Engaging with the Standards - **3**

A series of 4 professional learning sessions:		
	1	Linking the Standards to your Role
	2	Building on a strength
➔	Session 3	**Working on an area for development**
	4	Exploring an interest

# Session 3:	# Info panel 1
From Session 1, what led to you identifying these areas as areas for development, and how can you take them forward?	To help you analyse why you chose these as areas for development and how to take them forward, ask yourself: **How** do you know these are areas for development? What evidence or rationale is there to justify choosing them as areas for development? How do these areas relate to an **improvement plan** or to your **own professional development or learning**? How do they manifest themselves at the moment in your **professional practice**? What **difference** might developing these areas make to you, your colleagues, your learners or your learning community, and how would you know? What kinds of **professional learning** would help you to address these areas for development? See info panel 2 below, in particular: • the Model of Professional Learning • the Professional Learning Wheel The following link to Using Evidence of Impact and Examples of Professional Learning Journeys will also be helpful: http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-learning-journey-using-evidence-of-impact.aspx

Info panel 2

Professional Learning: "Long term and sustained improvement which has a real impact on the quality of children's learning will be better achieved through determined efforts to build the capacity of teachers themselves to take responsibility for their own professional development, building their pedagogical expertise, engaging with the need for change, undertaking well-thought through development and always evaluating impact in relation to improvement in the quality of children's learning. That is the message from successful education systems across the world." *Teaching Scotland's Future (Scottish Government, 2011)*

What is Professional Learning? Professional learning is what teachers engage in to stimulate their thinking and professional knowledge and to ensure that their practice is critically informed and up-to-date. We believe that by undertaking a wide range of high-quality, sustained professional learning experiences, teachers are more likely to inspire pupils and provide high quality teaching and learning experiences, enabling learners to achieve their best. It is important that professional learning provides rich opportunities for teachers to develop and enhance their professional knowledge and practice, in order to progress the quality of learning and

teaching and school improvement.

This interconnected diagram demonstrates the relationship between the teacher as enquiring professional and the wider processes of self-evaluation, professional learning, Professional Standards, Professional Review and Development (PRD), Professional Update and impact on professional practice and school improvement. The diagram has at its centre, teachers as enquiring professionals who are both committed to on-going self-evaluation and are supported by and engage in mentoring relationships with others. It also emphasises that teachers working and learning together rather than as individuals will have the greatest possible impact. Critical self-evaluation is an important part of the professional learning and PRD process. The revised GTC Scotland Professional Standards have been developed to offer constructive support for teachers as they consider how they might develop their professional values and dispositions, their knowledge, skills and understanding through on-going critical self-evaluation and professional learning.

A model of Professional Learning: Supporting this is a model of professional learning that makes explicit four interconnected dimensions of the learning experience. The model is based on research in the field of professional learning and developed with colleagues at Glasgow University, Education Scotland and the GTCS. Each dimension of the professional learning model is an essential part of the professional learning process. The dimensions do not represent separate or distinctive 'types' or approaches of professional learning. Although it is important to note that some professional learning will take a 'collaborative' approach, for example, but each dimension should still be embedded within. Each dimension is explained in more detail below. The model can be a useful tool to reflect on your professional learning, it can also serve as a useful resource when planning professional learning experiences for others.
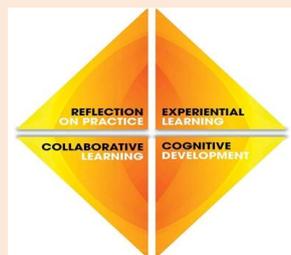
Reflection on practice: Reflection on practice as part of the learning process is more than just reflecting back on things that did or did not work for you. This emphasises the need for the individual to be curious and critically explore as part of the learning process. To be asking questions about practice and about their learning (the Standards might help prompt some critical questions).

Collaborative learning: Collegiate and collaborative practices underpin models of professional learning. There is an increasing awareness among teachers of the importance of engaging in a wide range of professional learning and in achieving the right blend and balance to enable teachers to progress, enrich, develop and enhance their practice and knowledge. This will develop the teacher as an agent of change and help to achieve transformational change at all levels.

Experiential learning: For professional learning to be worthwhile and effective it needs to happen through some form of structure, relevant and meaningful activity that enables the individual to question, try out, develop and enhance practice. It needs to be contextualised or contextually relevant for the learner.

Cognitive development: the learning process will be limited if there is insufficient cognitive focus. Professional learning should seek to challenge and develop ideas, inform and question assumptions and practices, extend

knowledge and skills and deepen understandings of practice.

The model promotes self-directed learning. It acknowledges the importance of the individual in identifying their own learning needs and goals and to consider the how, what and why of their professional learning. It is important to recognise though, that this is not an individualistic approach but rather one that is absolutely connected to, informed by and relevant to context but mediated and adapted to meet the cognitive and development needs of the individual.

The Professional Learning process: We have developed this visual and key questions to help you consider your professional learning process. The 'planning wheel' reflects the enquiry process and can be used alongside the model of professional learning to help you focus on the most appropriate and meaningful approach to your learning. Key elements in the professional learning process include:

- The initial planning of the professional learning
- How you plan to engage in your professional learning
- Considering the impact of your professional learning
- Understanding the evidence of impact of your learning
- Importance of engaging in professional dialogue about your learning

Examples of Professional Learning: From the information above, it is clear that professional learning can take many forms. Here are some examples of professional learning opportunities:

- 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
- 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
- Co-operative 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

GTC Scotland's Professional Recognition process provides the opportunity for teachers to focus on and develop their professional learning in particular areas of interest and/ or expertise and gain recognition for enhancing their knowledge, understanding and practice.

Impact of Professional Learning: Evaluation of the impact of professional learning is important in order to ensure it has been worthwhile and informs next steps. Evidence of impact can be gathered from a diverse range of sources including direct observation, information and data and people's views. It does not always have to be a written record of something. What is important is that whatever you use as evidence it should be analysed and reflected on.

Examples of evidence

- Reflections on professional dialogue with peers, parents, colleagues and learners
- Individual critical reflections on practice, including reflective journals
- Analysis of pupil work, individual or group focused
- Quantitative data
- Analysis of surveys taking account the views of children and young people, parents and colleagues
- Reflection on and analysis of lessons and/or discussions with learners
- Analysis of visual data, artefacts
- Analysed pupil interviews/ group discussion
- Analysed pupil talk (individual, group and pair)
- Analysed teacher talk (from audio and/ or video recording)