Currently, further education (FE) teachers and qualified school teachers working within the maintained sector must be registered with the Education Workforce Council (the Council). From 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2016, learning support workers in maintained schools and FE institutions in Wales will also need to be registered. It is intended that, from April 2017, work-based learning (WBL) practitioners and youth workers will also be required to register with the Council.

There is currently no requirement for teachers and learning support workers within independent schools or private FE institutions to be registered with the Council – however, during the passage of the Education (Wales) Bill in 2013, some Assembly Members called for parity in the way that the behaviour of practitioners within the independent sector is regulated.

Why is this consultation taking place?

The Welsh Government has commissioned Owens Consulting (UK) Ltd to conduct a review on whether teachers and others who support learning in independent schools and private FE institutions in Wales should be required to register with the Council. They will be gathering views on:

a) whether there should be a requirement for practitioners (teaching and learning support workers) within independent schools and private FE institutions to register with the Council

b) whether employers (independent schools, private FE institutions and supply agencies) should be legally required to refer cases of unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence and relevant criminal offences to the Council

c) any potential implications associated with any such registration

Views will be gathered via an online survey, hosted on Learning Wales, and through individual and group discussions which will take place between August and December 2015.

What is the Education Workforce Council?

The Council is the independent regulator in Wales for school teachers in maintained schools and for teachers in FE institutions. It aims to:

- contribute to improving standards of teaching and the quality of learning in Wales
- maintain and improve standards of professional conduct amongst practitioners with a responsibility for teaching and learning in Wales
- maintain public trust and confidence, and to safeguard the interests of learners, parents/guardians and the general public

The Council’s main functions include:

- establishing and maintaining a Register of Education Practitioners
- maintaining a Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for the education workforce
- investigating and hearing allegations of unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence or relevant criminal offences that might call into question a registered practitioner’s fitness to practise
- providing advice to the Welsh Government and others on matters related to the education workforce, and on teaching and learning
- monitoring Induction, issuing Induction certificates, and hearing Induction appeals (where applicable) for school teachers
- promoting careers in the education workforce
- undertaking specific work in relation to teaching and learning at the request of the Welsh Government
The Council is funded by practitioner registration fees but receives grant funding from the Welsh Government for the following activities that it undertakes on its behalf:

- administering the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- administering funding, tracking and recording arrangements for Induction and the Masters in Educational Practice (MEP)
- hearing Induction appeals and issuing Induction certificates
- developing and hosting the Professional Learning Passport: an online tool that enables practitioners to record and reflect on their professional development

How do people register with the Council?

Registration information, which currently only applies to the maintained sector, is available at: http://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/registrant-information

What would registration mean for me?

If you are required to register, your name would be on the Register of Education Practitioners which provides assurance to parents/guardians, learners and the general public that you are appropriately qualified and continue to meet the expected standards of conduct and competence as set out in the Council’s ‘Code of Professional Conduct and Practice’: http://www.ewc.wales/site/images/documents/regulatory/EWC_Code_of_Professional_Conduct__Practice_E.pdf

The Register would include: your name, contact address, employment, qualifications, and professional development information. The Council guarantees the security of your information, and is fully compliant with Data Protection legislation.

Who would be able to access my information?

You would have full access to your own record. Employers, including supply agencies, would be able to make pre-employment or employment registration checks which would provide them with information on:

- whether or not you are qualified, as per the relevant legislation in Wales
- whether or not you have been deemed suitable for registration with the Council
- whether or not you are registered with the Council
- information about your qualifications
- details of your Initial Teacher Training (if you are a qualified teacher)
- whether or not you have satisfactorily completed a statutory Induction period in Wales (if you are a qualified teacher)
- the description of any restriction or prohibition in relation to you which may be in force as the result of a direction given by the Council

Members of the public would be able to check whether someone is on the Register or not.

What would this mean for independent schools, private FE institutions and supply agencies?

They would have a legal obligation to:

- only employ registered practitioners. This requirement applies to staff working on a full-time, part-time (including hourly paid) or supply basis. Employers have online access to the Register in order to check a practitioner’s registration status
- refer cases to the Council where a practitioner is dismissed or resigns in certain circumstances
- deduct the registration fee annually from a practitioner’s salary in order to ensure continued registration

It is important that if a school or FE institution uses a private supply agency that all parties are clear who is actually making the checks to ensure that a person is registered with the Council. Further guidance for employers is available at: http://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/registration-information-for-employers