

DRIVING FORWARD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS

THE GENERAL
TEACHING COUNCIL
FOR SCOTLAND

The Student Teacher code



WWW.GTCS.ORG.UK



About this publication

The information contained in this brochure was correct at the time of publication. GTC Scotland cannot be held responsible for any issues arising from any errors or subsequent changes in requirements.

About GTCS

The General Teaching Council for Scotland is the world's first independent, self-regulating professional body for teaching. We aim to maintain and enhance teaching standards and promote the teaching profession in Scotland.

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

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Introduction

GTC Scotland is the independent professional body which maintains and enhances teaching standards and promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. Teachers employed by Scottish local authorities must be GTC Scotland registered and the vast majority of Scottish independent schools also require their teachers to be so registered.

GTC Scotland has a duty to regulate teachers in the public interest and, in so doing, is accountable to the public and the profession for maintaining teaching

standards and ensuring that teachers are fit to teach.

Registered teachers are required to abide by the professional standards that GTC Scotland sets and are expected to follow the principles set out in GTC Scotland's Code of Professionalism and Conduct (CoPAC).

CoPAC, along with further information about GTC Scotland and how it regulates the teaching profession, can be found at www.gtcs.org.uk



The Student Teacher Code

When you successfully complete your initial teacher education programme and apply to register with GTC Scotland, you must be considered fit to teach. This means that even although GTC Scotland's professional standards and principles do not apply to you now, it is important that you understand that when you apply for registration, GTC Scotland will investigate and consider any suggestion that you may not be fit to teach, taking account of your past conduct and any criminal record.

As your initial teacher education programme is preparing you to enter the teaching profession and you are already representing that profession, GTC Scotland expects you to conduct yourself professionally. This Student Teacher Code ("STC") has been prepared to provide you with guidance on what this means and is designed to complement the Code of Conduct in place for your University. It is appreciated that student

teachers gain experience in a variety of placements; therefore throughout the Code, where the term "pupil" is used, it refers to learners in the wider sense, including those who are being educated in the pre-five, primary, secondary and further education sectors.

This Code, which should be read in conjunction with CoPAC, is intended to be supportive - we hope that it will help you build a strong professional foundation and lead to a long and successful teaching career.

Key Principles of the Student Teacher Code

As a student teacher you must:

- be a good role model;
- make pupils your key concern;
- promote the education of pupils;
- be open and honest, and act with integrity;
- show respect for others.

Part 1: The Student Teacher Working with Pupils

Being a good role model and making pupils your key concern

You have come into the teaching profession to work with children and young people and their education, care and safety will be your responsibility. There are a number of ways that you can ensure you fulfil this responsibility:

- you must treat all pupils without discrimination and with respect and fairness;
- as a student teacher you will hear personal and sometimes sensitive information about the pupils with whom you work. All information obtained in the educational establishment must be treated as confidential, and only shared as may be required by law, or under the policies or procedures of the educational establishment concerned;
- you are a role model for pupils in all you do and say; honesty and fairness are highly important, not least in relation to the information you give about them;
- concerning the procedures that are in place in all educational establishments to protect children and protected adults, it is your responsibility to know what these are and to ensure that you follow them at all times;
- you should be aware of the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding equal treatment, the child's best interests, and giving appropriate weight to the views of the child.

Part 2: The Student Teacher Working with Others (Educational Establishments, Parents and Carers)

Promoting the education of pupils within the educational community

- As a student teacher you are required to work co-operatively within the educational community and respect the skills, expertise and contribution from all people involved in the education of pupils;
- You should treat everyone with whom you work and learn, fairly, respectfully and without discrimination;
- You should not make any comment about teachers and other professionals or staff within the educational community or by electronic means, which may undermine them professionally;
- You should be professional in your relationships with parents and carers, respecting and valuing their role in the learning experience;
- In all dealings with parents and carers you must not become involved in inappropriate discussions or divulge sensitive or confidential information about other pupils, staff or the educational establishment concerned.

Part 3: The Student Teacher and Honesty and Integrity

Being open and honest, and acting with integrity

As a student embarking upon a programme in Professional Education, you should be aware that your initial teacher education (ITE) programme will involve a blend of academic study and practice based in educational establishments which aims to provide you with a set of skills, dispositions and behaviours that will become the basis upon which your professional practice is built. It is important that you begin to understand and reflect on this professionalism as soon as you commence your ITE studies, and the fact that, as a student teacher or registered teacher, pupils will look to you as a role model:

- you must not engage in criminal behaviour of any kind, especially related to sex, dishonesty, firearms, misuse of drugs and violence against a person or property, serious public order or crimes of serious dishonesty;
- you should inform your University if you have been cautioned or have committed a criminal act that might affect your suitability to enter the profession;
- you should be aware of and adhere to the relevant Code of Conduct of your University;
- you should have regard to your honesty and integrity in your academic studies;
- you must not by any means or in any circumstances make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children or protected adults;
- you should be mindful that your professional reputation, together with your suitability and fitness to teach, is not judged exclusively upon your behaviours while out on teaching placement, but also on your general good character;
- you should be aware of your personal conduct and ensure that your behaviour does not bring your professionalism into question. This would include, for example, drug and alcohol abuse, or inappropriate contact or relationships with young people of school age;
- you should take great care and use common sense and appropriateness in your use of social networking, always mindful of the reality and perception in regard to your position and reputation as a student teacher and the appropriate professional boundaries between yourself and pupils. Social networking sites should not be used to make comments about pupils, parents/carers, colleagues or educational establishments.



Part 4: The Student Teacher and Equality and Diversity

Respecting others

In line with GTC Scotland's general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Council promotes equality and diversity and respects and values difference. GTC Scotland wants to promote an inclusive profession that incorporates people from a range of diverse backgrounds. Through respecting the principle of equal treatment, this will benefit both the teaching profession and pupils alike and therefore as a student teacher:

- you must treat all pupils without discrimination and with respect and fairness;
- you should engage and work positively with pupils, colleagues, parents and carers in an open, inclusive and respectful way, in

line with the law and with a non-judgemental approach whatever their background, personal circumstances, cultural differences, values and beliefs;

- you should help pupils to understand different views, perspectives, and experiences and develop positive relationships both within the educational establishment and within the local community;
- you should recognise the potentially serious impact which any demonstration by you of intolerance or prejudice could have upon your standing as a student teacher and any application for registration in the future.

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



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Direct weblinks

Main site:
www.gtcs.org.uk

Fitness to teach department:
www.gtcs.org.uk/copac

Probation site for teachers:
www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk

Registration department:
www.gtcs.org.uk/registration

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