



# Stakeholder Research

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# Executive Summary

## Conclusions

To a large extent, GTCS has a challenging role to play, given the wide range of stakeholder audiences with an interest in the organisation and their differing requirements in terms of information provision and their involvement in different initiatives.

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative findings show that GTCS is regarded positively by stakeholder audiences, albeit some teachers are less positive than other stakeholder audiences or the general public.

When considering the role and remit of GTCS, respondents focus primarily on ensuring the professionalism and competence of teachers, management of the teacher register and the setting and maintaining of education standards. Individuals in stakeholder organisations also tend to focus on a broader remit, although not at the expense of the aforementioned primary roles.

While it is important to ensure clear channels of communication exist with all stakeholder audiences, the data suggests that there is a cohort of teachers who are unlikely to engage to any great extent with GTCS. That said, the introduction of Professional Update will mean that all teachers will have a greater level of interaction with the organisation in the coming years.

GTCS should continue with its current levels of involvement in national educational initiatives, networking activities and so on as these have been noted as helping to raise its profile.

## Recommendations

- While levels of interest in information provision vary across different audiences, where information is required, respondents focus on information on teaching standards first and foremost.
- GTCS needs to improve upon lines of communication and the dissemination of information. The key ways of managing this are to utilise different communication channels to meet different needs and to work more closely with local authorities in particular, to ensure relevant information is cascaded.
- The quantitative and qualitative data point to the need for GTCS to utilise a wide range of communication channels, including the newsletter (hard copy and online), the website, social media and so on. Views on these channels are generally very positive.
- There is a need for a leaflet to be provided to parents providing information on GTCS, perhaps via schools and parent stakeholder organisations.
- There is a need for GTCS to ensure that it manages relationships well with all stakeholder audiences. To a large extent, GTCS is reliant on local authorities and other stakeholder audiences to disseminate information. GTCS should consider having one nominated officer as a contact within each local authority. This would help to ensure consistency in information provision and reduce duplication of effort for teachers.
- GTCS should help to raise its profile by positive media coverage, and via schools and other organisations such as parent organisations. There is little support for a “broad brush” advertising campaign.

- GTCS should maximise opportunities to provide information via other websites and stakeholder organisations as well as local authorities.
- There is a need to put out a number of positive messages about Professional Update to ensure that all teachers have a clear picture of its intended outcomes and usefulness.
- GTCS should consider introducing a more flexible registration approach, offering a conditional category for those trained outwith Scotland.
- There is a need for improvements to the Student Placement Service in order for this to work effectively and efficiently.
- If it is not possible to reduce the time taken for complaints to be resolved, there is a need to explain the procedures to clarify the role played by other organisations such as local authorities.
- GTCS could give consideration to developing more of a role in professional learning, particularly with the introduction of Professional Update.

## **Main Findings**

### **Setting the scene**

- Some respondents have a number of different roles that bring them into contact with GTCS and so provided their views from different perspectives.
- In general, there appears to be a correlation between contact with GTCS and positive perceptions of the organisation ie the greater the contact, the more positive the views.
- There are a number of issues currently impacting on the education sector, which in turn impact on views of GTCS. These included the current shortage of classroom and supply teachers, declining resources in the classroom and the number of new initiatives that have been introduced within recent years.
- There is widespread support for a regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland.
- Reasons for having a regulatory body focus on the setting and upholding of teaching standards, reassurance for the general public and the protection of children and teachers / lecturers.

### **Awareness of, and contact with, GTCS**

- There are high levels of awareness from teachers and individuals within stakeholder organisations that teachers in Scotland must be registered by GTCS; with most claiming to know of the organisation and what it does. This awareness is lower among members of the general public, where there appears to be a degree of confusion over which organisation is responsible for registering teachers and only 25% claiming to know of the organisation and what it does.
- Most individuals in stakeholder organisations have had some form of contact with GTCS, and over half of these had regular contact with the organisation.
- There appears to be a cohort of teachers who have very little contact with GTCS, other than payment of their annual registration fee and receipt of the Teaching Scotland magazine or email updates.
- Not all staff at GTCS are aware of the full range of activities undertaken by the organisation.

## **Perceptions of GTCS**

- General perceptions of GTCS are very positive across all audiences, with only small proportions of respondents holding a negative view of the organisation. Qualitative respondents referred to GTCS being a gatekeeper to, and safeguarder of the teaching profession.
- In considering specific roles of GTCS, views again are very positive, with only small proportions of respondents disagreeing with each of these roles. The audience most negative about GTCS is teachers.
- A large majority of GTCS staff consider GTCS to be an effective professional regulator and that it protects the public well.
- The qualitative data show that a number of factors contribute to positive perceptions of GTCS. These factors include: positive personal contact, positive views of GTCS staff, being a lean organisation, communicating and networking well with different audiences, being professional.
- Views as to whether GTCS is dynamic, innovative or a world leader in professional educational issues were mixed, albeit these are not necessarily qualities that respondents wish to associate with a regulatory body like GTCS.
- Views on the remit of GTCS vary across audiences, with individuals in stakeholder organisations generally focusing on a broad remit, and teachers tending to focus on teacher standards, maintenance of the teacher register and teacher competence.
- Respondents who have had contact with other regulatory bodies tend to regard GTCS as less rigorous in comparison to the Law Society, Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland, General Medical Council or General Dental Council, although more rigorous in comparison to SSSC or the Midwifery Council.

## **Role and Remit of GTCS**

- A large majority of individuals within stakeholder organisations, GTCS staff and teachers consider the current role of GTCS to be important.
- A large majority of teachers are aware of the revised Professional Standards, and consider these to be relevant.
- Awareness of Fitness to Teach, and specific cases before a Fitness to Teach panel being cited in the media, is relatively high among teachers and individuals in stakeholder organisations. However, there is little recall of Fitness to Teach or specific cases among the general public. The qualitative data show concerns on the part of many teachers that media coverage creates a negative picture of teachers and teaching in Scotland, but the lack of awareness on the part of the general public suggests that these concerns are misplaced.
- There are some concerns over the length of time taken to resolve Fitness to Teach cases.
- While only a very small proportion of the general public has ever raised a complaint about a teacher, GTCS clearly is not the top-of-mind organisation to approach in order to make a complaint.
- Of all the roles undertaken by GTCS, the Student Placement Service (SPS) came in for most criticism and respondents cited a number of improvements they would like to see introduced in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency.

## **Governance at GTCS**

- Although a significant number of teachers have limited contact with GTCS, it is positive that 43% have ever voted in GTCS elections and a similar proportion have not voted but are aware of elections. The quantitative data show that participation is an issue, with less than 5% of teachers having considered standing for election.

- Knowledge of the GTCS Appointments Committee was relatively limited (32%).
- 17% of the general public claim to be aware that GTCS is governed by a Council, and 15% claim they would consider applying to become a lay member.
- The qualitative data show that respondents with the highest levels of knowledge about governance at GTCS tend to be those who have most contact with the organisation.
- There is broad support for teachers to be represented on the various GTCS committees, boards and panels although there is also support for lay members who are seen to provide a wider perspective.
- The independent status of GTCS is perceived to be a positive and many respondents feel that GTCS has adopted a broader and more high profile role since independence in 2012.

## **Registration**

- There is broad support for the current categories of individuals who have to be registered with GTCS, although changes in the way in which education is delivered have led to some suggestions that a broader range of individuals should have to be registered with GTCS. There are also concerns over a loss of existing teachers within the FE and HE sectors if categories of registration are extended.
- Some respondents perceive the process to achieve registration to be inflexible for individuals who trained outwith Scotland. Suggestions as to how to overcome this include the provision of new categories of registration (including conditional registration) and for a greater number of courses to be accredited by GTCS.
- Registration is perceived to offer a wide range of benefits, with a key focus on teacher standards, professional standing and the reputation of the teaching profession.
- 50% of teachers claim they would still register if it were not compulsory, compared to 21% who would not, with the cost of registration being cited as a key factor in this decision.

## **Professional Update**

- Views on Professional Update are largely positive, with a perception that it will enhance the professionalism of teachers.
- The introduction of PU is being undertaken over a 5 year period, and the qualitative data suggests that teachers who have not had to register for PU in this academic year are still largely unaware of the process to achieve PU. For some of these respondents, there were concerns over additional workloads or an increase in bureaucracy. There are also concerns that staff who do not work full time will find it difficult to meet the requirements of PU and / or that local authorities have different requirements for recording CPD, thus leading to duplication of effort.
- Longer term, PU is likely to raise levels of contact with, and awareness of, GTCS.
- Whilst GTCS is responsible for the introduction of PU, to a large extent they are reliant on other organisations (local authorities and schools / colleges) to disseminate information. There are suggestions from the qualitative data that not all organisations are cascading the same information, using the same language and this may reflect poorly on GTCS.
- Respondents suggested a number of ways to improve upon the introduction of PU and these included a common template for the recording of information, the provision of support packs, information provided across all channels including the GTCS website, positive peer review and positive reinforcement of the benefits it will bring to the teaching profession. Ensuring that workloads are not duplicated (in particular, where local authorities require teachers to complete similar information) was seen as important.

## **Relationships with other educational stakeholder organisations**

- Views on GTCS's management of relationships with other educational stakeholder organisations are very positive. The organisation is perceived to be collaborative, to involve others in early discussions and consultation and to be effective at networking.
- In the main, most respondents are clear about the different roles of educational stakeholder organisations.

## **Communication and Information**

### ***The magazine***

- A large majority of teachers recall receipt of a regular magazine and / or can remember its name. Most respondents tend to read articles of interest or flick through this when they have the time. There is a degree of resistance to provision of an online version of the magazine. A key issue for GTCS is the provision of a regular magazine that will appeal to a wide range of readers and interests and there are some suggestions that the magazine should be segmented in some way to help readers identify those sections of greatest interest and / or relevance.
- There is a preference for articles in the magazine to include copy from practising teachers and information on PU and other new initiatives. In order to increase interest in an online version, it would be useful to point to video and audio articles that may be of interest to readers.

### ***The website***

- A large majority of respondents have visited a GTCS website and qualitative respondents were broadly positive about the website, with some comments that this has improved recently. Across this project, it is clear that the website is regarded as an important source of information and there is an expectation of comprehensive coverage of all issues relevant to the teaching profession of today.

### ***Conferences, seminars and other channels of communication***

- Relatively small numbers of teachers have attended the GTCS stand at the Scottish Learning Festival or other events, although there are higher levels of awareness that GTCS runs events. However, a majority of teachers are interested in receiving information about GTCS events. Views from those participating in the qualitative survey are largely positive.
- There are some requests for GTCS to field more representatives across local authorities, to participate in more in-service days and to maximise opportunities to communicate with all stakeholder audiences.
- GTCS was praised for being forward-thinking in using social media as part of its communications mix.

### ***Overall,***

- The quantitative data show the importance of using a range of different communication channels to provide information and increase awareness of the organisation and its role(s), although recollection of the precise content of much media coverage is hazy.
- The qualitative data suggest that those in the media would like GTCS to adopt a more open, self-promoting and positive approach to communication.

## **Teacher Services**

- Usage levels of MyGTCS are high and views are largely positive, with recognition of recent improvements to this site.
- Usage is likely to increase in future years given the introduction of Professional Update which will require all registrants to access MyGTCS in the coming years.

- A majority of teachers are aware of the Teacher Induction Scheme, with a good understanding of the role of GTCS.

### **GTCS and the Future**

- Views on the role of GTCS in the future are very positive, with respondents continuing to focus on maintaining standards of conduct and competence by teachers, maintaining and improving standards and maintaining the register of teachers / lecturers as well as investigating and adjudicating on a teacher's Fitness to Teach.



# Introduction

## General Teaching Council for Scotland

Established in 1965, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) is an independent professional body, responsible for promoting and regulating the teaching profession in Scotland. It was one of the first teaching councils in the world. In January 2008, the First Minister announced that it would be changed from an NDPB (Non-Departmental Public Body) to a self-regulating profession-led body, along similar lines to that of the General Medical Council, although its general functions would not change. This took place in April 2012 when GTCS underwent a significant change and the legislation that established and governed the organisation was replaced by The Public Services Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011. This means that now the organisation is the first fully professional independent regulatory body for teaching. Its functions are:

- To keep a register of teachers
- To establish, review and change standards of education and training for school teachers, standards of conduct and professional competence of registered teachers
- To investigate fitness to teach for those who are, or who are seeking to be registered
- To keep informed of the education and training of individuals undertaking teacher courses for the education and training of teachers
- To make recommendations to Scottish Ministers in relation to teacher education, training, career development, fitness to teach and the supply of teachers

With the introduction of this Order, additional roles and responsibilities have been awarded to GTCS, including the power to keep a register of other education professionals. Alongside these functions, GTCS is expected to maintain the interest of the general public in a way that is proportionate, accountable, transparent and consistent, targeted where action is needed, encourages equal opportunities and is consistent with any other principle that appears to represent best regulatory practice. GTCS is governed by a Council comprised of teachers, educationalists and lay members and they are responsible for decisions to do with strategy and policy.

A key policy initiative introduced by GTCS in August 2014 was Professional Update. Under this, teachers are expected to engage in professional learning, self-evaluate using professional standards, maintain a record of professional learning and confirm their engagement with this process on a regular basis. This will be a professional requirement for registration with GTCS. This will be introduced for all teachers and aims to support, maintain and enhance teachers' continued professionalism.

## Engaging Stakeholders

GTCS recognises the importance of working with and listening to its stakeholders; to help it to be more forward thinking and provide a better service. Stakeholders for GTCS include a broad range of individuals or organisations that either affect or are affected by GTCS and its activities. Key stakeholders for GTCS include Education Scotland, Scottish Government, teachers, the general public, parent forums / councils, local authorities, universities, colleges, trade unions and the media to name but a few.

## **A need for research**

In 2013 the GTCS Council conducted a 'Horizon Scanning' exercise and following on from this, in 2014 commissioned Why Research to conduct further research in order to build upon this initial work and gather stakeholder views' of GTCS. It was intended that this stakeholder research would provide concrete evidence of issues that need to be addressed by GTCS and identify ways in which these issues should be addressed in order to improve upon stakeholder perceptions and meet the needs of those who come into contact with GTCS. The research findings will be used in GTCS's strategic planning and feed into future aims and objectives for the organisation. Key objectives for this research were defined as:

- To understand perceptions of GTCS and its work, and how these perceptions are formed
- To understand which stakeholders currently engage with GTCS (and in which ways this engagement takes place)
- To identify measures that could be introduced in order to improve upon stakeholder engagement
- To identify areas that could be developed in order to meet stakeholder expectations of GTCS
- To identify which, if any, groups of stakeholders require greater levels of engagement from GTCS

The following chapters of this report provide details of our approach to this exercise, and detail the research results as well as providing a series of recommendations.

# Approach

A two staged approach was adopted for this project. The first stage was a series of online surveys among all stakeholder audiences, conducted in October-November 2014. GTCS provided their database of teachers and stakeholder organisations to be used as the basis for a sampling frame. The general public survey was conducted via a panel held by Research Now. All those participating in the online surveys – with the exception of the general public – were asked if they would be willing to participate in a subsequent stage of qualitative discussions. Those agreeing formed the basis for the sample for the subsequent stage of qualitative research which was conducted in January-February 2015.

## Online surveys

Details of each of the online surveys are provided below.

### The General Public

The online survey among the general public was conducted via a provider of online surveys, Research Now. A total of 1,002 members of the general public across all local authority areas in Scotland participated in this online survey. As shown in the table below, 5% were still at school, 10% were parents or carers of primary school children and 6% were parents or carers of secondary school young people.

#### Profile of general public respondents

Age	%	No	Status	%	No
16 – 18	4	36	Still at school	5	54
19 – 24	10	100	Parent / carer of primary child	10	97
25 – 34	15	147	Parent / carer of secondary child	6	56
35 – 44	16	162	Other	79	795
45 – 54	18	184			
55 – 64	16	159	<b>Gender</b>		
65+	21	214	Male	47	475
			Female	53	527
<b>Employment of Head of Household</b>					
Professional	16	153			
Managerial	28	261			
Administrative	20	192			
Technical	11	101			
Other	25	241			

### Teachers

An invitation to participate in the online survey was sent to all teachers registered on the GTCS database (59,644 names) and 4,487, across all Scottish local authorities, responded. Because of the number of questions to be asked of teachers, two different questionnaires were used. Each went to a random half of the sample. Both contained a number of core questions. The areas covered in each questionnaire are listed in Appendix 1.

The profile of these respondents is shown in the table below. Almost all those responding worked in local authority schools (93%). The majority of these respondents were teachers (52%), Principal teachers / Department heads or Faculty heads (15%) or Headteacher / deputy headteachers (12%). Most of the respondents worked either in the primary sector (43%) or the secondary sector (47%). The majority of those responding had worked in teaching for more than six years.

#### Profile of teachers responding to the online survey

<b>Role</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>
Probationary teacher	3	122	Nursery	2	90
Teacher	52	2320	Primary	43	1911
Chartered teacher	4	193	Secondary	47	2101
Principal teacher / Dept / Faculty Head	15	666	Special	4	173
Depute head / Headteacher	12	558	FE / HE	1	66
Retired	5	240	Other	3	146
Other	9	388			
<b>Time in teaching</b>					
< 1 year	2	99			
1 – 2 years	2	93			
3 – 5 years	7	309			
6 – 10 years	16	695			
11 – 15 years	15	656			
16 – 25 years	25	1126			
> 25 years	33	1478			

#### GTCS staff, Council members, Appeals Board members, Adjudicating Panel members, Appointments Committee members

A total of 72 individuals responded to the GTCS staff survey. Of these, 27 were GTCS staff members, 17 were GTCS Council members, 5 were Appeals Board members, 18 Adjudicating Panel members and 5 were Appointments Committee members. The 27 staff members covered a range of roles in the organisation, including director, manager, administrative, secretarial and technical.

#### Stakeholder organisations

A total of 41 individuals within stakeholder organisations chose to respond to this survey. These came from a wide range of different organisation types, although the highest proportion (41%) came from local authorities; 15% were central government agency / body; 10% were from the college / university sector.

#### Qualitative Research

This stage of the project involved qualitative discussions among teachers, individuals in stakeholder organisations, GTCS staff, Council members and members of various GTCS panels and committees. These qualitative discussions were conducted either over the telephone or face-to-face, depending on respondent preferences and geographical location.

A total of 117 qualitative discussions were conducted and the profile of this sample is shown overleaf.

## Profile of qualitative respondents

<b>GTCS</b> - Staff - Council - Appeals Board - Appointments Committee - Adjudicating Panel	5 2 2 2 2		<b>Stakeholder organisations</b> Scottish Government Education Scotland COSLA / local authorities FE colleges Universities Media Professional associations Other	2 3 9 5 8 4 3 11
<b>Teaching staff: Respondent role</b> - Headteacher / depute head - Principal Teachers / Faculty Head / Department Head - Teacher - Other  <b>Teaching staff: Length of time in teaching</b> - < 1 year - 1-2 years - 3-5 years - 6-10 years - 11-15 years - 16-25 years - > 25 years	9 6 31 13   2 1 5 10 5 14 20		<b>Teaching staff: School type (1)</b> - Secondary - Primary - Other  - Local authority - Independent - Other	24 27 8  45 5 9

Copies of the questionnaires and topic guides used in this survey have been provided under separate cover.

This report highlights the key findings emerging across both stages of the project.

# Setting the scene

## **In summary,**

- Some respondents have a number of different roles that bring them into contact with GTCS and so provided their views from different perspectives.
- In general, there appears to be a correlation between contact with GTCS and positive perceptions of the organisation ie the greater the contact, the more positive the views.
- There are a number of issues currently impacting on the education sector, which in turn impact on views of GTCS. These included the current shortage of classroom and supply teachers, declining resources in the classroom and the number of new initiatives that have been introduced within recent years.
- There is widespread support for a regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland.
- Reasons for having a regulatory body focus on the setting and upholding of teaching standards, reassurance for the general public and the protection of children and teachers / lecturers.

Before reporting the key findings of this project, it is worth providing some background information to help set the context in which to frame this analysis and reporting.

Some of the qualitative respondents, primarily non-teachers, who participated in this project come into contact with GTCS in a number of different ways and provided their opinions from a number of different perspectives. For example, a respondent working in a stakeholder organisation who had qualified as a teacher and been registered with GTCS for a number of years may also be on one of the GTCS committees and / or been involved in working parties alongside GTCS representation and / or been involved in the Professional Learning Network or in piloting Professional Update.

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative data suggests there is a correlation between contact with GTCS and positive perceptions of the organisation; ie the greater the contact, the more positive the perception. In general, although again not exclusively, those holding the most positive perceptions of GTCS were likely to be within stakeholder organisations, more senior teaching staff, mentors and teachers relatively new to the profession. This is because these respondents are most likely to have had relatively recent contact with GTCS on specific educational initiatives, be on working parties, committees or simply to have had recent contact with the organisation. Conversely, many classroom teachers have little or no contact with the organisation other than the annual payment of their registration fee or receipt of the Teaching Scotland magazine at regular intervals during the year; these respondents tended to have a relatively neutral view of GTCS and most held little by way of perceptions of the organisation, either positive or negative.

It might be expected that parents of school-aged children would have more distinct perceptions and views, although the online survey data show that there was little by way of significant differences between parents and non-parents across the data.

Many of the views expressed during this project reflected the broad context in which respondents are working and many referred to issues that are currently impacting upon the teaching profession and other organisations within the education sector. One key issue primarily mentioned by qualitative

respondents was that of reducing budgets and declining resources. Another issue cited by respondents was the current shortage of teachers, which is in turn exacerbated by a shortage of supply teachers. Indeed, on 10 March, Dumfries and Galloway Council took the decision to send P5 pupils at one particular primary school home due to a lack of permanent and supply teaching staff on that day and this course of action has also been considered by at least one other local authority.

There were also concerns over the number of new initiatives that have been introduced into the Scottish curriculum. These included Curriculum for Excellence, the new SQA qualifications and the introduction of Professional Update. The view expressed by some respondents – mainly teaching staff – is that these changes have led to increased workloads and concerns over the introduction of too many initiatives in too short a timescale, thus placing further pressure on teachers.

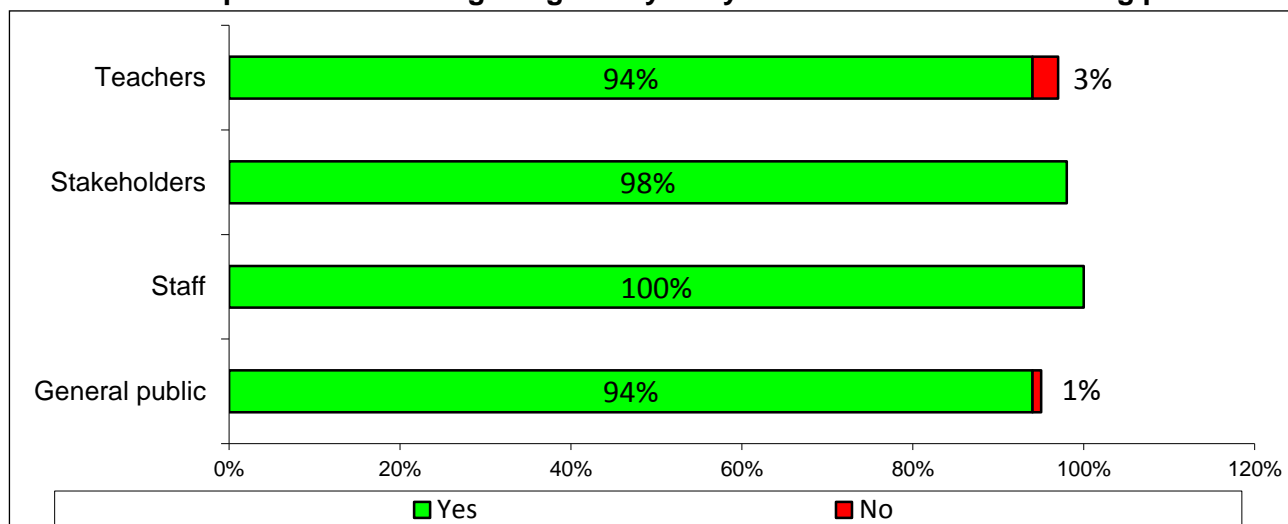
A number of respondents were also aware that there is no equivalent organisation in England and there were a number of concerns that the quality of teaching in England is declining as a direct result of this. For example, some respondents noted that classes in English schools do not have to be taught by a subject specialist and that teaching assistants (or their equivalent) who do not hold a teaching qualification play a larger role in the classroom than in Scotland. This has led to concerns that teacher qualifications in England are not as robust as in Scotland and that teaching standards and the professionalism of teachers in England is declining. Respondents do not wish to see this situation replicated in Scotland.

While there has been much change within the education sector in recent years, two relatively recent reports have made a number of recommendations which need to be taken into account in any decisions taken by GTCS. These two reports are 'Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a Review of Teacher Education in Scotland' by Graham Donaldson and often referred to simply as the Donaldson Report; and the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce report entitled Education Working for All (sometimes known as the Wood Report). Both of these reports focus on a number of key issues but highlight the need to consider these in a holistic manner. As such, their recommendations focus on a broad holistic perspective and consider how education relates to the wider world. For example, the Wood Report refers to the need to promote lifelong learning and ensure that children leaving school or college have the necessary skills to join the workforce for the future.

## **The importance of having a regulatory body for the teaching profession**

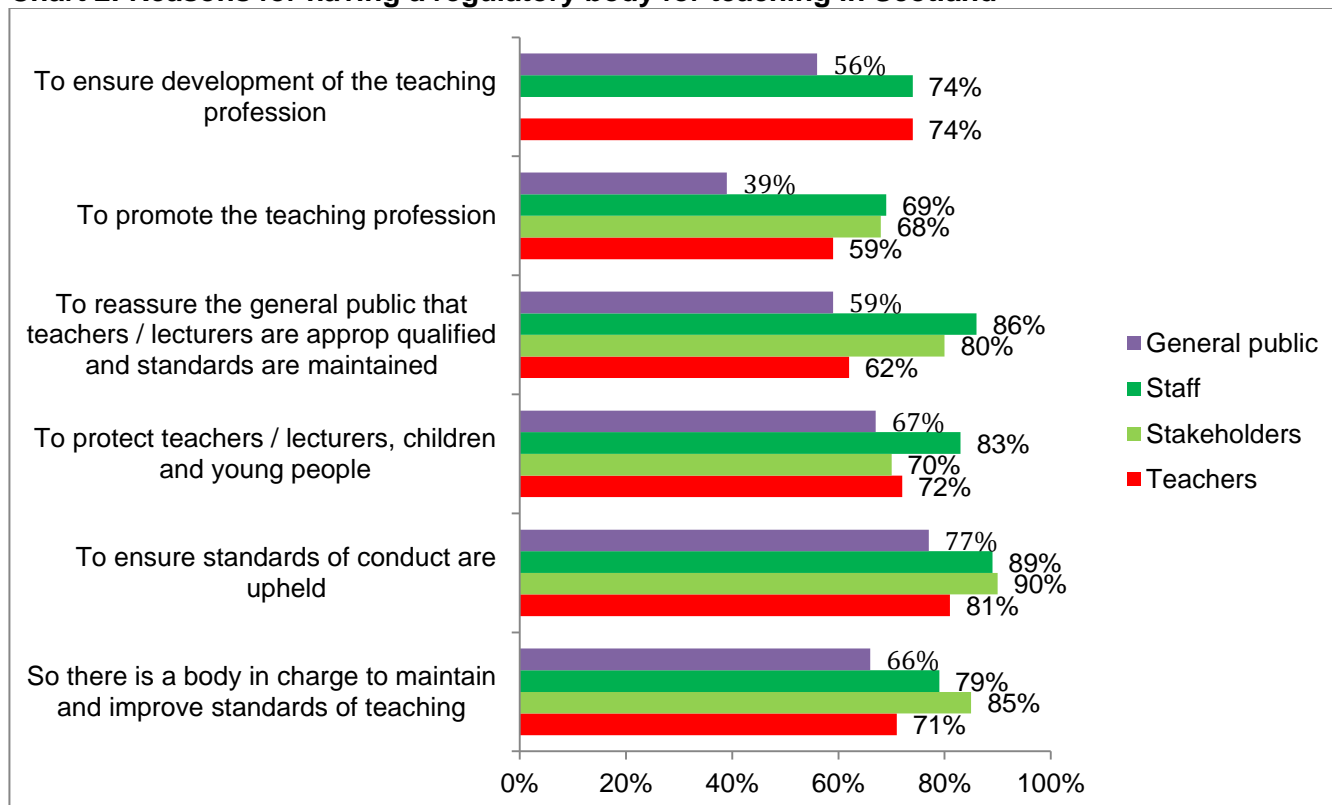
There is clearly strong support for a regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland, with almost all respondents participating in the online surveys agreeing this is important. While almost all qualitative respondents considered it necessary to have a body that represents, supports and protects the teaching sector in Scotland, the qualitative data also suggests that this reflects, at least in part, the concerns from some respondents over perceived declining teaching standards in England. Only 3% of teachers and 1% of the general public disagreed with the need for a regulatory body in Scotland (Chart 1).

**Chart 1: The importance of having a regulatory body in Scotland for the teaching profession**



Respondents were also asked what they felt were the most important reasons for having a regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland. As shown in Chart 2, respondents across all audiences focused on standards of teaching, standards of conduct and reassurance for the general public, as well as the protection of teachers / lecturers and children. The views of individuals within stakeholder organisations and GTCS staff were generally in parallel and in most instances, higher proportions of these two audiences cited each reason than members of the public or teachers. Of least importance to members of the general public, at a level of 39%, was 'promoting the teaching profession'.

**Chart 2: Reasons for having a regulatory body for teaching in Scotland**





It is also important to bear in mind that throughout the quantitative data, there were some trends among those in the teaching profession. Teachers in more senior positions such as depute headteacher or headteacher, teachers in primary schools and those who have been in teaching for either a relatively short period (under 2 years) or for a much more lengthy time (25 years +) tend to be more positive than those who are in less senior positions, teaching in secondary schools or teaching for between 6-15 years. The qualitative data suggests that for those in senior positions in schools and / or who have been in teaching for a number of years, their positive view is likely to equate to a broader perspective on the teaching profession, a greater interest in changes in education in general and / or having more regular contact with GTCS.

Within the secondary sector, new qualifications have recently been introduced by SQA and, while GTCS has no involvement in these per se, some secondary teachers participating in the qualitative work generally commented on the pressure placed upon them by very heavy workloads and the amount of change that has taken place in recent years. Some of these teachers had a more negative perspective of the teaching sector as a whole in comparison to their counterparts in primary schools.

Teachers who have recently joined the profession will have been introduced to GTCS during their university courses and thus will have had recent contact with GTCS as well as being more au fait with GTCS as a result of this.

Having set the scene for views on a regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland, the following chapters examine awareness and perceptions of GTCS, how perceptions have been formed, and views on the current and future role and remit of GTCS.

# Awareness of, and contact with, GTCS

## **In summary,**

- There are high levels of awareness from teachers and individuals within stakeholder organisations that teachers in Scotland must be registered by GTCS; with most claiming to know of the organisation and what it does. This awareness is lower among members of the general public, where there appears to be a degree of confusion over which organisation is responsible for registering teachers, and only 25% claiming to know of the organisation and what it does.
- Most individuals in stakeholder organisations have had some form of contact with GTCS, and over half of these had regular contact with the organisation.
- There appears to be a cohort of teachers who have very little contact with GTCS, other than payment of their annual registration fee and receipt of the Teaching Scotland magazine or email updates.
- Not all staff at GTCS are aware of the full range of activities undertaken by the organisation.

## **Awareness of GTCS**

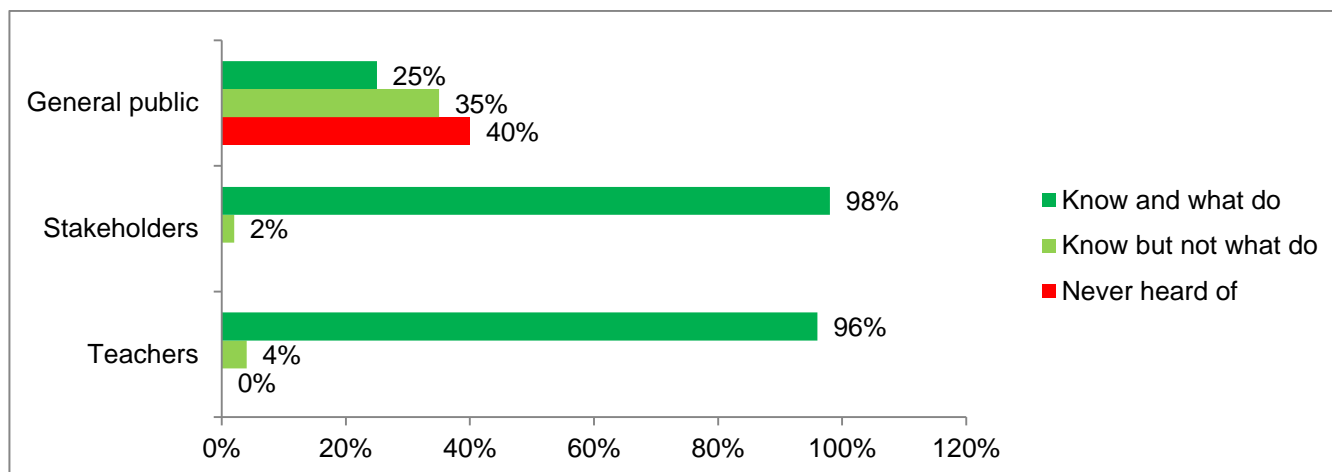
Respondents within stakeholder organisations, the general public and teachers participating in the online survey were asked, from a pre-coded list of different organisations, which one is responsible for registering teachers in local authority schools in Scotland. There were very high levels of awareness from teachers and individuals within stakeholder organisations (both at a level of 98%) that teachers in Scotland must be registered by GTCS.

Awareness that teachers in Scotland must be registered by GTCS is lower among members of the general public, with 39% citing GTCS. There is a degree of confusion among this audience as to where the responsibility lies, with 23% citing EIS (a professional body representing around 80% of teachers in Scotland), 16% citing their local authority and 10% referring to Education Scotland. Other organisations mentioned by the general public included the Scottish Government (8%), teacher education institutes (2%) and the newly formed Scottish College for Educational Leadership (1%).

Having asked which body is responsible for registering local authority teachers in Scotland, these respondents were then provided with information confirming the General Teaching Council for Scotland is the independent professional body which promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. All respondents were then asked if they had heard of the GTCS.

As illustrated in Chart 3, the majority of teachers and individuals within stakeholder organisations claimed to know the name of GTCS and what it does. In line with awareness figures, this picture is different among the general public, with a quarter claiming to know of GTCS and what it does, around a third claiming to know the name but not what it does and 40% claiming never to have heard of GTCS.

**Chart 3: Whether heard of GTCS**



## Contact with GTCS

During the course of the online survey, individuals within stakeholder organisations were asked to indicate whether they have any contact with the GTCS, whether this contact is regular or occasional and the reasons for this contact.

Most of those responding (90%) claimed to have ever had contact with the GTCS and, of these, over half (56%) claimed this contact was regular. Highest proportions of those having regular contact were within local authorities and those classified as 'other' organisations<sup>1</sup>; lowest levels of regular contact came from individuals within colleges or universities and government agencies / bodies. Respondents provided a wide range of reasons for this contact, including probationer support, teacher representation and teacher education.

As noted earlier in this report, the qualitative data shows there appears to be a correlation between contact and positive perceptions of the organisation. Many individuals within stakeholder organisations claimed to come into contact with GTCS both directly and indirectly; for example, some were involved in the National Professional Learning Network or a pilot for Professional Update; others come across GTCS regularly on a networking basis. Contact with the GTCS on the part of teachers participating in the qualitative work varied more considerably; some had regular contact because of involvement in an initiative such as Professional Update; others had very little contact and what contact there was tended to be limited to the annual payment of registration fees, receipt of the Teaching Scotland magazine or receipt of emails from GTCS.

As noted by one individual in a stakeholder organisation who was also a teacher, GTCS is perceived to be collaborative and consensual rather than antagonistic,

"I think it's good to have a professional organisation working with teachers and the government. In England it seems to be much more confrontational but in Scotland I would describe it as more collaborative and consensual. There is a mutual respect there, for example, they consult with teachers."

<sup>1</sup> ie not within local authorities, colleges, universities or government agencies / bodies

GTCS staff tended to focus primarily on their role at GTCS and not all were aware of the roles played by other members of staff with whom they had little or no contact.

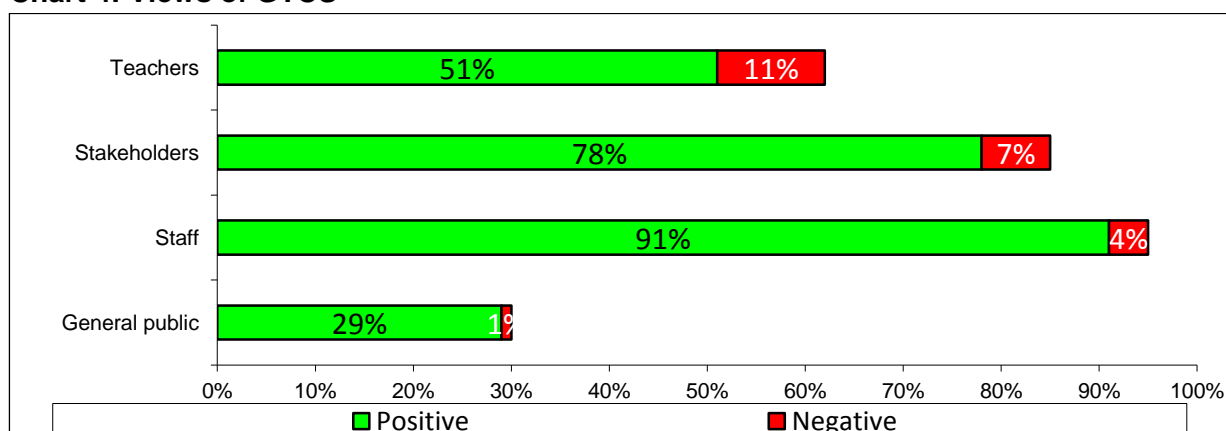
# Perceptions of GTCS

## In summary,

- General perceptions of GTCS are very positive across all audiences, with only small proportions of respondents holding a negative view of the organisation. Qualitative respondents referred to GTCS being a gatekeeper to, and safeguarder of the teaching profession.
- In considering specific roles of GTCS, views again are very positive, with only small proportions of respondents disagreeing with each of these roles. The audience most negative about GTCS is teachers.
- A large majority of GTCS staff consider GTCS to be an effective professional regulator and that it protects the public well.
- The qualitative data show that a number of factors contribute to positive perceptions of GTCS. These factors include: positive personal contact, positive views of GTCS staff, being a lean organisation, communicating and networking well with different audiences, being professional.
- Views as to whether GTCS is dynamic, innovative or a world leader in professional educational issues were mixed, albeit these are not necessarily qualities that respondents wish to associate with a regulatory body like GTCS.
- Views on the remit of GTCS vary across audiences, with individuals in stakeholder organisations generally focusing on a broad remit, and teachers tending to focus on teacher standards, maintenance of the teacher register and teacher competence.
- Respondents who have had contact with other regulatory bodies tend to regard GTCS as less rigorous in comparison to the Law Society, Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland, General Medical Council or General Dental Council, although more rigorous in comparison to SSSC or the Midwifery Council.

During the course of the online surveys, all respondents were asked 'how positive is your opinion of GTCS in general?' It is extremely encouraging that views across all these audiences were very positive (see Chart 4 below), with far greater proportions being positive than negative.

**Chart 4: Views of GTCS \***



\* Bars do not add to 100% as respondents saying 'don't know' or that their views are 'neither positive nor negative' have been excluded

Teachers, GTCS staff and individuals within stakeholder organisations taking part in the online surveys were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements about GTCS and the following charts (5-7) outline their views. Overall, for each statement views were largely positive across all audiences, although views of staff and individuals within stakeholder organisations were slightly more positive than those of teachers.

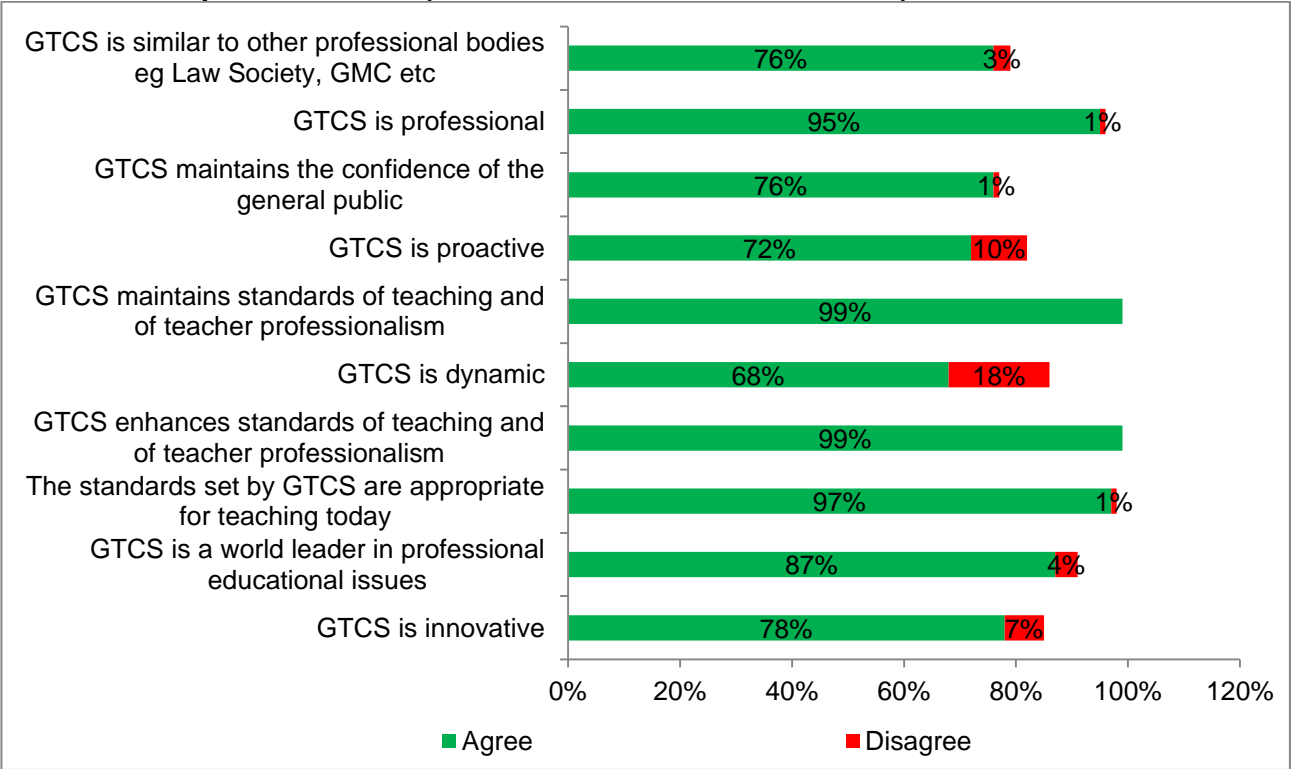
Chart 5 examines the perceptions of **GTCS staff**, almost all of whom agreed that:

- GTCS **maintains** standards of teaching and of teacher professionalism (99%)
- GTCS **enhances** standards of teaching and of teacher professionalism (99%)
- The standards set by GTCS are appropriate for teaching today (97%)
- GTCS is professional (95%)

Three in four or more agreed with all other statements about GTCS, with the exception that GTCS is proactive (72%) or that GTCS is dynamic (68%).

When asked to give reasons for their positive or negative view of GTCS, the main comments from staff focussed on the ethos and professionalism of GTCS (and its staff) along with the work they have done and are doing in upholding and raising standards.

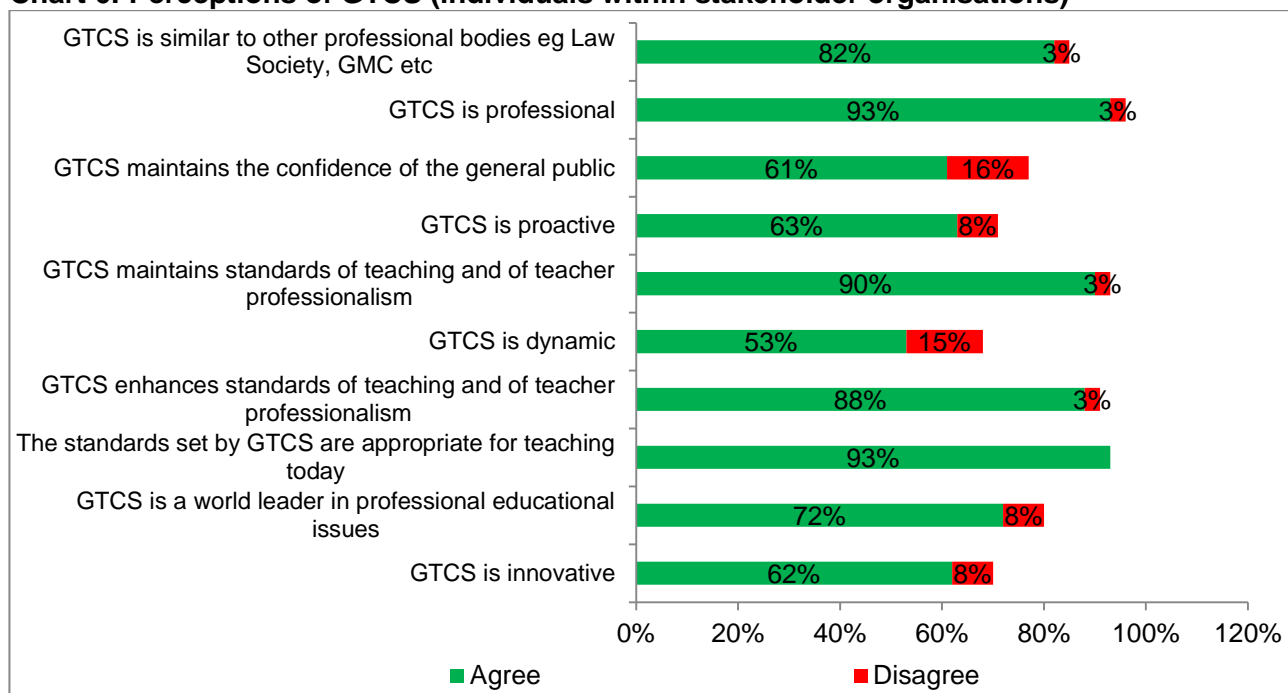
**Chart 5: Perceptions of GTCS (GTCS Staff, Council members etc)**



When we examine the **perceptions of individuals within stakeholder organisations**, these are broadly similar to those expressed by GTCS staff, albeit each statement received a slightly lower level of agreement. When asked to give their spontaneous reasons for their positive views, individuals in stakeholder organisations referred to GTCS being professional, well regarded or having a good

reputation, that personal contact with GTCS has been positive, that GTCS staff are helpful, responsive and supportive or that they are a good source of information.

**Chart 6: Perceptions of GTCS (individuals within stakeholder organisations)**



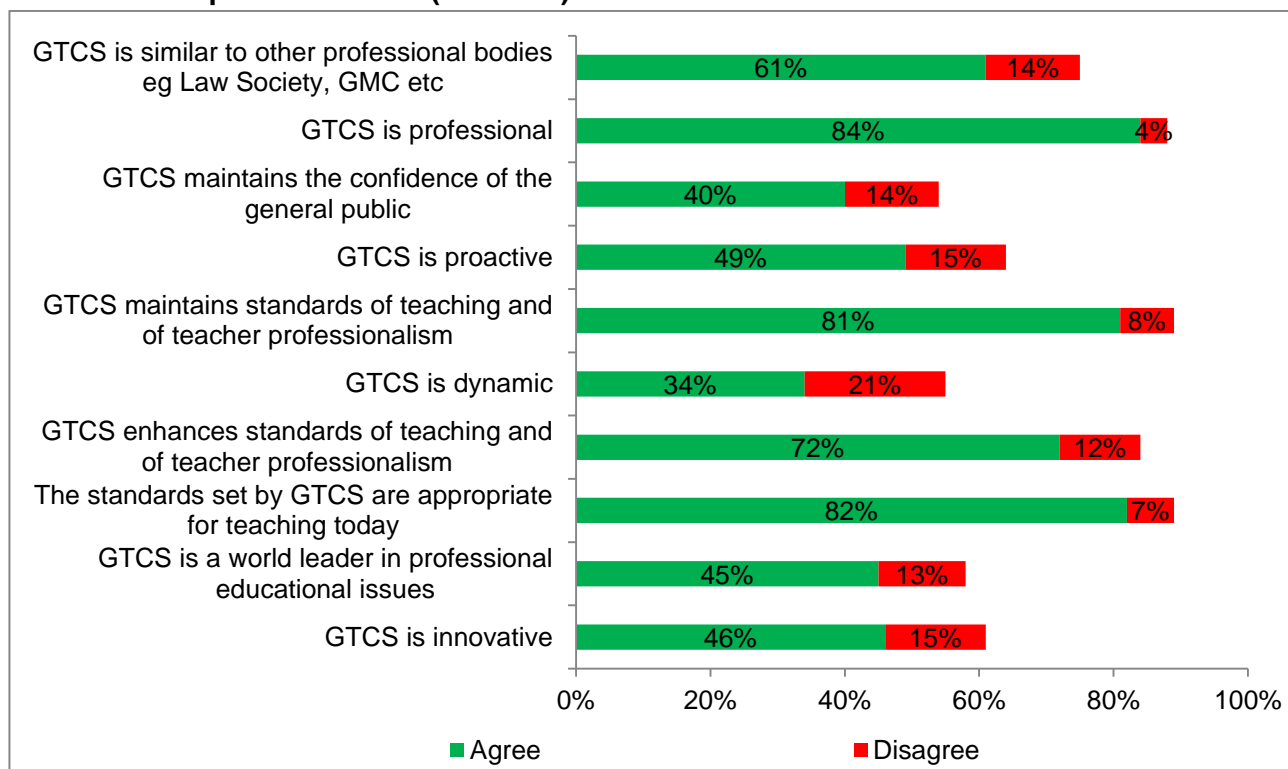
When we examine the **perceptions of teachers**, once again, much higher proportions were positive for each statement than were negative, although views were not quite as positive as those seen for individuals in stakeholder organisations or GTCS staff.

Around three in four or more teachers agreed that:

- GTCS is professional (84% agreed; 4% disagreed)
- The standards set by GTCS are appropriate for teaching today (82%; 7% disagreed)
- GTCS maintains standards of teaching and of teacher professionalism (81%; 8% disagreed)
- GTCS enhances standards of teaching and of teacher professionalism (72%; 12%)

A minority of teachers agreed that GTCS is dynamic (34%; 12% disagreed), that GTCS is a world leader in professional educational issues (45% agree; 13% disagree) or that GTCS is innovative (46% agreed; 15% disagreed). The qualitative findings suggest that many respondents, particularly those who have limited or no contact with GTCS, found it difficult to define terms such as 'dynamic' or 'innovative' or relate these to GTCS or indeed to any educational stakeholder organisations.

**Chart 7: Perceptions of GTCS (teachers)**



During the online survey, GTCS staff were also asked to indicate how effective they thought GTCS was as a professional regulator, and 93% considered **GTCS as 'very' or 'quite' effective**, with no staff considering it as ineffective to any extent. A similar proportion of GTCS staff (94%) also considered that GTCS protects the public well.

The qualitative findings help to explain how these perceptions have come about. A key factor cited by most respondents was that GTCS ensure and uphold the minimum standards that exist within education and that they ensure professional development and offer support to teachers. So to many, GTCS is perceived to be a gatekeeper to, and safeguarder of, the teaching profession.

Another factor helping to create positive perceptions was the attitude and response of GTCS staff, most of whom were described as helpful, professional, supportive, friendly and speedy in providing responses to queries. Most respondents who have had contact with GTCS staff noted that past personal contact had been a positive experience and only a small number of respondents cited any instances where they felt that GTCS staff had not been helpful.

GTCS is known to most audiences as a lean organisation employing a relatively small number of individuals and this is perceived to be a positive for two key reasons. First, it is assumed by most that any income is spent wisely and that the organisation is not overburdened by an unnecessary number of staff. Second, most individuals who have had any form of contact with GTCS noted it was easy to get in touch with the relevant individual(s) to obtain the required support or advice. One respondent commented:



“They have a lean structure (which is a positive). They work well in terms of limited resources. Funds are limited by the fee charged to members and they have demonstrated the value of this fee to their members.”

Some respondents referred to specific aspects of GTCS’s role such as the introduction of Professional Update, that the website or the magazine are good sources of information or focused on communication. These specific issues are covered in subsequent chapters of this report.

The qualitative findings show that there are mixed perceptions of GTCS and there often appears to be a conflict between the perceptions of different stakeholder groups. For example, many non-teachers want GTCS to have a wide remit that not only focuses on teacher standards or competence or the teacher register, but they would also like the role to include being an advisor to the government or taking on a broader role within the education sector. However, some teachers would like GTCS to focus more narrowly on teaching standards, the teacher register and teacher competence.

For most respondents and across all stakeholder audiences, GTCS is seen as being professional, committed to the teaching profession and managing teaching standards, the teacher register and teacher competence very effectively. That said, a small number of respondents commented that at times they can also be seen as unnecessarily bureaucratic and slow. As one respondent commented:

“They are steady. A little bit unwieldy, formal, safe, bureaucratic but they give some sense of safety and low risk which protects their image as being an arbiter of standards. They can be slow to make decisions or to react, although if they have to make a choice between being too quick and being too slow, they should err on the side of slow .... They aren’t a very sexy organisation but they shouldn’t be. They are a regulatory body and that means that by necessity they will be reactive rather than proactive.”

There was also a perception that for many people outwith education, in particular the general public, GTCS remains a relatively invisible organisation. That said, some respondents felt that teachers are generally held in high regard by the public and that GTCS has helped to instil this viewpoint. There were mixed views as to whether GTCS should be putting more focus on increasing awareness of the general public or whether they should be focusing primarily on individuals with whom they should be having contact, including educational stakeholders and parents.

The qualitative findings show that there are mixed views on whether GTCS is a world leader in professional educational issues. Those who perceived GTCS as a world leader tended to be GTCS staff and some individuals within stakeholder organisations. However, some of these respondents questioned whether GTCS should be a world leader in educational issues on the basis that while GTCS has a responsibility to help disseminate innovative practice and take the profession forward, that they do not really initiate themselves. These respondents tended to think that Education Scotland is more of a world leader in professional educational issues and that GTCS does not or should not be at the forefront of things. For example, one journalist noted that the key role of GTCS is as a regulatory body and that as such they will tend to be reactive rather than proactive in the education sector; conversely Education Scotland as the body responsible for the curriculum and innovation within the curriculum was perceived to be more at the forefront of educational issues. As noted by two respondents:

“It isn’t dynamic. It isn’t at the forefront of education. But it is becoming dynamic. It is seeking to be of more value to teachers and what it does other than striking off teachers. There is an emerging dynamism. It isn’t at the forefront of education but it doesn’t need to be and shouldn’t be; that is the role of the Scottish Government and local authorities.”

“GTCS isn’t really at the forefront of educational change but is more reactive. For example, Professional Update has emerged as a reaction to the Donaldson Report. Compared with Education Scotland, which is seen as more proactive. GTCS is an organisation that administers lots of things and does that very well, but it isn’t putting new ideas into the system. It acts as an agent for the ideas of others. A really vibrant organisation should be thinking ahead and GTC needs to do this.”

Another respondent commented;

“There has been less staff change at GTCS than in some other organisations which is good. In Scotland there is quite a high degree of understanding of partnership working. GTCS isn’t a reactive organisation, it is at the front of developments in education. It’s also connected to the world of business and having to understand that.”

While most views were positive, there were some comments that GTCS do little to support teachers or they have no direct impact, that there is no advantage to payment of the registration fee or that GTCS adds to the teacher workload. This latter point came primarily from teachers and was made largely in relation to the introduction of Professional Update. This is covered in a later chapter of this report.

## **Comparison with other regulatory bodies**

Across each of the audiences participating in the online surveys, a majority agreed that GTCS is similar to other professional bodies such as the Law Society, General Medical Council (GMC) etc. However, the qualitative data suggests that respondents who have any knowledge or understanding of other regulatory bodies have more mixed views as to how similar GTCS is.

A small number of those participating in the qualitative discussions had friends or relatives who worked in other professions and who had to be registered with a professional body; by and large, the bodies referred to were the General Medical Council and the Law Society, although there were one or two mentions of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS), the General Dental Council (GDC), Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Midwifery Council.

There were comments that the Law Society, the General Medical Council and the General Dental Council impose more by way of regulation upon the individuals they regulate, primarily in respect of the regularity and amount of continued professional development that has to be undertaken in order to retain professional status. While the introduction by GTCS of Professional Update is perceived to be going some way to matching the expectations of some other professions, it is still not perceived to be as rigorous. Examples provided by respondents were that lawyers and accountants have to provide ongoing information to annual reviews of continued professional development, and that this is often undertaken at their own expense and in their own time.

GTCS was perceived to be more rigorous and supportive than the Midwifery Council or other nursing bodies, which one respondent described as being less well organised than GTCS. Another respondent noted;

“They (GTCS) are better than SSSC which doesn’t represent social workers in the same way as GTCS does teachers. SSSC feels more like it’s about the regulation of workers rather than the development of the profession – whereas GTC has a good balance of both.”

# Role and Remit of GTCS

## **In summary,**

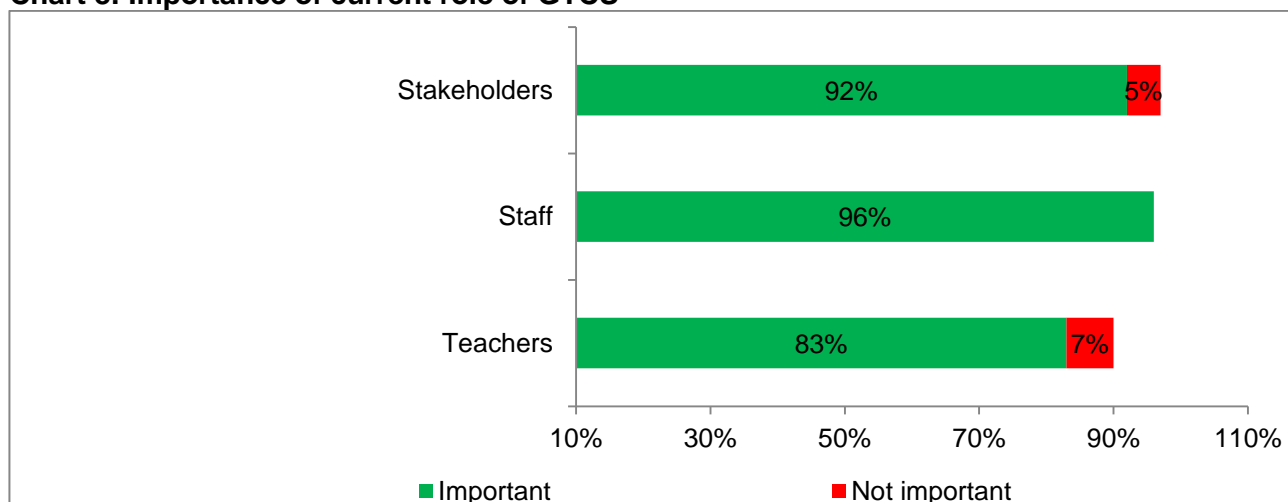
- A large majority of individuals within stakeholder organisations, GTCS staff and teachers consider the current role of GTCS to be important.
- A large majority of teachers are aware of the revised Professional Standards, and consider these to be relevant.
- Awareness of Fitness to Teach, and specific cases before a Fitness to Teach panel being cited in the media, is relatively high among teachers and individuals in stakeholder organisations. However, there is little recall of Fitness to Teach or specific cases among the general public. The qualitative data show concerns on the part of many teachers that media coverage creates a negative picture of teachers and teaching in Scotland, but the lack of awareness on the part of the general public suggests that these concerns are misplaced.
- There are some concerns over the length of time taken to resolve Fitness to Teach cases.
- While only a very small proportion of the general public has ever raised a complaint about a teacher, GTCS clearly is not the top-of-mind organisation to approach in order to make a complaint.
- Of all the roles undertaken by GTCS, the Student Placement Service (SPS) came in for most criticism and respondents cited a number of improvements they would like to see introduced in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency.

GTCS has a number of different roles that include:

- Maintaining the register of teachers in Scotland
- Setting the professional standards expected of all teachers
- Investigating and adjudicating on the Fitness to Teach of registrants
- Supporting the operation of the Teacher Induction Scheme
- Managing the scheme of Professional Update, launched in August 2014
- Operating and promoting Professional Recognition to support teachers' expertise and experience
- Operating and maintaining the Student Placement Service
- Accrediting programmes leading to the award of GTCS Standards
- Advising the Scottish Government
- Promoting and supporting the teaching profession via seminars, conferences and research
- Offering a dedicated MyGTCS account to all registrants to enable them to log professional learning and access a range of support tools

As part of the online surveys, individuals within stakeholder organisations, teachers and GTCS staff were asked to indicate the importance of the GTCS role at present. As Chart 8 demonstrates, a large majority of respondents considered the current role of GTCS to be important, with only small proportions of stakeholders or teachers considering their role to be at all unimportant.

**Chart 8: Importance of current role of GTCS**



\* Bars do not add to 100% as don't know responses have not been included

All respondents participating in the online surveys were also asked to indicate the importance of a number of specific roles and responsibilities of GTCS. As table 1 demonstrates, almost all respondents across all audiences considered most of these roles to be either 'very' or 'quite' important. The two roles where the lowest proportion of teachers attributed importance (albeit these were still considered important by around three in four or more) were ensuring the general public is aware of the Professional Standards and maintaining the scheme of Professional Update.

**Table 1: Roles and responsibilities of GTCS \***

How important is it that GTCS ...	Teachers (%)	Staff (%)	Stakeholders (%)
Maintains the register of teachers / lecturers	96	100	98
Investigates and adjudicates on a teacher's Fitness to Teach	92	100	98
Ensures that children and young people in Scotland are taught by qualified registered teachers / lecturers	96	98	95
Promotes and supports the teaching profession	93	93	85
Maintains and improves standards	93	100	96
Ensures all teachers / lecturers are aware of the Professional Standards	92	96	98
Ensures the general public are aware of the Professional Standards	<b>70</b>	90	80
Supports the Teacher Induction Scheme	91	96	83
Operates and maintains the Student Placement Service	79	81	74
Accredits programmes leading to teaching qualifications	90	99	87
Maintains a scheme of Professional Update for teachers / lecturers	<b>79</b>	96	93
Advises the Scottish Government	87	95	96
Promotes equality and diversity in all activities	80	93	88

\* charts providing a full breakdown of respondents by each audience are provided in appendix 2 (charts A-C) of this report

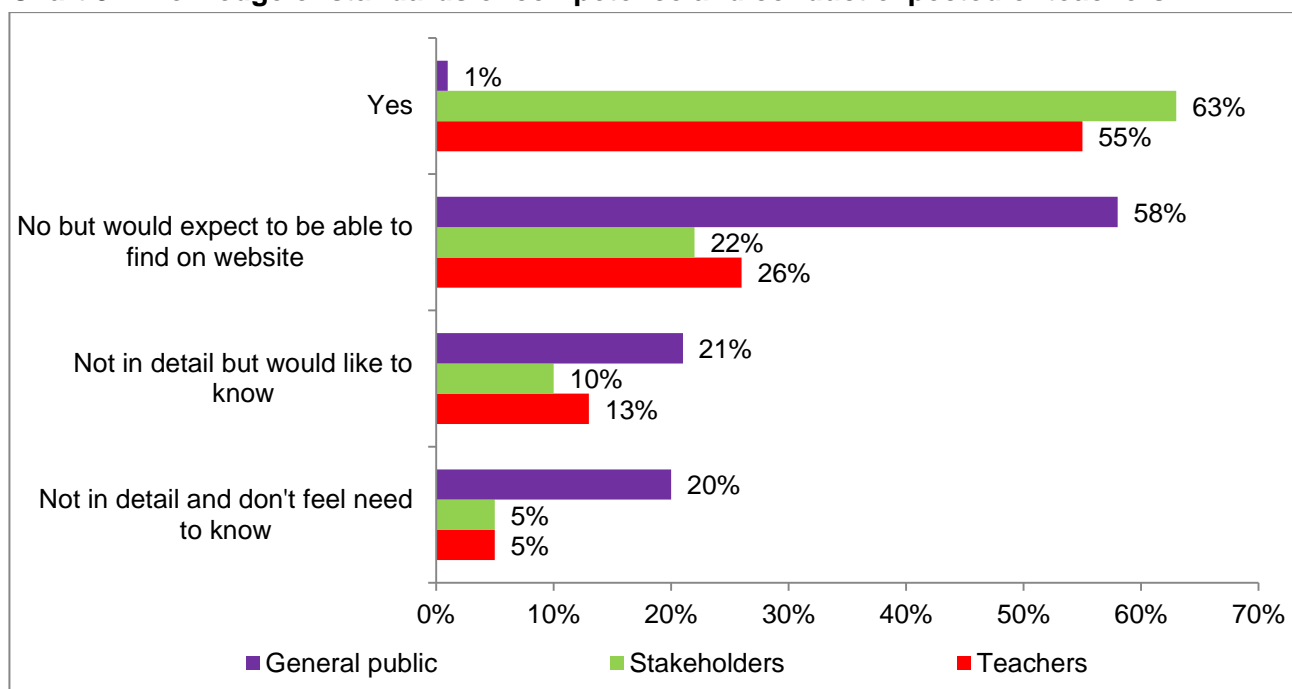
The qualitative findings show that different audiences focused on different roles for GTCS. In the main, individuals in stakeholder organisations and GTCS staff tended to take a broad perspective, while the focus of many teachers was largely limited to the setting, maintaining and upholding of standards, teacher competence, management of the teacher register and the provision of support to teachers.

The online survey asked individuals within stakeholder organisations, teachers and members of the general public if they knew what standards of competence and conduct GTCS expects of registered teachers / lecturers. As Chart 9 shows, knowledge varied across different audiences, with a majority of teachers (55%) and individuals within stakeholder organisations (63%) claiming to know what is expected, compared to only 1% of the general public.

There is a degree of interest from members of the general public who are currently unaware of the standards of conduct and competence that are expected, with 21% claiming they would like to know more, albeit that a similar proportion (20%) do not feel they need this information.

For those respondents who were unsure as to GTCS expectations, significant numbers expected to be able to find this information on the GTCS website, thus pointing to the importance of this as a source of information.

**Chart 9: Knowledge of standards of competence and conduct expected of teachers**



## The revised Professional Standards

GTCS has a suite of recently revised Professional Standards that are relevant to anyone involved and / or interested in teaching in Scotland. These are:

- The Standard for Provisional Registration
- The Standard for Full Registration
- The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning
- The Standards for Leadership and Management

Teachers participating in Questionnaire B were asked to indicate whether they were aware of the revised Professional Standards and how relevant these are to the teaching profession. A large majority of these respondents (82%) claimed to be aware of these revised standards, with only 12% unaware and 6% unsure. Encouragingly, views on the relevance of the revised Professional Standards were

very positive, with over half (53%) claiming they were 'very' relevant to the teaching profession and a further 34% claiming they were 'quite' relevant. Only 5% felt these were 'not very' or 'not at all' relevant.

The qualitative findings show that in the main, respondents consider the revised professional standards have helped improve the quality of teaching. For some, the introduction of these has helped to change the image of GTCS to a more forward thinking organisation that is more relevant to teaching today in Scotland.

There is clearly a degree of difference in opinion between those teachers who think GTCS should focus on the core roles of maintaining standards and teacher professionalism, and other stakeholder organisations who see a much broader role for GTCS within the education sector. The key issue for GTCS will be how to balance these two preferences.

### **Fitness to Teach**

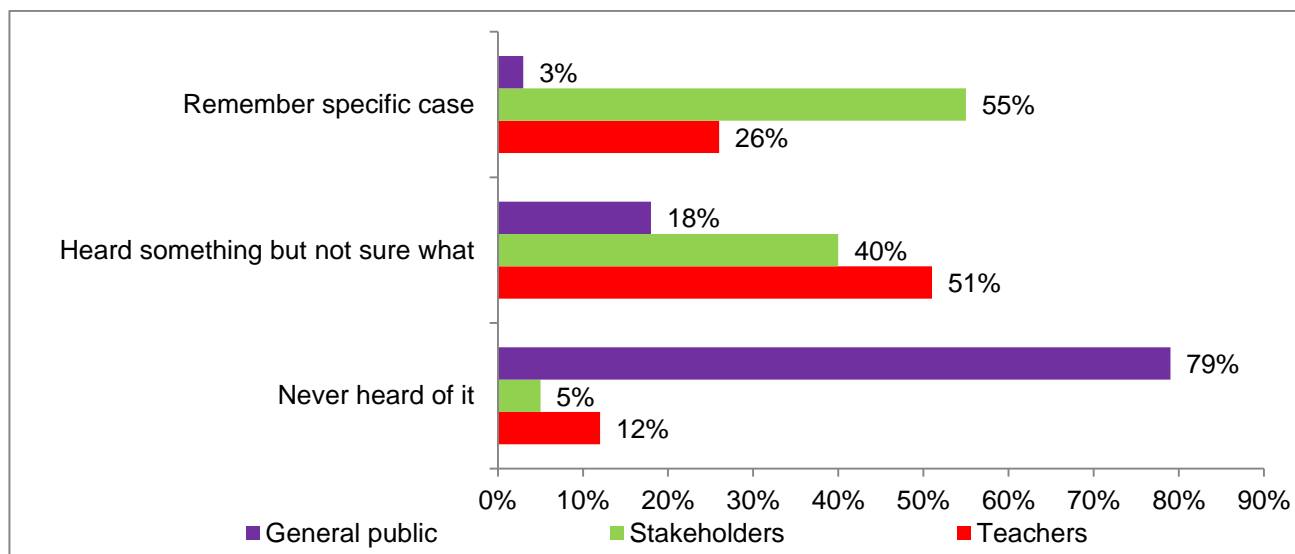
The Fitness to Teach framework covers the conduct and professional competence of registered teachers / lecturers and of anyone wishing to join the register and teach in Scotland.

All teachers, stakeholders and the general public participating in the online survey were asked a series of questions in relation to Fitness to Teach. The quantitative data (see Chart 10) show that awareness among teachers of anything about Fitness to Teach cases in the media is relatively high, although only 26% claimed to remember a specific Fitness to Teach case and a larger proportion (52%) claimed to have heard something about Fitness to Teach but not to remember specific details. A further 21% claimed to have never heard of it.

Recall of anything about Fitness to Teach cases in the media is relatively high among stakeholders, with 55% remembering a specific case, 40% having heard something, and only 5% having no recall of any specific cases).

Perhaps not surprisingly, there was little recall of anything seen in the media about Fitness to Teach from the general public, with only 3% remembering a specific case and a further 18% recalling seeing something but unsure of the details.

**Chart 10: Awareness of Fitness to Teach cases in the media**



The qualitative findings suggest that many teachers are concerned about bad media publicity and there is a perception that most media coverage focuses on fitness to teach cases and reflects negative aspects of the teaching profession, rather than focusing on more positive aspects. Perhaps not surprisingly teachers may, to some extent, have heightened concerns over negative media coverage and the impact of this on the teaching profession. However, the quantitative data shows very low levels of recall among the general public, and suggests that teachers' concerns over poor media coverage are not shared with the general public at large.

Indeed, one individual in a stakeholder organisation suggested that coverage of fitness to teach cases should be treated as a positive, with GTCS needing to place greater emphasis on the very small number of teachers who are struck off the register and highlighting the importance of having a rigorous process in place to ensure that poor teachers can be routed out of the profession.

There were some comments about the length of time taken to resolve some fitness to teach cases and the qualitative data suggest that many teachers are unaware of the process from start to finish that this entails. For example, they may be unaware that a local authority as a teacher's employer will have to carry out initial investigations into a complaint before this can be handed over to GTCS; after which specific processes have to be followed that are in line with employment legislation. It would seem that many teachers are unaware of the full process that has to be undertaken and that there is a need for GTCS to provide this information to registered teachers.

### **Complaints about Teachers**

As part of the online survey, members of the general public were asked a series of questions in relation to complaints about teachers / lecturers. Only 7% of these respondents had ever raised a complaint about a teacher / lecturer and GTCS is clearly not top of mind as the organisation to approach, as most who had made a complaint (77%) did so via the school or college or local authority education department (29%). No one had contacted the GTCS in order to make a complaint.

When asked to indicate, from a pre-coded list of options, who they would contact if they had a complaint to make about a registered teacher, GTCS is still not top of mind, with only 22% of respondents referring to GTCS. The two top of mind channels were the headteacher or principal at the



school / college (76%) or their local authority education department (40%). Just under one in ten (9%) referred to their MP / MSP or their local councillor. The qualitative findings suggest that this is not an issue so long as the school / college or local authority can then act upon the complaint and point the parent / carer in the direction of GTCS to take this further.

In considering the types of complaints that parents / carers / others should be allowed to make about teachers / lecturers, the general public focused on complaints about conduct (85%) or competence (82%). It is clear that there is a requirement for range of channels via which complaints can be made, with a number of preferences being noted; namely, by letter (30%), in person (27%) or using an online form (25%).

## **Student Placement Service**

In June 2012, GTCS took over responsibility for managing the Student Placement Service (SPS) and in May 2014, their new IT system was introduced. In the online survey there were no specific questions in relation to this, other than asking the importance of GTCS's role in operating and maintaining this system. However, this was discussed by some respondents during the qualitative stage of research.

While many of the qualitative respondents had not had any involvement with SPS and made no comment, it was raised by some. These were generally respondents who had had involvement with the SPS in recent years; either in universities that work closely with GTCS in the placement of students; or in local authorities which have individuals with specific responsibility for SPS; or in schools who receive placement students.

Most of the comments noted the usefulness of having SPS although its current operation is seen to fall short of what respondents would like to see and, of all the roles undertaken by GTCS, this is the one attracting most criticism. Overall, there was a perception that SPS does not fully represent the Scottish teaching system and key issues highlighted by respondents were that:

- SPS should ensure that students are placed in a range of different schools across their three placements, so they have different experiences. There were one or two comments that at present there is no guarantee that students will be offered placements at different types of school.
- There are logistical issues in relation to where students are placed, in that some students are expected to make lengthy journeys to their placement school, sometimes to areas where there is inadequate public transport.
- There is no capacity to change a placement if there is a mismatch between the student and the school at which they are placed.
- Not all schools requiring placement students appear on the system, although one respondent acknowledged this could be an issue within the local authority rather than the GTCS.
- There are not adequate facilities for students wanting to obtain dual qualification as dual placements are not available.
- SPS does not allow for non-traditional placements outwith schools, for example, within the NHS.
- There is a lack of anonymity for students so that it is possible for a second or third placement school to contact a first placement school and obtain feedback on the student, which may present them in an unfavourable or unfair light.

Another concern, and one which may reflect local authority structures rather than the GTCS, was that no one individual seems to have a professional overview of the system although it was acknowledged that where this has been highlighted as an issue to GTCS, they have tried hard to resolve this. One respondent noted that responsibility for SPS within local authorities can in some instances lie with a senior member of staff but that in others it is treated as an administrative task and may be managed by someone who has little understanding or experience of the theory behind student placements.

There were some comments that GTCS have tried hard to deal with complaints about the SPS in its current form and some respondents noted there have been improvements in the last year. However, there is still a view that problems exist that need to be resolved speedily by GTCS in order to ensure that SPS works effectively in the future. One respondent noted there had been a lot of last minute requests for placements as the system had not worked as efficiently as it should have done or that in a small number of instances students made direct approaches to schools because they had not been offered a placement in time. One or two respondents also noted that, at a time of increasing workloads for many working in the education sector, failures within SPS further increased workloads. While this presents a relatively negative view of the effectiveness of SPS, respondents did note that there were some improvements in the last year, that GTCS has been responsive when contacted about problems with this system, and there is an expectation that there will be further improvements this year.

# Governance at GTCS

## In summary,

- Although a significant number of teachers have limited contact with GTCS, it is positive that 43% have ever voted in GTCS elections and a similar proportion have not voted but are aware of elections. The quantitative data show that participation is an issue, with less than 5% of teachers having considered standing for election.
- Knowledge of the GTCS Appointments Committee was relatively limited (32%).
- 17% of the general public claim to be aware that GTCS is governed by a Council, and 15% claim they would consider applying to become a lay member.
- The qualitative data show that respondents with the highest levels of knowledge about governance at GTCS tend to be those who have most contact with the organisation.
- There is broad support for teachers to be represented on the various GTCS committees, boards and panels although there is also support for lay members who are seen to provide a wider perspective.
- The independent status of GTCS is perceived to be a positive and many respondents feel that GTCS has adopted a broader and more high profile role since independence in 2012.

Version A of the Teacher questionnaire asked a few questions about involvement in the governance or legal side of GTCS. Bearing in mind that many teachers have limited contact with the organisation, it is encouraging that a significant proportion (43%) claimed to have ever voted in GTCS elections and a further 45% claimed not to have voted but to be aware of elections. That said, any further participation is clearly an issue, with very few teachers (4%) having ever considered standing for election.

Knowledge of the GTCS Appointments Committee was relatively limited, with 32% knowing of it but not in detail. Over two in three teachers (67%) were not aware of the GTCS Appointments Committee.

We have already noted that the general public's awareness of GTCS is relatively low compared to other audiences, although almost a fifth (17%) claim to be aware that GTCS is governed by a Council. That said, there is clearly a degree of interest in GTCS, with 15% claiming they would consider applying to become a lay member of GTCS.

The qualitative findings show that respondents with the best levels of knowledge about governance at GTCS tend to be those who have had contact with the organisation, for example involvement on working parties or with educational initiatives. Those teachers whose contact is limited to payment of the annual registration fee or receipt of emails or newsletters, tended to know little, if anything, about governance at GTCS. There also appears to be little interest on the part of many of these teachers in being provided with information on governance or legal structures at GTCS.

The qualitative findings show broad support for teachers to be represented on the various committees, panels and boards at GTCS, although there was also support for the inclusion of lay members. This is because they are perceived to provide a good counterbalance to teachers as well as bringing a broader perspective to any issues under discussion. For example, some respondents commented on the increased emphasis on partnership and multi-agency working, lifelong learning or the development of

employability skills. These respondents commented that the knowledge brought to the table by lay members from outwith the school environment is extremely valuable. One or two respondents felt that teachers who leave school for university, then return to school as teachers have little experience of interaction with the broader community.

Those most likely to support larger numbers of teachers on the committee, boards and panels tended to be teachers in schools. Some commented that as the GTCS is there to support teachers, it stands to reason that they are the audience with the greatest level of understanding of the environment in which teachers work and with knowledge of the issues facing teachers in the classroom today.

A small number of respondents, primarily individuals within stakeholder organisations, perceived there to be over-representation of EIS members on the GTCS Council and there were some concerns over a perceived lack of impartiality on the part of these individuals and an allied lack of external rigour. One respondent noted, “it is important that GTCS is seen as being alert to all stakeholder interests. Maybe there should be more representation from the general public and other sectors.”

A small number of respondents commented on the size of the committee. This currently has a total of 37 members, comprising 19 teacher representatives, 11 individuals nominated by stakeholder organisations and 7 lay members. While it was acknowledged that this structure is laid out in the constitution and therefore cannot easily be altered, there were comments that this is an unwieldy size which lends itself as being more akin to a discussion forum than a decision-making body.

There were also one or two suggestions that GTCS has to think more like a business and less like a public sector organisation but that the current culture and ethos is ‘public sector’. For these respondents there is an apparent conflict between the two that needs to be resolved in order for GTCS to be regarded as more forward thinking.

## **Independence of GTCS**

In 2012, legislation was passed by the Scottish Parliament, making GTCS an independent self-regulating organisation. Among respondents participating in the qualitative research, there was relatively widespread knowledge of their independent status, and this was welcomed by respondents. It was felt by most that if GTCS is to play an advisory role as well as representing teacher interests, it can do so most effectively from an independent viewpoint. There was a degree of cynicism from a small number of qualitative respondents as to whether GTCS is fully independent, with one or two comments that it works too closely with the Scottish Government.

In line with its independent status, most respondents perceived that GTCS has adopted a broader and more high profile role within the Scottish education sector; and a few individuals within stakeholder organisations were aware that GTCS also maintains relationships with a wide variety of organisations within or allied to the education sector outwith Scotland.

The last three chief executives of GTCS are also seen to have contributed to a more positive and outward thinking perspective. Some commented on the effectiveness with which the current Chief Executive (Kenneth Muir) networks with other organisations and noted the importance of this in helping to raise the profile of the organisation. While many respondents were supportive of this outward-facing role, some respondents – primarily teachers – queried the relevance of this. As noted by three respondents (individuals within stakeholder organisations and teachers):

“There is some awareness that GTCS has changed in the last 4 years and becoming independent has changed the way they operate. It has strengthened their profession.”

“They are now more forward-thinking and flexible. They have stopped the ‘this is the way it’s always been done’ mentality.”

“We’ve been trying to link into GTCS more recently to help raise [our] profile .... I feel that GTCS have upped their game over the last few years. It started to become different when Tony Finn arrived.”

Some individuals within stakeholder organisations felt that since 2012 GTCS has had a broader spectrum of people on committees and that GTCS has engaged with the Donaldson Report and ensured that recommendations from this are being taken forward. There were also some references to the need to ensure that recommendations from the Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce report entitled Education Working for All (sometimes known as the Wood Report) are taken on board by GTCS.

# Registration

## **In summary,**

- There is broad support for the current categories of individuals who have to be registered with GTCS, although changes in the way in which education is delivered have led to some suggestions that a broader range of individuals should have to be registered with GTCS. There are also concerns over a loss of existing teachers within the FE and HE sectors if categories of registration are extended.
- Some respondents perceive the process to achieve registration to be inflexible for individuals who trained outwith Scotland. Suggestions as to how to overcome this include the provision of new categories of registration (including conditional registration) and for a greater number of courses to be accredited by GTCS.
- Registration is perceived to offer a wide range of benefits, with a key focus on teacher standards, professional standing and the reputation of the teaching profession.
- 50% of teachers claim they would still register if it were not compulsory, compared to 21% who would not, with the cost of registration being cited as a key factor in this decision.

It is a legal requirement for any teacher working in a local authority school in Scotland to be registered with GTCS. This ensures that teachers are appropriately qualified and that standards of conduct and competence are maintained. To be eligible for registration by GTCS, teachers must have a relevant degree and a recognised teaching qualification at SCQF level 9 or above.

## **Who should be registered with GTCS?**

In recent years, education and the way in which it is delivered has changed, for example, an increasing number of staff within FE colleges are now teaching school pupils. These changes have led to some debate about who should be registered with GTCS. The Scottish Government has recently announced that all individuals teaching in independent schools in Scotland will soon be required to hold registration with GTCS. Additionally, it has recently been agreed that all instrumental music instructors in Scotland will have to be registered with GTCS. Registration is not consistent across the UK, for example, in Wales, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, all further education lecturers will have to register and from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, all learning support staff in schools and FE will also need to register. There are not currently any plans to introduce these changes within Scotland.

While it is not a prerequisite in Scotland for all individuals working in a school context to be registered with GTCS, there are some suggestions that a wider range of individuals working with pupils should be registered. During the online surveys, staff, individuals within stakeholder organisations and the general public were asked to say who should be registered with GTCS.

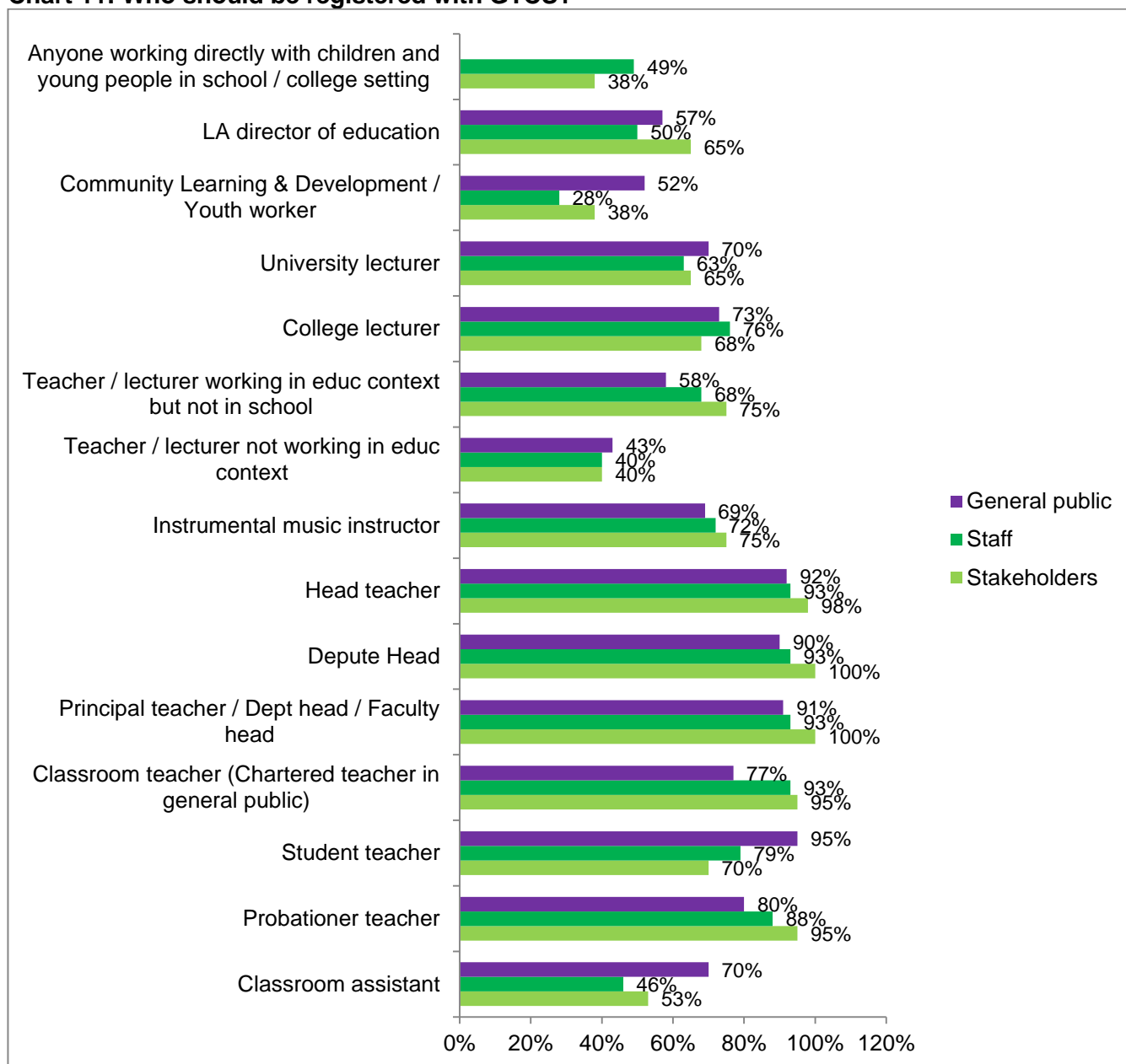
As demonstrated by Chart 11, there is majority support across all these audiences for the continued registration of senior staff within schools, classroom teachers, probationer teachers and student teachers. Around half or more across these audiences would also like to see registration for

instrumental music instructors, college lecturers and university lecturers, local authority Directors of Education and teachers or lecturers working in an educational context but not within a school.

There was less support for the registration of anyone working with children and young people in a school or college setting, Community Learning and Development youth workers and teachers or lecturers not working in an educational context or classroom assistants.

There was not a great deal of difference across different types of respondent, although greater proportions of the general public were supportive of the registration of Community Learning and Development youth workers and classroom assistants.

**Chart 11: Who should be registered with GTCS?**



The qualitative data show support for the principle of registration, although there were some concerns expressed about the process to achieve registration and the categories of teacher that are expected to register with GTCS.

For some respondents, often those who had direct or indirect experience of individuals trained outwith Scotland and wanting to teach in Scotland, there was a perception that the road to registration is a lengthy one, which places unnecessary obstacles to registration in the path of good quality teachers. A small number of respondents queried why an experienced teacher has to submit to a lengthy process, rather than provide references from their previous employer or colleagues. One or two respondents participating in the online surveys commented that it had taken the best part of a year or more to be registered to teach in Scotland by GTCS.

There was a perception that concerns over difficulties in registration were exacerbating the current shortage of permanent and supply teachers.

To an extent, many of the qualitative respondents considered that GTCS registration is inflexible and that while it is important to maintain high standards of teaching, it is also important to ensure that good quality teachers are allowed the opportunity to work in Scottish schools. As noted by one respondent,

“There is a struggle with registration because of the nature of some of the qualifications teachers have. For example, in England qualifications are geared towards 8-13 year olds but this doesn’t fit into the GTCS model.”

Another respondent commented,

“They have a problem with recognising those who are trained outwith Scotland. GTCS could offer conditional membership of the GTCS. It sometimes seems like an organisation designed to keep people outside of Scotland.”

Some respondents also questioned what registration is there for. For those with safeguarding concerns, many commented that anyone working with children, including classroom assistants, educational psychologists and FE lecturers should be registered. Other respondents focused on the importance of teaching standards, were less concerned about a “broad brush” approach to registration and commented that the current categories of registration are sufficient. There were also some concerns that if registration is extended to a wider range of categories such as classroom assistants, this dilution could undermine the status of GTCS as well as creating a lot more work for GTCS to undertake. Two respondents commented,

“If the role is to act in the public interest, then they should be extending registration to other categories such as music teachers or FE lecturers.”

“All who deal with education have a duty of care to any young person regardless of where they teach.”

A small number of respondents also commented that some types of staff such as nursery nurses currently register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and that broadening out GTCS registration might ‘step on the toes’ of SSSC.



There were also concerns that some staff – primarily classroom assistants – would need a great deal of support from GTCS if there was a need for them to register. Furthermore, that as these individuals often work part-time and for relatively low pay, the current registration fee would have to be reduced. A small number of respondents who were supportive of registration for classroom assistants commented that this would enhance their professionalism.

Given the increased amount of school pupils receiving tuition at FE colleges, a number of respondents focused on the need to extend registration to the FE arena. However, while there was a degree of support for FE lecturers to be registered with GTCS, there were concerns from many, particularly those within the sector, that this could lead to a loss of good teaching staff. For example, one FE respondent had concerns that if registration were made compulsory for FE lecturers, this could lead to a loss of up to 30% of lecturers in FE colleges. To an extent, FE colleges often provide a mixture of both academic and vocational courses and it was felt that lecturers providing vocational and practical expertise could not be expected to study for a teaching qualification. Furthermore, a number of FE college lecturers only work part-time or occasionally in a lecturing capacity. By and large it was felt that it would be too onerous for these part-time lecturers to have to undertake a teaching qualification and that they are regarded differently from full time teachers. Some of these respondents noted that compulsory registration for FE lecturers would be contrary to the recommendations in the report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

A supporter of a move toward registration for FE lecturers commented,

“It would be good if FE lecturers have to register. It would be good as it's about professionalism and offers professional status and helps develop the profession.”

Some respondents suggested solutions to help deal with these issues and these included:

- Time-delimited conditional registration to allow those who have qualified outwith Scotland to achieve the standard required in Scotland. One or two respondents commented that this exists in other countries such as Eire where conditional and immediate registration is offered and it then takes a further 3 years to qualify fully.
- Construct different levels of registration such as Associate Registration for retired teachers who might do occasionally supply work or for those who wish to remain registered but are not longer teaching.
- Accreditation of a greater number of courses provided outwith Scotland (this is something which is already being considered by GTCS who have recently accredited two more English teaching qualifications).
- Provision of online courses to allow individuals to fast track to qualify to teach in Scotland.
- Offering equivalency tests to those who have qualified outwith Scotland.

## **Checking registration status**

During the online survey, members of the general public were asked to indicate how they would check a teacher's registration status, and a range of different sources was cited. Almost a third (30%) of the general public claimed they would contact the GTCS to check a registration status; a similar proportion would contact the school or college (28%), and 16% noted they would ask their local authority. There is a significant proportion who are not clear how to check registration status, with almost a quarter (24%) saying 'don't know' who they would contact.

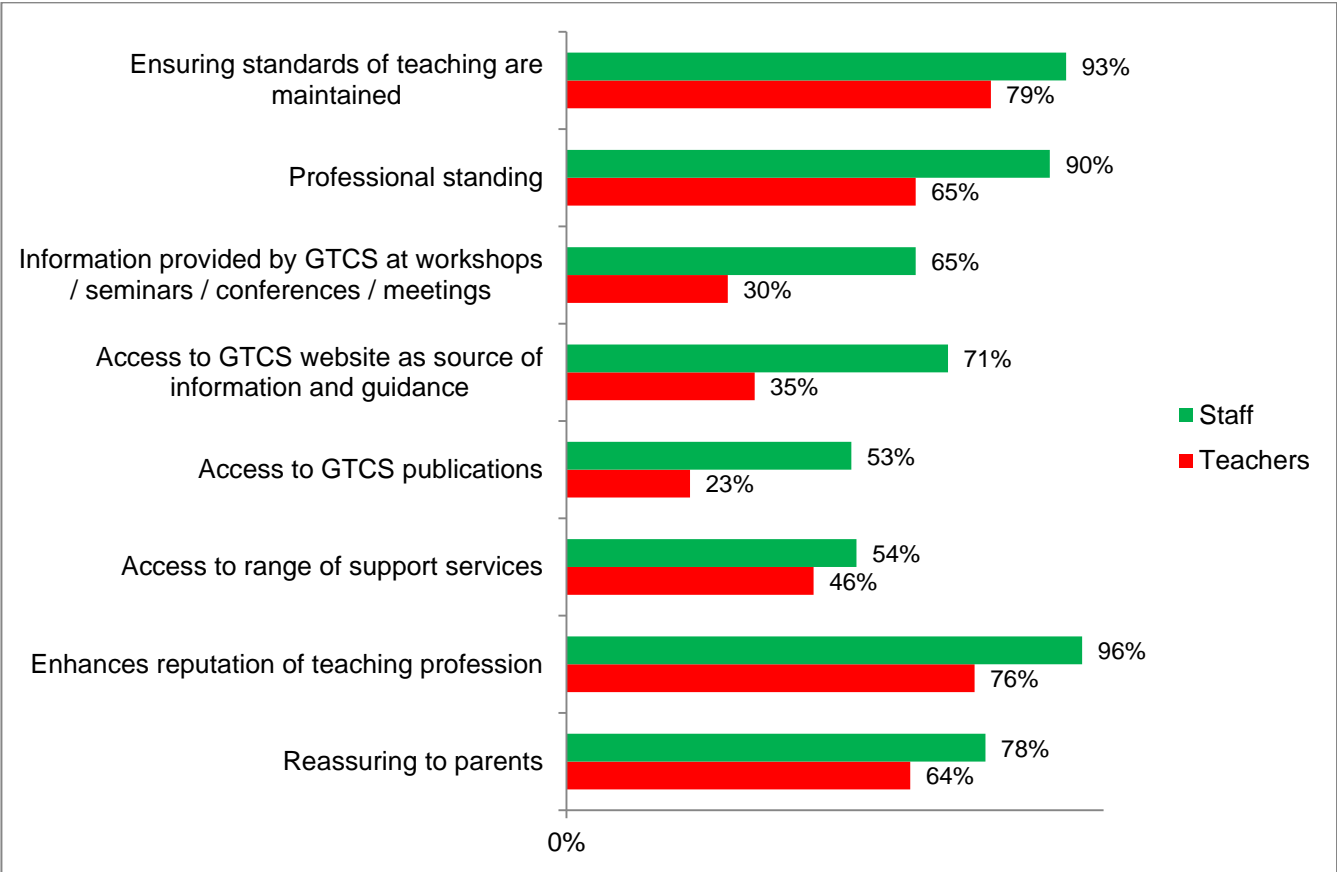
Only 2% of this audience had ever checked a teacher’s registration status. When asked what information they would expect to find if they did check a teacher’s registration status, over half (60%) referred to information on a teacher’s / lecturer’s qualifications, and just under half mentioned a teacher’s / lecturer’s name (46%) or whether the teacher / lecturer has been subject to Fitness to Teach proceedings (46%). Around a third (33%) referred to the school name.

**The benefits of registration**

As part of the online survey, GTCS staff and teachers were asked to say what they saw as the benefits of registration. We have already noted the key role of GTCS in relation to maintaining standards for teachers and again this is highlighted. Across each possible benefit, GTCS staff was more positive than teachers.

As Chart 12 shows, the key benefits highlighted by both audiences were that registration ensures standards of teaching are maintained, that it enhances the reputation of the teaching profession, that it demonstrates professional standing or that it reassures parents. At a lower level, other benefits included the provision of information and access to the website, publications or support services.

**Chart 12: The benefits of registration**



Teachers completing version A of the online questionnaire were also asked to indicate whether they would still register with GTCS if it was not a legal or employment requirement. Half (50%) agreed they would still register, just over a fifth (21%) said they would not register and almost a third (30%) said they did not know. There are some differences across different types of teachers, with higher proportions of headteachers and depute headteachers (66%) agreeing they would still register, than

classroom teachers (45%). Of those claiming they would not register (381 respondents), the highest single reason given (by 69% of respondents) was that of cost. Other reasons cited included:

- Standards can be upheld at school level = 42%
- Local authority provides necessary information = 38%
- Have never used or accessed information from GTCS = 36%
- Would prefer different model of regulation = 27%

A number of the qualitative respondents noted that registration with GTCS provides assurances about the standards of teaching and professionalism of teachers as well as offering security and credibility to teachers themselves. A small number of retired teachers noted they have kept up their registration as they do supply teaching or want to keep up-to-date with changes in the profession. Some working outwith schools commented that they wanted to keep up their registration in case they return to teaching at some point in the future, albeit there was also reference to it being easier to remain registered than to leave and want to re-register at some future point.

One FE lecturer commented that they were unsure of the benefits of registration to those working in the FE sector. Furthermore, they commented that FE colleges have their own curriculum and their own CPD but that they could find no reference to this on the GTCS website;

“I’m still not sure what registration brings to FE lecturers. I have yet to see the benefits of what can be offered. For example, I look at the website FE section and there doesn’t seem to be much there. They seem to be very exclusive. It takes time, effort and energy to get registration to teach in schools if you have trained outwith Scotland. They don’t seem to offer flexibility to allow you to get membership. They appear to create barriers – they are more a wall than a door.”

## **The Registration Process**

Teachers participating in the online survey were also asked to indicate which words – from a pre-coded listing – described their experience of the registration process. There are clearly some differing views emerging, for example, similar proportions of teachers described the process as being ‘quick’ and ‘time consuming’, although most other descriptors were positive rather than negative. Highest proportions of respondents referred to the process as being:

- Straightforward = 25%
- Average for that kind of thing = 21%
- Quick = 18%
- Time consuming = 18%
- Easy = 16%
- Expensive = 15%
- Simple = 11%
- Clear = 10%

One issue raised by a small number of respondents was that of dual registration. There was a perception that this should be made easier, particularly given the shortage of teachers in some specific subjects and limited funding available. One headteacher commented;

“I am currently in need of teachers across the sciences. If I could find someone with dual registration for say physics and chemistry, it would be a great help to my school budget.”

## **The Cost of Registration**

The Teacher A questionnaire noted that the cost of registering with the GTCS is £65 initially and then £50 per year thereafter; and also provided information on the fees paid to some other bodies. These were:

- Nursing and Midwifery Council = £100 (to become £120 in March 2015)
- Security Industry Authority (bouncers) = £220 for a three year licence
- General Dental Council (dental care professionals) = £140
- General Dental Council (dentists) = £345 per specialism
- EIS (Educational Institute of Scotland) = approx. £110
- SSTA (Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association) = approx. £166

Teachers were then asked to indicate, given the comparative amounts provided, whether they felt the GTCS registration fee of £50 per year provides better value, worse value or the same value as other bodies. It is encouraging to see that a higher proportion of teachers considered this to provide better value than worse value (36% compared to 10%), and almost a quarter (24%) considered this to offer about the same value. Almost a third (29%) gave a response of 'don't know'.

There was much debate around the registration fee during the qualitative discussions. While some teachers queried the benefit they received from this fee, other teachers and individuals in stakeholder organisations commented that the existing fee is reasonable, particularly in comparison to the fees paid by some other professions. There was a suggestion from a small number of individuals within stakeholder organisations that the current fee is too low and makes GTCS seem less professional than other regulatory bodies; that the fee impacts on the gravitas of the organisation and to enhance the value of GTCS and what it does, the fee should be raised. An increase in the registration fee was also seen by some respondents as adding to the professionalism of teachers themselves.

A small number of qualitative respondents also commented that raising the registration fee might increase the professionalism of teachers and help to create a more positive perception of the teaching profession and its value among teachers. That said, many teachers were aware of a relatively recent rise of 11% in the GTCS fee and were very resistant to any further increases. Some teachers found it difficult to compare their fee with that charged by other professional bodies and some were unaware of what they pay to GTCS each year. As noted by one respondent,

“The service that teachers get for what they pay is phenomenal although I know a lot of teachers still complain about it.”

# Professional Update

## **In summary,**

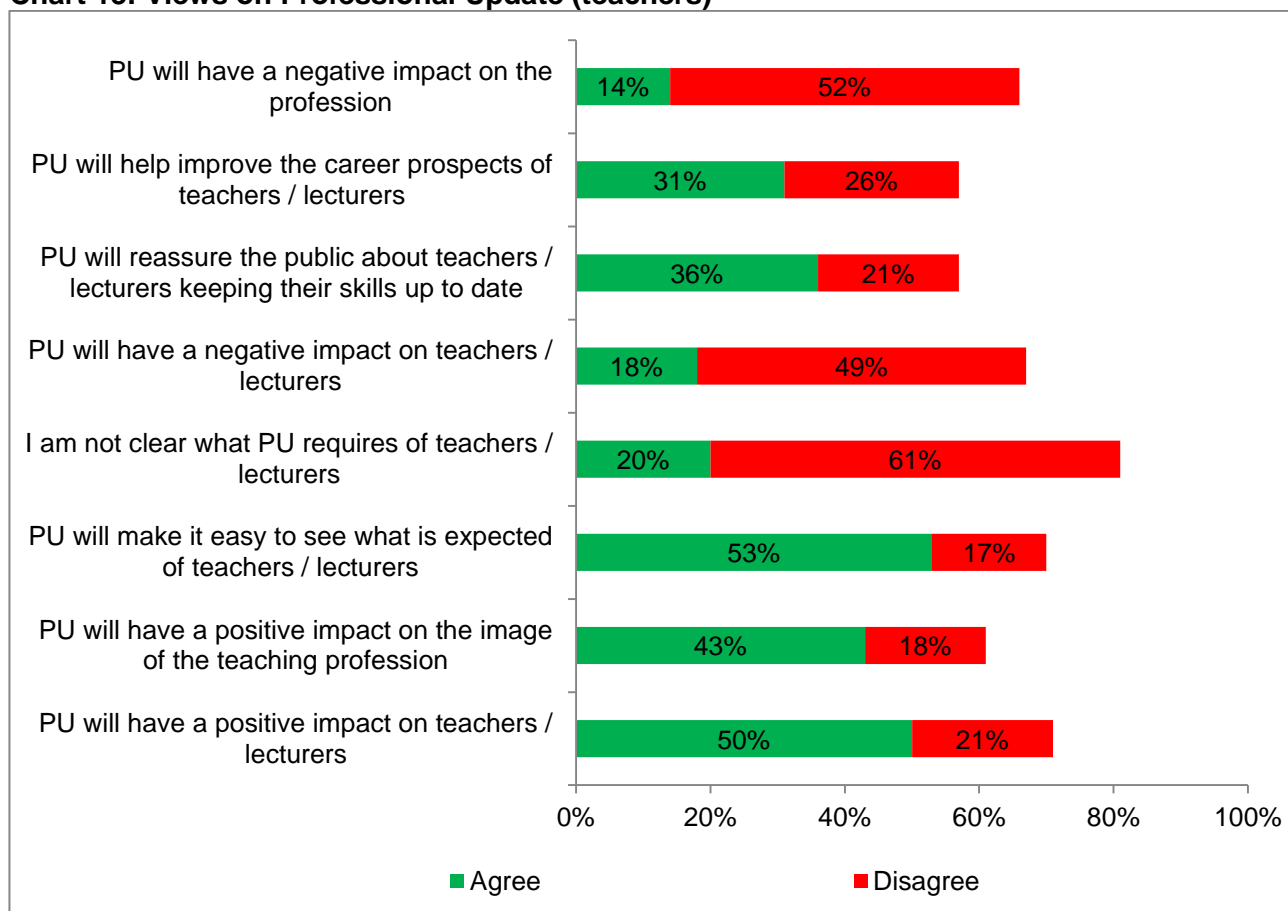
- Views on Professional Update are largely positive, with a perception that it will enhance the professionalism of teachers.
- The introduction of PU is being undertaken over a 5 year period, and the qualitative data suggests that teachers who have not had to register for PU in this academic year are still largely unaware of the process to achieve PU. For some of these respondents, there were concerns over additional workloads or an increase in bureaucracy. There are also concerns that staff who do not work full time will find it difficult to meet the requirements of PU and / or that local authorities have different requirements for recording CPD, thus leading to duplication of effort.
- Longer term, PU is likely to raise levels of contact with, and awareness of, GTCS.
- Whilst GTCS is responsible for the introduction of PU, to a large extent they are reliant on other organisations (local authorities and schools / colleges) to disseminate information. There are suggestions from the qualitative data that not all organisations are cascading the same information, using the same language and this may reflect poorly on GTCS.
- Respondents suggested a number of ways to improve upon the introduction of PU and these included a common template for the recording of information, the provision of support packs, information provided across all channels including the GTCS website, positive peer review and positive reinforcement of the benefits it will bring to the teaching profession.

Engagement in Professional Update became a requirement for all registered teachers in Scotland in August 2014 and is being introduced over a five year period between 2014-2019. It has two key purposes:

- To maintain and improve the quality of teachers and enhance the impact they have on pupils' learning
- To support, maintain and enhance teachers' continued professionalism and the reputation of the teaching profession in Scotland

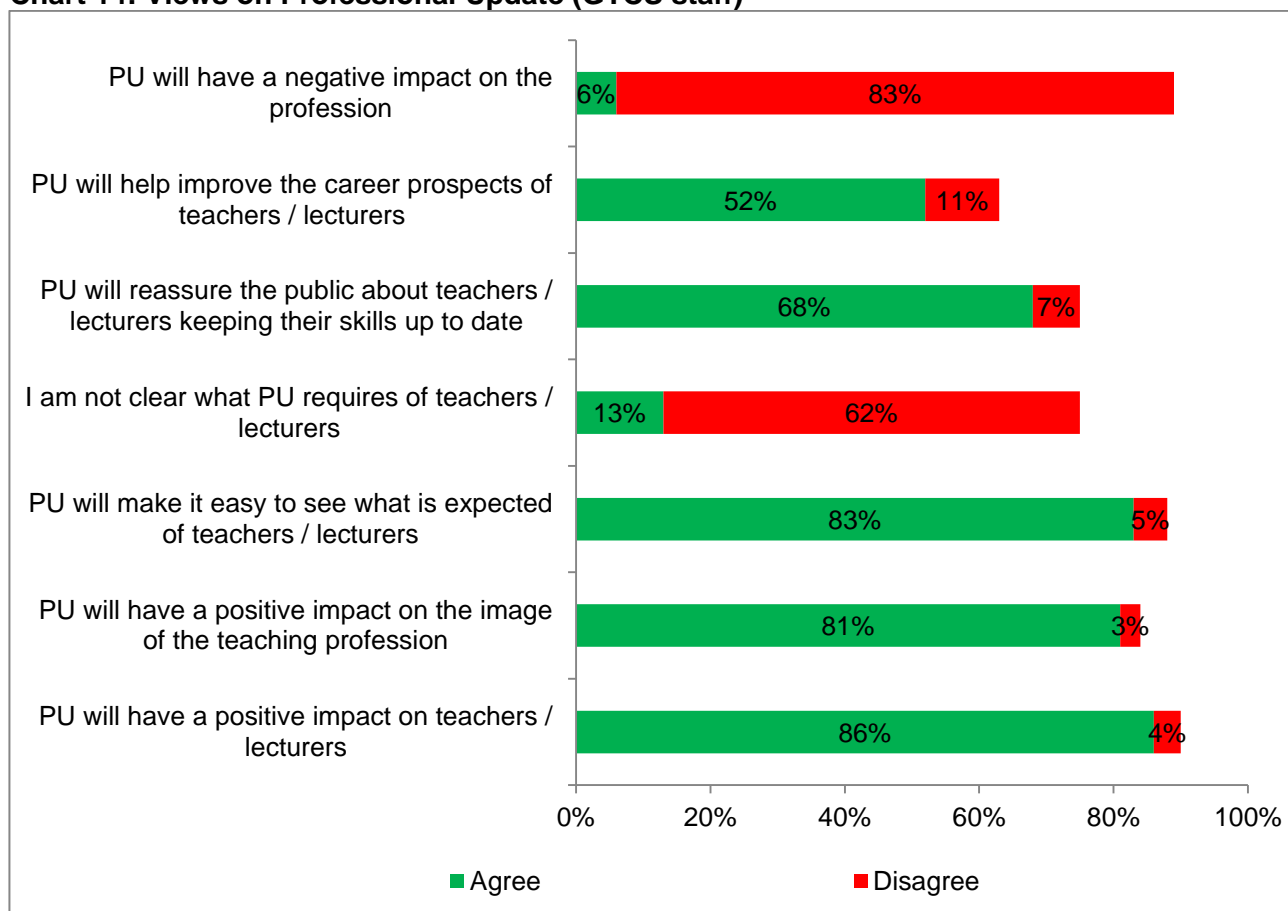
Teachers and GTCS staff were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements about Professional Update. As Chart 13 shows, teachers' views on Professional Update are largely positive, with small proportions of teachers demonstrating negative views of Professional Update. For example, 53% agreed that Professional Update will make it easy to see what is expected of teachers / lecturers, compared to only 17% who disagreed. Conversely, 52% disagreed that Professional Update will have a negative impact on the profession, compared to only 14% who agreed.

**Chart 13: Views on Professional Update (teachers)**



As can be seen in Chart 14, GTCS staff were more positive than teachers in their views of Professional Update.

**Chart 14: Views on Professional Update (GTCS staff)**



The qualitative findings show that views on Professional Update (PU) are fairly positive with many commenting that the requirements of PU are what should be expected in any profession. Those with knowledge of other professions often commented that the requirements of PU are still somewhat less rigorous than those expected by say the Law Society, the British Medical Association (BMA) or the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS). In fact, one or two respondents commented that requirements under PU should be annual, rather than five-yearly, in order to bring more rigour to the teaching profession. One stakeholder commented;

“PU will achieve limited outcomes. It is very light touch and involves a teacher updating their own details and it relies on processes within schools being brought up-to-date. It is a modest aspiration although placing more emphasis on professional review and development will be good.”

Many of the respondents in stakeholder organisations perceived PU as being about ongoing professionalism and a real benefit to the teaching community. The sorts of comments made by respondents included;

“It allows teachers to add their learning activities to their professional learning page and they can make this relevant to different jobs. It’s easy to use. It’s a good way of keeping a record of activities. It is consistent and it links to career standards ... Previously the

impact of training was inconsistent across schools and it's much more focused now. There's a commitment to implement training in classroom practice."

"There's a rigour that needed to be brought in and that's what Professional Update does."

"PU is a reinforcement of work that teachers are already doing. Professional learning is an entitlement of teachers."

That said, there were some concerns, particularly from teachers, some of whom are not aware of what PU will require of them as they have period of five years in which to meet their obligations under PU. Some of these teachers appear to be ignoring PU until they reach a point in time where they have to undertake this. So, while some teachers regard PU as an initiative offering them access to opportunities to develop their teaching practice, others know relatively little about it at present. Unfortunately, many of the teachers who know little about PU hold a perception that additional work will need to be undertaken to complete the requirements of Professional Update. The themes of additional bureaucracy or overburdening teachers with administration were common running throughout discussions.

In the past, there has been some reference to PU as being 'an MOT for teachers' and unfortunately, this has led to some perceptions that it has been put in place to 'weed out poor teachers'.

A number of respondents, again primarily teachers with little practical experience of PU, had concerns over how non full-time teaching staff will be able to meet their obligations under PU. Examples provided here included supply teachers who do not work full-time, teachers who have retired from teaching but who wish to maintain their GTCS registration or teachers who work across more than one local authority.

Another concern highlighted by some respondents was that some local authorities have their own requirements for recording CPD information and that this will lead to duplication of information provision. While a small number of respondents commented that some local authority IT systems do not fit with that of GTCS, this does not appear to be a widespread issue. That said, it does appear that there are one or two local authority areas where teachers may well have to enter the same information twice to meet the requirements of PU and their local authority. Respondents who had been involved in piloting PU in their local authority were very positive about its impact and benefits to teachers.

Some respondents noted that, to ensure the impact of PU is maximised, there is a need for a culture change within the teaching profession. That said, there were also some concerns that not all local authorities and teachers are prepared for this as they should be.

A small number of respondents were against the introduction of Professional Update and felt that schools should be responsible for supporting the professionalism of teachers and that they should not need to be checked by GTCS or another body. One teacher commented,

"I was aware of it [PU]. I work hard to meet the children's needs and I have less focus on online form filling. I don't think there are any advantages to PU at all. It's just added pressure. My current headteacher piles on the pressure and this is just another



measure of accountability and I already have to be accountable to my headteacher. It is just an added stress. I haven't had any information on this from my headteacher or the local authority. I don't feel good about PU in the way I did for Curriculum for Excellence as I don't see PU as being good for the children. I'm already putting in hours of CPD and I do recognise the need to learn so that I am not stale. It's good to go on courses and I am open to fresh ideas but I feel PU makes us untrusted."

There were also some concerns that if PU is not managed effectively, it could just become a paper exercise or a box-ticking exercise.

One or two respondents referred to GTCS as expanding 'their empire' by introducing PU. Its introduction will certainly mean that teachers have to engage with GTCS on a regular basis. That said, given the correlation between contact with GTCS and positive perceptions of the organisation, increased contact should be a benefit in the longer term.

Some respondents noted they had had initial problems with the recording of information via the GTCS website and that initially it was restrictive in terms of the types of files that could be uploaded and it will be important for GTCS to ensure these issues no longer exist.

Longer term, graduates new to the profession are likely to help increase positive perceptions of PU in that the concept of lifelong learning is one that is developed at university.

To an extent, although GTCS is responsible for the introduction of PU, the organisation is very reliant on local authorities, headteachers and other teaching professionals to provide information on PU and its implementation. There were some suggestions from the qualitative discussions that not all local authorities are placing the same degree of importance on PU or using the same language and / or that not all those involved in PU are cascading information down to all teaching staff.

During the course of the qualitative discussions a number of suggestions were made on the introduction of PU. These included:

- Provision of a template for all teachers to use to bring about consistency in recording.
- Information on how to match professional experience to specific standards.
- Provision on the GTCS website and in the magazine and other communications of case studies / peer group recommendations and commentary, rather than pages of dense text.
- Quotations from teachers about how easy PU is to use, for example, "It's good for teaching. People are taking real ownership of it. Initially it can be a bit of a pain but it's rewarding once it's done. Once it's done for the first time, it will be great. I've been very impressed with the training GTCS provided and came away quite excited about it. There is something quite rewarding about it."
- Clear messages that PU is not about competency but about professional learning and professionalism for teachers.
- Ensure that information on PU is provided in a consistent manner, using the same terminology.
- Providing support packs.
- Reinforcing that PU is of benefit to all types of teacher, including supply staff.
- Publicise what information is on the website.

Overall, there is clearly a need for GTCS to reinforce key messages about PU and to address concerns that this is not simply a means by which bad teachers can be routed out. Many of the respondents in stakeholder organisations perceived PU as being about ongoing professionalism and this is a key message to communicate to teachers

# Relationships with other educational stakeholder organisations

## In summary,

- Views on GTCS's management of relationships with other educational stakeholder organisations are very positive. The organisation is perceived to be collaborative, to involve others in early discussions and consultation and to be effective at networking.
- In the main, most respondents are clear about the different roles of educational stakeholder organisations.

During the qualitative discussions respondents were asked to give their views in relation to the way in which GTCS manages its relationships with other educational stakeholder organisations. In the main, respondents were very positive about the ways in which GTCS interacts with others and felt they manage relationships well.

In terms of roles and remits, there was seen to be very little blurring of lines between GTCS and other organisations, although there were some comments that this is a degree of blurring between Education Scotland and SQA as both have responsibility for quality assurance, although this was seen as necessary and beneficial to education in general. As one respondent commented;

“GTCS is more clear about where their role starts and finishes and where their responsibilities are.”

Education Scotland and SQA are perceived to be better known to individuals engaged in the education sector, mainly because of their role. Additionally, Education Scotland has annual engagement visits with some other stakeholders, it is responsible for reviews across different education sectors and staff are assigned to local authorities and colleges. Individuals working in schools are familiar with Education Scotland because of their inspection role.

In some respects GTCS is seen as similar to other educational stakeholder organisations in that there is some perception that they are all public sector organisations who operate along similar lines. One respondent commented ‘[GTCS] is similar to ES in that they are ‘civil servants who stick to a script which makes them less approachable for a ‘normal’ teacher’. One respondent noted;

“The Scottish Government, Education Scotland & GTCS are all interested ‘listening people’ these days. They are engaged and want to know how they can help. I would say they are all collaborative as well, which is good and doubly positive.”

The organisation GTCS was seen most closely aligned to was Education Scotland. The two organisations are perceived to complement each other in that Education Scotland has a curricular role to play, while GTCS is about regulation and personal development. One stakeholder differentiated between the two by commenting,

"The GTCS website should be the place I go to to be a better teacher and Education Scotland should be about the curriculum ie it's the difference between personal professionalism and the required standard to teach and Education Scotland is about the curriculum".

Some respondents commented that GTCS is easier to approach and deal with than other stakeholder organisations; in part because of personal contacts and in part because of the size of the organisation. It was generally perceived to be easy to get in touch with the relevant individual(s) at GTCS. Similarly, SQA has a great deal of contact with education stakeholders. However, organisations such as EIS, Education Scotland and SQA are seen to have a network of representatives to deal with queries and provide information, and this is not the case for GTCS. There were some suggestions of a need for GTCS to have representation at local authority level as well as being seen to attend in-service days in schools and maximise opportunities to network with individuals. One stakeholder commented that all local authorities will in effect have a GTCS representative at some level, for example, a probationer officer or professional update officer but there were some suggestions that one individual representing the wide interests of GTCS within each local authority would be of benefit in helping to raise their profile and increase awareness of the organisation.

GTCS is perceived to communicate well with stakeholder organisations and they were praised for their communication with these audiences. Respondents referred to a number of different ways in which they come into contact with other stakeholders and these included:

- Early involvement in discussions regarding changes or initiatives such as Professional Update
- Formal and informal contact
- Good relationship management
- Involvement on government working groups such as the Professional National Learning Network
- Consulting with other organisations
- Networking

There were some suggestions that GTCS should work more closely with teachers in training, although respondents in universities commented that this is what currently happens.

# Communication and Information

## **In summary,**

### ***The magazine***

- A large majority of teachers recall receipt of a regular magazine and / or can remember its name. Most respondents tend to read articles of interest or flick through this when they have the time. There is a degree of resistance to provision of an online version of the magazine. A key issue for GTCS is the provision of a regular magazine that will appeal to a wide range of readers and interests and there are some suggestions that the magazine should be segmented in some way to help readers identify those sections of greatest interest and / or relevance.
- There is a preference for articles in the magazine to include copy from practising teachers and information on PU and other new initiatives. In order to increase interest in an online version, it would be useful to point to video and audio articles that may be of interest to readers.

### ***The website***

- A large majority of respondents have visited a GTCS website and qualitative respondents were broadly positive about the website, with some comments that this has improved recently. Across this project, it is clear that the website is regarded as an important source of information and there is an expectation of comprehensive coverage of all issues relevant to the teaching profession of today.

### ***Conferences, seminars and other channels of communication***

- Relatively small numbers of teachers have attended the GTCS stand at the Scottish Learning Festival or other events, although there are higher levels of awareness that GTCS runs events. However, a majority of teachers are interested in receiving information about GTCS events. Views from those participating in the qualitative survey are largely positive.
- There are some requests for GTCS to field more representatives across local authorities, to participate in more in-service days and to maximise opportunities to communicate with all stakeholder audiences.
- GTCS was praised for being forward-thinking in using social media as part of its communications mix.

## **Overall,**

- The quantitative data show the importance of using a range of different communication channels to provide information and increase awareness of the organisation and its role(s), although recollection of the precise content of much media coverage is hazy.
- The qualitative data suggest that those working in the media would like GTCS to adopt a more open, self-promoting and positive approach to communication.

GTCS recognises the importance of communication with stakeholders, and currently provides information in a number of different formats across a variety of different channels; including its websites, e-newsletters, a magazine and conferences and events. All respondents were asked a series of questions in relation to communication, and teachers completing version A of the questionnaire were asked some additional questions.

## Teaching Scotland magazine

Teachers completing version A of the questionnaire were asked a series of questions in relation to the magazine 'Teaching Scotland' specifically. This is issued five times a year. It is encouraging that the large majority of these teachers (81%) said they receive a magazine regularly and a similar proportion (79%) correctly recalled its name 'Teaching Scotland'.

In terms of the actual content read, the highest proportions claimed to either look for articles of interest and read those (34%) or flick through it when they have time (30%). Only 10% claimed to make a point of reading the magazine in its entirety, and a further 10% claimed they might read an article if something on the front cover catches their attention. This fits with readership patterns seen in other research undertaken.

Most of the qualitative respondents commented that they are too busy to be able to spend much time reading the magazine. They tended to look for articles of interest to them, which often related to topical issues such as Professional Update or changes to the curriculum. A few mentioned Learning for Sustainability which is a relatively new topic.

At present, the Teaching Scotland magazine is distributed in hard copy and is also available online. While GTCS wish to produce a magazine in a format that readers wish to see, an online version provides opportunities to include video and audio links that cannot be provided in a hard copy magazine. As such, respondents were also asked to provide their thoughts on Teaching Scotland moving to an online-only format. The quantitative data suggests there is still a need to continue to provide a hard copy magazine, with almost half (46%) claiming they would be less likely to read an online only format. Around a third (34%) said it would make no difference and 18% would be more likely to read an online format. This resistance on the part of some teachers to electronic communications was also borne out by other data.

These teachers were asked whether they read any of the e-newsletters that GTCS sends out and were prompted with a list of different e-newsletters that are distributed. The e-newsletter read by the highest proportion of teachers (27%) was the GTCS e-newsletter. A further 16% referred to the online version of Teaching Scotland, 8% to an e-newsletter for headteachers of probationers and 6% to a probationer e-newsletter. Over half of these teachers (58%) claimed not to have read any of the e-newsletters with which they were prompted.

Qualitative respondents were generally positive about the magazine in that it provides a good interface with teachers, and many commented that it provides a broad view of education. A challenge for GTCS is to produce a magazine that will appeal to a very broad range of registrants covering a wide range of sectors, and as such it is not likely that the entire magazine content will ever appeal to all potential readers. For example, it is unlikely that a primary school teacher is going to read features about the new secondary qualifications. The qualitative findings suggest a number of key factors that are important and these include:

- Coverage of a broad range of sectors
- Coverage of a broad range of subjects
- Focusing on topical issues such as Professional Update
- Ensuring the magazine content is clearly signposted; for example, respondents commented that the front page should signpost them to articles within the magazine

- Well laid out, using bullet points, headings, photographs, graphics

We believe there could be value in segmenting the magazine using colour coding or some other form of topic divider. For example, all articles of relevance to primary teachers could be collated in one section of the magazine; another for secondary teachers and so on. For topics of general interest such as Professional Update, there could be a differently colour coded section. In this way, teachers could be pointed to the relevant bits of the magazine, rather than feel they have to flick through the whole magazine searching for articles of interest.

There were comments from some respondents that the magazine has improved a lot recently. It is now perceived to be more accountable, more interesting and more informative for the reader. As one respondent commented, "It now gives a greater sense of what GTCS are doing for professional development and learning etc. It is more professionally produced than it used to be."

However, some respondents commented on the importance of including copy that focuses on articles that are applicable to teachers and teaching rather than 'self-satisfied articles saying how brilliant GTCS are'. There was a preference from some respondents for a greater number of articles from practising teachers rather than theorising academic articles. To an extent, some respondents feel there is a greater sense of credibility in articles written by others in their peer group. An example given here was the sharing of good practice or the provision of case studies for Professional Update.

We have already noted a preference for hard copy from a significant proportion of teachers and the qualitative data show that hard copy is useful in that it is portable and can be easily picked up and put down again. Some teachers want to be able to flick through this in their own time, and not have to sit at a computer to access an online version. One or two also commented that they receive so many email updates from various organisations that they are unlikely to read the magazine online and it is possible that its arrival may go unnoticed.

For those who were receptive to the online magazine, there were some comments that they would like to see more articles by high profile educationalists like Andy Hargreaves, Dylan Williams or Avis Glaze; or videos of them delivering at conference. The benefit of online articles is that they can be used to encourage staff in professional dialogue and can be used as a resource for twilight sessions.

We believe that there will be a greater acceptance of emailed magazines from those entering the profession, so over time it is likely that a greater proportion of recipients will be using an online version. In the meantime, we think it is important that hard copy and online versions are produced, with text in the hard copy pointing respondents to video and audio articles of interest in the online version.

## **The Website**

Teachers participating in questionnaire A were asked whether they ever visited a GTCS website and 90% had visited [www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk). Two in five (40%) had visited [www.teachingscotland.org.uk](http://www.teachingscotland.org.uk) and 4% [www.in2teaching.org.uk](http://www.in2teaching.org.uk). Only 6% had not visited any of these sites.

As with the magazine, there were comments from some qualitative respondents that there have been recent improvements to the website and views were largely positive about its content, layout and so on. One or two respondents noted initial problems with the website, and felt that some of those who had initial problems may have been put off revisiting the website. However, respondents were generally

aware that Professional Update requires them to access MyGTCS to record information, so usage should increase in the coming few years.

Regardless of usage patterns, the GTCS website is perceived to be a valuable source of information, with an expectation that it will include video content, audio content and information on a wide range of issues related to teaching and the role of GTCS.

Those who have used the website were generally positive and commented that it is easy to navigate and easy to find information. As one respondent noted,

“I use the website a bit. If I’m looking for information or I might have read something in the journal and want to know more about it; something like Professional Update or professional development resources, I would go to their website.”

Qualitative respondents noted a number of key elements, other than actual content, which contribute to a good website. These included:

- Ease of navigation
- Clear signposting
- Good search tool
- Provision of information across a number of different levels eg students considering teaching as a career, professional update / etc

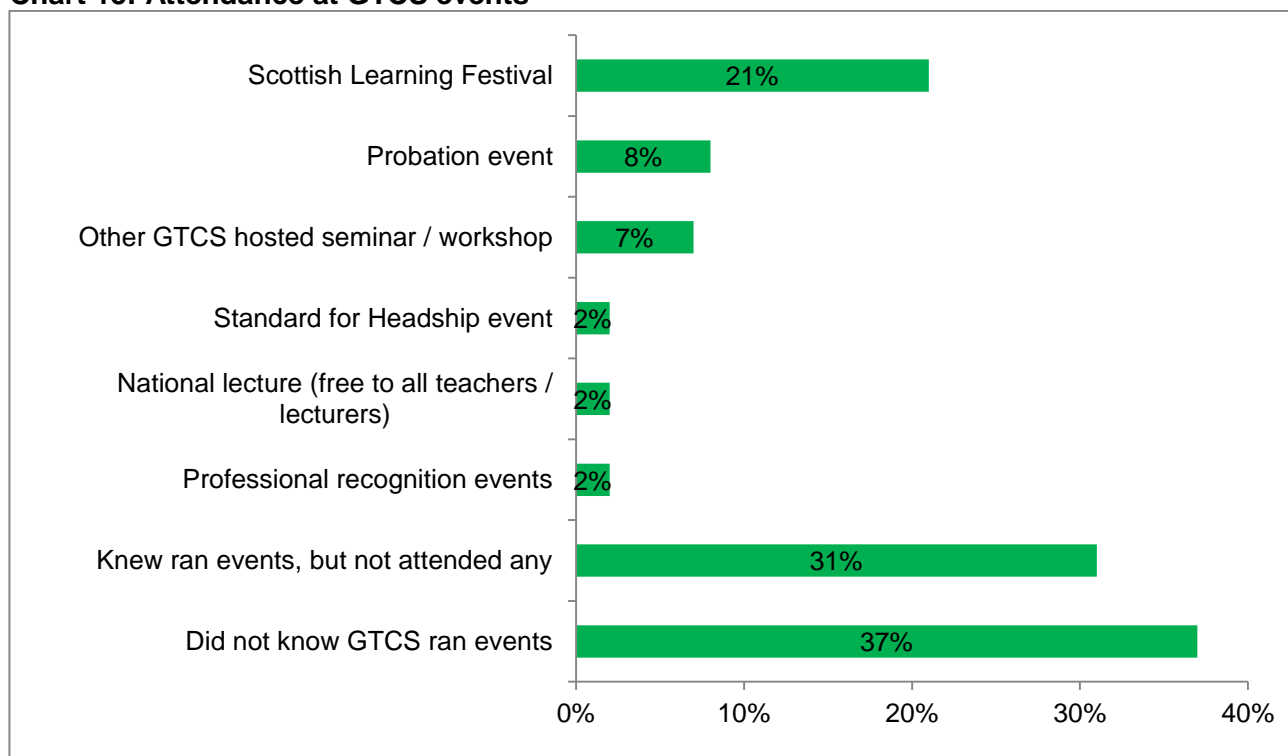
## **Attendance at conferences, seminars and other events**

Teachers completing version A of the questionnaire were asked to indicate from a pre-selected list, which of a number of GTCS events they had ever attended. As shown in Chart 15, 21% had attended the GTCS display stand and seminars at the Scottish Learning Festival; and smaller numbers had attended other events such as a probationer event (8%) or other GTCS hosted seminars or workshops (7%). A further 31% were aware of GTCS events but had never attended any and 37% did not know GTCS ran events.

Clearly, not all events will be of interest to all teachers and there may be problems in attending some events because of a lack of supply cover and / or limited budgets. However, it is encouraging that over half (57%) these respondents claim they would be interested in receiving information on GTCS events.



**Chart 15: Attendance at GTCS events**



Individuals in stakeholder organisations participating in the qualitative discussions were generally more aware of GTCS involvement in conferences, seminars and other events than were teachers. This was attributed to their joint involvement across a wide range of different initiatives.

Respondents who had attended any conferences, events, seminars etc organised by GTCS were generally favourable in terms of content and logistics. There were some suggestions that GTCS should field more representatives within local authorities and ensure regular attendance at as many events as possible. One or two teachers commented that they would like to see GTCS participating in in-service sessions, although they also acknowledged that this could be problematic for GTCS given the size of the organisation.

Other areas where it was felt GTCS could become more involved in activities were attendance at student enrolment events and in-service days.

### **Other types of information**

From time to time GTCS sends out one-off information to those registered on its database and questionnaire A asked whether respondents recalled recently receiving any of a number prompted communications. Given the relevance of Professional Update to all those registered with GTCS, it is encouraging that over half (57%) of respondents recalled receiving a leaflet on Professional Update. A smaller proportion (15%) recalled receipt of a credit card-sized publication about the work of GTCS. Just over a quarter (26%) did not recall receiving anything from GTCS recently.

### **Use of social media**

A small number of respondents commented specifically on GTCS's use of social media as this is seen as a positive in that it shows the organisation in a forward thinking light, keen to keep up to date with

new channels of communication. The use of blogs and twitter as channels to provide information is increasing and these social media avenues should be exploited by GTCS whenever possible. One respondent commented;

“GTCS have made a great deal of effort to get to outlying areas like this [Island location]. They get involved in things like twitter and glow and they are keen to use these tools.”

Some qualitative respondents were also aware that GTCS produce news bulletins and these are perceived to give a sense of their engagement with stakeholders. One respondent, commenting on the broad range of contact they had with GTCS commented;

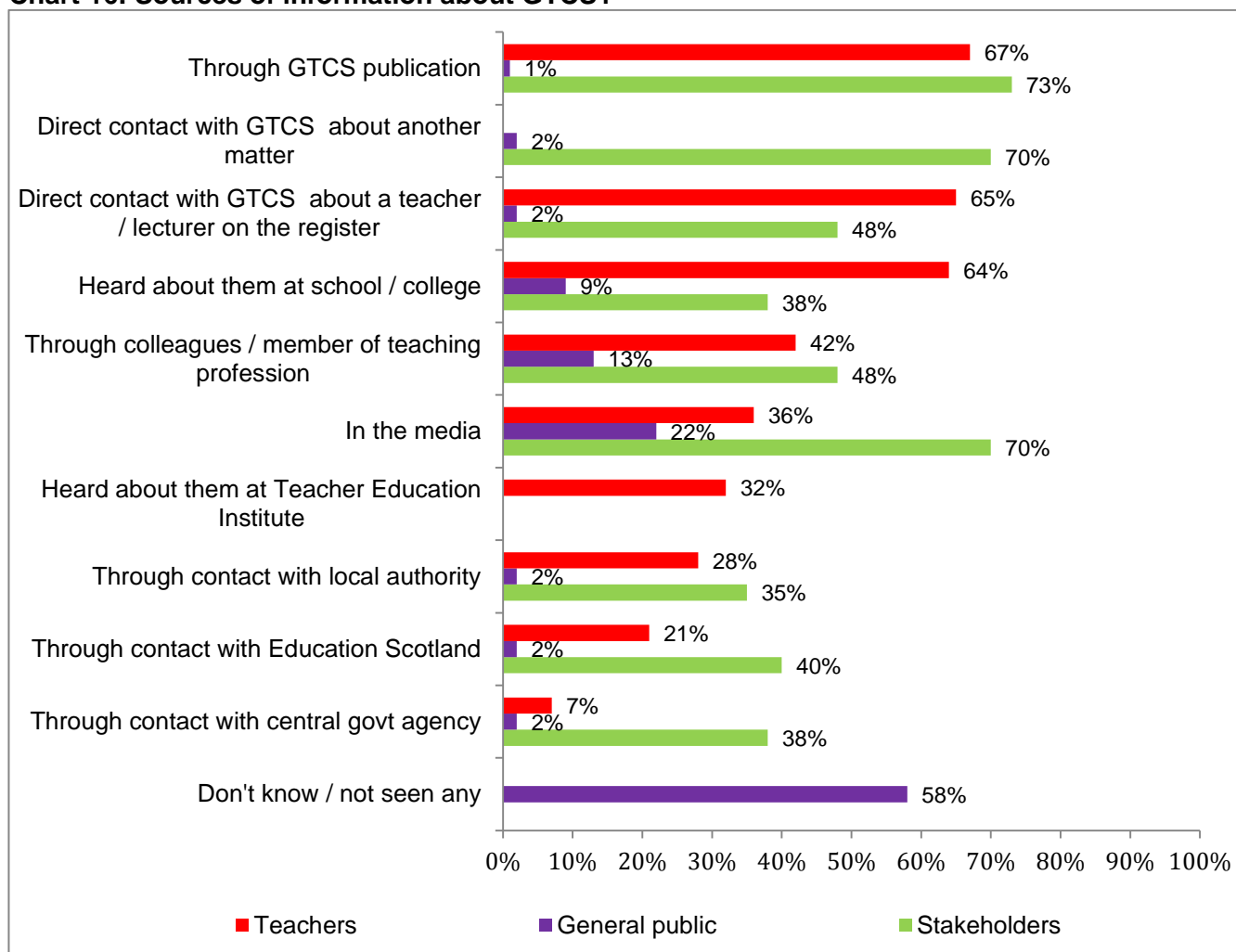
“They are involved in lots of engagement with stakeholders. For example, they are engaged in the National Leadership Programme. They are very engaged with local authorities and work in partnership with them with GTCS having the role of gatekeeper of standards. They are involved at a strategic and policy direction, for example, the Wood Commission. They are willing to open up to others involved in education.”

## **Sources of information about GTCS**

All respondents participating in the online surveys were asked to indicate where they had seen or heard information about GTCS, from a pre-selected list. As Chart 16 shows, there is a range of different ways in which teachers and individuals within stakeholder organisations obtain information on GTCS, with contact with GTCS in some shape or form being an important source of information; for example, a majority of these respondents referred to direct contact with the organisation or GTCS publications. Smaller proportions of these respondents also referred to colleagues, their local authority, Education Scotland and central government or agencies.

We have already noted that awareness among the general public of GTCS and its roles is at a much lower level and this audience referred to the media as a key source of information, albeit at a level of only 22%. Over half of these respondents had not seen any information about GTCS.

**Chart 16: Sources of information about GTCS?**



These audiences were also asked if they could remember the content of any articles they had seen, or the source of this information. For most respondents, there was a relatively hazy recollection of this information, with vague references to a wide range of different publications including the national press and other media channels.

Individuals in stakeholder organisations and teachers primarily recalled specific information on Professional update, teacher misconduct and teacher standards and cited the GTCS newsletter Teaching Scotland, TES Scotland the national press and EIS magazine as key sources of this information.

Most members of the general public were unable to recall a specific source or content.

## Managing the Media

The qualitative discussions included a number of individuals working within the media, primarily journalists from national Scottish publications. This audience noted that public sector press offices are not always good at self-promotion and there is sometimes a sense that to say nothing is better than to say something, which might then be interpreted in a negative way. One journalist commented that

public sector organisations – and GTCS is included in this category – in general are seen as being ‘risk averse’.

There was a sense from this audience that there needs to be more self-promotion and more provision of information in relation to current issues. As one journalist noted;

“It would help if they would identify stories themselves .... There is an issue that they are risk averse. This is a general issue of how the public sector sell themselves... they need to be on the front foot about things. If a journalist thinks he has a story, he will write it anyway, so GTCS might as well be upfront and present this issue in a positive light.”

Views were generally positive about the team led by Martin Osler although one noted that there is a lack of openness on the part of some other staff at GTCS.

Another issue facing GTCS is the sense that regulatory bodies in general tend to be reactive rather than proactive and that it can be difficult for the media to highlight stories that they want to publish. As one journalist commented,

“They [GTCS] do send out press releases but they tend to be dry and dull reports on technical matters which the mainstream press isn’t interested in. I’ve never seen a story about its work that is interesting. There are some talented people doing some fantastic work but we don’t get any information on this. For example, what are teachers doing with their lives – do they have a strange hobby like being a cage fighter at weekends? They could give us stories about positive things that kids do at school. There is a fear of doing anything proactive and there needs to be a cultural change. They need to be a bit braver and show a more human face and be less sensitive. This is typical of many professions, not just teaching. They will always find it difficult to show a different side to their work and they have a tougher job than most in trying to present a positive spin on their work.”

Given the reliance on the media by the general public in particular, it will be important for GTCS to provide interesting stories as frequently as possible.

Some stakeholders commented that while it cannot be expected that the national press will cover feel good factor stories about the education sector, there is an expectation that the educational press should take more of an interest.

# Teacher Services

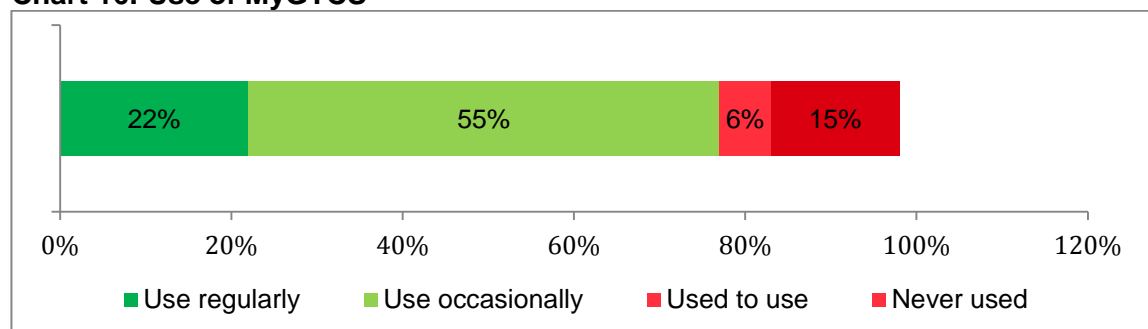
## In summary,

- Usage levels of MyGTCS are high and views are largely positive, with recognition of recent improvements to this site.
- Usage is likely to increase in future years given the introduction of Professional Update which will require all registrants to access MyGTCS in the coming years.
- A majority of teachers are aware of the Teacher Induction Scheme, with a good understanding of the role of GTCS.

## MyGTCS

MyGTCS is a personalised and secure web portal that allows teachers to keep their details up-to-date and provides access to the Professional Update system where professional learning is recorded. Teachers completing version B of the online survey were asked whether they have used (or currently use) MyGTCS. As Chart 16 shows, a large majority use MyGTCS, with almost a quarter (22%) using it regularly and a further 55% using it occasionally. Only 6% claim they used this in the past, and 15% that they have never used it. Usage is like to increase in the coming years, with the introduction of Professional Update.

**Chart 16: Use of MyGTCS**



The two key reasons cited by these respondents for using MyGTCS were to update contact details (72%) and Professional Update (68%). Other reasons for use included:

- Updating qualifications / employment = 35%
- Probationer profiles = 26%
- View messages from GTCS = 19%
- Student Placement Service = 13%
- Visit research resources (EBSCO database) = 13%
- Student (ITE) profile = 9%

While usage of MyGTCS is not universal, it is encouraging that 60% of these respondents consider the services available via MyGTCS add value to their registration. Only 23% disagreed that this adds value to their registration, although 16% claimed not to know what services are available via MyGTCS.

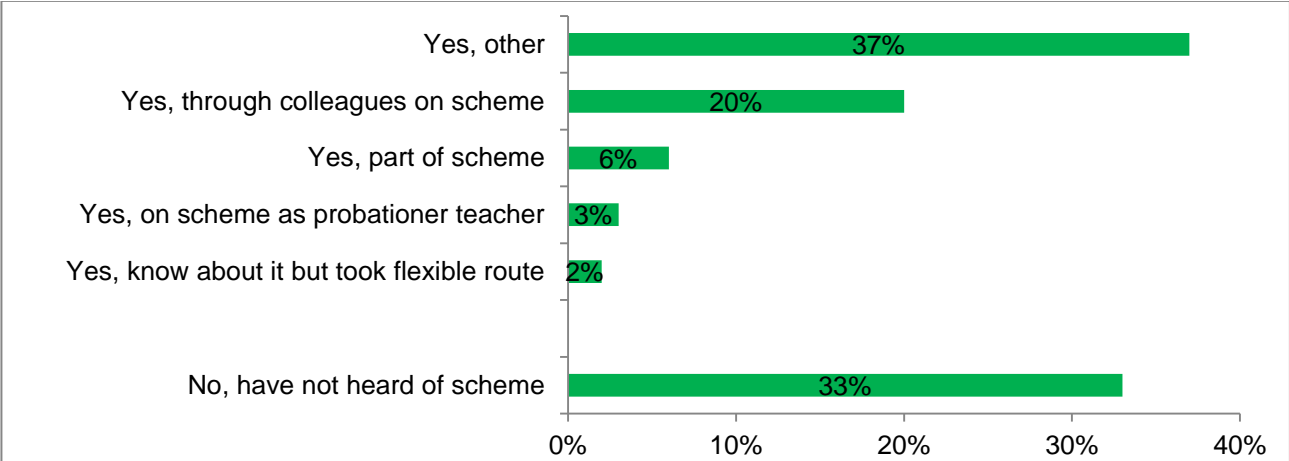
Respondents participating in the qualitative discussions who had used MyGTCS were largely positive about this. Some commented that there were some initial problems using this when it was first introduced, but that these have now been ironed out. As with the main GTCS website, MyGTCS is seen to be easy to access and easy to navigate. One or two teachers commented that they can only upload information in relation to the last year and that they would like to be able to upload information over a greater period of time.

**Teacher Induction Scheme**

The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) provides a guaranteed one-year training post to every eligible student graduating with a teaching qualification from one of Scotland’s universities. GTCS is responsible for administering this scheme.

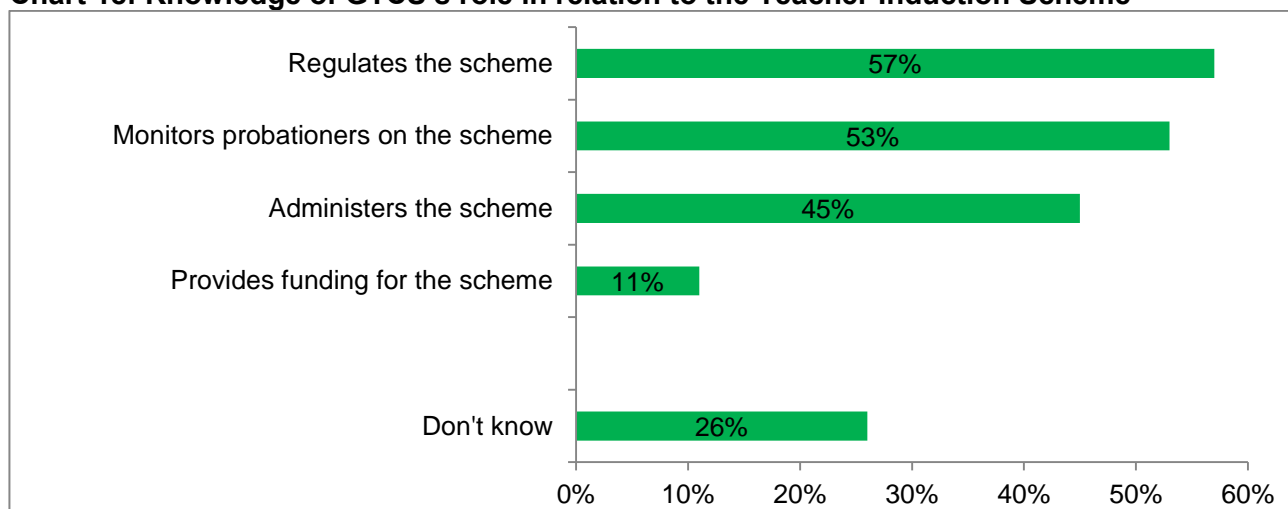
Around two in three (67%) had heard of the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) and Chart 17 provides a further breakdown on this.

**Chart 17: Whether heard of Teacher Induction Scheme**



These respondents were then asked if they knew GTCS’s role in relation to the TIS, from a pre-selected list of options. As chart 18 shows, just over half claimed either that GTCS is responsible for monitoring probationers on the scheme (57%) or for regulation of TIS (53%). Smaller proportions claimed that GTCS administers the scheme (45%) or that GTCS provides funding for the scheme (11%). Just over a quarter (26%) did not know GTCS’s role in relation to TIS.

**Chart 18: Knowledge of GTCS's role in relation to the Teacher Induction Scheme**



There was little by way of commentary on the TIS during the qualitative discussions, although one or two respondents queried the difference between this and the flexible route and one requested a resource from GTCS setting out clearly the differences between the two and illustrating which jobs and services qualify for the flexible route. One commented that they would have liked more information on this before they made their choice to follow the flexible route. There were also comments that the flexible route is more difficult to mentor. In general, those commenting on TIS seemed to feel this works well and the guarantee of a one-year training post is welcomed.

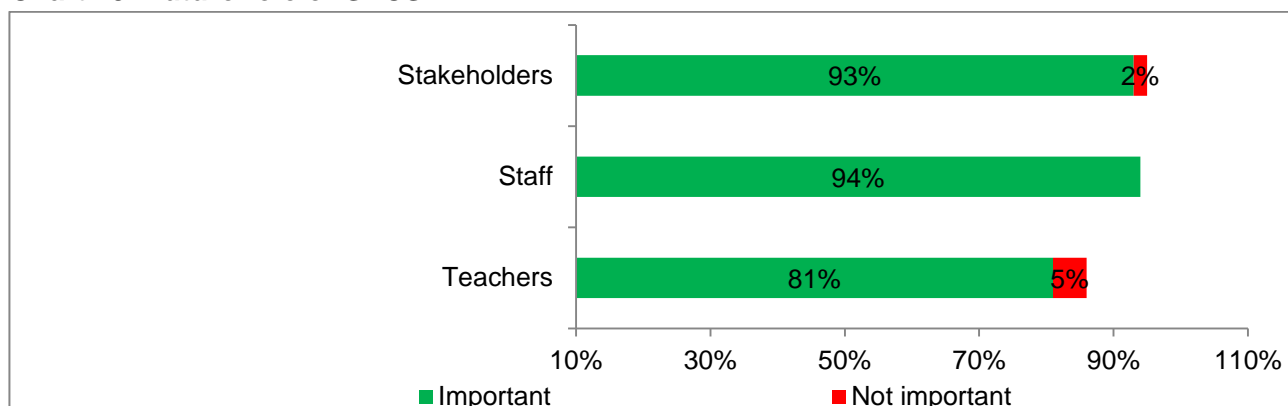
# GTCS and the Future

## In summary,

- Views on the role of GTCS in the future are very positive, with respondents continuing to focus on maintaining standards of conduct and competence by teachers, maintaining and improving standards and maintaining the register of teachers / lecturers as well as investigating and adjudicating on a teacher's Fitness to Teach.
- While levels of interest in information provision vary across different audiences, where information is required, respondents focus on information on teaching standards first and foremost.
- The quantitative and qualitative data point to the need for GTCS to utilise a wide range of communication channels. There are suggestions for the provision of a leaflet for parents providing information on GTCS and how to contact the organisation.
- There are suggestions that GTCS should raise its profile by positive media coverage, via schools and other organisations such as parent organisations. There is little support for a "broad brush" advertising campaign.
- There are also suggestions that GTCS should maximise opportunities to provide information via other websites and related organisations as well as local authorities.
- There is a need to put out a number of messages about Professional Update to ensure that all teachers have a clear picture of its intended outcomes.
- There is a need to improve upon the current Student Placement Service.
- If it is not possible to reduce the time taken for complaints to be resolved, there is a need to explain the procedures to clarify the role played by other organisations such as local authorities.
- There are requests for changes to the registration process.
- A minority of respondents suggested GTCS could develop more of a role in professional learning, particularly with the introduction of Professional Update.

Views on the future role of GTCS are very positive. During the online surveys, individuals in stakeholder organisations, GTCS staff and teachers were asked to indicate how important they felt the role of GTCS in education in Scotland would be in the future. As Chart 19 demonstrates, views were very positive, with over 90% of individuals within stakeholder organisations and GTCS staff, and over 80% of teachers noting the importance of the future role of GTCS.

**Chart 19: Future role of GTCS**



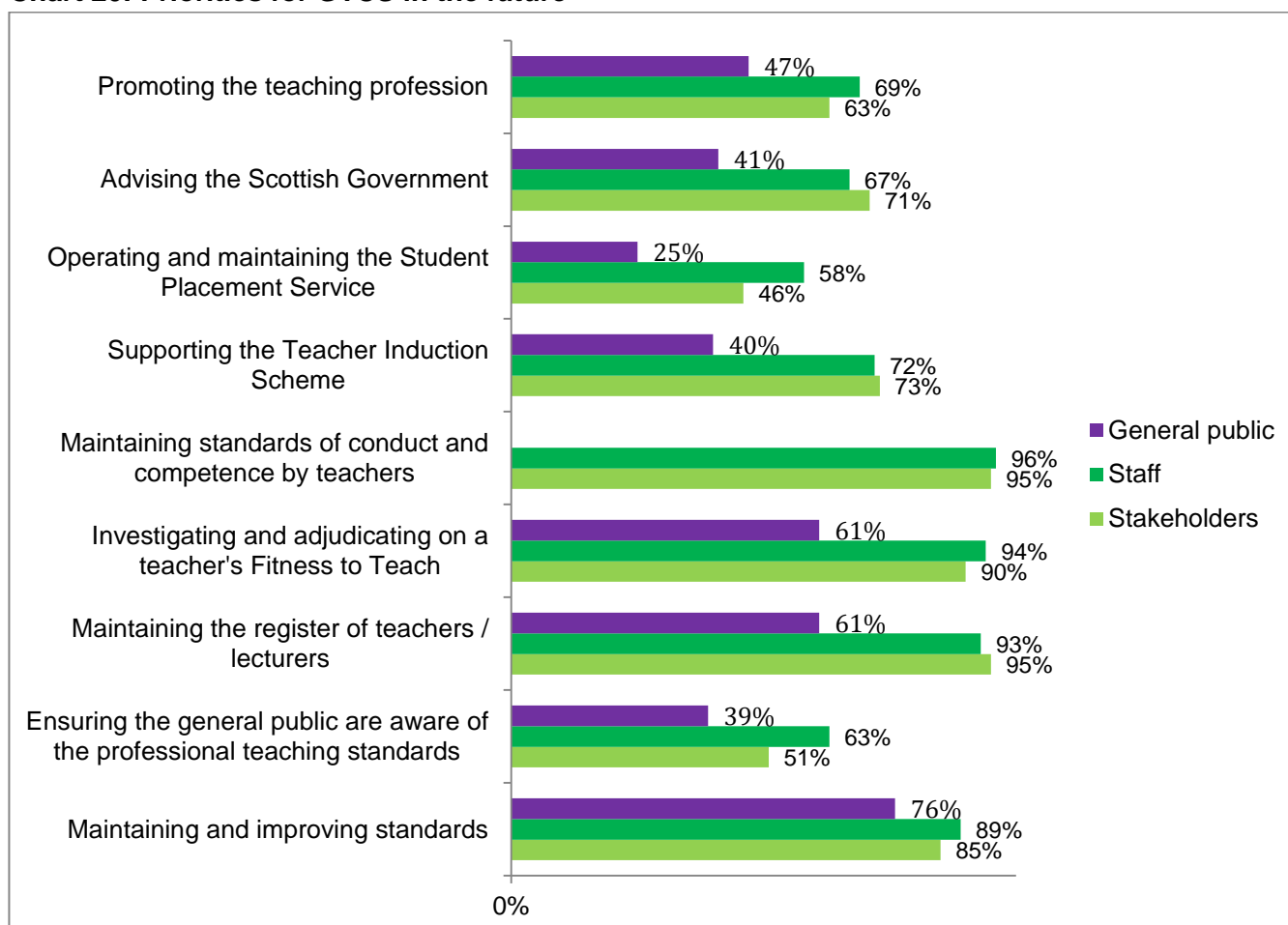


These same respondents were also asked to say what they saw as being the key priorities for GTCS, using a prompted list of different roles. As Chart 20 shows, respondents perceive no real change in the role of GTCS, with a continued focus on the same key roles as noted earlier; namely, the standards, the competence of teachers (including investigating and adjudicating on a teacher's fitness to teach), and the maintenance of the register.

That said, there is also a view that there are a wider range of roles to be carried out by GTCS, with relatively high levels of support for all other potential GTCS roles. For each of the other roles under discussion, over half GTCS staff and individuals in stakeholder organisations were supportive of each – the exception being for the Student Placement Service, where there was less support from individuals in stakeholder organisations. This may well reflect the problems earlier identified in relation to SPS.

Across each of these roles, there were lower levels of support from members of the general public, although this is likely to be reflective of lower levels of awareness and knowledge of GTCS per se rather than a lack of support for the organisation. Indeed, we noted earlier in this report high levels of support for a regulatory body for education in Scotland.

**Chart 20: Priorities for GTCS in the future**



These findings were borne out by the qualitative discussions, where respondents tended to focus on the maintenance of standards, maintaining the register of teachers, and teacher competence. Once again, there was greater support for the broad range of roles from individuals in stakeholder organisations.

The following paragraphs examine a number of specific issues that GTCS needs to consider for the future.

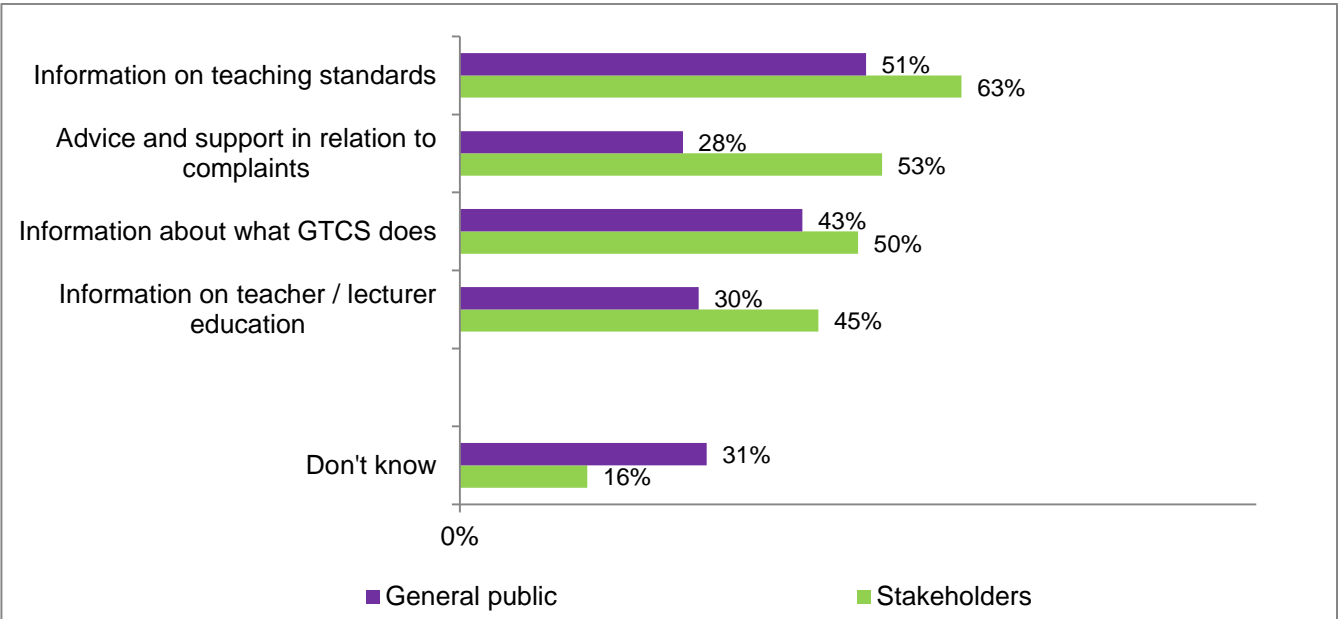
**Information Provision**

The quantitative data has already shown that levels of awareness and knowledge of GTCS and its remit vary across different audiences. It will be important in the future to increase levels of awareness and to understand what factors help to bring this about. As such, the online surveys asked a number of questions about the types of information respondents would find useful and how they would expect this information to be provided.

Members of the general public and individuals in stakeholder organisations were asked to indicate what information about GTCS they would find useful. GTCS staff were asked what information they felt other audiences would find useful.

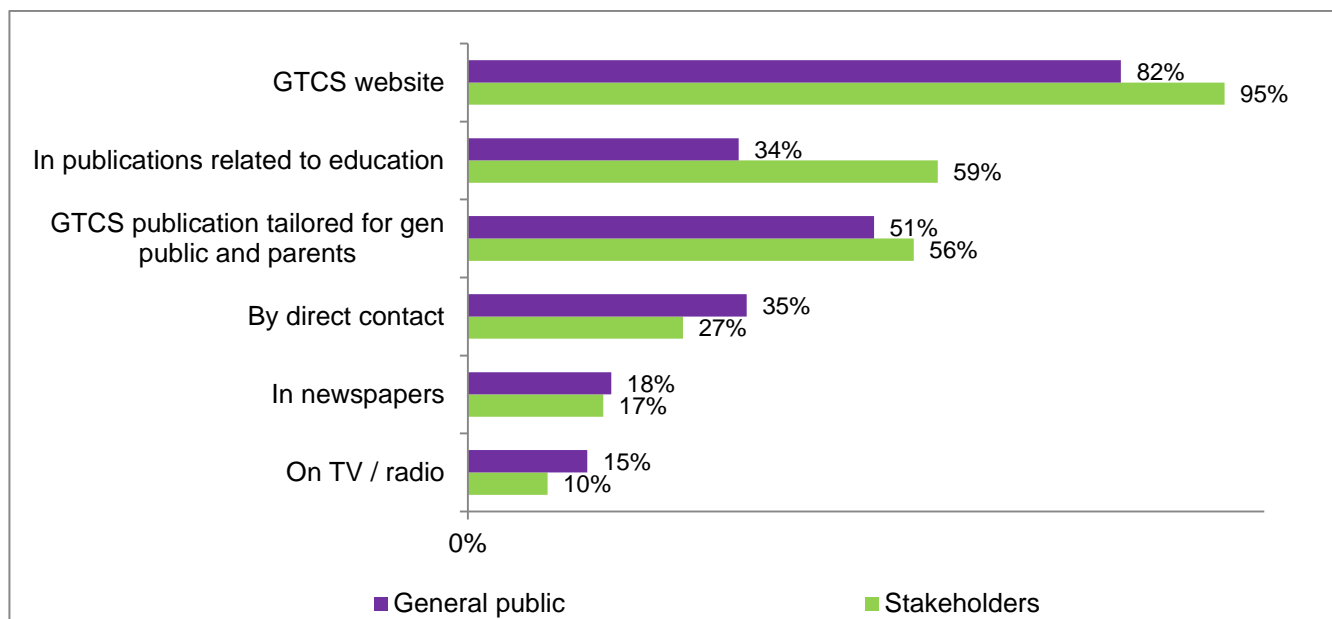
Chart 21 shows that higher proportions of individuals within stakeholder organisations were interested in receiving information than were members of the general public. There is a continued focus on the provision of information in relation to teaching standards, with over half of each audience claiming information on this area would be of interest. A significant minority of the general public also felt that information about what GTCS does would be useful.

**Chart 21: Information that would be useful**



Not only is it important to understand the type(s) of information that respondents would like to see but it is also important to find out what information channels are most useful and relevant to each audience; and these respondents were asked where this information should be made available. The data points to the importance of the GTCS website as a source of information, with 95% of individuals within stakeholder organisations and 82% of the general public showing support for this specific source. Other sources cited by respondents included educational publications or a GTCS publication tailored for the general public and parents. There were lower levels of support for information via direct contact with GTCS, in newspapers or on TV / radio.

**Chart 22: Where should information be made available?**



Information that GTCS staff considered should be provided to members of the general public, teachers / lecturers and individuals in stakeholder organisations was similar, with references to:

- What GTCS does
- Teaching standards
- Advice and support in relation to complaints
- Information on teacher / lecturer education

As with other audiences, GTCS staff also focused on the GTCS website (92%), GTCS publications tailored for the public and parents (86%) or in educational publications (79%) as key sources in which to provide this information.

Teachers / lecturers completing the version B questionnaire were also asked what support materials they would like to see GTCS provide for teachers / lecturers and to outline what else GTCS could be doing to support teachers / lecturers. Over 1,000 teachers made suggestions. While there were many requests for very specific role or course-related information, the main requests were for easily accessible, relevant, up to date, clear and concise information, materials or advice (including examples and case studies) on:

- CPD / Professional Update (e.g. “A simple 'Professional Update for Dummies' type manual”).
- Curriculum for Excellence (e.g. “a properly planned introduction to CfE and exemplar materials for staff and pupils”).
- Standards (e.g. “Annual, brief reminder of standards and expectations”).
- Dealing with challenging behaviour.
- Time / workload management.
- There were also requests for practical tutorials and online training.

The qualitative discussions also highlighted the importance of the GTCS website as a source of information and pointed to the need to ensure that this is kept up-to-date as well as being easy to

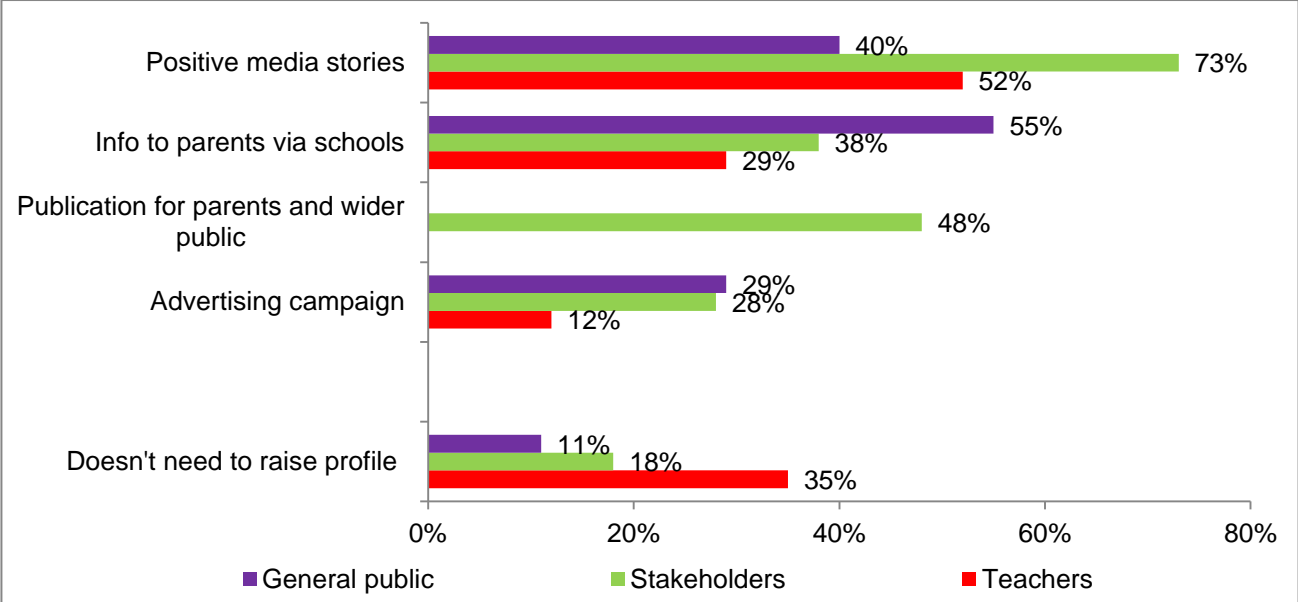
navigate and find the required information. Information on more specific requirements from the website has been covered in the previous chapter.

There was support in the qualitative discussions for a tailored publication that could be developed for parents and members of the general public, although how this would be distributed was raised as an issue. By and large, it was felt that non parents or non-grandparents within the general public will have limited interest in GTCS and what it does. As such, respondents did not want to see GTCS use much by way of resources in advertising their role to the general public at large and some commented that the expense of a national advertising campaign would far outweigh any benefits. There was however, support for a publication to be distributed via schools, perhaps with school handbooks. Some respondents also commented on the need to have posters about GTCS, how to contact them and so on, in public areas of schools.

**Raising the Profile of GTCS**

All individuals within stakeholder organisations, teachers and the general public participating in the online surveys were asked to indicate in what ways they felt GTCS could raise its profile. Across these audiences positive media stories and information to parents via schools were considered as key methods by which GTCS can raise its profile. There was also once again reference by some stakeholders to a tailored publication for parents and the wider general public. While there was a degree of support for an advertising campaign, this was at a relatively low level. It is interesting to note that a minority of teachers (35%), and smaller proportions across other audiences noted there was no need for GTCS to raise its profile but this is likely to reflect teachers’ preferences for GTCS to focus on their central role of maintaining standards and teacher competence.

**Chart 23: Raising the profile of GTCS**



The same approaches were cited by GTCS staff in terms of information that should be provided to teachers, the general public and stakeholder organisations. For example, GTCS staff considered the organisation could raise its profile for the general public by providing information to parents via schools (75%), a publication for parents and the wider general public (69%) and more positive stories in the media about good teachers (67%). Less than half (39%) were supportive of an advertising campaign and 8% did not consider GTCS needs to raise its profile.

On the provision of information to parents, one respondent commented;

“There is a need to increase parental awareness. Because education is such a political football, it’s important that the general public are aware of the accountability mechanisms, that GTCS is guarding standards and that GTCS is an independent body. These are key messages to put out there.”

Some respondents commented that GTCS should have links to, and ensure a presence on, related websites such as Parentzone, the National Parent Forum of Scotland or the Scottish Parent Teacher Council. While there was a perception that it might be difficult to engage parents, there were one or two suggestions that some of these organisations might be in a position to circulate a hard copy leaflet via schools and / or ask schools to share this with parent councils and pupil councils. One respondent also commented that some local authorities have parental involvement officers who could also distribute information for GTCS.

### **Communication and stakeholder relationships**

There is a need for GTCS to consider their communications with other stakeholder bodies, and how these bodies help to disseminate information. There were one or two comments that not all organisations ‘sing from same hymn sheet’, that the language and terminology used by different organisations is not always consistent; for example, whether local authorities or headteachers reinforce key messages about Professional Update.

While Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) participating in this research generally felt they had good relationships with GTCS, there were some suggestions from other stakeholder bodies that GTCS needs to ensure it works closely with TEIs to ensure that graduates joining the teaching profession have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills. While respondents tended to focus on certain core roles for GTCS (teacher competence, managing the register etc), there were also comments that anything that is a national issue such as literacy and numeracy should involve GTCS as they are an organisation with a national remit. One respondent commented that in the light of the Donaldson Report, GTCS should be more involved in initial teacher training and universities; particularly because they felt that there is inconsistency across universities in creating profiles because different systems exist. This respondent felt there is a need for consistency to help develop a two year experience before moving into Professional Update. In this way, links are created between the standards and development of the profession from the very start of a teacher’s experience. One respondent queried whether GTCS has liaison staff dealing with colleges and universities.

There were a small number of suggestions from qualitative respondents that the relationship between the Scottish Government and GTCS is too close which led to some cynicism over whether GTCS are truly independent.

### **Communication channels**

The quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate the need for a wide range of different channels to be adopted in order to maximise communication across a wide range of stakeholder audiences. While the website is clearly very important, there is also clearly a place for the Teaching Scotland magazine in both hard and online copy. Emails are perceived to be an effective way of providing basic information but not for points of discussion. One respondent asked if GTCS could traffic light information being sent out (for example red means you should read this; green means this is interesting but not essential)

although this might be difficult to implement, given that different stakeholders might not agree with the traffic lighting applied by GTCS.

GTCS is currently perceived to be good at exploiting opportunities for networking and there is a need to ensure this continues wherever possible.

### **Student Placement Service**

This received the most criticism from respondents participating in this research and there is a need for GTCS to make the necessary changes to ensure this is managed effectively in the future.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- Ensuring that student placements offer a range of different experiences
- Ensuring that logistical issues are kept to a minimum so that student do not have to make lengthy journeys to their placement school
- A capacity to change a placement if there is a mismatch between the student and the school at which they are placed
- All schools requiring placement students should appear on the system
- Adequate facilities for students wanting to obtain dual qualification
- Allow for non-traditional placements outwith schools
- Offer anonymity to students

### **Professional Update**

Professional Update is a very important initiative but the quantitative and qualitative data show there are clearly some misconceptions about what it entails, and about the actions that need to be taken to meet its requirements. There is clearly a need for a number of key messages to be disseminated to all audiences but particularly teachers; these messages need to be communicated via a range of different channels, and with a focus on provision of case studies, peer group commentary and support packs.

### **The complaints process**

The research findings indicate there is an issue over the length of time it can take to resolve complaints and, while responsibility for part of this process does not lie with GTCS but with local authorities as the employing organisation, there is a need to ensure that stakeholder audiences are aware of this.

One respondent also commented on the need to assess the tone of information going out to teachers who are subject to competence proceedings; and that it would also be useful if GTCS provided an accompanying leaflet setting out the key stages to proceedings and details of contacts, particularly as this is a very stressful situation. Furthermore, there may be a perception of the part of some teachers subject to competence proceedings that GTCS is not on their side.

There were also a small number of suggestions that more resources should be diverted to competence hearings if this would help reduce timescales.

### **Involvement in policy areas**

Views on the role of GTCS as an advisor to the government were mixed, although individuals in stakeholder organisations felt this is an important role. Most respondents across all audiences also felt there is a continuing role to play in terms of involvement at a national level, for example, being involved in the debate on teacher shortages or involvement in national initiatives.

## **Registration**

There is a perception that GTCS need to introduce a degree of flexibility into the registration process for teachers who have qualified outwith Scotland, for example, by accreditation of a greater number of courses leading to a teaching qualification. There were also suggestions that GTCS should consider a greater number of registration categories to encompass the broad range of individuals currently working in the education sector, for example, allowing for dual subject entry. That said, there is clearly a divergence in opinion as to whether or not FE staff and other categories of individual working alongside pupils should have to register with GTCS. It will be worthwhile assessing the impact of changes to registration categories that have been introduced in Wales this year. Should there be a move towards registration for non-teaching staff such as support staff who are not currently formally managed or monitored but are an integral part of school life, this would have to be supported by a positive ethos in schools and would need to be carefully managed to ensure that everyone understood where individual responsibilities lie.

One or two respondents asked if there is a role for GTCS to play in encouraging registered teachers who are not currently teaching back into the classroom, particularly given the current shortages of teachers and supply teachers.

## **Involvement in learning and development opportunities**

There were suggestions from a small number of respondents that GTCS could develop more of a role in professional learning, for example, by offering online learning and development opportunities, particularly with the introduction of Professional Update. One respondent commented that they are now more in the forefront of the development of the profession as a whole and they are seen as more relevant. While it was acknowledged that they are limited as to how much they can do because of the size of the organisation, they could take on more of a leadership role in professional learning. For example, by offering Standards to Headship or the accreditation of courses means they could position themselves in a greater leadership role than at present.

## **Appendix 1: Teacher Questionnaires Subject Coverage**

Teacher Questionnaire A version:

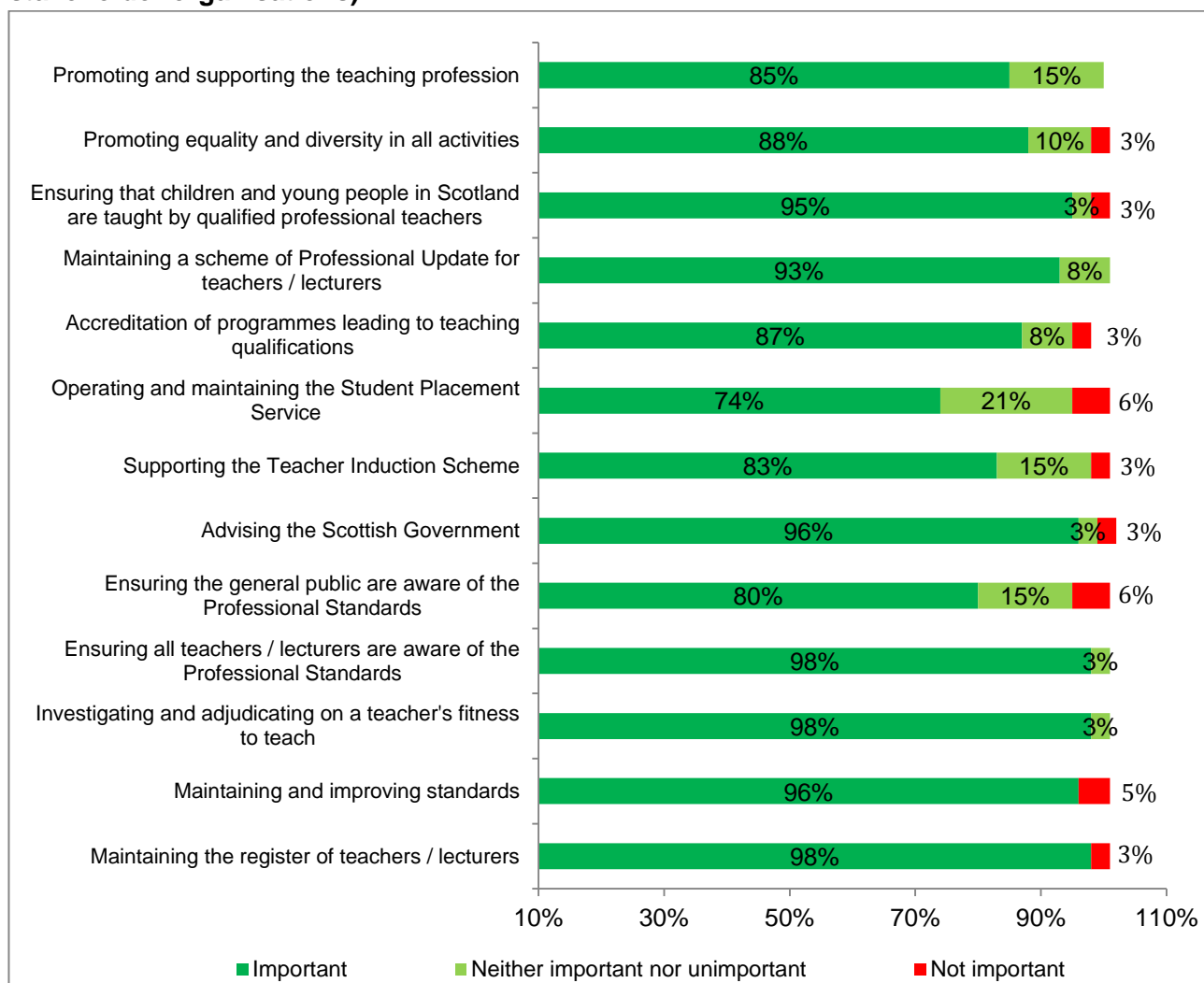
- Section A – ABOUT YOU
- Section B – ABOUT GTCS
- Section C – REGISTRATION
- Section D – COMMUNICATION
- Section G – GOVERNANCE / LEGAL
- Section H – FINAL THOUGHTS
- Section I – ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Teacher Questionnaire B version:

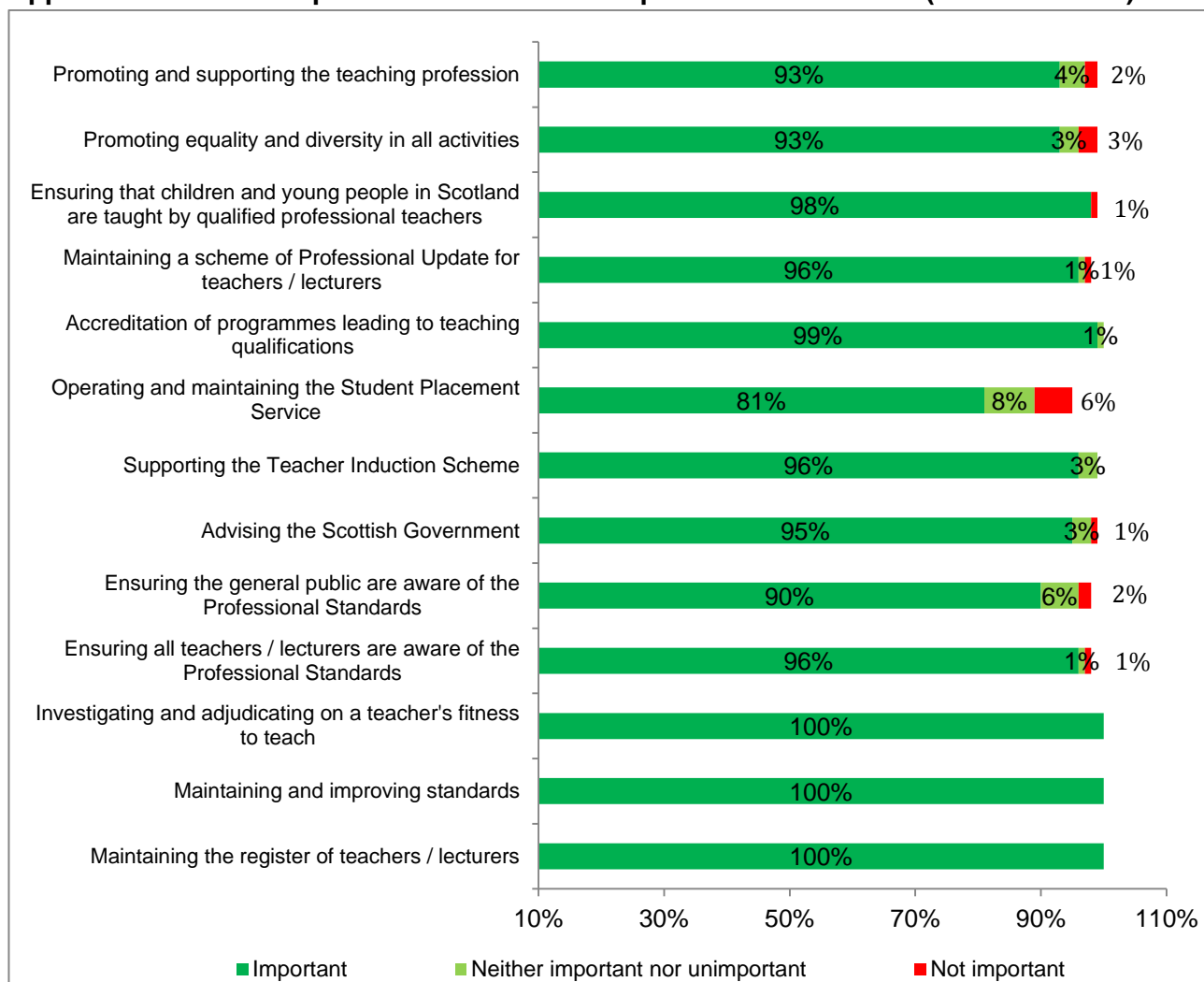
- Section A – ABOUT YOU
- Section B – ABOUT GTCS
- Section E – EDUCATION
- Section F – YOUR SERVICES
- Section H – FINAL THOUGHTS
- Section I – ADDITIONAL RESEARCH



**Appendix 2 Chart A: Importance of roles and responsibilities of GTCS (individuals in stakeholder organisations)**



**Appendix 2 Chart B: Importance of roles and responsibilities of GTCS (GTCS Staff etc)**



**Appendix 2 Chart C: Importance of roles and responsibilities of GTCS (teachers)**

