

Ysgol Aberconwy



Professional Development **Review Policy**

POLICY DOCUMENT NO: 52

ISSUE NO: 10

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

Date: 30/09/25

Review due date : 01/10/26

LT Link : IG

CONTENTS

Policy Control.....	1
Contents	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1. Overview	3
2. Purpose of Professional Development Review	3
3. Values and Principles Underpinning Effective Professional Development Review.....	4
4. Professional Standards	4
5. Outline of the Professional Development Review Process	5
6. Timing of the Professional Development Review Cycle.....	7
7. Appointment of a Professional Development Review Partner (PDRP).....	7
8. Headteachers Review	7
9. Development Priorities.....	7
9.1 Agreeing Development Priorities.....	7
9.2 Professional Development Review Plan	9
10. Professional Support.....	100
11. Reflecting on Progress.....	10
12. The Annual Professional Development Review Meeting	11
13. The Outcome of the Annual Professional Development Review Meeting.....	122
14. Appeals	122
15. Managing Underperformance.....	122

Note

The [Professional Development Review Guidance](#) relates to [The School Teacher Appraisal \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#) and replaces the Welsh Government performance management guidance for teachers, headteachers and unattached teachers (2012)

This policy refers to the statutory arrangements for the professional development review of Headteachers, teachers and also learning support workers.

The term 'professional development review' is used throughout the policy to refer to the process that may previously have been known as 'performance management' or 'appraisal'.

1. Overview

- 1.1 This policy brings professional development review arrangements in line with changes to the current education landscape, including the Curriculum for Wales, school improvement arrangements, the national professional learning entitlement and the schools as learning organisations model. This policy has been developed using the professional development review guidance which involved consultation with the profession, stakeholders and the teachers, leaders and learning support workers' unions. It is for all school practitioners, (by which we mean teachers, headteachers, unattached teachers and learning support workers), governing bodies and the local authority.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the professional development review arrangements for the headteacher, teachers and of Ysgol Aberconwy. It has been agreed by the governing body, headteacher and local authority and follows consultation with all staff members and recognised trade unions. It describes the purpose, procedures, roles and responsibilities that will ensure that the school's professional development review arrangements contribute to securing effective teaching and leadership for the benefit of all learners, practitioners and the wider school staff. It supports practitioners to continuously develop themselves as committed professional learners, through reflection, collaboration and innovation and fulfil their role in the school as a learning organisation.
- 1.3 At least once during each school year the headteacher will make a written summary to the governing body about the operation of the school professional development review policy, the effectiveness of the school's professional development review procedures, and the training and development needs of practitioners.
- 1.4 This policy has been produced with due regard to the current professional development review guidance and published by the Welsh Government in 2024. These can be found at:
Regulations: [The School Teacher Appraisal \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)
Guidance: [Professional Development Review Guidance](#)
- 1.6 This policy does not apply to:
- newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undergoing their statutory period of induction who are exempted from professional development review arrangements
 - teachers employed for a fixed period of less than one school term.

2. Purpose of Professional Development Review

- 2.1 The purpose of professional development review is to secure effective teaching and leadership for the benefit of all learners, practitioners and the wider school staff. It does this by supporting practitioners to continuously develop themselves as committed professional learners, through reflection, collaboration and innovation.
- 2.2 Underpinning effective professional development review is a culture of trust and an expectation that practitioners take responsibility for their own development. In order for this to happen, the school will plan to provide the time and space required to be an effective learning organisation.
- 2.3 Professional development review will support practitioner well-being, professional development review and continuous reflection and review. Encouraging practitioners to have affiliation to and agency in achieving the school vision and supporting the delivery of the school's development plan within a learning environment. As part of this, the school will ensure that there is investment in practitioners' enquiry and pedagogic skills that will enable them to be innovative professional learners within a culture of enquiry.

- 2.4 This approach to professional development review will promote both an individual and a collective means to realising the four purposes within the Curriculum for Wales.

3. Values and Principles Underpinning Effective Professional Development Review

- 3.1 The overarching values on which professional development review is based are:
- **Affiliation:** Developing ownership and connection to professional development review as an integral part of every practitioner's professional learning and improvement
 - **Agency:** Having time and space to engage with, reflect on and map out your own professional learning journey to meet the needs of learners, within a supportive culture and environment.
 - **Ambition:** Setting your ambitions for professional growth by using the professional standards for teaching, leadership and assisting teaching as a framework for continuous improvement.
- 3.2 From these values the following principles are identified as being essential to effective professional development review:
- an entitlement for all practitioners working in 1 school for 1 complete term or 2 consecutive half terms
 - celebrates strengths, recognises progress towards goals and promotes further development
 - part of a culture of mutual trust and respect
 - an integral element of team learning and collaboration
 - linked to a commitment to career-long professional growth
 - supports the individual's professional learning journey and guided by individual reflection and support from peers within the school or from another school
 - accompanied by high-quality professional learning and on-going, focused professional dialogue
 - a process in which all practitioners are treated fairly
 - based on a shared commitment to meeting learner needs
 - people-focused as opposed to 'paper-focused'
 - confidentiality between professional development review partner and practitioner in relation to the formal decision-making component
 - supports the well-being of learners and practitioners

4. Professional Standards

- 4.1 Teachers are required to meet the Practising Teacher Standards at the end of their induction period and must continue to meet them throughout their career. The headteacher is required to meet the Leadership Standards. Other practitioners may choose to use the Leadership Standards as a reference for their leadership development where this is identified as a priority for their professional development review.
- 4.2 Standards for assisting teaching were published on 1 September 2019. The school encourage the use of the standards with their support staff (teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants) to reflect on their practice and identify professional learning. The standards are not currently statutory for support staff but this will be the subject of further consideration.
- 4.3 The professional standards should be considered as a whole to provide a backdrop to discussion and to help practitioners identify areas for further development. The relevant professional standards can be found at: [Professional Standards](#).
- 4.4 The 5 standards (pedagogy, leadership, professional learning, innovation and collaboration) describe the skills, knowledge and behaviours that characterise excellent practice. The professional standards are also

accompanied by overarching values and dispositions that drive all practitioners to be the best they can be. They are consistent with the realisation of the Curriculum for Wales and they support career-long professional growth.

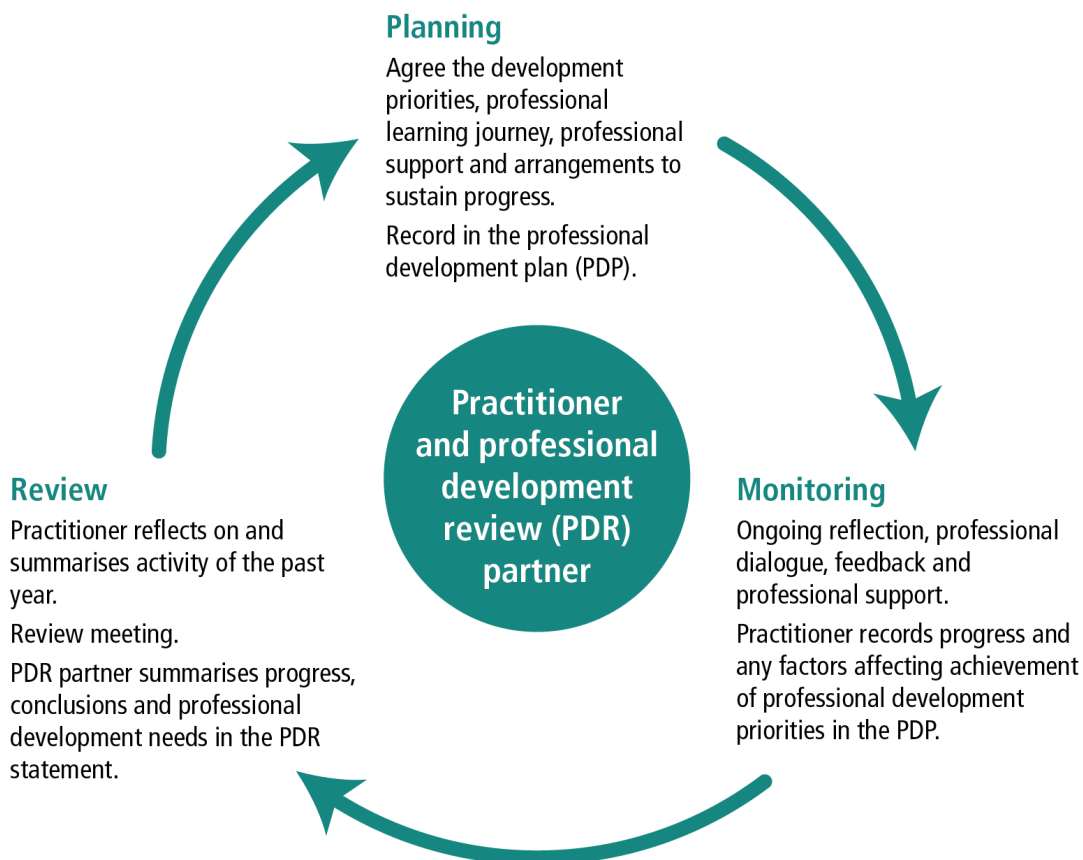
- 4.5 The standards support the individual in the planning, development and review of their professional learning journey as part of the national professional learning entitlement. The standards are designed to be used in a bespoke way using the online [Professional Learning Passport \(PLP\)](#) which is hosted by the Education Workforce Council. How practitioners engage with the standards will depend on where the individual is in their career and what they want to achieve.
- 4.6 The majority of practitioners will use the 5 professional standards to reflect on their practice. Descriptors within each of the standards exemplify how the standards could apply to a practitioner's work at different stages of their careers. Practitioners are not expected to provide evidence against every descriptor as part of professional development review.
- 4.7 Using the standards as part of professional development review provides a formalised, flexible process for individual reflection, celebration of success and a focus on professional growth to support rounded development. An individual may choose to link descriptors from standard to standard and make links with professional practice, or they may use examples of practice collected over time and then explore the descriptors. Alternatively, the focus of reflection may be professional learning events, activities or enquiry, using the descriptors to inform that process.

5. Outline of the Professional Development Review Process

- 5.1 As professionals, practitioners should take ownership and have personal responsibility for developing their practice through appropriate professional development review. Professional development review supports practitioners to focus on their professional development review priorities and evaluate their progress towards realising them.
- 5.2 Effective professional development review requires practitioners to:
 - reflect on their successes, strengths and areas for further growth within the context of the professional standards, the progression of their learners, their school's development priorities and their role within that. In addition, practitioners in a formal leadership role will need to reflect on the relevant standards in relation to their specific area of responsibility
 - identify development priorities (objectives) that are challenging but achievable. These priorities will be discussed and finalised with the support of their professional development review partner (see below) and used to develop an individual professional learning journey in line with the national professional learning entitlement. This discussion needs to identify success criteria for each of the priorities that can be reflected on at the end of the cycle, as well as throughout the year
 - actively pursue and reflect on their professional learning journey, supported by their school and professional development review partner
 - revise priorities if appropriate, through discussion with their professional development review partner
 - instigate, engage and contribute to professional dialogue, reflection, enquiry and professional learning
 - at the end of the professional development review cycle, evaluate the progress made towards their development priorities against the success criteria set at the start of the cycle.
 - Reflect on their progress in an evaluative conversation with their professional development review partner
 - be given the opportunity to present aspects of their professional learning journey to colleagues at the end of the professional development review cycle, if they choose. This will allow them to:

- reflect with purpose on their professional learning journey
- share key areas of learning and progress
- identify areas for deeper learning or development
- contribute to the sharing of learning and effective practice across the school

- 5.3 At Ysgol Aberconwy all staff to whom this policy applies (see 1.6) will record the above process on Bluesky (now The national college's 'People development').
- 5.4 It is the headteacher's responsibility to create the conditions to support practitioners to be able to carry out the above activities. This includes ensuring that time is allocated during directed time for professional development review discussions to take place.
- 5.5 The diagram below summarises the review cycle and the role of the professional development review (PDR) partner in supporting the practitioner to agree priorities, monitor and reflect on their progress using the professional development review plan (PDP).



6. Timing of the Professional Development Review Cycle

- 6.1 The school's annual professional development review cycle will start on **1st September** and be completed by **31st August**. The professional development review cycle has been timed to link with the school's annual planning and self-evaluation cycle.

7. Appointment of a Professional Development Review Partner (PDRP)

- 7.1 The headteacher will appoint an appropriate professional development review partner (or carry out the role themselves) for every practitioner within the school with the appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours.
- 7.2 Professional development review partners of teachers must have qualified teacher status. Professional development review partners of learning support workers will be teachers or higher-level teaching assistants where possible.
- 7.3 The headteacher may replace a PDR partner at any time and the practitioner should be notified of any change.
- 7.4 The professional development review of unattached teachers is the responsibility of the local authority. The authority may delegate this to a teacher or other suitable member of staff at the school where the unattached teacher works for the majority of their time.

8. Headteachers Review

- 8.1 The headteacher's review will be carried out by a panel consisting of:
- at least 2 governors appointed by the governing body, 1 of whom must be a foundation governor if the school is a faith school or a voluntary aided school
 - the panel may also include 1 or 2 representatives appointed by the local authority; this will usually include the school's link Education Improvement Service Officer (Improvement Advisor) who will be responsible for ensuring that headteacher reviews are undertaken during the agreed timeframe
 - the Diocesan Authority may choose to appoint a representative to the headteacher review panel where the school has a religious character
 - the governing body may seek to change panel members at any time. In the case of the local authority appointed representatives, this is at their discretion. If the local authority refuses to appoint an alternative panel member, their reasons must be given in writing
 - no governor who is a teacher or has any other role in the school may be a member of the headteacher review panel.
 - The local authority is responsible for ensuring governors have the training and information they need to carry out their role effectively.

9. Development Priorities

9.1 Agreeing Development Priorities

- 9.1.1 In planning and reviewing their development priorities, practitioners are asked to take responsibility for working with their professional development review partner to reflect on their current knowledge, skills, behaviours and experiences.

9.1.2 The practitioner will then:

- identify the needs of their learners (individual, groups or classes) and/or whole school priorities
- set out what they (the practitioner) intends to learn, develop or do differently
- outline the professional learning required to achieve that

9.1.3 Where possible, practitioners will outline the potential impact of this professional learning on practice. The practitioner and the professional development review partner are expected to agree the development priorities, bearing in mind the importance of autonomy and choice in this process. The development priorities should be realistic and manageable, while taking into account the practitioner's existing knowledge and expertise. Providing practitioners with opportunities to substantially affect and direct their priorities through practice and enquiry is a powerful motivator.

9.1.4 In cases where agreement on development priorities cannot be reached, for example if they do not link coherently to the needs of the class, specific class/es, groups, individual learners or whole-school priorities, the professional development review partner will identify appropriate priorities which the practitioner may comment on in writing.

9.1.5 Development priorities must take into account relevant evidence agreed by the practitioner and the professional development review partner.

9.1.6 For practitioners and unattached teachers these priorities will include supporting learners to make progress in realising the four purposes of the curriculum, and must relate to:

- developing the practitioner's professional practice
- the job description
- relevant priorities from the school development plan
- the professional standards for teaching

9.1.7 The development priorities may also take account of:

- the practitioner's professional aspirations
- national education priorities for school improvement

9.1.8 For headteachers, these priorities will include supporting all learners to make progress in realising the four purposes of the curriculum and must relate to:

- school leadership and management
- the headteacher's job description
- any relevant whole-school or team objectives specified in the school development plan
- the professional standards for leadership
- any national priorities for school improvement

9.1.9 For learning support workers, the focus of development priorities will depend on the context in which they are working, and will be discussed and agreed with their professional development review partner using the professional standards for assisting teaching.

9.1.10 It may be appropriate for a teacher, headteacher or learning support worker to identify shorter-term development priorities. It may also be appropriate to identify longer-term development priorities that require more than 1 academic year to be achieved, especially when taking into consideration part-time staff.

9.1.11 Sometimes the practitioner or the professional development review partner may feel it is necessary for development priorities to be revised during the year. In most cases, it is expected that changes will be agreed between the practitioner and the professional development review partner. Where agreement is not

reached, for example if they do not link coherently to the needs of the class, specific classes, groups, individual learners or whole-school priorities, the professional development review partner will identify appropriate priorities. The practitioner will be provided with the opportunity to comment on these in writing prior to them being finalised. The professional development review partner will identify and record appropriate development priorities which the practitioner may comment on in writing.

- 9.1.12 Part-time staff must have the same opportunities for professional development as full-time staff. This might include ensuring that part-time workers have access to training, mentoring, and development programs, even if their working hours are fewer. Development priorities must be proportional to reflect their working hours, ensuring they are still able to meet professional growth objectives. It may also be appropriate to identify longer-term development priorities that require more than 1 academic year to be achieved.

9.2 Professional Development Review Plan

- 9.2.1 The professional development review plan is where practitioners set out their development priorities and their professional learning journey for the year (or more where longer-term development priorities require more than 1 academic year to be achieved). It also enables practitioners to note progress over the year in relation to development priorities and any other significant factors.
- 9.2.2 The professional development review partner will meet with the practitioner at the start of the cycle to agree the key elements of the professional learning journey and this will be set out in a professional development review plan. This meeting may be combined with the review meeting held at the end of the previous cycle.
- 9.2.3 The development priorities should be clear, concise, challenging and relevant. The development priorities should be measurable, but this may not always be the case, for example targets that focus on pedagogy or the learning environment.
- 9.2.4 All practitioners are encouraged to undertake; **professional enquiry**, **collaborate** and be **innovative** in their approach to professional development review.
- 9.2.5 Practitioners should have access to appropriate professional learning opportunities via Hwb and at a school level, along with the time to work towards their development priorities.
- 9.2.6 All practitioners should be encouraged to try new approaches offered by the professional learning they undertake. This, together with reflection on the outcomes, will maximise the impact of professional learning on learners' progress and the practitioner's professional growth.
- 9.2.7 As part of the school becoming a learning organisation, headteachers will encourage a culture of collaboration, trust and transparency in which practitioners share all or part of their professional development review plan with colleagues. This will support shared professional learning and a collegiate approach to development. This might be particularly relevant where an individual priority links to a team or school priority.
- 9.2.8 The professional development review plan should be a 'live' document, stored on 'B;uesky' which practitioners should use throughout the year to:
- reflect on their own assessment of progress towards the achievement of their development priorities
 - keep a record of any professional learning undertaken using the professional learning passport
 - keep a record of any other factors that may affect performance in relation to their development priorities

10. Professional Support

- 10.1 Best practice suggests that all practitioners benefit from supporting colleagues and learning from them. As part of professional development review and developing as a learning organisation, in-school professional support should be available for all practitioners so that they can actively engage with and reflect on their development priorities. The practitioner and professional development review partner should agree at the initial meeting when and how this support will take place.
- 10.2 This support can take many forms, including;
- dialogue
 - co-planning
 - mentoring
 - coaching
 - analysis
 - feedback
 - observation
- Whatever form it takes, the approach should be developmental and constructive.
- 10.3 All practitioners should take a pro-active approach to working collaboratively with others to support their professional learning and to generate information about their progress so that they can monitor and adapt their learning. This is a continuous process and could involve peers within and beyond the school, including individuals with expertise in a specific area.
- 10.4 The school will provide opportunities throughout the year for this to take place, allowing practitioners and groups to reflect, review progress and consider the effectiveness of their practice. Within this 'continuous feedback loop', practitioners also have a 'safe space' to consider, with others, an aspect of their work that they may be struggling with. Equally, practitioners may use it to share something that has worked well and may be of use to others.
- 10.5 The role of any practitioner when supporting a colleague is to act as a critical friend, share relevant experience or knowledge and be a sounding board for ideas. This will support the practitioner to become an adaptive expert who is capable of continually growing, reflecting on, and expanding the depth and breadth of their expertise. In order for this process to be effective, it is essential for there to be a culture of trust, honesty and a shared commitment to improved outcomes for learners.
- 10.6 For the headteacher, the professional support role may also be undertaken by the governor performance development panel, a local authority officer or peer mentor.

11. Reflecting on Progress

- 11.1 How progress is reflected on and sustained must be agreed between the practitioner and the professional development review partner at the beginning of the year.
- 11.2 The type of reflection that takes place will vary according to the development priorities and may include:
- supportive lesson observations
 - drop-ins
 - learning walks
 - book looks.
- 11.3 Occasionally, agreement on the means of reflecting on progress may not be reached. In such cases, the professional development review partner will identify an approach they consider appropriate.

- 11.4 There is a **statutory requirement** for the professional development review partner to **observe the practitioner at least once during the review cycle**. Rather than focussing on the number of observations, the practitioners and professional development review partners are encouraged to give careful thought to the purpose, nature and desired outcome of the observations to ensure that they are constructive.
- 11.5 The schools is expected to create the conditions whereby observation and other activities are seen as a valuable opportunity for professional development review, continuous improvement and mutual support.
- 11.6 Professional dialogue and constructive feedback are key to reflecting on progress towards achieving the development priorities. The feedback sessions are where the learning and action begin, by focusing on a specific area for further development of the individual and/or the learners. Feedback sessions should be:
- specific
 - constructive
 - challenging yet respectful
 - part of a dialogue
 - focused on behaviours, not traits
 - reflecting on successes as well as areas for improvement
 - part of a discussion about next steps
- 11.7 Any reflective activity will be undertaken by a professional development review partner or colleague who has the skills, knowledge and behaviours to carry out the role effectively.
- 11.8 Taking opportunities with colleagues for impromptu, professional conversations and seeking informal, constructive feedback can also be effective ways to reflect and develop without creating additional workload.

12. The Annual Professional Development Review Meeting

- 12.1 The annual professional development review meeting takes place between the practitioner and their professional development review partner. The meeting usually takes place towards the end of the professional development review cycle and the professional development review partner must give the individual 10 school days' notice.
- 12.2 The purpose of the meeting is to summarise activity over the last year by reflecting on:
- progress against development priorities (individual and school-level)
 - relevant professional standards
 - benefits and application of professional learning
 - achievement of learners
 - any factors which may have had an impact on the above
- 12.3 The meeting may also be used to agree the focus for the next professional development review cycle.
- 12.4 The practitioner will have reflected throughout the year and must share their reflections with their professional development review partner at least 5 school days in advance of the annual professional development review meeting.
- 12.5 This process should be followed for all members of staff, including headteachers, and should be recorded on Bluesky as an 'Overview Statament'.

13. The Outcome of the Annual Professional Development Review Meeting

- 13.1 Within 10 school days of the annual professional development review meeting, the professional development review partner will produce a brief summary of the discussion and the conclusions reached. Professional development review partners are encouraged to share the summary with the practitioner within the 10-day period. The practitioner may add their own comments to the summary.
- 13.2 The headteacher must keep the summary until at least 3 years after the next annual review summary has been finalised.

14. Appeals

- 14.1 Where the practitioner cannot agree on the outcome of the review meeting, they can make a written appeal to the governing body within 10 days of receiving the review meeting summary.
- 14.2 The appeal will be considered by an appeals officer (usually the headteacher) or by the chair of the governing body (assisted by a local authority appointed representative) if the appeal is made by the headteacher. If the chair of the governing body is on the panel, the local authority will appoint an alternative representative.
- 14.3 This will take place within 10 school days of the appeals officer receiving the appeal and must take into consideration representations made by the practitioner.
- 14.4 After considering the appeal, the appeals officer may:
- decide that the review was carried out satisfactorily
 - with the agreement of the professional development review partner, amend the professional development review summary
 - decide that a new annual professional development review meeting be carried out with a new professional development review partner within 15 school days
- 14.5 The appeals officer cannot decide that new development priorities will be agreed or existing priorities will be revised.

15. Managing Underperformance

- 15.1 The professional development review process does not form part of any disciplinary, competency, capability or dismissal procedures. Effective line management arrangements, including the professional development review procedures set out above, will help prevent underperformance by supporting the individual to meet the development priorities identified.
- 15.2 Procedures to address under-performance are the subject of separate regulations.