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SCOTLAND  
GENERAL TEACHING  
COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

# **The Standard for Provisional Registration**

**Mandatory Requirements for Registration  
with the General Teaching Council for Scotland**

**Formal Enactment August 2021**

# Contents

Introduction .....	3
1 Being a Teacher in Scotland .....	4
1.1 Professional Values .....	4
1.2 Professional Commitment .....	5
1.3 Standard for Provisional Registration .....	6
2 Professional Knowledge and Understanding .....	7
2.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy.....	7
2.2 Professional Responsibilities.....	8
3 Professional Skills and Abilities .....	9
3.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy.....	9
3.2 The Learning Context.....	10
3.3 Professional Learning .....	11

# Introduction

## Professional Standards for Teachers in Scotland

The Professional Standards, with professional values at the heart, support and promote partnership, leadership, enquiry and professional learning. They describe teacher professionalism in Scotland, our 'way of being'. Professional Standards for teachers in Scotland have multiple purposes:

- to create a shared language for teaching professionals;
- as a benchmark for professional competency;
- to develop and enhance professionalism;
- to support career-long professional growth;
- to provide a framework for Initial Teacher Education, probation and leadership pathways and programmes; and
- to ensure and enhance public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

Professional Standards for teachers were first established in Scotland in 2000. They were reformed in 2012 and enacted in 2013 as a reconceptualised model of teacher professionalism supported by the introduction of **Professional Update**. The discussion to review the 2012 Professional Standards began in 2017 and concluded in a set of refreshed and restructured Professional Standards with an enactment date of 2 August 2021.

The **Standard for Provisional Registration** is the **benchmark** of competence required of all student teachers at the end of Initial Teacher Education who are seeking provisional registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland). **This Professional Standard outlines what is required to become a teacher in Scotland.**

The **Standard for Full Registration** is the foundation of the Professional Standards and is the **benchmark** of competence required of all registered teachers in Scotland. This Professional Standard is the gateway to the profession and constitutes the teaching standards in which learners, parents, the profession itself and the wider community can have confidence. **This Professional Standard encompasses what it is to be a teacher in Scotland.**

The **Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning** provides an **aspirational and/or developmental** framework for teachers. It describes the advanced professional knowledge and pedagogical expertise that registered teachers could develop and maintain as they continue to progress in teaching and the education profession. **This Professional Standard supports the professional growth of teachers in Scotland.**

The **Standard for Middle Leadership** and **The Standard for Headship** provide **aspirational and/or developmental frameworks** for teachers in or considering leadership roles. They outline the strategic vision, professional knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills and abilities and professional actions that support teachers in leadership roles. **These Professional Standards provide a framework for professional growth for teachers in leadership roles.**

Consequently, they have some additional purposes:

- support for self-evaluation and reflection for teachers in, and aspiring to, formal leadership roles in our schools;
- informing the process of recruitment and selection; and
- contributing to dialogue about leadership and management.

The **Standard for Headship** has the additional purpose of being a requirement for teachers permanently employed in headteacher roles from August 2020.

The suite of Professional Standards is underpinned by the interdependent themes of professional values, Learning for Sustainability and leadership. The Professional Standards provide the framework for all teachers in Scotland to enhance their professionalism and ensure rigour and challenge that supports a resilient and enabled profession confident in the skills, knowledge and values needed to enable Scotland's young people to develop skills for learning, life and work.

Scotland's Professional Standards actively support, embrace and promote the principles and practices of sustainability across all aspects. This means understanding and valuing environment, culture and heritage, developing a sense of place and belonging to the local, national and global community. It also means having a deep connection to the natural world and understanding the significance of the choices we make - now and in the future.

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

# 1 Being a Teacher in Scotland

Our increasingly interconnected and rapidly changing world faces many social, environmental and economic challenges, and an effective, responsive and inclusive education system is vital if we are to address these. Engaged, reflective, empowered and skilled teachers and learners acknowledge Scotland's place in the world, our history, our differences and diversity, and our culture based on social justice. Scotland's teachers help to embed sustainable and socially just practices in order to flourish as a nation.

The **Professional Standards** outline what it means to become, to be and to grow as a teacher in Scotland. A commitment to the **professional values of social justice, trust and respect and integrity** are at the heart of the Professional Standards and underpin our relationships, thinking and professional practice in Scotland.

The educational experiences of all our children and young people are shaped by the professional values and dispositions of all those who work to educate them. Values are complex: they are the ideals by which teachers shape their practice as professionals. Starting with teachers as individuals, values extend to our learners, our colleagues and community and to the world in which we live.

Professional values help to develop our professional identity and underpin a deep commitment to all learners' cognitive, social and emotional growth and wellbeing. They provide the foundation to support and encourage teachers to see the whole child or young person and their needs. They are integral to, and demonstrated through, all our professional relationships, thinking and actions and all that we do to meet our **professional commitment** as teachers registered with GTC Scotland.

As part of **teacher professionalism**, professional values are required to be enacted in everyday practice both within and outwith the educational establishment. They support us to ask critical questions of educational theories, policies and practices and to examine our own attitudes and beliefs. Values, and the connections between values and actions, require regular reflection over the course of teachers' careers as society and the needs of learners change and as understanding develops. Our commitment to career-long professional learning is a critical part of developing our professionalism. Enquiring and collaborative professionalism is a powerful force in developing teachers' agency and delivering our commitment to engaging children, young people, their families and communities in the education process.

## 1.1 Professional Values

### Social Justice

Social justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities.

- Promoting health and wellbeing of self, colleagues and the children and young people in my care.
- Building and fostering positive relationships in the learning community.
- Embracing locally the global educational and social values of sustainability, equality, equity, and justice and recognising children's rights.
- 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.
- Committing to social justice through fair, transparent, inclusive, and sustainable policies and practices in relation to protected characteristics, (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation) and intersectionality.
- Valuing, as well as respecting, social, cultural, religious, and racial diversity and promoting the principles and practices of local and global citizenship for all learners.
- Demonstrating a commitment to motivating, and including all learners, understanding the influence of gender, social, cultural, racial, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds on experiences of learning, taking account of specific learning needs and seeking to reduce barriers to learning.
- Demonstrating a commitment to supporting learners who are experiencing or who have experienced trauma, children and young people from a care experienced background and understanding responsibilities as a corporate parent.
- Understanding and challenging discrimination in all its forms, particularly that which is defined by the Equality Act.

## Trust and Respect

Trust is a belief; respect is that trust in action. A relationship based on trust and respect requires everyone to take responsibility for their actions.

- Promoting and engendering a rights-respecting culture and the ethical use of authority associated with one's professional roles.
- Acting and behaving in ways that develop a culture of trust and respect.
- Understanding, acknowledging, and respecting the contribution of others in positively influencing the lives of learners.
- Understanding wellbeing and the importance of positive and purposeful relationships to provide and ensure a safe and secure environment for all learners and colleagues within a caring and compassionate ethos.
- Respecting individual difference and supporting learners' understanding of themselves, others and their contribution to the development and sustainability of a diverse and inclusive society.

## Integrity

Integrity is the practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values.

- Demonstrating kindness, honesty, courage, and wisdom.
- Acting within the Professional Code for Scotland's teachers.
- Being truthful and trustworthy.
- Critically examining professional beliefs, values and attitudes of self and others in the context of collegiate working.
- Challenging assumptions, biases and professional practice, where appropriate.

## 1.2 Professional Commitment

Making a professional commitment to learning and learners that is compatible with the aspiration of achieving a sustainable and equitable world embodies what it is to be a teacher in Scotland. This means teachers commit to living the professional values and engage in lifelong learning, reflection, enquiry, leadership of all and collaborative practice as key aspects of their professionalism. This commitment to personal learning and growth, to the growth of learners, and to helping support that of colleagues, is demonstrated through engagement with all aspects of professional practice. It is demonstrated by working collegially, in English or the Gaelic medium with all members of our learning communities with enthusiasm, adaptability, critical thinking and associated constructive, professional dialogue.

A core component of teachers' professional commitment is understanding the needs of learners with additional support needs including: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD); Autism; Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia) (DCD); Dyslexia; and Tourette syndrome. Teachers recognise, see and acknowledge the value in everyone and have a deep awareness of the need for culturally responsive pedagogies. They promote equality and diversity, paying careful attention to the needs of learners from diverse groups and in upholding children's rights.

Upholding the professional values of social justice, trust and respect and integrity requires a commitment to leadership that inspires confidence and encourages aspiration. This commitment underpins leadership of learning in all contexts and change for improvement. It values the contribution of others, challenges biases and assumptions and applies critical thinking to make effective decisions, in the interests of maintaining and improving the quality of education and leading to improved outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland.

The professional commitment of teachers in Scotland is to:

- develop deep knowledge of learning and teaching;
- critically examine how our teaching impacts on learners;
- use evidence collaboratively to inform teacher judgement and next steps for learners.

### 1.3 Standard for Provisional Registration

**Professional Values** and **Professional Commitment** are at the core of the **Standard for Provisional Registration**. They are integral to, and demonstrated through, all our professional relationships and practices. They are about doing well by ourselves, others and the world in which we live. The personal and professional qualities of sustainability and social justice, integrity, trust and respect and professional commitment are crucial if we are to inspire and prepare learners for success in our complex, interdependent and rapidly changing world.

'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 Standards for Registration to support teachers in actively embracing and promoting principles and practices of sustainability in all aspects of their work.

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 Standards for Registration include a focus on leadership for learning.

The **Standard for Provisional Registration** specifies what is expected of a student teacher at the end of **Initial Teacher Education** who is seeking provisional registration with GTC Scotland. It also acts as one of the set of subject benchmark statements for professional qualifications in Scotland developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Having gained this Professional Standard, all provisionally registered teachers continue their professional learning journey by moving towards the attainment of the Standard for Full Registration.

The scope of this document is limited to defining expectations of student teachers and does not address in detail how judgements will or should be made. It is not intended that the Professional Illustrations should be used as a checklist. In broad terms, the person reviewing the work of a teacher needs to be reassured that the capabilities described by the Professional Standard are achieved. Where it is thought that further development is needed, the Professional Illustrations provide a focus for what needs to be done.

The Professional Standards are organised into inter-related categories with **Professional Values** and **Professional Commitment** at the heart. These categories are inherently linked to each other in the development of teachers, and one aspect does not exist independently of the others. It is this inter-relationship among all of the categories which develops a teacher's understanding, practice and professionalism. During the early phase of a teacher's career, there should be clear evidence of the development and consolidation of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities.

# 2 Professional Knowledge and Understanding

## 2.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy

### 2.1.1 Have knowledge and understanding of Pedagogical Theories and Professional Practice

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- pedagogical theories and draw on these appropriately to inform:
  - curriculum design and content where appropriate taking account of the Gaelic medium;
  - classroom organisation, learning environment and structures;
  - planning, learning and teaching and assessment;
  - interdisciplinary learning;
  - outdoor learning, including direct experience of nature and other learning within and beyond school boundaries
  - additional support needs;
- the stages of learners' cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and psychological development and their influence on learning and wellbeing; and
- digital technologies to support learning.

### 2.1.2 Have knowledge and understanding of Research and Engagement in Practitioner Enquiry

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- how to access and apply relevant findings from educational research to develop an enquiring stance; and
- how to engage appropriately in the ethical investigation of practice.

### 2.1.3 Have knowledge and understanding of Curriculum Design

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- principles of curriculum design and how these can be applied in context;
- theory and practical skills required in curricular areas as set out in current national and local guidelines;
- processes used to develop the curriculum;
- curriculum content and its relevance to the education of every learner;
- interdisciplinary learning between curricular areas e.g. literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, Learning for Sustainability and digital literacy;
- the skills and competencies that comprise teacher digital literacy and know how to use digital technologies to enhance teaching and learning; and
- the need to take account of learners with additional support needs.

### 2.1.4 Have knowledge and understanding of Planning for Assessment, Teaching and Learning

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- how to plan for effective assessment, teaching and learning across different contexts;
- approaches to assessment, recording and reporting as an integral part of learning and teaching;
- national assessment requirements and requirements of other relevant awarding and accrediting bodies; and
- how to use feedback to engage learners in dialogue about their progress and next steps.

## 2.2 Professional Responsibilities

### 2.2.1 Have knowledge and understanding of Education Systems

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the principal international influences on Scottish education;
- current, relevant legislation, policies and guidance in relation to the teacher's role;
- pastoral and legal responsibilities, for example, in relation to equality, diversity, additional support needs, child protection, and wellbeing;
- frameworks, systems and processes to support and enhance teacher professionalism; and
- biases and their impact on people and practices and challenge these.

### 2.2.2 Have a knowledge and understanding of Learning Communities

#### Professional Illustration

As a student teacher you are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the roles and responsibilities of teachers in establishing and sustaining positive and purposeful relationships across the learning community;
- the distinctive culture, context and ethos of the learning community including Gaelic medium ethos where appropriate; and
- the role of local, regional and national bodies in relation to the context.



# 3 Professional Skills and Abilities

## 3.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy

### 3.1.1 Plan effectively to meet learners' needs

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- plan coherent, progressive and engaging teaching programmes which address the needs of learners;
  - plan learning in accordance with current curriculum guidance including Gaelic medium education where appropriate;
  - identify the potential barriers to learning and plan differentiated and appropriately challenging learning experiences to ensure learning is accessible for every learner;
  - communicate appropriately with every learner, modelling and promoting competence and confidence in literacy, numeracy and digital literacy; and
  - ensure teaching builds confidence and promotes the progress of every learner.

### 3.1.2 Utilise pedagogical approaches and resources

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- create meaningful contexts for learners through a range of different learning environments;
  - employ teaching strategies and resources, including digital approaches, to meet the needs and abilities of every learner;
  - use self-evaluation and professional learning to improve practice;
  - use a variety of questioning techniques and a range of digital and traditional approaches to enhance learning and teaching; and
  - create opportunities for learning to be transformative in terms of challenging assumptions and expanding world views.

### 3.1.3 Utilise partnerships for learning and wellbeing

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- contribute to a rights-respecting culture where learners can meaningfully participate in decisions related to their learning, wellbeing, learning environment and their school;
  - create and sustain effective working relationships with colleagues, parents/carers, families and the wider school community and partner agencies where appropriate, to support learning and wellbeing across the school;
  - practise self-care and support the wellbeing of others, seeking support where necessary;
  - develop partnerships which:
    - support decision-making that is compatible with a sustainable future in a just and equitable world;
    - connect learners to their dependence on the natural world and develop their sense of belonging to both the local and global community; and
    - connect relevance of learning to skills for life, learning and work.

**3.1.4 Employ assessment, recording and reporting as an integral part of the teaching process to support and enhance learning****Professional Illustration**

As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:

- record, analyse and use assessment data to evaluate learning and teaching;
- use the results of assessment to identify development needs at class, group and individual level;
- use a range of differentiated assessment strategies that ensures support and challenge for all learners;
- use appropriate formative and summative assessment strategies to provide opportunities for challenge and growth appropriate to the needs of every learner and to meet the requirements of the curriculum and awarding and accrediting bodies; and
- contribute to clear, informative reports for parents/carers and the school which discuss progress in learning in a sensitive and constructive way.

**3.2 The Learning Context****3.2.1 Appropriately organise and manage learning****Professional Illustration**

As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:

- create a safe, caring and purposeful learning environment which is welcoming and inclusive, well managed and well organised;
- plan and organise effectively to facilitate whole-class lessons, group and individual work and promote independent learning;
- use a range of opportunities that stimulate and reflect ongoing learning in varied and dynamic learning environments;
- enable learners to make use of well-chosen resources, including digital technologies to enhance learning, teaching and assessment, as appropriate;
- create opportunities for learning to be transformative in terms of challenging assumptions and expanding world views; and
- evaluate the impact of the learning environment on every learner and learning and to challenge assumptions, surface unconscious bias and adapt provision, as appropriate.

**3.2.2 Utilise learner participation****Professional Illustration**

As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:

- value all learners and their participation, actively engaging children and young people in decision-making about their education;
- demonstrate care and commitment to working with every learner, embracing diversity to ensure that every learner feels welcome, included and ready to learn;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of wellbeing indicators and childhood development;
- recognise that childhood experiences impact on the learning and wellbeing of children and young people and actively respond in appropriate ways, seeking advice and collaborating as required; and
- utilise strategies to nurture caring and supportive and purposeful relationships with learners and celebrate success.

### 3.2.3 Build positive rights for learning

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- promote and develop positive and purposeful relationships with and between learners, colleagues, families and partners;
  - use research-informed approaches to positive and purposeful relationship building in a consistent way to build and sustain all professional relationships;
  - communicate appropriately with every learner, modelling and promoting competence and confidence in literacy and numeracy;
  - commit to and demonstrate equity and inclusion; and
  - encourage learners to respect and care for themselves, others and the natural world.

## 3.3 Professional Learning

### 3.3.1 Engage critically with literature, research and policy

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- identify and source appropriate literature, research and policy; and
  - engage critically with research to challenge and inform professional practice and question and challenge educational assumptions, beliefs and values of self and system.

### 3.3.2 Engage in reflective practice to develop and advance career-long professional learning and expertise

#### Professional Illustration

- As a student teacher to demonstrate your professional skills and abilities you are required to:
- reflect and engage critically in self-evaluation using the relevant professional standard;
  - adopt an enquiring, reflective and critical approach to professional practice;
  - enhance learning and teaching by taking account of feedback from others including children and young people and actively engage in professional learning to support school improvement; and
  - maintain a reflective record of evidence of impact of professional learning on self and learners.

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