



Community Services: Education

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To: Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

Teacher induction - probationer support

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The teacher induction scheme was introduced in August 2002 as a result of the agreement reached between the Scottish Executive, employers and the teaching organisations following recommendations made in the McCrone report.
- 1.2 *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* guarantees probationers:
 - A one-year training post.
 - A maximum class commitment of 0.7 FTE.
 - Access to a dedicated probationer supporter to support their professional development.
 - A high quality probationary experience.
- 1.3 At the end of the one-year training post, if they have met the requirements of the Standard for Full Registration (SFR), probationary teachers will be eligible to apply for full registration as a teacher with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS).
- 1.4 This circular, which is based on accepted and emerging good practice, is intended to establish within each school, procedures for offering a programme of positive support for all new entrants to the profession.

2 The role of the local authority

- 2.1 Argyll and Bute Council will work within the framework of *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* in providing support for probationary teachers. A one-year

training contract with a salary will be offered to probationary teachers under the teacher induction scheme.

- 2.2 Probationers will be matched and allocated to local authorities nationally using student's preference lists. This process is usually concluded by May. It is the responsibility of the local authority to allocate probationers to schools within their area. The allocation of probationers to particular schools across Argyll and Bute will take full account of the needs of the service.
- 2.3 The local authority will play a key role to play in providing support, training and development opportunities for all probationer teachers. In addition, the education service will monitor the quality of the support given to probationers in their respective schools.
- 2.4 The responsible authority Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) will coordinate a range of probationer induction training seminars over the course of the school session. These seminars will be designed to complement the core experiences of the school and classroom as well as to respond to the support needs of the probationers. (An example of the local authority Probationer Support Calendar is given in Appendix 1).

3 The role of coaching and mentoring

- 3.1 An essential element of the induction arrangements is the provision of a supporter to act as a coach or mentor for each probationer. Funding has been built into authority allocations to provide 0.1 FTE supporter time for each probationer.
- 3.2 Guidelines are available from GTCS on the roles and responsibilities of supporters. Supporters should demonstrate good professional skills along with well developed interpersonal skills. The widespread practice of automatically allocating line managers as supporters is not seen as the best practice; supporters should be allocated by suitability for the role. (Line managers may of course be seen as most suitable when judged by these criteria). Where desired, the authority will provide training in coaching and mentoring techniques for supporters.

4 The role of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)

- 4.1 The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) administers the teacher induction scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government Education Department (SEED).
- 4.2 GTCS provides local authorities and schools with comprehensive information and guidance on support and assessment arrangements for probationer teachers. This is now implemented exclusively through the GTCS website. www.gtcs.org.uk

4.3 GTCS is also responsible for monitoring the quality of provision across all local authorities to ensure a coherent and consistent experience for all probationer teachers.

5 The role of the school

5.1 The head teacher/campus principal must identify a suitable, experienced teacher to act as the supporter for one or more probationer teachers. In many smaller primary schools it will not be possible for the head teacher/campus principal to delegate this responsibility.

5.2 While the local authority will provide training seminars, the day to day support will be provided within schools. In collaboration with the head teacher/campus principal the supporter will:

- provide an in-school induction programme;
- provide a suitable timetable that fulfils the maximum teaching requirements of 0.7 FTE and minimum requirement of 0.55 FTE. (12hrs 23mins to 15hrs 45mins). This time requirement refers to the probationer's core subject time.
- offer advice on school policies, resources, organisation and discipline;
- arrange regular weekly meetings with the probationer to discuss progress, reflect on classroom practice and identify next steps for development;
- carry out regular observed lessons with a clearly defined focus for each observation.
- provide opportunities for the probationer to experience a range of classroom and whole school activities, eg team-teaching, parent council meetings, parental contacts, multi-agency links.

5.3 0.1 FTE is available for supporters to take forward as required the duties detailed above. An element of this time should also be spent on providing probationers with professional support and guidance on planning and preparation. The supporter is also expected to assist with the probationer's induction portfolio and help prepare interim and final reports. For further details see section 7 - Observation and reporting requirements.

6 The role of the probationer teacher

6.1 The GTCS requires all probationers to maintain their online profile.

6.2 It is the responsibility of the probationer to maintain the profile and any supporting evidence. The supporter will countersign all records and minutes of meetings and monitor that the portfolio is being kept up-to-date.

- 6.3 The probationer must ensure that interim and final profiles are submitted by the agreed date. Deadlines for submission of profiles are set by the GTCS and must be adhered to.

7 Observation and reporting requirements

A 3 week cycle of observations is recommended:

Week 1: An observation time and focus identified.

Week 2: The observation takes place. (With brief feedback as soon as possible).

Week 3: Feedback should take place.

Overall there will be 5 observed lessons by December and a minimum of 4 observed lessons between January and June.

These observations are not full lesson observations. Good practice would be to focus on the agreed area of development at that time. 20 to 35 minutes would be a reasonable time allocation. It is also good practice for the observer to get involved in the lesson just enough to make the observation feel less like a “crit” lesson and more like a formative exercise.

One observation before December, and another between January and June should be carried out by someone different from the supporter.

- 7.2 In the event of serious concern over the progress of a probationer teacher, the head teacher/campus principal must send a report to the responsible QIO no later than October of the first term of induction. This 'early warning' would alert the education service to the fact that a probationer requires additional support. The head teacher/campus principal should indicate the mechanisms that the school has set in place to support the probationer and indicate whether additional assistance is required from the education service.
- 7.3 The GTCS requires an interim profile detailing the probationer's progress in December. The QIO will inform schools of the date by which all profiles must be sent to the education office. All profiles must be returned to the QIO by the specified date in order that they can be submitted to the GTCS within the designated deadline. Schools should not submit profiles directly to the GTCS.
- 7.4 Where an 'early warning' has been received which has resulted in a probationer being recorded as making “unsatisfactory” progress on the December profile, a second interim profile must be completed in March and submitted to the GTCS.

8 Beyond the induction training year

- 8.1 If the probation post is advertised as a vacancy, the incumbent probationer will be guaranteed an interview for the post.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Community Services
March 2010

Appendix 1

Argyll and Bute Council Community Services: Education

Probationer support calendar

The local authority provides a range of probationer core experience seminars over the course of the induction training year.

The seminars are two-day residential events delivered **four** times per year. Seminars are usually held in the **Argyll Hotel, Inveraray**. The seminars are always delivered on a **Wednesday** and **Thursday**. Head teachers/campus principals should endeavour to timetable probationer non-class contact time (0.2 FTE/0.1 FTE with supporter) for these days to minimise disruption for classes when probationers are out of school.

A sample programme detailing core experiences covered by the local authority is given below:

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| September | Welcome to Argyll and Bute; Probationer induction - responsibilities of the probationer; Classroom organisation and management; Effective behaviour management. |
| November | Reporting to parents / report writing; Completion of interim profiles - appropriate supporting evidence; Assessment. |
| February | Teaching for effective learning; Mind friendly learning; Child protection; Disability Discrimination Act / equal opportunities. |
| May | Interview and presentation skills; Time / stress management; Maintaining enthusiasm! Continuing professional development. |

Specific dates for all seminars will be communicated to probationers and head teachers/campus principals no later than the end of June.