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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
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Consultation Document

Revised professional standards for education practitioners in Wales

Date of issue: **31 March 2011**

Revised professional standards for education practitioners in Wales

Overview

This consultation document outlines proposals to refine a number of professional standards to reinforce education improvement priorities for Wales. We propose to refine:

- the professional standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA)
- End of Induction Standards which will be renamed as the Practising Teacher Standards
- the National Standards for Headteachers in Wales which will become Leadership Standards to emphasise their use to recruit and develop high quality headteachers and also to develop leadership potential across the system.

How to respond

The consultation response form is available for completion at www.wales.gov.uk/consultations

Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by **16 June 2011**.

Please enter 'Professional standards consultation' in the subject matter box.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.

Revised National Standards for Headteachers in Wales National Assembly for Wales Circular No: 14/06 (2006)

Induction and Early Professional Development for Newly Qualified Teachers in Wales (revised June 2008) Welsh Assembly Government Circular No:015/2008

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2005

Contact details

For further information:

Kelly Murphy-Addis
Project Manager

Learning Improvement and Professional Development Division
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: practicereviewanddevelopment@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 029 2082 1678

Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Assembly Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Assembly Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Assembly Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Assembly Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Introduction

Why are we proposing to change the professional standards?

Professional standards for teachers, support staff and leaders working in schools in Wales are an important tool to drive school improvement to ensure that all learners are able to achieve their potential.

Effective professional standards should:

- set out what is expected of each person as they carry out their role teaching and supporting learners
- support development and training of individuals to enable them to carry out their role effectively
- enable individuals to consider their career development
- act as a focus for appraisal discussions
- bring consistent high-quality experience for learners.

Many of the professional standards have been in place for some time and so do not reflect current priorities for education in Wales. Current priorities include a focus on literacy, numeracy and reducing the link between poverty and under-attainment, as well as changes resulting from the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. They are not used consistently by all schools and practitioners.

We are proposing to refresh some of the professional standards to bring them up to date so that they can form the basis for new performance management arrangements, support professional development, and so better support school improvement.

Where are we now?

Currently, separate sets of professional standards exist for education practitioners in Wales. These are:

- National Occupational Standards for school support staff
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant Standards
- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Standards
- End of Induction Standards
- National Standards for Headteachers in Wales
- Threshold, Excellent and Advanced Skills Teacher Standards.

The Welsh Assembly Government has responsibility for setting the Higher Level Teaching Assistant Standards, Qualified Teacher Status Standards, End of Induction Standards and the National Standards for Headteachers in Wales. As we set these standards we take account of the needs of the education system in Wales while ensuring that our standards are comparable to those across the UK and are compatible with the operation of the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* and *Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* (Department of Education, 2010).

Threshold, Excellent and Advanced Skills Teacher Standards are pay standards set in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* and *Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* so powers to change these standards are not devolved to the Welsh Ministers.

Review of professional standards, performance management and continuing professional development (CPD)

Over many years, the policies for professional standards, performance management and CPD have developed in a piecemeal way and so do not work together as a coherent and effective system. As a result, during 2009–10 we held extensive discussions about the effectiveness of the arrangements with a wide range of practitioners and other stakeholders.

There is a general consensus that the current arrangements are too fragmented and not sufficiently robust or focused to deliver education improvement priorities. The current standards:

- do not provide a clear career path for education practitioners in Wales
- are not explicitly linked to performance management and/or CPD opportunities
- do not explicitly support Welsh Assembly Government educational priorities such as improving literacy and numeracy, and addressing the attainment gap in learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds
- do not explicitly support the Welsh Assembly Government's broader priorities for children and young people
- are not widely used as part of practitioners' day-to-day practice.

The result is we are not supporting practitioners effectively to enable them to deliver the best for our learners.

What changes are we proposing?

We are aiming to develop one simple, consistent system including a suite of clear and coherent professional standards to provide a framework for professional development and to underpin new, more effective performance management arrangements. These elements will work together as a coherent system to drive improved standards of teaching focused on national priorities.

We propose to refine:

- standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) to highlight Welsh Assembly Government priorities for education improvement including a focus on literacy, numeracy and reducing the link between poverty and under-attainment, as well as changes resulting from the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- End of Induction Standards to provide progression between Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the Threshold, Excellent and Advanced Skills Teacher Standards. We propose to rename these standards the Practising Teacher Standards to better reflect their role as the standards that apply to most teachers on the main pay scale, and to include clearer reference to Welsh Assembly Government priorities for education improvement, including a focus on literacy, numeracy and reducing the link between poverty and under-attainment, as well as changes resulting from the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The draft Practising Teacher Standards have been compiled to ensure they complement the non-devolved pay standards that are the responsibility of the Department for Education, and link to them coherently and consistently

- National Standards for Headteachers and redevelop them as Leadership Standards. The draft Leadership Standards will continue to form the basis for the development, recruitment and performance management of high-quality headteachers, but will also meet the needs of practitioners who wish to develop their leadership skills at all levels in the education system. This will support our school improvement agenda by enhancing systems and distributing leadership throughout schools and providing individuals with a clear leadership development framework. Again these standards include clearer reference to Welsh Assembly Government priorities for education improvement, including a focus on literacy, numeracy and reducing the link between poverty and under-attainment, as well as changes resulting from the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

These changes are designed to bring our professional standards up to date quickly so that they are fit for purpose by September 2011. We will be consulting separately on revised performance management regulations.

Further evaluation

We will continue to evaluate the use of these standards as a tool to support performance management and professional development alongside our wider school improvement agenda. We will also work with the Department for Education as they review their professional standards and the non-devolved professional standards contained within the pay system. We will use this evaluation to decide whether a more fundamental review of all professional standards, including QTS, is required in the next few years.

How will we know if the changes have worked?

If these changes work we would see improved education outcomes for Wales because education practitioners would:

- be aware of the clear expectations about the standards expected of their practice
- focus their development on areas of greatest need, including priorities of literacy, numeracy and breaking the link between poverty and under-attainment
- be in a stronger position to support children and young people as learners to access opportunities to fulfil their potential and achieve improved well-being.