

Professional Review for Academic Staff Policy

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Version Control History

Version Number	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
1	September 2021	Created.
2	November 2022	Clarity about not dealing with performance issues within professional reviews, updating of relevant teaching and learning strategy.
2.1	April 2024	Updated to UHI Perth branding. Footer updated to remove 'Owner'. Title page updated to add information on alternative formats.

Professional Review for Academic Staff Policy

1 Purpose

This document outlines the policy of UHI Perth to support and enhance the continued professional learning of Academic staff within UHI Perth with the aim of attracting, retaining and developing high-quality and creative staff who are able to meet the changing requirements of our students, our institutions, our communities and the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) which is the recognised professional body for Academic staff.

This will be achieved by the provision of ongoing opportunities for staff to:

- Reflect on their practice and professional learning through self-assessment against relevant standards.
- Engage in supportive and challenging professional dialogue with their line manager in an atmosphere of trust and collegiality.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all Academic staff employed by UHI Perth no matter what their subject, length of service or level of teaching (ie FE and HE). An Academic member of staff is defined as a member of staff on terms and conditions for Academic staff which are covered by National Bargaining. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

UHI Perth as part of the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership has accepted and endorsed the cross partnership Professional Update/Professional Review and Development Framework which this policy is then linked to.

3 General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)

UHI Perth is committed to supporting lecturers to comply with GTCS requirements for lecturer registration. Therefore, the policy includes the Professional Update process for lecturers which has 2 key purposes:

- i To maintain and improve the quality of our lecturers as outlined in the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges and to enhance the impact they have on student learning.
- ii To support, maintain and enhance lecturers' continued professionalism and the reputation of the lecturing profession in Scotland.

The detailed procedures and guidance notes set out the process to be followed – PDR Procedure and Guidance.

4 Definitions

Lecturing Staff: Any member of staff employed under lecturing terms and conditions as set by the **National Joint Negotiating Committee and National Recognition and Procedure Agreement**.

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS): This is the professional body given statutory responsibility to promote, support and develop the professional learning of teaching and lecturing staff.

Registration: All lecturing staff employed by UHI Perth are required to maintain registration with GTCS as agreed as part of National Bargaining.

Professional Update: An annual process of engagement in the PRD scheme, ongoing professional learning including reflection on own learning and the relevant Professional Standards, as well as an annual update of registration details on **MyGTCS**. Then on a 5-yearly basis there is a signoff process of professional learning between the member of staff and line manager confirmed to GTCS through the MyPL recording system.

Professional Learning: In Section 3.1 Ongoing Professional Learning of **Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges** this is defined as:

- Uses the Professional Standard to inform practice and ongoing professional learning and development.
- Reflects critically on own practice and engages in professional dialogue with others.
- Continuously and actively engages with up-to-date research and developments in learning, teaching and assessment to inform practice.
- Engages in collaborative professional enquiry to develop knowledge and practice to enhance the student experience and outcomes.
- Engages with technology and digital literacies to enhance opportunities for collaborative practice and professional learning.

Professional Review and Development Scheme: A supportive and challenging process of self-evaluation, professional dialogue and recognition of how prior learning has impacted on the lecturer's practice and how future professional learning will enhance the lecturer's professional practice going forward taking cognisance of the relevant Professional Standards. This is an annual review process however the specific timings of which will be highlighted each year at the start of Semester One.

Relevant Professional Standards: For most lecturing staff in scope this will be the **Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges**, however some staff may have other GTCS Professional Standards that they need to self-evaluate against. This will be determined by their type of registration, for example staff teaching on Initial Teacher Education courses or staff who have acquired GTCS registration as part of their route to qualification.

5 Key Principles

The staff of UHI Perth are our most valuable asset and are key to successful delivery of our aims, objectives, strategies and vision. Attracting, retaining, and developing high-quality and creative staff helps to meet the changing requirements of our students, our institutions and our communities.

A keyway to achieve this is to have a PRD scheme that looks to support, challenge and guide lecturing staff, and this is recognised by GTCS as a key part of Professional Update. GTCS requires that these PRD schemes are validated by them at an institutional level.

Once validated, this PRD process cannot be amended without discussing the issue first at Human Resources Practitioners Group (HRPG) at UHI as revalidation may be required.

6 Support and Training for Professional Reviews

UHI Perth will ensure that appropriate support and training are in place to Academic Staff and their line managers in undertaking professional reviews. This will include training on undertaking Professional Reviews and on completing these with a Coaching Approach.

UHI Perth will also ensure that there are appropriate resources available to support Academic staff in their reflection of their own practice and the GTCS Professional Standards to enable them to fully participate in the PRD process as well as the Professional Update process.

Conversations where there are concerns about performance should take place outside the Professional Review process and be considered in line with the UHI Perth capability procedure.

7 Responsibilities

The **Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development** has responsibility for reviewing the policy in line with changes and developments in employment law, requirements from GTCS or changes agreed at a UHI level and for supporting any subsequent validation process as required by GTCS.

The **Corporate Management Team** Committee has responsibility for approving any subsequent changes to this policy.

The **Head of Teaching and Learning Enhancement** has responsibility for supporting Corporate Managers and Academic staff to deliver their role in the UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and for ensuring that appropriate training and learning activities is available to Corporate Managers and Academic Staff to achieve this including coaching skills.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring team members who are academic staff are aware of the procedures.

Quality approval check of the policy is the responsibility of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development who will arrange for the policy to be posted on the UHI Perth website.

Academic Staff are responsible for their own development and professional Learning as a core component of lecturer professionalism.

8 Deferral and Appeals Process for Professional Update

If an Academic member of staff is not able to complete the 5-yearly PRD sign-off process for reasons such as secondment, career breaks, extended absence for reasons such as sickness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave then they should discuss this with their line manager in the first instance. If agreed, then this should be notified to GTCS through the **MyGTCS** portal. If there is not agreement, then the Academic member of staff may appeal this to the Head of HR and Organisational Development.

9 Linked Policies/Related Documents

- Professional Update/Professional Review and Development Framework
- Staff Complaints and Grievance Procedures
- PDR Procedure and Guidance

10 Relevant Legislation

- National Agreements: <https://njncscotlandscolleges.ac.uk/>
- GTCS Registration Information:
<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/college-lecturers/college.aspx>