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education trade union

EIS Guide on the Teacher Induction Scheme

(The Probationary Year)





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The Teacher Induction Scheme – The Probationary Year

The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) provides a guaranteed one-year training post in a local authority school to every eligible student graduating with a teaching qualification from one of Scotland's universities – i.e. newly qualified teachers.

This one-year training post is commonly known as the 'probationary' year, and those carrying it out are known as probationary teachers or probationers.

The Teacher Induction Scheme is overseen by the GTCS (General Teaching Council for Scotland). The key aim for each probationary teacher is to achieve the GTCS Standard for Full Registration – this allows full registration on the GTCS Register which is a legal requirement of being able to teach in any state or independent school in Scotland.

All probationers following the Teacher Induction Scheme have three years to obtain full registration. Probationers following the Flexible Route have a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of five years to achieve full registration.

GTCS Flexible Route to Achieve the Standard for Full Registration

Many state and independent schools facilitate the GTCS Flexible Route as a way to complete the probationary requirement if a teacher:

- has opted out of the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS)
- is not eligible to join the TIS
- would like the flexibility of working part-time
- wish to complete their probation somewhere other than a Scottish state school.
- is already fully registered in one or more subject(s) / sectors and looking to gain Professional Registration in an additional subject

Probationer teachers following the Flexible route will often have different amounts of teaching experience/lengths of probationary service to complete, different employment opportunities and different support available to them within local authorities.

The Independent School Sector

Many independent schools provide experiences for probationer teachers that are similar to the GTCS Teacher Induction Scheme. More information about working in the independent schools' sector in Scotland can be found here: [Members in Independent Schools \(eis.org.uk\)](http://MembersinIndependentSchools.org.uk).





■ Probationary Teachers' Pay & Conditions of Service

Probationary teachers' pay and key conditions of employment are negotiated and agreed nationally at the SNCT. The SNCT is a tri-partite body between the Scottish Government, COSLA and teacher unions, including the EIS.

This means that all probationary teachers in state schools (independent schools will differ) have the same pay, national conditions of service and induction year rights.

Some conditions of employment are negotiated locally through a forum called the LNCT (Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers) which involves both employer (management) side and employee (union) side meeting on a regular basis.

Probationer teachers currently have an annual salary of £32, 217 (since January 2024). The 2024-25 pay negotiations have yet to be concluded.

Probationer teachers are automatically enrolled in the national pensions scheme, the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme.



■ Achieving the Standard for Full Registration (SFR)

To become a fully registered teacher in Scotland, you are required to achieve the Standard for Full Registration (SFR)– assessed by the GTCS. The SFR outlines the professional values, knowledge and skills expected of you during your induction year. It is the professional standard that you must meet in order to successfully complete your teacher induction.

Your probation year should be a structured and supported process which enables you to build the evidence used to complete your interim and final profiles and achieve the Standard for Full Registration by the end of the year.

Throughout your induction year, you should undertake professional development in the three key areas of the SFR:

- Being a Teacher in Scotland
- Professional Knowledge and Understanding
- Professional Skills and Abilities.

Teacher Induction Scheme Entitlements

Probationer teachers have some additional entitlements to support their induction year.

Most importantly, probationary teachers teach for a maximum of 18 hours per week rather than the 22.5 hours maximum of fully registered teachers, i.e. 0.8 FTE (full time equivalent) in front of a class. The balance of these hours (4.5 hours, 0.2 FTE) should be given to professional learning. In a 35-hour week, there are also 7.5 hours for preparation and correction and 5 collegiate hours that have been negotiated as part of the school Working Time Agreement.

Find out more information about WTAs here:

www.eis.org.uk/pay-and-conditions-of-service/wtas.

More information may be found at:

www.gtcs.org.uk/probationer-teachers/teacher-induction-scheme/

Primary Probationary Teachers Class Contact:

Normally, the whole of the 0.8 FTE time should be spent with one class. Where this is not possible, at least 0.55 FTE should be spent in one class i.e. 12.4 hours per week.

Secondary Probationary Teachers Class Contact

A probationer teacher may be qualified to teach one or two subjects, but they will be allocated a school in the TIS scheme based on one of those subjects. Their weekly timetable should be equivalent to a maximum of 0.8 FTE of a full-time teacher's timetable with at least 0.55 FTE being spent in the allocated subject. The teaching periods allocated will conform to these contact requirements.

Your Entitlements as a Probationer Teacher

- To have timetabled teaching of no more than 18 hours per week. This may be increased later in the session (but not normally before Easter) and only following full discussion and agreement with the individual probationer and endorsement by the relevant manager within the local authority
- Opportunities for Professional Learning both in and out of school
- A supporter/mentor in school with whom you have regular weekly meetings that have a specific focus
- Regular observed teaching sessions with your supporter/mentor
- To receive regular feedback and support on your progress; this should include discussions at an early stage if there are any perceived issues with your progress
- To be made fully aware of school policies and procedures at the beginning of your probation year
- To be made aware of the specific learning or behavioural needs of individual pupils that you will teach and any associated plans or risk assessments. You should also receive support in dealing with particularly challenging pupils or groups of pupils
- Support to manage your workload and advice on how to look after your own health and wellbeing.

Your Probationary Year

Professional Learning

It is important that you as a probationer plan how best to use the 0.2 FTE of your timetable that is for Professional Learning experiences. These will take place in and out of your school base and may include:

- Collaborative working in your own or a different subject or stage
- Shadowing or observation of other teachers/education professionals
- Enhanced planning and preparation including self-evaluation of your own planning and teaching
- Self-evaluation and reflection based on discussions with your mentor and your progression towards achieving the SFR
- Professional reading and familiarisation with school resources
- Engaging with Professional Learning Experiences organised by your local authority
- Visiting other schools or establishments.

Mentor/Supporter Meetings

Your probation year should be a structured and supported process which enables you to build the evidence used to complete your interim and final profiles and achieve the Standard for Full Registration by the end of the year. All information, records of meetings and reflections on your experiences should be documented in your profile.

When you graduate from university, you will have a final ITE profile which is used to draw up your IPDAP (Initial Professional Development Action Plan). This will be the basis of your action plan for professional development at the beginning of the year and should be the focus of your first meeting with your supporter/mentor.

The GTCS recommend that you have a supporter/mentor meeting every week and that each meeting has a specific focus directly linked to the SFR and your strengths and development needs.

Your objectives are set with your Mentor in meetings and should be recorded, with a copy for each person. Your objectives, and your progress towards your objectives will be discussed at your next meeting with your Mentor. Your Mentor should share a copy of the notes that she/he makes regarding your progress for your information.

Observations

Observations are an important part of achieving the Standard for Full Registration as they allow probationer teachers to receive feedback on their development and progress.

Probationer teachers should be observed teaching on a regular basis throughout the year (the GTCS recommend five observations in the first term) and each observation should follow a structured process as detailed below:

Before the observation: you and your supporter/mentor should agree a focus for the observation. This should relate to your strengths and areas for development within the SFR.

After the observation: You should have a discussion with your supporter/mentor reflecting the focus of the observed lesson and areas of strength and development.

The pre-observation discussion and focus should be recorded as well as the observation notes and post-observation discussion of strengths and development needs.

Your Relationship with your Supporter/Mentor

Your relationship with your supporter/mentor should be a professional and productive one. They are there to support you and share their professional knowledge and skills with you. If for any reason you feel that there are any issues with that relationship, then speak to your headteacher or contact the relevant personnel at local authority level. If you feel these concerns are not being resolved to your satisfaction, then speak to your EIS School Rep or contact your EIS Local Association Secretary.

Deferrals and Withdrawals

It is possible that you may be unable to take up or continue your induction post for example, due to medical reasons or family circumstances. In these circumstances, please contact your local authority probation manager who will help you complete a deferral request form which will be sent to the GTCS. The GTCS will decide whether a deferral will be granted or not.

Some probationary teachers may decide to withdraw from the Teacher Induction Scheme and either choose to follow the Flexible Route or leave teaching altogether. In all cases, contact should be made with the local authority probation manager for advice on how to proceed.

Extensions and Cancellations

Health Extensions

Sometimes an issue with your health may cause you to be absent from work for a period of time. If this happens to you then please speak to your headteacher and local authority probation manager. You may be granted an extension, on the grounds of health, which will reflect the total length of your absence. For example, if you are absent for six weeks then you will have to complete a six-week extension.

Competency Issues and Extensions

Any issues with your competency or inability to meet the SFR should be indicated to you at the earliest opportunity. You should be given the opportunity to address these issues with support from your supporter/mentor, headteacher and local authority probation manager.

If your employer recommends an extension to your period of probation in order to give you more time to demonstrate that you have met the SFR you will be notified of that recommendation in writing. You can either accept the recommendation that has been made or challenge the recommendation. For further information, please contact the Professional Learning and Development Department of the GTCS.

Cancellation of Registration

If your final profile contains a recommendation from your employer that your provisional registration should be cancelled, you will be contacted by the GTCS to ask whether you wish to challenge this recommendation.

If you require support at any time, please speak to your EIS school Rep or contact your EIS Local Association Secretary.

Your Induction Year: Managing your Workload

Your induction year will involve much work, especially preparing for your lessons. This, in part, is the reason that probationers teach for a maximum of 28 hours per week rather than 22.5 hours per week that fully registered teachers do.

The GTCS' expectation for probationers is that your role will develop over the course of the induction year. When you enter in August, you have already met the Standard for Provisional Registration and over the course of the year, with mentoring and coaching from your mentor/supporter, you are required to evidence that you have met the SFR in all areas. The nature and focus of your workload will vary for each individual depending on where you are on the route to meeting the SFR.

As a probationer, you will be expected to demonstrate how you plan and evaluate lessons. At this stage in your teaching career, you may prepare detailed plans outlining CfE E's and O's (Experiences and Outcomes), assessment methods and an evaluation of your lesson. All probationers should have a mentor that they can ask for guidance and feedback around this planning.

Probationers may consider detailed lesson planning/evaluation as personal and professional development, and it is worth noting that you will not be asked to focus on many other areas at the same time.

Probationers work to 'action plans' within your profiles to keep your targets manageable. If you are being asked to do more than you believe is necessary, such as excessive planning and reporting, speak to your mentor.

Safety and Wellbeing



Violence – Record it – Report it!

Health, safety and wellbeing is important for all teachers. The EIS advises members to record and report all incidents using school and local authority reporting systems.

Violence at work includes incidents which cause physical injury, mental injury, damage to property or threats:

Please see EIS Guidance on ‘Violent and Disruptive Pupils’:

www.eis.org.uk/Health-And-Safety/EIS-Advice-On-Violent-And-Disruptive-Pupils

Members must be encouraged to report all violent incidents otherwise the scale of the problem remains hidden.

Social Media

Use a sensible approach to the use of social media – as it may be visible to pupils, parents and colleagues. Likewise, your employer may, in certain circumstances, take disciplinary action if it finds unprofessional or disturbing content on your personal social media space.

Detailed advice to members on social media may be found here:

www.eis.org.uk/PoliciesandGuidance/CommunicationTech

Social Media – CoPAC

Probationers in Scotland are also required to abide by the GTCS Code of Professionalism and Conduct (CoPAC) that sets out key principles and values for all registered teachers in Scotland. It is intended that teachers should be mindful of the Code when making judgements within and outwith the classroom, including social media posts.

The GTCS CoPAC may be found here:

www.gtcs.org.uk/regulation/copac.aspx

How to Stay Safe Online:

- Do not publicly post information and photos about yourself, or school-related matters that you wouldn't want employers, prospective employers, colleagues, pupils, or parents/carers to see
- Do not post any views that show intolerance or prejudice against another
- Agree the level of your social media exposure with friends/family that post pics of you or tag you
- Keep passwords secret and protect access to accounts
- Do not befriend pupils or other members of the school community on social networking sites. Be cautious about accepting requests or invites online

Health and Wellbeing

Teaching can be a stressful and exhausting profession so taking care of your own health is very important. Support should be available in school as colleagues understand that the wellbeing of everyone in a school community is a fundamental pre-requisite for productive teaching and learning:

- Make time to rest in the evening and restore your energy
- Eat well, sleep well and look after your physical and mental wellbeing
- Don't work late into the night at home

- Take all your breaks where possible during the school day
- Put self-care first and plan restful activities during school holidays.

For more advice look on the EIS website:

www.eis.org.uk/member-support/hwresource

Support

Your mentor is the first person to contact for support to address any issues you may be experiencing. Don't let a problem multiply. The probation year is a training year and colleagues are there to support you and lend a guiding hand. Speak to someone as soon as you feel an issue arising. There are also Probation Managers linked to every local authority in Scotland, details of which can be found on the GTCS website:

www.gtcs.org.uk/probationer-teachers/local-authority-probation-managers/

Don't Forget the Support of your Union – The EIS

As you set out in your career, your union - the EIS - is the largest education union in Scotland with around 80% of teachers in membership:

- Find out who the EIS Rep is at the start of your school placement and make sure they know that you are an EIS member
- Be part of union activities in school
- Take the opportunity to attend any school EIS meetings held during your placement and within your Local Association
- Take the opportunity take part in national EIS activities, such as conferences, webinars and CPD training.

Reasons to stay with the EIS

1. The EIS is the largest teacher trade union representing over 80% of Scotland's teachers

2. Due to its size the EIS is also the most efficient and affordable union to join

3. The EIS campaigns actively to secure and maintain professional salaries and improve conditions of services for all of its members (the EIS has the overwhelming majority of members on the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers – SNCT)

4. As a professional organisation, the EIS is committed to promoting opportunities for quality professional development for ALL teachers throughout their careers. The EIS is the only Scottish teaching union with Learning Representatives to support members' CLPL



5. The EIS provides the best legal and professional advice. Our solicitors and our network of EIS Representatives, Local Association Secretaries and Area Officers are available to provide the highest quality support and advice when it is needed

6. The EIS provides four insurance policies to all members covering Personal Effects, Malicious Damage to Motor Vehicles, Third Party Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance

7. A commitment to quality and equality across our education service is a hallmark of the EIS and its work in developing policies covering Education, the Equality Agenda, Pay and Conditions of Service

8. EIS is a campaigning organisation that takes a lead on the big issues for education and teachers. The EIS runs major campaigns to protect education, deliver better opportunities for learners, and defend the pay and conditions of teachers

9. The EIS also campaigns on wider issues, such as social justice, equality and anti-racism

10. We have the largest network of staff and representatives in Local Associations and schools to support and help you throughout your teaching career: www.eis.org.uk (Help & Advice)

■ Induction Year Timeline (Important Milestones in Your Probationary Year)

The first few weeks of Term 1:

1. Make sure you have all the information relating to your class(es) including class lists, timetables, individual support plans and medical information
2. Request copies of and familiarise yourself with all school policies and procedures
3. Attend your first local authority induction event, meet fellow probationer teachers and find out about Professional Learning opportunities available to you
4. Read through the Standard for Full Registration and the GTCS guidance note www.gtcs.org.uk/probationer-teachers/how-to-meet-the-standard-for-full-registration/
5. Review your ITE profile and meet with your supporter/mentor to discuss your Initial Professional Development Action Plan (IPDAP)
6. Plan a schedule of meetings with your supporter/mentor
7. Start recording information in your GTCS profile.

Term 1 and Term 2 (August-December):

1. Plan, discuss and receive feedback from your supporter/mentor on observed lessons. You should have 5 observed lessons between August and December

2. Reflect upon feedback from observed lessons and use these to identify targets
3. Continue to have regular meetings with your supporter/mentor where you discuss your progress in relation to the SFR
4. Understand your strengths and areas for development and set objectives
5. Receive support and undertake Professional Learning to help you achieve elements of the SFR
6. Ask for opportunities to observe colleagues when they are teaching. Discuss teaching and learning or behavioural management strategies with them
7. Record meetings, discussions, observations and any other Professional Learning in your GTCS profile
8. Any areas of concern should be raised with you and discussions should take place with your supporter/mentor and the local authority probationer manager
9. Continue to attend local authority probationer teacher events
10. Take opportunities to attend EIS meetings in and out of school
11. Complete your Interim Profile in December and submit it to the GTCS.

Term 3 (January -April):

1. Your Interim Profile should have been submitted and approved in December. If there are any issues with your Interim Profile, speak to the Local Authority Probation Manager and seek out EIS support
2. Your targets for the rest of the year will have been identified (from the SFR) in your Interim Profile so plan how these will be met this term
3. Set dates for regular meetings with your supporter/mentor
4. Seek out opportunities to shadow education professionals (Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language specialists, SEBN teachers etc).

Term 4 (April to June):

1. You are in the final term of the academic year, so identify any remaining parts of the SFR that you are still to meet and plan how to achieve these
2. Continue to have regular meetings with your supporter/mentor
3. If everything is going well then you may be asked if you wish to increase your teaching commitment. This is a decision that should be taken with consideration for your own personal development needs and after discussion with the local authority Probation Manager and your supporter/mentor and headteacher

4. You will have a lesson observed by someone other than your mentor, often a headteacher or head of department. Plan the date for this taking account of school activities in the summer term including the exam timetable if you are in a secondary school
5. The local authority may hold mock interviews so prepare well for these and reflect on any feedback given
6. Start preparing to apply for jobs. The EIS has guidance for probationers: 'Getting Your Best Job'
www.eis.org.uk/Probationers/BestJob
7. Make sure your profile is up-to-date and that you will be ready to submit your Final Profile to the GTCS in June.

The Final Profile

When your Final Profile is submitted, your headteacher will make one of three recommendations:

- **Recommended for Full Registration**
- **Recommended for extension of probation period**
- **Recommended that Provisional Registration should be cancelled.**

Most probationer teachers achieve the SFR in their first year and are recommended for Full Registration. If it is recommended that you extend your probation period or that your provisional registration is cancelled, then please speak to your EIS Rep in school or the EIS Local Association Secretary as soon as possible. They will advise and support you in your next steps.

The logo for the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) features the lowercase letters 'eis' in a white, serif font. The letter 'i' has a distinctive dot and a tail that curves under the 's'. The background is a solid purple color with a curved white border at the bottom.

www.eis.org.uk

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