GTCS Fitness to Teach Consultation

**Do you have any comments on how we have structured the revised Rules?**

*No, they seem clear and well structured*

**Do you have any comments on the factors that we have taken into account in revising the Rules?**

*National Parent Forum appreciate that GTCS only accept competence cases from employers, however, we would welcome more promotion of how the public may raise concerns to their school or authority. There are concerns that the employer may refuse to refer a case and that parents may still have concerns and in this situation an appeals type process ajudicated by GTCS would be welcomed.*

**Do you agree that we should align how we manage competence cases throughout the teacher journey?**

*Yes*

**Do you agree that it should be possible for a temporary restriction order to be imposed in a provisional registration competence case (i.e. at the probationary service stage)?**

*Yes*

**Do you agree with our proposals to move away from the use of the term "complaint" in our fitness to teach process?**

*Yes . We do agree as we believe that ‘complaint’ is a loaded term.*

**Do you agree with our proposals to streamline the process we use to investigate conduct cases?**

Yes, the proposed new process seems sensible. There are concerns regarding the time limit at section 2.1.1 (b), and that parents would feel it is always in the public interest regardless of the passing of time. Overall, parents would welcome the streamlining of the process to minimise the stress and anxiety to all parties involved so long as thoroughness was ensured.

**Do you think there are other aspects of the investigation process that we should change?**

*No*

**Do you agree with the proposals we have made to try to make our conduct hearings process more efficient?**

*Yes*

**Do you think there are other aspects of the hearing process that we should change?**

*No*

**Do you agree that we should remove our internal appeals process as proposed?**

*Yes. The removal of conflict of interests is welcomed*.

**Do you have any comments on the proposed right of review that would apply to provisional registration competence cases?**

*No*

**Do you have any comments on the changes we have proposed to the "General" section of the Rules?**

*The rules seem relevant and reasonable. For upmost transparency we would welcome the addition of definitions of Competence, Professional Competence etc - even if only to refer back to registration standards.*

**Do you think we should change who we define as a "vulnerable witness" in our fitness to teach hearings?**

*Yes, we would welcome a change to ensure that the hearings are accessible to all parents. Thus we would like to see the widening of the rules to include those with impairments of intelligence, and additionally physical disabilities such as sight or hearing impairment. GTCS must be mindful that parents are automatically vulnerable at such hearings as they are likely to have less understanding of the process and terminology used, and are under particular stress.*

**Do you have any comments on the Rules (or our fitness to teach process more generally) that you think we should consider as part of this review exercise?**

*A flow chart of the process would help parents to understand the process and make the rules more accessible.*

*We would like to see the new rules heavily publicised, and guidance for parents would be welcomed.*

*We would like to see teacher competence covered at parent consultations in some way.*

*Lastly, in rule 1.7.18 the word ‘adduced’ seems unnecessarily legalistic.*

**Do you think that any of the changes we are proposing will have an impact on any group of people in terms of the protected characteristics (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership)?**

*No but extra attention should be paid to such groups to avoid any impact that materialises during roll out.*