**Registration department:**

[www.gtcs.org.uk/registration](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/registration)

**Professional Update:**

[www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update)

**Professional recognition:**

[www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-recognition](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-recognition)

**Fitness to Teach:**

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**Research:**

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