

TRUSTED TEACHING



The General Teaching Council for Scotland

Standing Order and Committee Scheme

2026



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## 1 Introduction

This Scheme is made by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) to set out its governance structure and in accordance with its statutory duty to make a scheme relating to the structure, membership, role and operation of its committees and sub-committees.

This Scheme may be referenced as The General Teaching Council for Scotland Standing Order and Committee Scheme and will come into force on 2 April 2022.

The General Teaching Council for Scotland Standing Order and Committee Scheme 2019 and any other earlier versions are revoked and replaced by this Scheme.

## 2 Interpretation

In this Scheme unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “appointed member” means a member of the Council appointed by the Appointments Committee.
- (b) “appointee” means a person appointed by the Appointments Committee to serve on panels.
- (c) “Appointments Committee” means the appointments committee established by GTC Scotland to appoint appointed members and appointees.
- (d) “Appointments Scheme” means GTC Scotland’s appointments scheme relating to the appointment of appointed members and appointees.
- (e) “Chief Executive” means the Chief Executive of GTC Scotland, or any person fulfilling this role.
- (f) “Code of Conduct and Membership Scheme” means GTC Scotland’s code of conduct and membership scheme applying to members.
- (g) “committee” means any one of the committees of GTC Scotland listed in the Schedule to this Scheme.
- (h) “co-opted member” means a person duly co-opted by the Council (following such process as it considers appropriate in the circumstances) to serve as a member of a committee, sub-committee or panel.
- (i) “Convener” means the Convener of the Council, or any person fulfilling this role and “Vice Convener” will be construed accordingly.
- (j) “Council” means the Council of GTC Scotland.
- (k) “elected member” means a duly elected member of the Council.
- (l) “Election Scheme” means GTC Scotland’s election scheme relating to the election of the elected members of Council.
- (m) “lay person” means an individual that (i) is not, nor had been, nor is eligible to be, entered in the Register; and (ii) has not obtained a “recognised teaching qualification”, as defined by the Order.
- (n) “member” means, as the context requires, either (i) a member of the Council; (ii) a member of a GTC Scotland committee, sub-committee or panel; or (iii) both (i) and (ii).
- (o) “nominated member” means a nominated member of the Council.
- (p) “Order” means the Public Services Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011.

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- (q) “panel” means any one of the committees of GTC Scotland designated as a panel in the Schedule to this Scheme.
- (r) “register” means the register of teachers kept and maintained by GTC Scotland and “registered” and “registrant” will be construed accordingly.
- (s) “sub-committee” means a sub-committees of GTC Scotland listed in the Schedule to this Scheme.
- (t) any reference to legislation, rules, standards, processes, publications, schemes, panels, committees or sub-committees will be construed as a reference to such legislation, rule, standard, process, publication, scheme, panel, or committee as may be supplemented, amended, substituted, re-named or replaced from time to time.
- (u) Any reference to (i) a numbered section or paragraph refers to the section or paragraph bearing that number in this Scheme; and (ii) a numbered schedule refers to a schedule bearing that number in this Scheme.
- (v) Headings set out in this Scheme will not affect the interpretation of the Scheme itself.

GTC Scotland must be aware of, and comply with, all legal requirements that impact on its governance structure as well as its operations and functions. This Scheme will be construed and applied in accordance with GTC Scotland’s obligations under the Order, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Equality Act 2010, as well as any other relevant and applicable legislation that may be enacted from time to time.

## **3 Council**

### **3.1 Membership**

The Council is the governing body of GTC Scotland and its membership is set out in Schedule 2 of the Order. The Council is composed of 37 members comprising 19 elected members, 7 appointed members and 11 nominated members. Appointed members will be appointed by the Appointments Committee in accordance with the Appointments Scheme and elected members will be elected in accordance with the Election Scheme. All members are governed by the Code of Conduct and Membership Scheme. Council members are non-executives: they are not employees of GTC Scotland. Given that GTC Scotland is registered as a charity, Council members are also the charity trustees. As charity trustees, in performing their role Council members must act in the interests of GTC Scotland, not in the interests of any other person or body.

### **3.2 Role**

The Council’s role is to:

- ❖ ensure GTC Scotland meets its statutory functions and aims;
- ❖ provide strategic leadership;
- ❖ exercise financial supervision and control;
- ❖ ensure that GTC Scotland is managed and run by the Chief Executive effectively and responsibly.

The Council fulfils its governance role by:

- ❖ setting strategic plans and strategic policy;
- ❖ ensuring the performance of GTC Scotland against its strategic plans and performance indicators;
- ❖ ensuring that GTC Scotland meets its public reporting requirements by approving the annual report;
- ❖ agreeing financial budgets, monitoring financial performance and approving the annual accounts;
- ❖ ensuring that effective risk management and audit arrangements are in place to provide assurance of operational management and delivery as well as legal compliance;

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- ❖ reviewing and agreeing Council's governance framework;
  - ❖ ensuring that GTC Scotland has employment policies and procedures in place to provide assurance that it is acting as a responsible employer;
  - ❖ appointing and removing the Chief Executive.

As set out in paragraph 11 of Schedule 3 of the Order, any function of GTC Scotland may be carried out by a Council member; a Committee, sub-committee or panel or a GTC Scotland employee, with the exception of making GTC Scotland rules or schemes by virtue of the Order.

## **4 Council Convener and Vice Convener**

The Council will elect (in accordance with this Scheme), a Convener and Vice Convener of Council to hold office until the date on which the next programme of election, appointment and nomination of Council members takes effect. For the avoidance of doubt, a Convener or Vice Convener may be elected for further terms of office.

In addition to chairing Council meetings consistent with the terms of this Scheme, the key role of the Convener (or the Vice Convener as deputy) is to lead Council, ensuring it makes an effective contribution to the governance of GTC Scotland. The Convener also has the following powers and functions:

- ❖ To authorise action on urgent matters falling under the role and authority of the Council. Any such action will be recorded by the Chief Executive and reported to the next Council meeting.
- ❖ To review the performance and development of the Chief Executive and review the salary of the Chief Executive accordingly.
- ❖ To facilitate, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, good relations between GTC Scotland and its stakeholders.

The Council may also delegate from time to time such further powers and functions to the Convener (or the Vice Convener as deputy) as it sees fit.

A Convener or Vice Convener may resign from that position at any time by written notice.

The Council may remove a Convener or Vice Convener from office by resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a Council meeting, provided that notice of the proposal has been circulated with the relevant agenda in accordance with paragraph 5.3 below.

## **5 Council Meetings**

### **5.1 Frequency**

The Council will meet as necessary according to a schedule agreed by the Council but a special meeting may also be called at the request of:

- (a) the Convener; or
- (b) not less than one third of the membership of the Council giving notice of such a request to the Chief Executive.

A minimum of 7 days notice will be given of a special meeting following receipt of the request. Within the periods that all local authority schools in Scotland are open, a special meeting will normally be held within 30 working days of receipt of the request.

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## **5.2 Quorum**

The quorum for any Council meeting is one third of the membership of Council. Any business transacted before a Council meeting becomes inquorate will not be invalidated by the later lack of quorum. If a meeting is found to be inquorate, it will be adjourned by the Convener and reconvened at a later date or time.

## **5.3 Agenda**

- 5.3.1 Any member wishing to place an item of business on the agenda or propose a motion at an ordinary Council meeting will notify the Chief Executive in writing no fewer than 14 days before the meeting. The Convener will determine whether the matter is competent to be considered. The Convener may arrange for the matter to be included in the agenda or refer it to an appropriate committee or sub-committee.
- 5.3.2 Any member wishing to place an item of business on the agenda or propose a motion at a special Council meeting will notify the Chief Executive in writing no fewer than 4 days before the meeting. The Convener will determine whether the matter is competent to be considered by Council. The Convener may arrange for the matter to be included in the agenda or refer it to an appropriate committee or sub-committee.
- 5.3.3 The Convener and Chief Executive will prepare the agenda for each meeting. No business other than that which has been included in the agenda, or which has been intimated to the Chief Executive in the terms set out above, will be discussed at a Council meeting, with the exception of business that the Convener considers urgent. Any such business should be referred by a member to the Chief Executive as soon as possible prior to the meeting for the Convener to determine whether it is urgent and should be added to the agenda accordingly.
- 5.3.4 Where an item of business or motion proposed by a member has been disposed of in the period of 6 months before the date of a meeting, it will not be competent for the same or substantially the same item or motion to be included on a meeting agenda.
- 5.3.5 The agenda and supporting papers for an ordinary Council meeting will normally be sent to members no fewer than 7 days before the meeting. The agenda and supporting papers for a special Council meeting will normally be sent to members no fewer than 2 days before the meeting.

## **5.4 Attendance of the public and others**

- 5.4.1 Members of the public may attend Council meetings but should any confidential or sensitive matters form part of the business to be transacted, the Convener will require members of the public to withdraw from the meeting so that those matters may be dealt with in private. The recording or photographing of Council meetings is strictly subject to permission being sought from the Convener.
- 5.4.2 The Convener may invite any person to attend the whole or part of a Council meeting to provide the Council with advice.

## **5.5 Exclusion from meetings**

Any member of Council may propose a motion that any person (including another member) be excluded from the whole or any part of a meeting. If that motion is seconded, the Council may decide (in accordance with section 5.9 of this Scheme) to so exclude that person where it considers that the person:

- ❖ has disregarded the authority of the Convener;
- ❖ has acted offensively; or
- ❖ has disrupted (or is likely to disrupt) the meeting.

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## **5.6 Absence of Convener and Vice Convener**

Where the Convener and Vice Convener are both unable to chair all or any part of a Council meeting for any reason, the Chief Executive will chair the meeting to the extent necessary to allow Council members to nominate an alternate chair as they see fit.

## **5.7 Conduct of discussion and debate**

- 5.7.1 Any member wishing to speak at a Council meeting will indicate as such to the Convener and wait to be called by the Convener. All contributions will be directed to the Convener and will relate to the motion or item of business open to discussion. A member will give way to the Convener on request.
- 5.7.2 A member may move a vote of no confidence in the Convener at a meeting. If this motion is seconded, the Convener will withdraw from the chair while it is discussed and the Vice Convener will take the chair for the time being with the voting rights of the Convener. If the motion is rejected, the Convener will resume the chair. If the motion is carried, the Vice Convener will remain in the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

## **5.8 Decision-making**

The intention is to reach agreement by consensus on any motion or matter put forward for decision at a Council meeting. The Convener will ask the Council to confirm a consensus decision orally. If there is not a general consensus, any member may call for a vote on the matter. Voting will be by a show of hands, by any technological equipment that may be provided for this purpose or by such means as the Convener considers appropriate in the circumstances.

Unless this Scheme provides otherwise, a simple majority of those members voting will be sufficient to carry a decision. In the event of an equality of votes, the Convener will have a casting vote. A member may dissent from a decision after a vote has taken place and this will be minuted appropriately.

## **5.9 Declaration of interests**

Where a member has registered or declared an interest in a matter under discussion or debate at a Council meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Membership Scheme, due consideration will be given to whether it is appropriate for that member to withdraw from the discussion, debate or vote concerned.

## **5.10 Adjournment**

Any member of Council may propose a motion to adjourn a meeting and have it reconvened at a later date or time. If that motion is seconded, the Council may decide (in accordance with section 5.8 of this Scheme) to adjourn and reconvene the meeting in the terms proposed.

The Convener may decide that any item of business or motion should be moved forward or continued to a Council meeting scheduled for a later date or time where the Convener sees fit.

## **5.11 Convener's authority**

The decision of the Convener on any matter of dispute, point of order or question of procedure at a Council meeting will be conclusive for all purposes.

## **5.12 Minutes and meeting recording**

Minutes of Council meetings will be taken. Subject to the agreement of those members in attendance, meetings may be recorded electronically for the sole purpose of enabling the minute to be prepared. Minutes will be approved by the Convener and then laid before the next Council meeting. No

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discussion will take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy. If no matter relating to the accuracy of the minutes is raised, the Convener will declare the minutes approved.

## **6 Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels**

### **6.1 Structure, functions and responsibilities**

A table setting out the committees, sub-committees and panels established by the Council, the functions that they are to carry out and the responsibilities delegated to them is set out in the Schedule to this Scheme.

Committees, sub-committees and panels may be delegated further responsibilities or be required to carry out further functions in such terms as are set out by Council in rules, schemes or policy or as may be referred to them by the Council or Convener from time to time.

The Council may establish temporary or ad hoc committees, sub-committees or panels from time to time in such terms and with such delegated responsibilities as it may determine. Committees and sub-committees may establish temporary or ad hoc sub-groups or working groups from time to time. These sub-groups or working groups may focus on informing, exploring and engaging on specific identified areas that fall within that Committee or sub-committee remit: they may not perform any decision-making role.

### **6.2 Membership and conveners**

The Appointments Committee will appoint independent persons to serve on Fitness to Teach Panels or these appointments will be made through such other process approved by the Council from time to time. The Appointments Committee will be appointed in accordance with the Appointment Scheme.

The Council will determine the membership of its other committees, sub-committees and panels entirely as it sees fit. For the avoidance of doubt, the Council may determine that such committees, sub-committees and panels are to include such number of co-opted, elected, nominated and appointed members as it considers appropriate.

With the exception of the Appointments Committee, as a result of their position of office and where the Council considers it appropriate, the Convener of the Council and Vice Convener of the Council will be members of the committees and sub-committees established by the Council.

With the exception of the Appointments Committee, the Council will (where it considers it appropriate so to do), elect (in accordance with this Scheme) members to act as conveners of the committees, sub-committees and panels. Subject to the provisions below, such conveners will hold office until the date on which the next programme of election, appointment and nomination of Council members takes effect. For the avoidance of doubt, any such convener may be elected for further terms of office.

A member or appointee may resign from a committee, sub-committee, panel or any position as convener or vice convener held at any time by written notice.

With the exception of the Appointments Committee, the Council may remove a committee, sub-committee or panel convener or vice convener from that office by resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a Council meeting, provided that notice of the proposal has been circulated with the relevant agenda.

### **6.3 Quorum**

With the exception of the Appointments Committee, the quorum applicable to a committee or sub-committee is one third of its membership. The quorum applicable to the Appointments Committee and any panel is set out in the table provided in the Schedule to this Scheme.

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## **6.4 Meetings**

Committees, sub-committees and panels will meet as necessary for the transaction of their business. Committees and sub-committees will meet in private. Meetings will be chaired by the relevant convener or, in the convener's absence, such member of the committee, sub-committee or panel as it may choose.

Committees and sub-committees may elect a vice convener to act in the absence of the convener should they so wish. Any such election will be conducted in accordance with the provisions set out in section 7 of this Scheme.

An agenda will be prepared for each meeting by a GTC Scotland employee in consultation with the convener (or the convener's alternate).

Contributions to meetings will be directed to the convener and members will give way to the convener on request.

Subject to the terms of this Scheme and any other applicable GTC Scotland rules, policy or guidance, meetings will otherwise be conducted as the relevant committee, sub-committee or panel sees fit.

## **6.5 Decision-making**

The intention at any committee, sub-committee or panel meeting or hearing is to make decisions by consensus. If there is not a general consensus, any member may call for a vote on the matter.

Each member of a committee, sub-committee or panel will have voting rights.

Voting will be by a show of hands or by such means as the convener considers appropriate in the circumstances.

A simple majority of those members present and voting at the meeting or hearing will be sufficient to carry a decision. Where members are asked to make a decision outside of a meeting, a simple majority of those members voting (by such means as may be provided for this purpose) will be sufficient to carry a decision. In the event of an equality of votes, and unless otherwise provided in the GTC Scotland rules governing any panel meeting or hearing concerned, the convener will have a casting vote.

## **6.6 Minutes**

Minutes of committee, sub-committee, panel and temporary or ad hoc sub-group or working group meetings will be taken and retained.

Minutes will be provided to the relevant convener for approval and circulated as appropriate to confirm accuracy.

With the exception of the Appointments Committee, minutes of committees and sub-committees will also be laid before the next Council meeting for information.

Minutes of panels and temporary or ad hoc sub-groups or working groups will be laid before the next originating committee or sub-committee meeting for information.

## **7 Election of Conveners**

7.1 The election of any convener or vice convener will be conducted in accordance with the provisions set out below.

7.2 To become a candidate for election, a member must be supported by two other members.

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- 7.3 If only one member is nominated for any position, that member will be declared elected. Otherwise, an election will be held and a ballot prepared. Each member present will be entitled to cast a vote or, where the election takes place outside of a meeting, each member will be entitled to cast a vote by such means as may be provided for this purpose. The voting system will be first past the post. In the event of a tie, the election will be decided between the tied candidates by the drawing of lots conducted by the Convener (where the Convener has been elected) or Chief Executive.

## **8 The Chief Executive**

- 8.1 The role of the Chief Executive is to lead GTC Scotland in implementing the strategic plans and strategic policy determined through Council and manage the operational delivery of all of GTC Scotland's services and functions.

The Chief Executive is to seek to ensure that GTC Scotland acts at all times within the terms of the Order and the law.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for presenting the views of the Council to members of the teaching profession, members of the public and other public bodies.

The Chief Executive's role will be further specified in a contract of employment and/or conditions of service.

The Chief Executive may sub-delegate their authority and functions to other GTC Scotland employees as is seen fit but will remain ultimately accountable. In addition, the Council, its committees and sub-committees may sub-delegate responsibilities or tasks allocated to it or them to the Chief Executive and GTC Scotland employees as is seen fit.

- 8.2 The appointment of a Chief Executive will be effected by the Council in accordance with the procedure determined by the Council from time to time.

## **9 Document Signing and Authorisation of Payments**

- 9.1 Any document issued on behalf of the Council or GTC Scotland may be signed by the Chief Executive or by another GTC Scotland employee duly authorised by the Chief Executive to do so or when acting in the course of their duties.
- 9.2 Payments drawn by whatever means on the Council's accounts will be authorised by the Chief Executive or by another GTC Scotland employee duly authorised by the Chief Executive to do so in the case of amounts below a threshold determined by the Finance and Corporate Services Committee. Payments drawn by whatever means on the Council's accounts in the case of amounts above that threshold will be authorised in accordance with arrangements approved by the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.



## Schedule Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels

Committee or Panel	Functions and Delegated Responsibilities	Quorum
<b>Appointments Committee</b>	Delegated responsibility for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>those functions set out in the Appointments Scheme; and</li> <li>adjudicating any case referred to it in accordance with the terms of the Code of Conduct and Membership Scheme</li> </ul>	3, including a registrant and lay person
<b>ITE Programme Accreditation Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility for scrutinising, reviewing and accrediting where it sees fit courses leading to the award of a GTC Scotland recognised teaching qualification or any GTC Scotland professional standard in accordance with any applicable GTC Scotland procedural rules, policy or guidance.	5, minimum of 3 drawn from the appointed Education Panel pool (including a majority of registrants) 1 university rep and 1 LA rep
<b>Education Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assure Council that GTC Scotland is performing its statutory functions related to the registrant journey from initial teacher education through to registration and career development.</li> <li>Advise and make recommendations to Council on registration rules and any related strategic registration policy; including the establishment of such other registers of other individuals working in educational settings as is seen fit.</li> <li>Advise and make recommendations to Council on the professional standards for registrants (excepting the standard of conduct) and any related strategic policy.</li> <li>Advise and make recommendations to Council on any strategic policy related to teacher education, teacher career development and teacher supply (excepting matters of remuneration or conditions of service).</li> </ul>	

<b>Conveners Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate and effective Council and committee communications and prepare and plan for Council meetings.</li> <li>• Act and make appropriate decisions on behalf of Council (with the exception of the functions of Council to make rules and schemes) between Council meetings.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on its governance framework and schemes, including determining the compensation policy (or similar) for members of Council and Panels.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on strategic communications and reputation management activities</li> </ul>	
<b>Finance and Corporate Services Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor GTC Scotland's financial performance.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on annual budgets, the annual report and annual accounts.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on GTC Scotland's risk management and audit arrangements to provide assurance of operational management and delivery as well as legal compliance.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on GTC Scotland's fee strategy.</li> <li>• Assure Council that GTC Scotland is managed and run by the Chief Executive effectively and responsibly.</li> <li>• Assure Council that GTC Scotland is performing against its strategic plans and performance indicators.</li> <li>• Assure Council that GTC Scotland has employment policies and procedures in place to provide assurance that it is acting as a responsible employer.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fitness to Teach Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility to adjudicate fitness to teach referrals made about registrants or those seeking registration in accordance with the terms of the Fitness to Teach Rules. For the avoidance of doubt, Fitness to Teach Panel Conveners are delegated responsibility to carry out those functions attributed to them by the Fitness to Teach Rules and to sub-delegate such functions in accordance with this Scheme.	3, including a lay person and majority of registrants
<b>Professional Regulatory Assurance Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure Council that GTC Scotland is performing its statutory fitness to teach function.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on Fitness to Teach Rules and any related strategic fitness to teach policy, including the Framework on Teacher Competence.</li> <li>• Advise and make recommendations to Council on the standard of conduct required of registrants and any related strategic policy.</li> </ul>	
<b>Excellence in Professional</b>	Delegated responsibility to issue GTC Scotland Professional Learning Excellence Awards in accordance with the GTC Scotland Professional Learning Framework (and any related guidance or policy)	4, including one member of the appointed Education

<b>Learning Awards Panel</b>		Panel pool acting as Chair and 3 Local Authority representatives
<b>Professional Update Validation/ Re-validation Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility to validate employer Professional Review and Development systems or schemes in the context of GTC Scotland's Professional Update framework	2, including one member of the appointed Education Panel pool acting as Chair and either one Local Authority representative or one university representative (depending on establishment being validated/revalidated)
<b>Professional Recognition Programme Accreditation Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility to make a Professional Recognition Award	4, including one member of the appointed Education Panel pool acting as Chair, one university representative and two Local Authority representatives
<b>Professional Standards Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility to adjudicate any case referred to it in terms of the Registration and Standards Rules relating to the matter of professional standards.	3, including a lay person and majority of registrants
<b>Registration Panel</b>	Delegated responsibility to adjudicate any case referred to it in terms of the Registration and Standards Rules relating to the matter of registration.	3, including a lay person and majority of registrants

*Inspiring world-class teaching professionalism*

## GTC Scotland *Comhairle Choitcheann Teagaisg na h-Alba*

The General Teaching Council for Scotland is the independent professional body which maintains and enhances teaching standards and promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. We strive to be a world leader in professional education issues.

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[gtcs.org.uk](http://gtcs.org.uk)

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