General Teaching Council for Scotland:

The General Teaching Council for Scotland is the independent professional body which promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. Its general functions include:

- keeping a register of teachers and other individuals working in educational settings;
- establishing and reviewing the standards of education and training appropriate to school teachers;
- establishing and reviewing the standards of conduct and professional competence expected of a registered teacher;
- investigating the fitness to teach of individuals who are, or are seeking to be, registered;
- making recommendations to Scottish Ministers about matters relating to teachers’ education, training, career development and fitness to teach as well as the supply of teachers;
- maintaining a scheme of Professional Update for teachers and the Student Placement System.

Registration requirements for teachers teaching in Scotland:

It is a legal requirement for any teacher teaching in a Scottish state school to be registered with GTC Scotland. Being registered not only allows an individual to teach but it also importantly provides assurances to the public, employers, parents and children that teachers meet a national standard of teaching. Registration also requires teachers to engage in Professional Update, the key purposes of which are:

- to maintain and improve the quality of teachers as outlined in the relevant Professional Standards and enhance the impact they have on pupils’ learning; and
- to support, maintain and enhance teachers’ continued professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland.

For these reasons, GTC Scotland supports strongly the proposals in the Education (Scotland) Bill 2015 to extend registration to all teachers in independent schools and grant-aided special schools.

Registration requirements for Primary:

For registration in the primary school sector, an applicant must have either:

- completed primary teacher education equivalent to one academic year of full-time study (with any part-time study normally being extended over a period of not more than three years); or
- if academic and teacher education have been undertaken concurrently (for example, a Bachelor of Education), have completed a course of not less than 3 years in duration (with any part-time study normally being extended over a period of not more than seven years).

The teacher education must have been undertaken at an institution that is recognised by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre and must have borne SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above).

The organisation and content of the teacher education undertaken must be comparable to the Scottish pattern. This will be evaluated with reference to current GTC Scotland Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland. Primary teacher education should, in particular:

- relate to the 3 to 12 year pupil age range;
- include professional/pedagogic studies;
- include subject studies that reflect the full range of the Scottish primary school curriculum; and
- include school-based teaching experience.

There is a separate academic education requirement for registration in the primary school sector of registration only where an applicant has not undertaken a combined academic and teacher education programme. Where such a combined academic and teacher education programme has not been undertaken, the academic education requirement is as follows:
An applicant must hold a United Kingdom degree or an academic qualification which is equivalent to a United Kingdom degree. An academic qualification will be regarded as equivalent to a United Kingdom degree if it either:

(i) is recognised as such by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre; or
(ii) has borne the equivalent of 120 credit points at SCQF level 7 (or above), 120 credit points at SCQF level 8 (or above) and 120 credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above) and if evidence is produced to GTC Scotland to satisfy it as such.

Registration requirements for Secondary:

For registration in the secondary school sector, an applicant must have either:

- completed teacher education equivalent to one academic year of full-time study (with any part-time study normally being extended over a period of not more than three years); or
- if academic and teacher education has been undertaken concurrently (for example, a Bachelor of Education), have completed a teacher education course of not less than 3 years in duration (with any part-time study normally being extended over a period of not more than seven years).

The teacher education must have been undertaken at an institution that is recognised by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre and must have borne SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above).

The teacher education completed must be subject specific and, if academic and teacher education has not been undertaken concurrently, correlate directly to the subject (or subjects) in which academic education has been completed.

The organisation and content of the teacher education undertaken must be comparable to the Scottish pattern. This will be evaluated with reference to current GTC Scotland Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland. Secondary teacher education should, in particular:

- relate to the 12 to 18 year pupil age range;
- include professional/pedagogic studies;
- include appropriate subject studies; and
- include school-based teaching experience.

There is a separate academic education requirement for registration in the secondary school sector of registration where an applicant has not undertaken a combined academic and teacher education programme in accordance with section 2.2 above. Where such a combined academic and teacher education programme has not been undertaken, the academic education requirements are as follows:

(a) An applicant must hold a United Kingdom degree or an academic qualification which is equivalent to a United Kingdom degree. An academic qualification will be regarded as equivalent to a United Kingdom degree if it either:

(i) is recognised as such by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre; or
(ii) has borne the equivalent of 120 credit points at SCQF level 7 (or above), 120 credit points at SCQF level 8 (or above) and 120 credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above) and if evidence is produced to GTC Scotland by the applicant to satisfy it as such.

(b) An applicant must have a minimum of 80 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7 (or above) relative to the subject for which the applicant’s teacher education is held, 40 of which must be at SCQF level 8 (or above).

(c) Credit from a masters level degree or doctoral programme may be considered in terms of the above provided that evidence is produced to GTC Scotland by the applicant to satisfy it that it is of direct relevance to the subject for which the applicant’s teacher education is held.

(d) An applicant must meet any specific requirements specified below or published in the Memorandum on Entry Requirements for Courses of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland relative to the subject for which the applicant’s teacher education is held.
For registration in the English as a Modern Foreign Language or English as an Additional Language registration categories, at least 40 of the SCQF credit points required in terms of (b) above must relate to study of the English language.

Registration requirements for Further Education:

For registration in the further education sector, an applicant must have completed teacher education at an institution that is recognised by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre. The programme must have borne SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above).

The organisation and content of the teacher education undertaken must be comparable to the Scottish pattern. This will be evaluated with reference to any guidance issued by the Scottish Government on programmes in Scotland that lead to a teaching qualification in the further education sector (and any other relevant or related guidance). The teacher education should, in particular:

- relate to the 16 year and above student age range;
- include professional/pedagogic studies; and
- include appropriate teaching experience.

Registration requirements for Additional Support Needs (ASN):

For registration in the ASN registration category, an applicant must meet the teacher education requirements for registration in either the primary, secondary or further education sectors of registration (as set out above).

In addition, an applicant must have successfully completed ASN teacher education at an institution that is recognised by the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre that has borne a minimum of 60 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9 (or above).

GTC Scotland must be satisfied that the ASN teacher education undertaken includes professional/pedagogic studies with a sufficiently broad and general content to cover pupils with a range of additional support needs.

Registration requirements for Teaching Service:

An applicant must provide appropriate professional references to evidence to the satisfaction of GTC Scotland that he/she has the necessary teaching service in order to be eligible for full registration at the time of application (meaning that a period of probationary service need not be completed).

GTC Scotland must be satisfied that the teaching service is sufficiently recent, of sufficient length, is of satisfactory content and that it demonstrates that the Relevant Standard for Full Registration has been achieved in each part of the Register in which he/she is to be registered.

Registration requirements for Teachers who are qualified outside Scotland:

The European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations (2005) require GTC Scotland to register a person where he/she is legally established as a teacher in another EU state. GTC Scotland may require from any such applicant attestations of teaching competence or evidence of a formal teaching qualification to show that an appropriate level of professional qualification has been achieved.

GTC Scotland assesses other applicants who have qualified outside Scotland using the criteria that teachers qualified in Scotland are required to meet. This means is to ensure that applicants have a certain amount of degree level academic credit in the subject that they are qualified to teach and that their teaching qualification is comparable to a Scottish initial teacher education programme.

In order to meet the teacher education criteria for registration with GTC Scotland, any teacher education programme must be comparable to the pattern of initial teacher education in Scotland. There are no employment based routes into teaching in Scotland. However, GTC Scotland can consider employment based routes that lead to the award of a PGCE (e.g. Teach First PGCE and School-Centred PGCE) as these include academic content that is similar to that in a Scottish initial teacher education programme. Employment based routes which do not lead to the award of a PGCE (e.g. the majority of Graduate Teacher Programmes) are not sufficiently comparable to the Scottish pattern, as they do not include any academic credit.

In/…
In the last four years, GTC Scotland has registered:

- 1006 teachers who are qualified from England, 43 from Wales and 35 from Northern Ireland; and
- 594 overseas teachers from 44 different countries, the largest numbers being from Spain (85); Australia (81); Republic of Ireland (70); Poland (65); USA (46); and Canada (44).

GTC Scotland Review of Registration Requirements:

GTC Scotland's Council approved a review of its registration policy framework in October 2014. This review is ongoing and is designed to build greater flexibility into GTC Scotland's registration and probationary service criteria for applicants, principally for those qualified as teachers outside Scotland while, at the same time, maintain the standards expected of teachers entering the teaching profession in Scotland. The requirement for teachers in independent schools and grant-aided special schools to be registered with GTC Scotland, and addressing the need for transitional arrangements to be put in place, will be facilitated by the actions being considered as part of this review. These actions include:

- GTC Scotland accreditation of initial teacher education "top up" PGDE programmes that will allow teachers to gain the necessary additional qualification to be registered with GTC Scotland. GTC Scotland recently accredited the "top up" programme of Northampton University and is in the process of accrediting further such programmes offered by universities in England and Scotland.
- The introduction of Standards for Registration Equivalence Tests. These have recently been piloted by GTC Scotland and allow the addressing of two potential areas of shortfall: a lack of coverage in knowledge of relevant pedagogy within a teaching qualification and/or a lack of coverage of relevant subject knowledge in an academic qualification.
- The creation of additional categories of teacher registration by GTC Scotland. For example, creating categories that would allow registration but would place limits on the school or sector in which a teacher can work.
- The introduction of a category of provisional, conditional registration.
- The introduction of an "Assessment Only" route into teaching.

A Working Group comprising representatives from independent schools, grant-aided schools, SCIS and GTC Scotland has been set up and had begun to meet to consider the implications of the Education (Scotland) Bill and the potential transitional arrangements that can be put in place to ensure a phased implementation of the policy.

Kenneth Muir
Chief Executive
General Teaching Council for Scotland

10th June 2015