

5.1 Teacher Professional Development

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The aim of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is to ensure a qualified, motivated, high performing and aspiring workforce of teachers with the capability to meet the requirements of the Sierra Leone Government's policy of free, compulsory quality education for all children from grades 1 to 9.

Teacher Professional Development for teachers in Sierra Leone's teaching service comprises:

- Pre-service teacher education from a recognised tertiary education institution, i.e. the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) and the Universities, which qualifies their graduates to become teachers.
- Two practice periods for teacher students comprising terms of practice in a school during the second and last year at college.
- Educational qualifying programmes for unqualified practising teachers which give them the required qualifications to teach and be licensed as teachers.
- Induction training during the probation period to introduce a new teacher to the teaching profession and work in the school.
- Continuous professional development which comprises in-service courses, work-based training through supervision, mentoring and coaching and self-directed learning.

- Upgrading of a teacher's formal education through part-time attendance in diploma and degree programmes at teacher training colleges and universities.

Teacher Professional Development and career path

The professional development of a teacher is closely linked to the teacher's career path. In developing and upgrading his or her qualifications through professional development, the teacher qualifies for promotion to higher positions and grades in the teaching service. This is recorded in the Teacher Portfolio and taken note of in the Performance Appraisal, which also includes plans for continuous professional development agreed between the teachers and his or her supervisor.

For teacher career path and the Teacher's Portfolio refer to the section on [Promotion](#).

Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders

The *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders in Sierra Leone* (TSC, 2017) establishes standards for high quality teaching and school leadership in primary and secondary schools in terms of a) professional knowledge, b) professional practice and c) professional engagement, the three fundamental dimensions of a teacher's work. It clarifies the expected standards of teaching at the four levels of new teacher, proficient teacher, highly accomplished teacher, and distinguished teacher. There are 19 standards with sub-standards for teachers and 5 standards with sub-standards for school leaders.

The professional standards are adapted from international standards in teaching and constitute an essential reference point for how to manage and deliver teaching of a high quality in primary and secondary schools. By derivation the professional standards establish a direction for the teaching of prospective teachers and school leaders at the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)

Institutions in Sierra Leone engaged in Teacher Professional Development

The main institutions engaged in Teacher Professional Development in Sierra Leone comprise:

- The Teaching Service Commission (TSC)
- The Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)
- The Universities
- West African Examinations Council

- Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA)
- TSC-DO
- Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU)
- International partner agencies and NGOs involved in offering TPE

For a complete overview and further details on engaged institutions and bodies refer to the *National Teacher Policy for Sierra Leone (TSC, 2019) pp. 83-90.*