

INSPIRING WORLD-CLASS
TEACHING PROFESSIONALISM



Teacher Induction Scheme Deferral Policy

October 2020

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1 Scope

The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) provides a guaranteed one-year training post in a local authority to every eligible student graduating with a teaching qualification from one of Scotland's universities. TIS is designed to follow on directly from a student teacher's successful completion of their initial teacher education programme, starting at the beginning of each school session in August and finishing the following June or July, at the end of the summer term.

GTC Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Government, is responsible for the administration of the scheme.

This policy provides an outline of the required practice for student teachers or probationer teachers who seek a deferral in the following circumstances: (a) prior to the commencement date of the TIS programme or (b) on or following the commencement date of the TIS programme and before the end of the TIS programme in the same school session.

2 Interpretation

- ❖ "days" means calendar days.
- ❖ "Flexible Route" means the route whereby probationer teachers, who for a range of reasons may complete their required period of probation on a more flexible basis, through employment in a fixed term contract, including supply work.
- ❖ "GTC Scotland" means the General Teaching Council for Scotland.
- ❖ "probationer" refers to a student teacher or newly qualified teacher who will be applying for provisional registration or who is provisionally registered with GTC Scotland, and who is requesting a deferral of their TIS place to the following academic session.

3 General Principles

GTC Scotland has overall responsibility for making the final decision about a deferral and will do so taking into consideration the views of relevant stakeholders as is seen fit.

GTC Scotland may seek advice from or require the applicant to be examined by an independent medical adviser appointed by GTC Scotland.

GTC Scotland cannot consider or address employment contract, occupational health, or any other employment related issues. These matters should be addressed by the probationer and their prospective or current employer.

This policy seeks to take account of both the exceptional circumstances of probationers requesting a deferral and the practical difficulties which a deferral can create for an employer.

4 Deferral Requests

4.1 Eligibility Requests

Requests for deferral from a TIS post will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. A material impact upon the probationer's ability to undertake the TIS post will require to be evidenced in any deferral request. Requests will normally be expected to relate to factors out with the control of the probationer, such as material health issues. Because of the intended follow-on of the TIS after successful completion of an initial teacher education programme and the practical difficulties which a deferral creates for an employer, the following are reasons for deferral requests which would not be considered to constitute exceptional circumstances:

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- ❖ travel purposes (including teaching posts abroad);
 - ❖ pursuit of alternative career options;
 - ❖ teaching posts in independent schools;
 - ❖ dissatisfaction with TIS allocation of local authority, school and/or class.

In addition, requests made following commencement of a TIS post will only be considered where there are no employer concerns over the probationer's professional conduct or competence.

Deferral requests made following the commencement of the TIS programme should normally be submitted to GTC Scotland before the end of November.

A deferral will not be considered if the probationer has notified their employer or GTC Scotland that they have withdrawn from the TIS programme.

4.2 Key Principles

- (a) Consideration of a deferral request prior to commencement of a TIS post is strictly subject to the Eligibility criteria set out above.
- (b) Deferrals will only be considered and granted for a period of up to one year.
- (c) If the deferral request is successful, the probationer will be expected to take up a TIS post commencing from the August of the following academic session.
- (d) A deferral will not be granted on more than two occasions.
- (e) Only in exceptional circumstances and where there is just cause will more than one application for deferral be granted. If a subsequent deferral (i.e. further to one already granted) is required, the probationer must submit a fresh deferral request to GTC Scotland, detailing the reason for this second request.

4.3 Procedure

- (a) Any application for deferral must be submitted on the appropriate form to the Professional Learning and Development Department.
- (b) The application should be accompanied by relevant evidence to support the request as appropriate. This evidence will remain strictly private and confidential.
- (c) Deferral requests will be considered by an Assessment Panel of officers appointed by a member of the Senior Management Team of the GTC Scotland.
- (d) The probationer may be invited to submit any additional information which the Assessment Panel may consider necessary.
- (e) The Assessment Panel has the discretion to request the attendance of the probationer at the panel meeting to consider the deferral request. In this regard the probationer would be given reasonable advance notice of the date and time of such a meeting.
- (f) The Assessment Panel will aim to inform the probationer of its decision in relation to the deferral request, together with the reasons for the decision, by letter within 7 days from the date of the Assessment Panel meeting. Where this may take longer, the Assessment Panel will let the probationer know when he/she can expect to receive its response.
- (g) If the deferral request is successful, the probationer's participation in the TIS programme will be deferred until the next TIS session and, where necessary, GTC Scotland will notify the relevant local authority accordingly.
- (h) If the deferral request has been received by GTC Scotland after the start of the TIS in August, and the deferral is successful, the probationer will normally be allocated to the same local authority to start TIS the following August, although this cannot be guaranteed.
- (i) If the deferral request is unsuccessful, the probationer will be given the option to:

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- ❖ remain part of the allocated TIS and commence/continue their post; or
 - ❖ withdraw from the TIS and follow the Flexible Route to meet the Standard for Full Registration. The probationer is required to notify the local authority and GTC Scotland of which option they have decided to follow within 14 days from the date of receipt of the letter or email intimating the Assessment Panel's decision.

4.4 Procedure for Appeals

4.4.1 Appeals against a decision of the Assessment Panel will only be considered if:

- (a) there are material procedural factors which affected the validity of the Assessment Panel's decision; and/or
- (b) there is new material evidence which was not, and could not have been, available to the Assessment Panel.

4.4.2 An appeal against a decision of the Assessment Panel must be submitted in writing, on the form provided by GTC Scotland, within 14 days of the probationer being informed of that decision.

4.4.3 Appeals against decisions of the Assessment Panel will be considered by a Preliminary Panel of officers appointed by a member of the Senior Management Team of GTC Scotland. Neither the appointing officer, nor the panellists will have had any prior involvement in relation to the appointment of the Assessment Panel or to the original request or appeal. No member of the Preliminary Panel will have served on the Assessment Panel which considered the original deferral request.

4.4.4 The Preliminary Panel will submit a recommendation, together with the reasons for that recommendation, to an Appeals Panel consisting of the Chief Executive (or their appointed deputy) and the Convener of the GTC Scotland Council or other GTC Scotland Council member, the latter requiring to be a registered teacher.

4.4.5 The Appeals Panel will consider whether the grounds for appeal are satisfied and, if so, will then consider the appeal itself. This process may be conducted using remote means.

4.4.6 The Preliminary Panel and the Appeals Panel have the discretion to invite the probationer to submit any additional information in advance of formal consideration of the appeal by the respective Panel. The Appeals Panel also has the discretion to request the attendance of the probationer at any meeting of the Panel to consider the appeal. In this regard the probationer would be given reasonable advance notice of the date and time of such a meeting. The Appeals Panel will aim to inform the probationer of its decision in relation to the appeal, together with the reasons for the decision, by letter within 7 days from the date of the Appeal Panel meeting. Where this may take longer, the Appeals Panel will let the probationer know when he/she can expect to receive its response.

4.4.7 The Appeals Panel's decision on any appeal will be final and immediate.

4.5 Contact Details Senior Strategic Manager: Education (Early Career)

E-mail: pld@gtc.org.uk

Post: Senior Strategic Manager: Education (Early Career)
The General Teaching Council for Scotland
Clerwood House
96 Clermiston Road
Edinburgh
EH12 6UT

Correspondence with enclosed evidence should be marked "Strictly Private & Confidential".

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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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