



Skills for Learning Professionals

General Professional Recognition Learning and Skills (England)

GPRLS Skills for Life

Guidance for Referees

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General Professional Recognition Learning and Skills (England) Skills for Life Teachers

Guidance for Referees

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1 What is Professional Recognition?

General Professional Recognition Learning and Skills (England) is open to those Skills for Life teachers **of English (ESOL), English (Literacy) or Mathematics (Numeracy) in all contexts** wanting to have their teaching experience, expertise and credentials reviewed with the purpose of becoming recognised teaching professionals in the lifelong learning sector. Teachers do not need to be working full time or indeed exclusively in this area, but must be fulfilling the Full teaching in their specialist subject. It is a scheme for practitioners to be recognised according to the requirements established by the FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007.

Experienced teachers recognised by Lifelong Learning UK on behalf of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), and who meet the eligibility requirements are able to submit evidence of how they meet qualification requirements with a view to being in a position to apply for QTLS. Professional Recognition will provide a route towards licensed status that does not demand acquiring additional formal qualifications. However, Professional Recognition **does not give equivalence** to the requirements of any particular teacher training qualification or, in the case of Skills for Life teachers, any subject specialist qualification. Professional Recognition status cannot be used to support any claim for such certification.

2 Who should apply?

Applicants for Professional Recognition must be delivering LSC funded learner provision in an FE context in England

Applications cannot be accepted from individuals who are enrolled, or have recently enrolled, on a generic or subject specialist teaching qualification unless supported by the tutor.

The new scheme is open to:

- experienced teachers who are new entrants to the lifelong learning sector, and who are seeking a means of gaining professional status on the route towards gaining licensed status
- those part way to achieving the qualification for their role when the 2007 regulations were implemented
- existing members of the workforce (pre-September 2007) as a means of gaining professional status for those who may voluntarily wish to go on to seek licensed status.

2.1 Eligibility

The table below outlines the eligibility criteria for teachers wishing to apply for General Professional Recognition.

Eligibility table

Experience	Requirements	Eligible
If you began teaching in the lifelong learning sector before 1 September 2001	You are exempt from the 2007 regulations but you are encouraged to gain QTLS or ATLS status and become a licensed practitioner.	✓
If you began teaching in the lifelong learning sector on or after 1 September 2001 and before 1 September 2007 and you qualified under the 2001 Regulations with a Stage 3 generic teaching qualification (QTLS) or stage 1 or 2 generic teaching qualification (ATLS)	You remain qualified and do not need to gain further qualifications or further subject specific qualifications to meet the new regulatory requirements but you are encouraged to gain QTLS or ATLS status. You have the required qualifications to progress to professional formation, and therefore you do not need to apply for Professional Recognition.	✗
If you began teaching in the lifelong learning sector on or after 1 September 2001 and before 1 September 2007 and you qualified under the 2001 regulations but did not gain a Stage 3 generic teaching qualification (QTLS) or stage 1 or 2 generic teaching qualification (ATLS)	You remain qualified and do not need to gain further generic qualifications to meet the new regulatory requirements but you are encouraged to gain QTLS or ATLS status You may wish to use the Recognition route to progress towards professional formation.	✓
If you enrolled on an ITT course by 31 August 2007 with a view to qualifying under the 2001 Regulations by 31 August 2008	You remain subject to the 2001 Regulations and exempt from the 2007 Regulations, provided you are successful in gaining that generic qualification. You do not need to apply for Professional Recognition.	✗
If you are an experienced teacher but new to teaching in the lifelong learning sector, taking up a Full or Associate teaching role after 1 September 2007	You must achieve the requirements for teachers through one of the pathways to the Certificate Award (CTTLS), Diploma Award (DTTLS) or their equivalent – for example Recognition.	✓
If you are new to teaching, with no relevant previous experience, and begin in a Full or Associate teaching role after 1 September 2007	You must gain the new initial Award, (PTTLS) and achieve the requirements for teachers through one of the pathways to the Certificate Award (CTTLS), or the Diploma Award (DTTLS).	✗

Thus, if the applicant is already qualified or began teaching in the lifelong learning sector before 1 September 2001 they may not be required to qualify further. However if he/she is required to gain QTLS status under the 2007 Regulations by their employer or they themselves choose to gain this status, then they may wish to pursue the Recognition route. By this pathway any prior qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience can count towards being Recognised as meeting the new standards without them having to take the new qualifications.

3 How are applications judged?

Applications should meet agreed criteria and should provide information and evidence regarding the applicant's ability to lead learning in a teaching capacity in their SfL subject specialist area. The criteria reflect the six domains in the *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*, and are as follows:

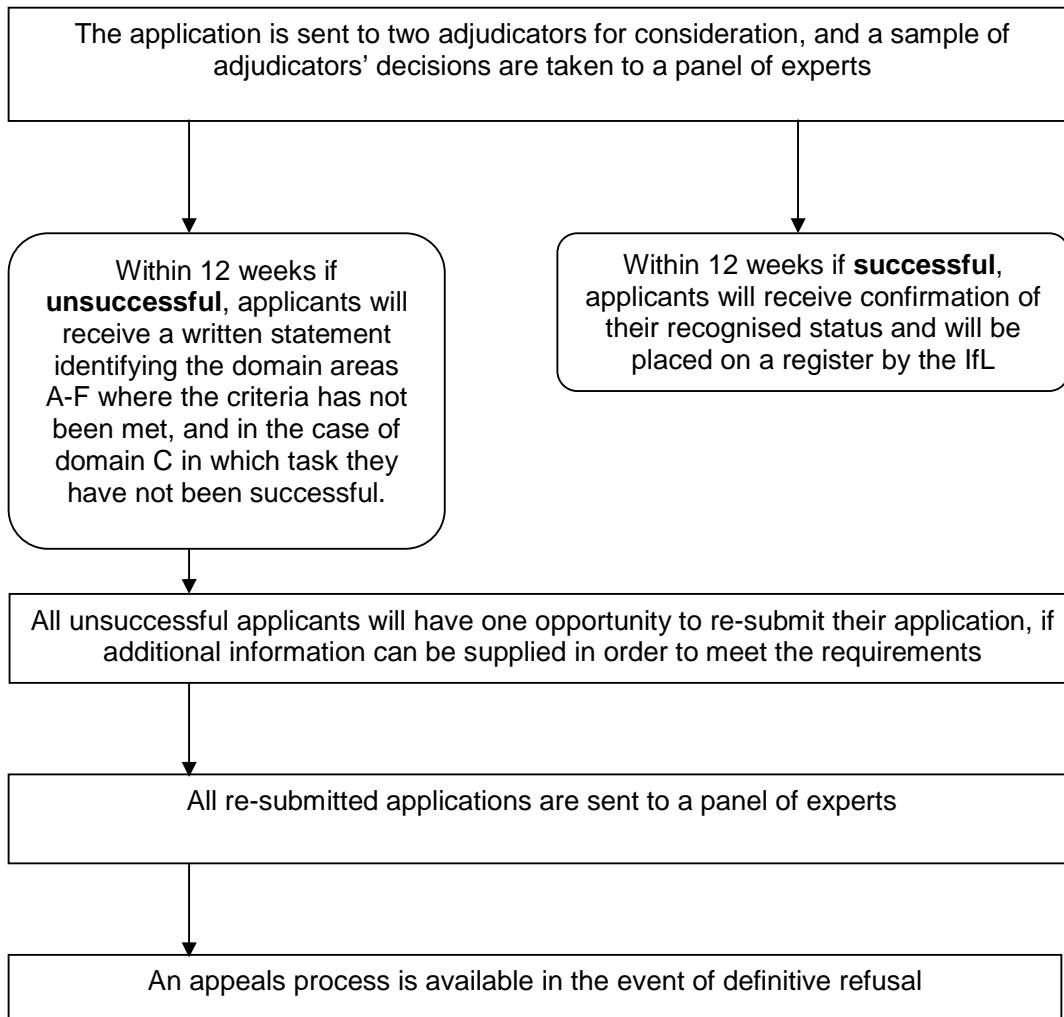
- A Professional values and practice
- B Learning and teaching
- C Specialist learning and teaching
- D Planning for learning
- E Assessment for learning
- F Access and progression

The focus for the above criteria should be the learner and effective learning.

4 How to apply

Applicants will need to complete a form, obtain references from two referees and provide their most recent job description(s). It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all required documentation is received by Standards Verification UK.

5 What happens next?



The team of adjudicators is drawn from across the lifelong learning sector and includes both education specialists and practitioners from a range of disciplines. They have been selected for their experience of external review and accreditation, as well as for their knowledge, skills and expertise in teaching and learning issues. Panel members are also experts and respected members of the relevant community of practice. SVUK officers do not make decisions on applications.

6 What is the role of the referees?

The role of the referees is crucial. Applications to previous Recognition schemes have been undermined by vague or sketchy references. Referees are asked to complete the references as thoroughly as possible, addressing each of the six domain areas identified in the *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector* (which can be accessed via the LLUK website at http://www.lluk.org/standards/new_prof_standards.html).

Your role is to provide a review of the applicant's practice and to support and supplement the information given in the application form. Your key contribution is to provide an informed review of the applicant's professional competence, using knowledge of their work including their teaching, and the context in which they lead learning. **Specific examples of good practice are important.**

It is important to discuss any **proposed** application with the applicant **before** they begin completing an application form. At this early stage you should consider whether:

- they are eligible to apply for Recognition
- they are likely to meet the criteria
- you are an appropriate referee and can support their application.

We recognise that this is a different kind of reference from one that is normally required for supporting promotion or appointment i.e. it is **not** a job reference. We are looking for evidence of commitment to teaching and learning rather than general academic achievement. However, teachers must also demonstrate the requisite level of subject knowledge, understanding and skill required of Skills for Life teachers.

7 Who can be a referee?

Generally, you should be familiar with the applicant's professional work and should understand the context and quality assurance framework in which the applicant's teaching activities take place. You need not necessarily be a very senior member of your institution, but you should be an experienced staff member, active in teaching or a closely affiliated role. An appropriate referee, for example, is someone who has observed the applicant's teaching, a course team leader, line manager or someone from another institution in a similar role. The adjudicators find it helpful when referees are able to comment on the applicant's current or recent role and responsibilities. Information about other relevant activities, including a commitment to CPD undertaken within the last five years is also helpful.

If you take on the role of referee, you should not be a close family member, employee or student of the applicant; neither should you be applying for Recognition yourself other than in exceptional circumstances, in which case you should contact SVUK.

First referee

One referee must be a specialist in the applicant's curriculum area and should either be in current teaching practice or recently retired (no more than two years).

Second referee

The other referee should be someone who can write a reference from a different perspective i.e. as manager, teacher trainer, employer etc, but is not necessarily from the same subject area.

Authenticating referee (*Can be either first or second referee*)

In addition to completing the reference, one of the referees is also asked to complete the Authenticity and Validity Declaration. To do this, you must have experience of working within a lifelong learning sector quality assurance framework. For example, you will be one or more of:

- someone with experience of internal auditing or inspection
- a part-time inspector for OfSTED
- a verifier, moderator or external examiner for an awarding institution
- someone with experience in a similar quality assurance capacity.

Note: In accordance with our quality assurance procedures, applicants and referees should be aware that SVUK will request original copies of authenticated qualifications and supporting evidence from a random sample of successful applications.

NB: For authentication purposes, please ensure that you see the original certificates or confirmation that originals have been seen by employers.

8 What do the referees do?

At least one of the referees will discuss the suitability of the applicant entering the Recognition process BEFORE the application document is completed.

When the application has been completed, both referees need to consider:

- does the applicant provide evidence that demonstrates application of knowledge and skills? For example, 'What did you learn from ... and how have you applied it to your work?'
- does the applicant concentrate on the subject area in which they are applying for Recognition?
- has the applicant given responses which relate directly to the questions, whether on subject knowledge, learning theory, application of knowledge and skills etc?
- has the applicant ensured that the learner, effective learning and the creation of suitable conditions for learning are kept central to their responses?
- has the applicant given enough information for the adjudicators to make their decision? Where appropriate, has the Tariff database of teacher training qualifications been consulted? For more information on the Tariff, visit <http://tariff.svuk.eu/> (This may be important in respect of the applicant's qualifications, as there are numerous qualifications, some of which are less well-known than others and which may or may not have had relevant content)
- has the applicant done him or herself justice?

8.1 Completing the references

If you are satisfied, you will complete the appropriate 'First or Second Referee' details sheet found within the application form, making it clear how you are qualified to do so. You will then prepare a signed reference, **on headed notepaper**, completed with reference to the six domains, see below.

In your reference you should provide comments on how the applicant meets the core criteria within the six domains, using your knowledge of his/her work and the context within which the applicant works. If possible, please comment on the applicant's role and responsibilities within the last five years. We expect the core criteria within the six Domain areas (see below) to underpin the practice of competent teachers. Please provide examples, where appropriate, of ways in which this underpinning is apparent.

Your reference should refer to the applicant's experience and achievements in teaching and learning. Please provide **specific examples** to support your comments wherever possible. If you have been involved in observation of your colleague's teaching, please draw on the evidence this provides. Similarly, please comment on any innovative practice, contribution to developments in teaching and learning at an institutional level, or contribution to national initiatives in developing approaches to teaching and learning in the chosen curriculum area.

We do not wish to constrain you by providing a template but ask that, in your reference, you comment **under the same domain headings** as those used in the application form. These reflect the *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*. The six domain areas are:

- **A** Professional values and practice
- **B** Learning and teaching
- **C** Specialist learning and teaching
- **D** Planning for learning
- **E** Assessment for learning
- **F** Access and progression

8.2 Evidence and supporting documentation for the authenticating referee

If the applicant has asked you to take on this role as well, you must be satisfied that the evidence and documentation provided is authentic, and supports or substantiates claims made by the applicant in their application form. You must complete and sign the Authenticity and Validity Declaration stating that you found this to be the case. If you are not sure whether the applicant wishes you to take on this role, please clarify this with them before completing the form.

The form requires specific details of the evidence seen (i.e. 'Certificate in Adult Literacy; Retention rates 2004-2005 provided by MIS' etc rather than 'Certificates; College data'). Please note this information must be directly related to the applicant.

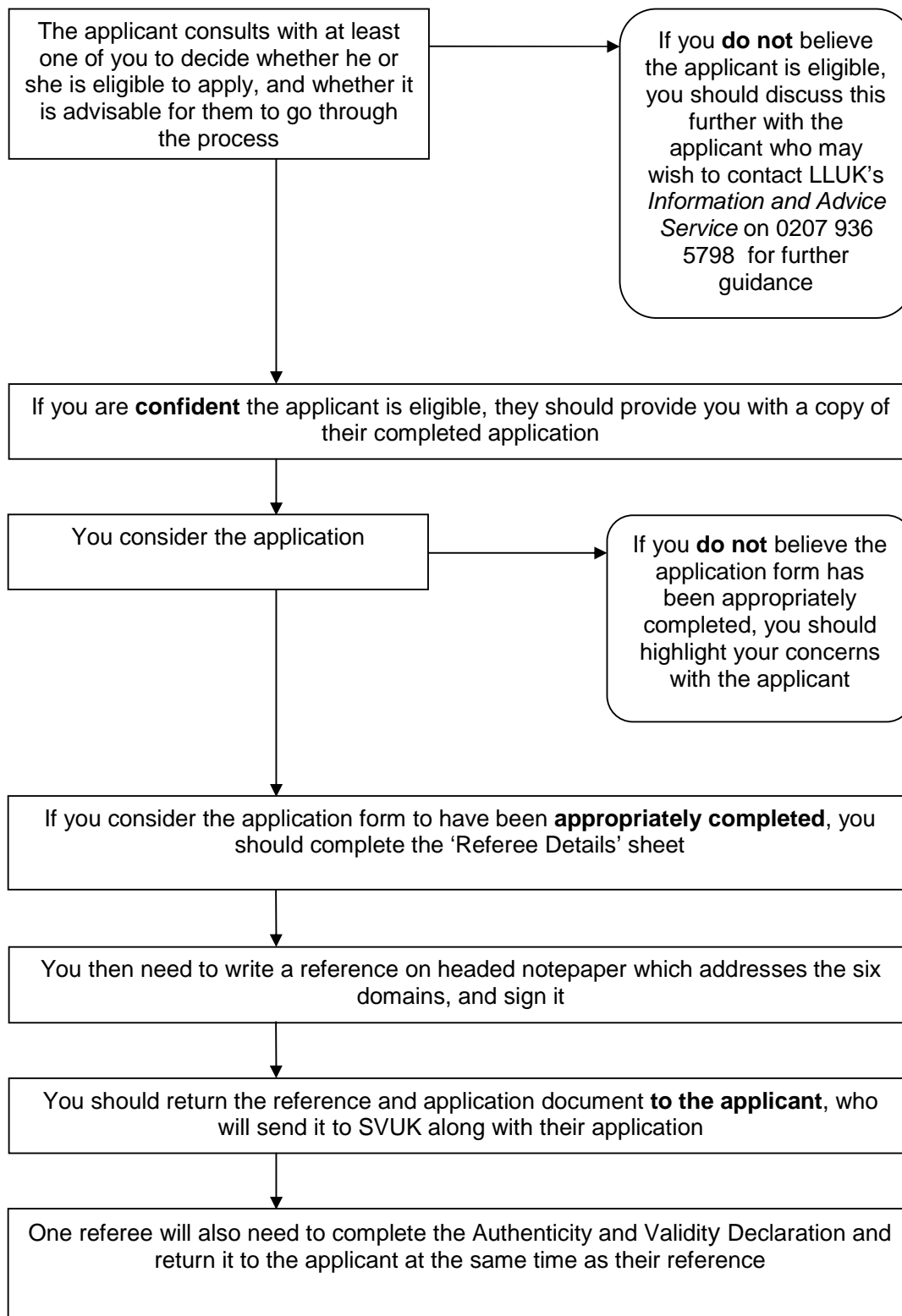
The applicant may provide you with several types of evidence, examples of which are listed below

- for evidencing competence: internal quality audit records, for example, SAR, external examiner reports, student achievement data, line manager observation records and evaluation records from learners, a lesson plan
- a record that shows the applicant's continuing professional development from within the past 5 years in their subject area and/or generic teaching (as appropriate) and sets out the plan for continuing development over the forthcoming year
- membership of any relevant professional bodies, institutions or specialist organisations
- relevant specialist qualifications/experience/published material, along with a record of any training undergone to update the qualifications where appropriate
- evidence of suitable awarding institution experience, e.g. as a chief or external verifier/moderator/examiner, assessor, marker, member of a validation/accreditation body
- details of suitable specialist consultancy work for an appropriate agency, e.g. QCA, QAA, Inspectorates, LSDA, NTOs, training associations, trade associations etc.

NB: For authentication purposes, please ensure that you see the original certificates or confirmation that originals have been seen by employers.

In accordance with our quality assurance procedures, please be aware that SVUK will request original copies of the stated qualification and supporting evidence from a random sample of successful applications.

9 Summary of the Process



NB All applications and references should either be submitted in paper-based form or submitted electronically. The references may be scanned for this purpose.

Applications without signed and completed references on headed paper will not be considered.

We may wish to contact you to clarify points in your reference. Please indicate on your details form your preferred means for us to do so.

Your contribution to GPRLS as a referee is greatly appreciated.

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