

## Professional Formation - Guidance for Supporters

The role of the supporter is to act as a 'critical friend' to the person applying for Qualified Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) or Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS).

### Who should be a supporter?

Ideally, the supporter should be a member of the Institute for Learning (IfL) (subject to the Code of Professional Practice), but as this may not be possible in all cases it is not essential, provided that she or he is appropriately qualified to pass judgements on the evidence collated by the applicant.

### What constitutes 'appropriately qualified'?

IfL would consider someone suitable to act as a supporter if they:

- are able to draw on wide-ranging experience of the sector
- have knowledge of a relevant subject specialist area or teaching and learning practice
- have personal knowledge and understanding of the applicant's professional practice
- have normally known the applicant in a professional capacity for at least two years.

In addition, the supporter might have a position of responsibility in his/her place of work and be someone whose opinion and judgment is respected.

The supporter's relationship with the applicant should be entirely professional; she or he should not be someone related to the applicant by birth or marriage, or someone who is in a close and personal relationship with the applicant.

### What would the supporter be required to do?

After the applicant has collected and collated evidence in the appropriate proforma in REfLECT, they would share it with their supporter and she or he would be required to read it and to confirm that the applicant has provided a true and accurate picture of his/her professional practice. The supporter would be required to complete a statement confirming this in the 'Supporter's statement' area of the applicant's proforma.

The statement requires the supporter to give details of the context in which the applicant is known to him or her, to outline particular strengths which the applicant brings to his or her professional practice and to indicate areas for future professional development.

Once completed, the supporter's statement would form part of the evidence to be sent to the IfL and reviewed in support of the applicant's claim to be awarded QTLS or ATLS.