

Professional Standards for Teachers

Excellent Teacher



Introduction

Professional Standards for Teachers in England from September 2007¹

Bringing coherence to the professional and occupational standards for the whole school workforce

1. The framework of professional standards for teachers will form part of a wider framework of standards for the whole school workforce. This includes the Training and Development Agency for Schools' (TDA) review of the national occupational standards for teaching/classroom assistants and the professional standards for higher level teaching assistants in consultation with social partners and other key stakeholders and a review of leadership standards informed by the independent review of the roles and responsibilities of head teachers and the leadership group.

What these standards cover

2. The framework of professional standards for teachers set out below defines the characteristics of teachers at each career stage. Specifically it provides professional standards for:

- the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (Q)
- teachers on the main scale (Core) (C)
- teachers on the upper pay scale (Post Threshold Teachers) (P)
- Excellent Teachers (E)
- Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) (A).

3. Professional standards are statements of a teacher's professional attributes, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills. They provide clarity of the expectations at each career stage. The standards are not to be confused with and do not replace the professional duties contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, which sets out the roles and responsibilities of teachers.

4. The framework of standards below is arranged in three interrelated sections covering:

- a. professional attributes
- b. professional knowledge and understanding
- c. professional skills.

How the standards will be used

5. The standards provide the framework for a teacher's career and clarify what progression looks like. As now, to access each career stage a teacher will need to demonstrate that he/she has met the relevant standards. The process for this varies depending on the standards concerned. Teachers seeking Excellent Teacher or AST status need to apply and be assessed through an external assessment process. Teachers seeking to cross the threshold are assessed by their head teacher. The standards for Post Threshold Teachers, Excellent Teachers and ASTs are pay standards and teachers who are assessed as meeting them also access the relevant pay scale.

6. The standards clarify the professional characteristics that a teacher should be expected to maintain and to build on at their current career stage. After the induction year, therefore, teachers would be expected to continue to meet the core standards and to broaden and deepen their professional attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills within that context. This principle applies at all subsequent career stages. So, for example, teachers who have gone through the threshold would be expected to meet the core and post-threshold standards and to broaden and deepen their professional attributes, knowledge,

¹ The framework as a whole, as set out here, applies in England only. The standards for Post Threshold Teachers, Excellent Teachers and ASTs are pay standards (as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document) and apply in England and Wales.

understanding and skills in that context. There are no new criteria for pay progression for teachers paid on the upper pay scale in the 2006 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

7. The standards will support teachers in identifying their professional development needs. Where teachers wish to progress to the next career stage, the next level of the framework provides a reference point for all teachers when considering future development. Whilst not all teachers will necessarily want to move to the next career stage, the standards will also support teachers in identifying ways to broaden and deepen their expertise within their current career stages.

8. All teachers should have a professional responsibility to be engaged in effective, sustained and relevant professional development throughout their careers and all teachers should have a contractual entitlement to effective, sustained and relevant professional development throughout their careers. There should be a continuum of expectations about the level of engagement in professional development that provides clarity and appropriate differentiation for each career stage. The expectations about the contribution teachers make to the development of others should take account of their levels of skills, expertise and experience, their role within the school, and reflect their use of up-to-date subject knowledge and pedagogy.²

9. In all these cases, performance management is the key process. Performance management provides the context for regular discussions about teachers' career aspirations and their future development, within or beyond their current career stage. The framework

of professional standards will provide a backdrop to discussions about how a teacher's performance should be viewed in relation to their current career stage and the career stage they are approaching. The relevant standards should be looked at as a whole in order to help teachers identify areas of strength and areas for further professional development. For example, a teacher who aspires to become an AST will need to reflect on and discuss how they might plan their future development so they can work towards becoming an AST, and performance management would provide evidence for the teacher's future application.

10. All qualified teachers in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools are required to be registered with the GTCE. To maintain registration they must uphold the GTCE's Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers.

11. The recommendation for the award of qualified teacher status and registration with the GTCE is made by an accredited Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provider following an assessment which shows that all of the QTS standards have been met. The Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) may then begin the induction period. NQTs will not be required to meet fully the core standards until the end of their induction period. The core standards underpin all the subsequent standards and, where there is no progression at subsequent career stages, are valid at all points of teachers' careers within both their immediate workplace and the wider professional context in which they work. Each set of standards builds on the previous set, so that a teacher being considered for the threshold would need to satisfy the post-threshold standards (P) and meet the core standards (C);

² Extract from the Rewards and Incentives Group's (RIG) evidence (Section 9 'The New Teacher Professionalism') to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) on 25 May 2005.

“Core standards underpin all the standards and are valid at all points of a teacher’s career”



a teacher aspiring to become an Excellent Teacher would need to satisfy the standards that are specific to that status (E) and meet the preceding standards (C and P); and a teacher aspiring to become an AST would need to satisfy the standards that are specific to that status (A) as well as meet the preceding standards (C, P and E) – although they can apply for an AST post before going through the threshold. In practice, the standards relating to the excellence of their own teaching are common to ASTs and Excellent Teachers; the three additional AST standards are focused on their ability to carry out their work with other schools and on their leadership role.

12. The framework of standards is progressive, reflecting the progression expected of teachers as their professional attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills develop and they demonstrate increasing effectiveness in their roles. Post Threshold Teachers are able to act as role models for teaching and learning, make a distinctive contribution to raising standards across the school, continue to develop their expertise post threshold and provide regular coaching and mentoring to less experienced teachers. Excellent Teachers provide an exemplary model to others through their professional expertise, have a leading role in raising standards by supporting improvements in teaching practice and support and help their colleagues to improve their effectiveness and to address their development needs through highly effective coaching and mentoring. ASTs provide models of excellent and innovative teaching and use their skills to enhance teaching and learning by undertaking and leading school improvement activities and continuing professional development (CPD) for other teachers. They carry out developmental work across a range of

workplaces and draw on the experience they gain elsewhere to improve practice in their own and other schools.

13. All the standards are underpinned by the five key outcomes for children and young people identified in Every Child Matters and the six areas of the Common Core of skills and knowledge for the children’s workforce. The work of practising teachers should be informed by an awareness, appropriate to their level of experience and responsibility, of legislation concerning the development and well-being of children and young people expressed in the Children Act 2004, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and relevant associated guidance, the special educational needs provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the associated Special Educational Needs: Code of Practice (DfES 2001), the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the guidance Safeguarding Children in Education (DfES 0027 2004).

14. The professional standards must operate in the context of teachers’ legal rights and contractual entitlements.

15. Nothing in the professional standards militates against teachers taking lawful industrial action.

Note on the terminology used in the standards

- The term 'learners' is used instead of 'children and young people' when learning per se is the main focus of the standard. It refers to all children and young people including those with particular needs, for example, those with special educational needs, looked after children, those for whom English is an additional language, those who are not reaching their potential or those who are gifted and talented.
- The term 'colleagues' is used for all those professionals with whom a teacher might work. It encompasses teaching colleagues, the wider workforce within an educational establishment, and also those from outside with whom teachers may be expected to have professional working relationships, for example early years and health professionals and colleagues working in children's services.
- The term 'classroom' is used to encompass all the settings within and beyond the workplace where teaching and learning take place.
- The term 'workplace' refers to the range of educational establishments, contexts and settings (both in and outside the classroom) where teaching takes place.
- The term 'subjects/curriculum areas' is used to cover all forms of organised learning experienced across the curriculum. For example, areas of learning in the foundation stage, broad areas of curricular experience and learning through play in the early years, thematically structured work in the primary phase, single subjects, vocational subjects and cross-curricular work in the 14–19 phase.
- The terms 'lessons' or 'sequences of lessons' are used to cover teaching and learning activities wherever they take place, whatever their nature and length, and however they might be organised, and are applicable to all educational phases and contexts.
- Where the phrase 'parents and carers' is used, it is understood that the term 'parents' includes both mothers and fathers.
- The term 'well-being' refers to the rights of children and young people (as set out and consulted upon in the Every Child Matters: Green Paper and subsequently set out in the Children Act 2004), in relation to:
 - physical and mental health and emotional well-being
 - protection from harm and neglect
 - education, training and recreation
 - the contribution made by them to society
 - social and economic well-being.
- The term 'personalised learning' means maintaining a focus on individual progress, in order to maximise all learners' capacity to learn, achieve and participate. This means supporting and challenging each learner to achieve national standards and gain the skills they need to thrive and succeed throughout their lives. 'Personalising learning' is not about individual lesson plans or individualisation (where learners are taught separately or largely through a one-to-one approach).

Excellent Teacher



Excellent Teachers (E) should meet the following standards and meet the core and post-threshold standards.

Professional attributes

Excellent Teachers should:

Frameworks

E1

Be willing to take a leading role in developing workplace policies and practice and in promoting collective responsibility for their implementation.

Personal professional development

E2

Research and evaluate innovative curricular practices and draw on research outcomes and other sources of external evidence to inform their own practice and that of colleagues.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Excellent Teachers should:

Teaching and learning

E3

Have a critical understanding of the most effective teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies, including how to select and use approaches that personalise learning to provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential.

Assessment and monitoring

E4

Know how to improve the effectiveness of assessment practice in the workplace, including how to analyse statistical information to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the school.

Subjects and curriculum

E5

Have an extensive and deep knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum areas and related pedagogy gained for example through involvement in wider professional networks associated with their subjects/curriculum areas.

Achievement and diversity

E6

Have an extensive knowledge on matters concerning equality, inclusion and diversity in teaching.

Professional skills

Excellent Teachers should:

Planning

E7

- (a) Take a lead in planning collaboratively with colleagues in order to promote effective practice.
- (b) Identify and explore links within and between subjects/curriculum areas in their planning.

Teaching

E8

Have teaching skills which lead to excellent results and outcomes.

E9

Demonstrate excellent and innovative pedagogical practice.

Assessing, monitoring and giving feedback

E10

Demonstrate excellent ability to assess and evaluate.

E11

Have an excellent ability to provide learners, colleagues, parents and carers with timely, accurate and constructive feedback on learners' attainment, progress and areas for development that promotes pupil progress.

Reviewing teaching and learning

E12

Use local and national statistical data and other information, in order to provide:

- (a) a comparative baseline for evaluating learners' progress and attainment
- (b) a means of judging the effectiveness of their teaching, and
- (c) a basis for improving teaching and learning.

Team working and collaboration

E13

Work closely with leadership teams, taking a leading role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practice that contribute to school improvement.

E14

Contribute to the professional development of colleagues using a broad range of techniques and skills appropriate to their needs so that they demonstrate enhanced and effective practice.

E15

Make well-founded appraisals of situations upon which they are asked to advise, applying high-level skills in classroom observation to evaluate and advise colleagues on their work and devising and implementing effective strategies to meet the learning needs of children and young people leading to improvements in pupil outcomes.

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