



**west lothian**  
college

# **Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy**

**2019 - 2021**

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## History of Changes

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	New policy created	QLS Team	October 2016
2.0	Professional Standards for Lecturers embedded into the policy and the inclusion of a Personal Learning Plan opt out statement	QLS Team	October 2019
3.0	Management terminologies amended due to management restructure, TQFE and PDApp wording amended to reflect National Bargaining agreement.	HR & People Development Team	August 2020

## **Introduction**

The College is committed to supporting the highest standard of quality delivery to our learners and customers to ensure that staff is equipped to provide an up-to-date and effective learning and teaching experience and an excellent standard of customer services.

The College's Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy supports delivery of the Outcome Agreement to direct staff training, development of skills and acquisition of qualifications that foster excellence in staff responsible for learning and teaching and to deliver the best possible service for all our customers.

The Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy has been informed by and developed from the People Strategy.

The policy sets out how the College will address staff development.

## **Aims**

The aims of the Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy are to:

- Embed workforce skills development and planning as a key Quality function.
- Develop a proactive approach to staff development at both a team and individual level.
- Develop effectiveness and efficiency at team and individual levels.
- Ensure that the College realises excellence across service delivery.
- Ensure professional standards are embedded in learning and teaching and service delivery

## **Development Themes**

The following themes will be developed:

- Learner retention and attainment.
- Learner involvement, engagement and partnership.
- Realisation of the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
- ICT utilisation and blended learning in the curriculum.
- Promotion of equity and diversity and challenging discrimination
- Effectiveness, efficiency and professionalism in all services.
- Highest possible customer services.
- Risk assessment and Health & Safety.
- Continuous quality improvement and enhancement.
- Societal, organisational and environmental sustainability.

## Budget

### Staff Development Expenditure

Staff development expenditure and budget control will be held by the Head of HR & People Development. Decisions of expenditure and priorities will be informed by:

- Requirements to realise the Outcome Agreement and Strategic developments.
- Annual priorities agreed with the Executive Leadership Team.
- External drivers and legislative requirements.
- An ethos of measureable continuous quality improvement and enhancement.

The table below summarises the decision making guidance.

Type of L&D	Required for the job?	Funding from L&D budget?	Travel Paid?
On the job training	Yes	Yes, in full *	Yes
E-Development	Yes	Yes, in full*	Yes
Qualification (which is a requirement or provides enhancement to job role and succession planning)	Yes	Yes, in full*	Yes, subject to total funding maximum of £1000.

\*Subject to money remaining in L&D budget and finance procedures to achieve best value

All spending will also be made in line with College Financial Regulations, particularly the Travel and Subsistence Policy.

### Approaches to Development

#### Individual Development

All staff are provided with an opportunity to have an annual personal learning plan (PLP) review with their line manager to discuss their learning and development activity during the current academic year, normally held in May/June. Guidance notes for the PLPs are available for all staff and managers. During this meeting the reviewer and reviewee will agree development activity targets for the upcoming academic year.

In certain circumstances staff can opt out of the PLP review process. It is essential that all staff are given the opportunity to attend a meeting and those that do not wish to engage with the process must complete a disclaimer to confirm that they 'have no individual development requirements and are fully competent in their job role'. It is anticipated that this would only apply to staff that are bank staff (i.e. invigilators or temporary lecturers used on an adhoc basis) or experienced Estates staff.

## **Team Development**

Teams and managers will identify development and quality enhancement needs through self-evaluation. These development needs will be expressed as SMART targets to ensure progress can be measured. Managers will have responsibility for and oversight of this work.

Team development needs may be addressed through team development days/events or other activities.

The College schedules team development days at intervals throughout the year. Managers will coordinate and facilitate activities on these days in conjunction with the Head of HR & People Development & the Learning & Development Officer to ensure that teams realise targets from self-evaluation. Team development events are approved through an applications process and submission of Professional Development Application (PDApp) forms.

The Learning & Development Officer will book external trainers/facilitators and will support managers in the coordination, delivery and evaluation of Team Development days.

Teams and managers are encouraged to develop service standards to facilitate objective measurement of activities.

Managers will report on progress quarterly and annually to the Executive Leadership Team and annually to the College Board of Governors, via the HR & People Development Team.

## **Whole College Development Days**

The College schedules whole College staff development days at intervals throughout the year. The content of these days will be informed by a strategic overview of development needs held by the Head of HR & People Development who will consult on content with the Executive Leadership Team and College Leadership Team.

## **On-line Staff Development**

Some aspects of staff development are most effectively addressed through e-learning. This method of development will be offered where;

- It represents best value for money.
- Access and availability issues are overcome.
- This form of presentation supports development of an e-learning literate workforce.

## **Informal Staff Development**

The College recognises that informal development is valuable and can only be undertaken with a commitment of time and other agreed expenses, which will be provided where possible. The following list provides examples of informal professional development:

- Representing the College on an external group.

- Visiting colleagues in another College to share best practice.
- Shadowing colleagues internally or externally.
- Attending network meetings.
- Leading and contributing to professional dialogue events.
- Team teaching.
- Discussion with internal colleagues.

## **Leadership and Management Development**

The College recognises that further and higher education is an ever-changing environment. The College will support staff who have the potential and aspiration for career development. General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) professional standards for leadership and management are embedded in the Management Development Framework and Career Long Professional Learning and Development reviews.

The College will aim that all Managers will have a first level Management Qualification and Deputies with at least Supervisory Awards as minimum.

## **Workforce Planning**

The College will, through effective workforce planning, ensure that it has a sufficient level of staffing which is appropriately skilled and deployed and will provide staff, where possible, with the opportunity to progress.

The College has three values which are:

- Welcoming to All
- Students at the centre of all we do
- Always striving for better

To ensure the realisation of these values a number of tools will be employed:

- Succession planning
- Skills audit gap analysis
- Risk management
- Recruitment and retention planning
- Flexible working
- Forecasting of demand for, and supply of, skills required in specific areas

## **Teaching Qualifications and Professional Development Awards**

### **Professional Development Awards (PDAs)**

The College will support staff undertaking Professional Development Awards in initial teacher training. All new teaching staff should complete the Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education: An Introduction within the first two years of employment. If a new member of staff holds a recognised teaching qualification there is no requirement to

undertake this award although this may still be useful if it is their first experience of teaching in Further Education.

### **Teaching Qualification (Further Education) – TQ(FE)**

The College is committed to supporting staff through a professional development process to gain an initial teaching qualification. The College uses the University of Stirling one-year distance-learning programme, supported by an internal mentor system, for staff to achieve the post-employment TQ(FE).

All lecturing staff are required to undertake the TQ(FE), unless they already hold an equivalent teaching qualification.

### **Post-TQ Development**

The College has an on-going commitment to improving the learner and customer experience. In line with this, it has adopted a policy of zero tolerance of under-performance, reinforced by the annual process of Career Long Professional Learning and Development Review and the College Performance Improvement Policy where appropriate.

All curriculum delivery staff are supported and encouraged to participate in on-going reviews of professional practice through the College's Independent Review of Learning and Teaching scheme

### **GTC Scotland**

The College actively encourages lecturing staff to register with the GTC Scotland – Professional Update. It is the lecturer's responsibility to ensure that they complete the annual update with GTC through MyGTCS. The PDApp process should be followed for lecturing staff that would like to register. Guidance on the expectations of GTCS registered lecturers and their line managers is included as Appendix A.

### **Assessor & Verifier Units**

The College will support staff undertaking Assessor and Verifier units where these are appropriate to their area of work.

### **Support Services**

The College actively encourages Support areas to engage in development activities including team and personal development. The College will support professional qualifications where appropriate and relevant to the post holders job role or to provide development opportunities. This may include, for example, professional qualifications for Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, Health and Safety Executive, Institute of Leadership & Management and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

## Recording

A central record is kept of PDApps – both individual and team, however, members of staff are responsible for keeping their individual Learning & Development records. This may be through the method adopted by College Development Network (<http://events.collegedevelopmentnetwork.ac.uk/mycpd>), via the College's VLE or an alternate method. Guidance is provided in the Career Long Professional Learning and Development Procedure on the type of records that should be maintained.

## Reporting

### Planning and Reporting

The Head of HR & People Development will produce an annual Staff Development Plan for Executive Leadership Team approval and report against realisation of this quarterly to this Team and annually to the College Board of Governors.

### Learning Agreement

Staff undertaking a programme of study which **either costs more than £750, or has a duration of greater than six months**, will be required to sign an agreement with the College detailing the conditions of the support provided.

This is detailed in the Learning Agreement form contained within the Career Long Professional Learning and Development Procedure.

### Payment of Professional Memberships

Where it is a requirement of the post, the College may pay studying memberships on behalf of staff, where this is part of the costs of undertaking a professional qualification. After the qualification has been achieved, the responsibility for professional membership reverts to the individual.

## Appeals

In the case of disagreement on staff development between members of staff and their line manager, staff can appeal to the Head of HR & People Development who will investigate the situation. The Head of HR & People Development's decision is final.

## Review

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis or as required.

### Related Documents

This policy links to the Career Long Professional Learning and Development Review Process and Guidance documents and for lecturing staff the revised Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges.

## Appendix A – GTCS Registered Lecturers Guidance

The following provides specific advice on Professional Update for General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) registered lecturers and their line managers.

This guidance relates to all and any staff, whether joining West Lothian College as GTC registered staff and maintaining this status, or becoming registered with GTC during the period of employment.

### Introduction

As of August 2016, engagement in Professional Update (PU) is a requirement to maintain registration with GTCS for registered lecturers working in the College sector. This appendix provides information and guidance for GTCS registered employees of West Lothian College and their line managers to meet the requirements of Professional Update.

West Lothian College have had their Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy (PLP) system validated by GTC Scotland for Professional Update.

### Key Purposes of Professional Update

Professional Update focuses on continuous improvement rather than performance management.

The key purposes of Professional Update are:

- to maintain and improve the quality of our lecturers as outlined in the appropriate professional standard and to enhance the impact that they have on learners' learning
- to support, maintain and enhance lecturers' continued professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland

### 1. Professional Update Requirements

Fully registered lecturers at West Lothian College are required to:

**a) Record professional learning using the MyGTCS system - you should check your contact details are up to date annually.**

Each registered lecturer should have a MyGTCS account through which contact details can be checked and amended. If you do not have an account set up, this can be created at [www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk) using your GTCS number, date of birth and by creating your own password.

**b) Engage in ongoing career-long, high-quality, professional learning**

Ongoing engagement with high quality learning and development opportunities in turn provides high quality learning experiences for the College's learners. Professional learning is what lecturers engage in to stimulate thinking and

professional knowledge and to ensure that their practice is critically informed and up to date.

A range of learning and development activities are available through a variety of sources including College Development Network, SQA and other external organisations. Opportunities will be circulated by the Quality Team as and when appropriate.

Examples of professional learning are:

<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-learning.aspx>

- Self-evaluation and critical reflection processes
- Experiential, action or enquiry-based learning
- Professional dialogue with colleagues, other professionals, parents, and learners
- Focused professional reading and research
- Leading or engaging in practitioner enquiry / action research
- Critical analysis of reading, learning and impact on professional practice
- Employer engagement
- Learning about aspects of the curriculum or pedagogical practice
- Peer support e.g. coaching or mentoring
- Classroom visits/peer observation
- Online learning/blogs
- Work shadowing
- Cooperative or team teaching
- Participation in collaborative activity e.g. teacher learning community, learning round
- Leading or participating in a working or task group
- Planning learning which is inter-disciplinary or cross-sector
- Participation in activities relating to assessment and moderation
- Secondments, acting posts and placements
- Masters study and qualifications
- Accredited courses or activity related to achieving national professional standards for teachers
- Professional/Academic conferences

### **c) Self-evaluate using professional standards**

The Professional Standard for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges (2018) is currently held by GTC Scotland and can be accessed here:

<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-standards.aspx>

The standards offer constructive support for registered members as they consider how you might continue to develop professional knowledge and skills through ongoing self-evaluation and professional learning. Lecturers can self-evaluate and plan professional learning using an aspect of any of the professional standards appropriate to their area of focus.

**d) Discuss the impact of professional learning through professional dialogue**

A wide variety of learning and development is available through organised events both internally and externally. West Lothian College recognises that participating in College, local and national working groups, being observed in the classroom and professional dialogue with colleagues is valid and beneficial to personal and professional development. All employees are encouraged to engage in professional dialogue as it is a key component of review and development meetings and supports professional learning.

**e) Maintain a record of professional learning / associated evidence**

The Quality Team will record all events and activities booked through the PD Application process. In addition, it is important that individuals also keep a record of any additional learning and development including reading of literature, professional dialogue etc. Lecturers must ensure that they update this into the MyGTCS system, which **must** be used for recording activity relating to Professional Update. The MyGTCS record should record professional learning activities reflecting on the professional standards and the impact of your professional learning.

GTC Scotland Guidance on Evidence of Impact can be accessed here:  
<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-learning-journey-using-evidence-of-impact.aspx>

**f) Confirm engagement in the Professional Update process every five years for sign off**

GTCS registered lecturers are required to complete the 'sign-off' process every five years through the MyGTCS system.

The statement which a registered lecturer is required to confirm is as follows (the wording of this statement may be subject to amendment by GTCS):

*"I confirm that I have engaged in ongoing professional learning, reflected against an appropriate \*GTCS Professional Standard, maintained a record of my professional learning with associated evidence of impact of my professional learning on my thinking, practice and professional actions, and have discussed this with my line manager as part of my Professional Review and Development process."*

*\*Please note it is not mandatory for lecturers to reflect against the GTCS suite of standards and lecturers can choose to work across these and / or the Standard for Lecturers.*

At West Lothian College, the PRD process is the Career Long Professional Learning Plan (PLP).

The line manager will then confirm this engagement via MyGTCS by confirming the lecturer's 'sign off'. Line managers are not required to be GTCS registered to participate in this process and a non-registered manager can have a MyGTCS account set up by emailing [PLD@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:PLD@gtcs.org.uk).

Registered Lecturers will be notified directly by GTCS at the beginning of the year that their Professional Update sign off is required. Lecturers can also see on the homepage within in their MyGTCS account when their Professional Update year is.

Information about the deferral process can be found in Section 3 (Deferral Process).

## **2. The Role of Line Managers**

Line managers should be familiar with the requirements of registered lecturers, as set out in Section 1 (Professional Update Requirements).

It is the responsibility of every individual GTCS registered lecturer to engage in reflective professional learning to meet the requirements of Professional Update. Professional learning is what lecturers engage in to stimulate their thinking and professional knowledge and to ensure that their practice is critically informed and up-to-date.

Line managers play a supportive as well as a challenging role, encouraging their individual staff and teams to reflect on practice with a focus on continuous improvement and assisting in the identification of professional learning activities and opportunities which will contribute to this.

GTCS registered lecturers should notify the line manager of their intention to engage in Professional Update and maintain registration with GTCS. Lecturers should also notify their line manager when it is their sign off year.

GTCS require line managers to confirm the ongoing engagement in professional learning on an annual basis through the College process (PLP review) and every 5 years by 'signing off' Professional Update with GTCS at the lecturer's identified sign-off year. Completing the sign off process enables the lecturer to have their GTCS registration confirmed for a further five years.

The line manager signing off professional learning through the Professional Update process is referred to as the Reviewer. A Reviewer must set up a MyGTCS account, so they can link their account to their GTCS registered staff. This is required to allow the lecturer to share their record on an ongoing basis with the Reviewer and also to enable the 5 year sign-off process. Reviewers are not required to be GTCS registered to participate in this process and a non-registered Reviewer can have a MyGTCS account set up by emailing [PLD@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:PLD@gtcs.org.uk) requesting this. If a Reviewer is already a GTCS member then they should email [PLD@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:PLD@gtcs.org.uk) requesting Reviewer status.

When a GTCS registered lecturer has completed Professional Update, they must submit their Reflective Professional Learning Record to their Reviewer. This is done via linked MyGTCS accounts.

The GTCS registered lecturer requests a Reviewer by clicking “request association” and entering the reviewer’s email address in their MyGTCS account. This only has to be set up once and would require change only if the Reviewer changed. The Reflective Professional Learning Record should then be discussed as part of the process and take into account evidence of impact.

The statement which a line manager is required to confirm is as follows (the wording of this statement may be subject to amendment by GTCS):

*“You have been asked to confirm that a teacher you are associated with has engaged in ongoing professional learning, reflected against an appropriate \*GTCS Professional Standard, maintained a record of my professional learning with associated evidence of impact of my professional learning on my thinking, practice and professional actions, and has discussed this with you as part of their Professional Review and Development process.”*

*\*Please note it is not mandatory for lecturers to reflect against the GTCS suite of standards and lecturers can choose to work across these and/or the Standard for Lecturers.*

### **3. Deferral Process**

It is recognised that there are a number of exceptional circumstances which may make completion of the Professional Update process within the designated timescale difficult. These include, but may not be limited to, career breaks, extended illness and maternity/paternity/adoption leave. In such circumstances, an extension to the 5 yearly sign off period may be requested.

Deferral would be subject to approval by the lecturer’s immediate line manager, or the Assistant Principal. A request for deferral can be made at any point in the year but should be made as far in advance as possible. Deferrals would normally be granted for a period of one year with the expectation that Professional Update sign off would be completed the following academic session. Where a lecturer knows in advance that the deferral period is likely to be greater than one year, this should be discussed with their line manager.

Where there is disagreement in relation to a decision regarding a deferral which cannot be resolved between the lecturer and their immediate line manager, the matter should be referred to the Head of Organisational Development.

The decision to grant a deferral sits with the employer, in this case West Lothian College. Where a deferral has been approved by a line manager, GTCS should be informed by way of the MyGTCS account. The GTCS Professional Update guidelines at <http://gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-update-what-do-i-need-to-know-do.aspx> give information about deferrals.

#### **4. Appeals Process**

Professional Update focuses on the lecturer's commitment to career long professional learning and the impact of this rather than determining whether or not a registered lecturer is, or has remained, competent in relation to the Standard for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges (2012) .

Where there are competency issues in relation to a lecturer's performance, this is a separate matter and would be addressed through College policy, advice on which can be sought through Human Resources.

Where there is dispute or disagreement about any aspect of the Professional Update process which cannot be resolved between the lecturer and their immediate line manager, the matter should be referred to the Assistant Principal.

#### **5. Action by West Lothian College**

West Lothian College expects that GTC registered staff will engage fully in professional review and development and Professional Update, making use of the support and tools available via GTCS.

- West Lothian College will provide support and guidance where appropriate to support meeting the Professional Standards for FE Lecturers.
- West Lothian College will encourage and support lecturers to attend and engage in learning and development activities as and when appropriate.
- GTCS registered staff will be reminded annually to check that their contact details with GTCS are up to date and to amend these as appropriate.

## Equality Impact Assessment

EIA covers **strategies, policies, procedures, plans, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services**, but will be referred to hereinafter as 'policy/practice'.

<b>Policy/Practice (name or brief description):</b>	<b>Career Long Professional Learning and Development Policy</b>
<b>Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (choose from the following options):</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed new policy/practice</li> <li>• Proposed change to an existing policy/practice</li> <li>• Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice</li> <li>• Other (please give detail):</li> </ul>	Undertaking a review of an existing policy.
<b>Person responsible for the policy area or practice:</b>	
Name:	Jenny Stalker
Job title:	Head of Quality & Learner Services
<b>An Equality Impact Assessment must be carried out if the policy/practice:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• affects <b>operational</b> or <b>strategic functions</b> of the College</li> <li>• is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)</li> </ul>	
Why the EIA is being carried out	<b>Affects operational functions of the College.</b>
<b>Equality Groups</b>	
Relevant to the Policy/Practice, identify which of the undernoted equality groups are impacted upon:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• race (including ethnicity and nationality)</li> <li>• religion or belief</li> <li>• sex</li> <li>• sexual orientation</li> <li>• gender reassignment</li> <li>• pregnancy and maternity</li> <li>• marriage or civil partnership</li> </ul>	<b>No impact</b>
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**Record your assessment against the following statements:**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Equality assessment</b>
Detail the evidence of the needs of the identified equality groups and any gaps in information	For staff with disabilities, PDApp identifies individual needs from the point of view of supporting that individual to attend/participate in the development activity.
Will application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups?	Not applicable
If yes, how will the policy/practice be changed to contribute to advancing equality of opportunity	Not applicable
State how this policy/practice will foster good relations:	The policy promotes opportunities to all staff regardless of any circumstances.
Will the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?	None – the PD application identifies individual needs from the point of supporting that individual to attend/participate in the development activity.
If yes, how will the policy/practice be changed to contribute to advancing equality of opportunity	N/A

Which equality groups or communities have been consulted in the development and review of this policy/practice?	N/A
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<p><b>Equality Impact Assessment Outcome</b>  Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision. (Delete the options that do not apply):</p>	
<p><b>Option 1:</b> No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.</p> <p><b>Option 3:</b> Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated</p> <p><b>Option 4:</b> Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated against.</p>	<p><b>No change required.</b></p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	
<p>When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?</p>	<p><b>October 2021</b></p>
<p><b>Publication of EIA</b></p>	
<p>Can this EIA be published in full, now? Please state Yes or No</p> <p>If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply:</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Sign-off</b></p>	

EIA undertaken by  Name: Date:  Accepted by person responsible for the policy/practice named above:  Name: Date:	  <b>Julia Simpson</b> <b>October 2019</b>      <b>Jenny Stalker</b> <b>October 2019</b>
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