

5. EDUCATION WORKFORCE COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

We will include provisions in the Education Bill to establish an Education Workforce Council which will take on the responsibilities of the GTCS, the Community Learning and Development Standards Council and register other education professionals.

The key policies of Getting It Right For Every Child, Curriculum for Excellence and Developing the Young Workforce require an approach to education which is focused on and responsive to the needs of individual children and groups of children. They require a wide range of outcomes to be achieved and a similarly wide range of professionals to be engaged with children and young people in their achievement. There are now many professions involved in the delivery of education with considerable differences between their requirements for professional standards, qualifications, initial training, performance management and continuing professional development.

Currently all teachers in publicly funded schools, all teachers in grant-aided schools and new teachers in independent schools must be registered with the GTCS in order to teach in Scotland. From 1 October 2020, existing teachers in independent schools must be registered. As part of this regulation process the GTCS sets professional standards, maintains a register of teachers and determines whether teachers from outwith Scotland meet the requirements of the standards to enable them to join the register and thereby teach in schools in Scotland. It also, through the Fitness to Teach process, considers whether teachers have fallen below the expected professional standards. The Scottish Social Services Council fulfills a similar role for the social services workforce in Scotland including early years practitioners.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) primarily supports disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities. CLD practitioners cover a wide range of activity such as youth work, family and adult learning, including adult literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), community development and community capacity building. While every local authority must secure and co-ordinate the provision of CLD, registration of professionals with the CLDSCS is not mandatory so we do not have comprehensive information on their number.

Other professionals working within the education workforce, including school learning and additional support staff, school librarians and teaching and support staff in the higher education sector are not currently required to register with a standard setting body.

The quality of teaching is the most important in-school factor that affects student learning and achievement which is why teacher professionalism and school leadership are key drivers within the National Improvement Framework

Research has shown that the GTCS standards and its processes requiring teachers to engage in professional learning, self-evaluate that learning using the standards, and maintain a record of their learning have all played a very important role in increasing the teaching profession's engagement with professional learning. Those involved in the research felt that the standards provided coherence through all stages of a teacher's career and promoted a shared language around professional learning and teaching practice.

While there has been a clear acceptance of the importance of teacher professionalism, and therefore investment in teacher professional development, this has not been replicated across the wider education workforce. Creating an Education Workforce Council for Scotland (EWCS) which covers teachers and non-teacher professionals will help recognise

the role and status of all those working to support learning and teaching as part of a coherent education workforce in Scotland. It will encourage non-teachers to engage in self-reflective professional learning, professional dialogue, collaborative working and the sharing of best practice.

We intend that the Education Workforce Council for Scotland should operate independently from Scottish Ministers rather than being an Executive Agency of Scottish Government.

The Education Workforce Council for Scotland will have the following purpose and aims:

Purpose

- Through supporting and enhancing the professionalism of those involved directly and indirectly in learning and teaching, support Scottish education to be world leading in the delivery of high quality outcomes for all learners.

Aims

- To set high standards and promote high quality professional learning, teaching and leadership to improve learner outcomes and assist in reducing inequality;
- Be an effective regulator acting in the public interest to maintain and enhance public trust and confidence in education professionals; and
- Through the setting of professional standards and values, support and enhance levels of professionalism, professional identity and professional practice while bringing cohesion to the Scottish education system.

Question 17

Are the proposed purpose and aims of the Education Workforce Council for Scotland appropriate?

Question 18

What other purpose and aims might you suggest for the proposed Education Workforce Council for Scotland?

The Education Workforce Council for Scotland will have the following functions:

Functions

- Keep a Register of those practitioners engaged in the teaching (including pre-school), community learning and development and other relevant professions (including the establishment of criteria to meet their registration);
- Establish and keep under review, as appropriate, Professional Standards and appropriate Code(s) relating to the conduct and professional competence of those engaged in the teaching, community learning and development and other relevant professions;
- Establish and review Standards of education, professional learning and leadership appropriate to those on the Register, including initial teacher and other professional education, and monitor and evaluate their implementation;
- Investigate and ensure the fitness to practise of registrants with regards to conduct and professional competence;
- Accredite, validate and promote professional learning and development through maintaining and operating national systems in partnership with other bodies as appropriate;
- Support the operation of teaching, community learning and development and other relevant professions, including induction schemes, professional learning frameworks, quality assurance marks and student placement systems;
- Provide independent, evidence-based advice to Scottish Ministers on relevant matters of education, teacher professionalism, workforce planning, career development and fitness to practise of those engaged in the teaching, community learning and development and other relevant professions;
- Contribute to evidence-based policy making through engagement in and with research that supports improved learning and teaching; and
- Promote family/carer/community engagement in and with the education system.

Question 19

Are the proposed functions of the Education Workforce Council for Scotland appropriate?

Question 20

What other functions might you suggest for the proposed Education Workforce Council for Scotland?

Registration

In order to ensure its remit focuses on those who support the learning and teaching of all in Scotland we think that the new Education Workforce Council for Scotland should be able to register members of the following professions:

- Teachers
- CLD Practitioners
- Classroom Assistants/ASL Support Workers
- Early Years Practitioners
- School Librarians
- College Lecturers and relevant support staff
- Home/School Link Workers

It is proposed that implementation of these registration provisions are staggered in order to allow appropriate time for planning and preparation for each professional group. The initial phase of implementation will be the registration of teachers and CLD practitioners. While we are clear that the registration of teachers should remain mandatory i.e. only teachers who are registered should be able to work in Scottish schools, we propose that registration of CLD practitioners remains voluntary and free of charge until the Education Workforce Council for Scotland can establish how best to take this forward, including the setting of registration fees.

We intend to include in the Education Bill a power for Ministers to amend the list of practitioners required to register with the Education Workforce Council for Scotland in future.

Question 21

Which education professionals should be subject to mandatory registration with the proposed Education Workforce Council for Scotland?

Question 22

Should the Education Workforce Council for Scotland be required to consult on the fees it charges for registration?

Governance

The Councils which govern the work of GTCS and CLDSCS are already large (37 and 50 members respectively) with varied and complex processes for the election, nomination and appointment of members.

GTCS members are appointed to its Council via three routes:

1. Teachers who are registered with the GTCS can elect 19 members all of whom are teachers;
2. A further 11 members can be nominated by a range of stakeholders set out in the legislation which established the GTCS: COSLA can nominate 3 members after consultation with ADES; Universities Scotland can nominate 3 members after consultation with universities providing teaching qualifications; further education colleges can nominate 1 member as can the Scottish Council of Independent Schools, the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Church and the National Parent Forum of Scotland.

3. GTCS has an appointments scheme which includes an Independent Appointments Committee which can appoint a further 7 members.

The council which governs the work of the CLDSCS has 50 registered members who sit on its Executive Committee, Committees for Approvals, Committee for Professional Learning and Committee for Registration.

Clearly joining these two Councils and processes together, and expanding them to ensure to ensure appropriate representation of other professions, would not be feasible.

Reducing the numbers of members on the governing Council to a more practicable level will allow all professions to be represented, to ensure that the Council can act impartially and without undue regard to any one particular interest, pressure or influence. This will help ensure that the Council can focus on strategic rather than operational issues with the aim of assuring excellence in delivery in the long term.

In order to function effectively and to sustain confidence in its independence, we think that the Council governing the EWCS should be constituted to ensure that professionals do not form a majority. We therefore anticipate a more 'board like' operation which holds the executive to account in exercising its core functions to deliver for relevant professions.

Question 23

Which principles should be used in the design of the governance arrangements for the proposed Education Workforce Council for Scotland?

Name

Is "The Education Workforce Council for Scotland" the right name for a body which will establish professional standards and registration for a range of education professionals?

Question 24

By what name should the proposed Education Workforce Council for Scotland be known?