

DfE consultation: Strengthening QTS and improving career progression for teachers

The Royal Society of Chemistry's response to the Department for Education's [consultation](#)

Q1: Do you think that QTS should be awarded after a period of sustained professional practice rather than the end of ITT?

- **Yes, I agree without caveats**
- **Yes I agree, but with caveats. Please provide your comment in the box below**
- **No, I disagree**
- **Do not know**

We welcome the suggestion to award QTS after a period of sustained professional practice. It sends a strong signal that ITT is just the beginning of the journey to develop great teachers and that professional development should be prioritised throughout a teacher's career

The benefits of the proposed changes to QTS should be available to all new teachers, irrespective of their Initial Teacher Training route or the type of school in which they are employed. We recommend that teachers in all publicly funded schools be required to hold, or be working towards, QTS. This would stop a potential unintended consequence of academies or free schools employing unqualified teachers to avoid new responsibilities relating to CPD and induction.

It is also important that the messaging is right so that potential teachers are not put off by the extended period of training and the delay in becoming a fully qualified member of the teaching profession. It should be made clear that the measures are intended to be supportive rather than punitive and that they will not have a negative effect on new teachers' salaries.

Q2: Do you agree that a core early career content framework and CPD offer for new teachers should be fundamental to a strengthened QTS?

- **Yes, I strongly agree**
- **Yes, I agree**
- **No, I disagree**
- **No, I strongly disagree**
- **Do not know**

We support the idea of a core early career content framework as it will help to ensure consistency of experience and support for new teachers in different situations. We agree that it is important for the framework to include optional areas so that it can be personalised according to a teacher's development needs.

Additional funding is likely to be needed to help schools deliver these ambitious plans. In the long-run however, this will be good value for money, as we would expect both the quality of teaching and teacher retention to improve.

Q3: What core competencies, knowledge areas or particular skills do you think should be developed in a structured way during the induction period?

- **Subject and curriculum knowledge**
- **Evidence-based pedagogy, including subject-specific pedagogy**

- **Use of and engagement with evidence**
- **Behaviour management**
- **Use and understanding of assessment**
- **Supporting pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND)**
- **Other, please provide below**

We are encouraged to see that subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy feature prominently in the proposed list of topics for the early career content framework. These areas should be tailored to teachers' individual needs and be based on the best practice that chemistry content from key stage four onwards should be taught by those with proven expertise in chemistry. For the sciences, subject specific pedagogy should include practical work. The Royal Society of Chemistry would be happy to work the Department for Education to advise on what the framework might look like for chemistry.

The induction period would provide a good opportunity to introduce new teachers to careers teaching. This could include the Gatsby Good Career Guidance benchmarks and their part in the new statutory guidance for schools¹.

Q4: Do you think we should extend the induction period?

- **Yes, extend to two years**
- **Yes, another amount of time. Please provide your comments in the box below**
- **No, keep it at one year**
- **Do not know**

If it is introduced and managed carefully, with consideration of the potential difficulties, an extension of the induction period to two years will benefit all new teachers. It is important however that the same induction period should apply regardless of the teachers' training route or perceived progress against the early career content framework. Without this requirement, schools may feel pressured to rush new teachers through the system because of other financial or resource commitments.

Q5: We have used the names QTS(P) and QTS throughout this document. Do you think that these terms are appropriate?

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672418/_Careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers.pdf

	Strongly agree	Agree	Do not mind	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
QTS (Provisional)/QTS (P) followed by QTS	<input type="radio"/>				
Certificate of Completion of ITT followed by QTS	<input type="radio"/>				
Associate Teacher Status followed by QTS	<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/> I would like to suggest another name for the award at the end of ITT instead of QTS(P). Please provide your suggestion(s) below <input type="radio"/> We should not change the name of QTS at all <input type="radio"/> Do not know					

Ticked don't mind for all of the suggestions above and then ticked the suggest different name box

We would like to see subject focus attached to QTS, for example 'QTS (Science, Chemistry)' to indicate the subject a teacher intends to teach. In the case of the sciences, this should include a specific science discipline (chemistry, biology or physics).

By the end of their induction period, biology, chemistry and physics teachers should be able to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach the required subject content to the appropriate age ranges within the discipline(s) they will be expected to teach. It should not be assumed that someone with a background in one science discipline will also have (or be able to develop during ITT and the induction period) the subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge to teach another science discipline beyond key stage three. However, there should be mechanisms in place for teachers to develop and then demonstrate their credentials to teach beyond their initial qualification subject should they wish so to do, at any point in their career.

Our suggestion for the name for the end of ITT would be QTS (Initial) 'QTS (I)', with teachers gaining full 'QTS' after the two year induction period. 'Initial' gives the impression that it is the start of a process, which is in keeping with the idea that teachers should be open to learning and development throughout their careers. It is also fits well with the 'initial' in 'Initial Teacher Training'.

Q6: From the options set out in paragraph 47 of the consultation, which of these proposals do you think would help improve the quality and quantity of mentoring for all new teachers?

- **Reviewing the existing ITT mentor standards**
- **Adding an additional mentor role into the statutory induction guidance**
- **Strengthening statutory guidance to require schools to provide more frequent mentoring sessions**
- **Development of high-quality mentor training**

- **Do not know**

All of these proposals are important and should be introduced to help improve the quality of mentoring for new teachers.

We particularly welcome the proposal to provide new teachers with a mentor who is not also responsible for formally assessing them. Research has shown that teacher mentoring is more effective when the mentor is not responsible for the formal evaluation and assessment of the mentee as it allows mentees to be more open when talking about their progress and development needs².

In order for this mentoring to be most effective, schools must prioritise it. The strengthening of statutory guidance would help with this.

Q7: How else can we improve the quality and quantity of mentoring for all new teachers?

We are convinced that mentoring has an important role to play in teacher development and retention. It should be available for all teachers, whatever stage they are in their career. There should be scope in any new mentor standards to allow for mentoring to be personalised according to an individual teacher's needs. It is also important that mentors of new teachers have experience and expertise in teaching the same subject (for secondary) and age range (for primary) as their mentee and have undertaken high-quality mentor training.

The use of external mentors (e.g. from neighbouring schools) should be considered, especially where there are no suitable/available mentors in the new teacher's own school. This is important to ensure that for, example, new teachers of chemistry are mentored by teachers with expertise and experience of chemistry teaching rather than of one of the other science disciplines. There is evidence to show that same-subject external mentors can be very effective in offering non-judgemental support to beginning teachers. This allows them to be open about discussing their learning and areas for development³. External mentoring would also be beneficial for more experienced teachers, especially for those who are at risk of leaving the profession.

Q8: How should we ensure that new teachers get sufficient time to focus on their professional development?

- **10% reduction in teaching timetable in the second year as well as the first year**
- **Different teaching timetable reduction. Please provide your comments in the box below**
- **Release new teachers from non-teaching tasks**
- **Other, please provide your comments in the box below**
- **Do not know**

Whilst there is merit in each of the suggestions to ensure new teachers have enough time for professional development, we think that the simplest and fairest would be a continuation of the 10%

² Hobson, A.J. (2017) The Terrors of Judgementoring and the Case for ONSIDE Mentoring for Early Career Teachers. In David A. Clutterbuck, Frances K. Kochan, Laura Lunsford, Nora Dominguez and Julie Haddock-Millar (Eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Mentoring, pp. 335-357. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

³ McIntyre, J. & Hobson, A.J. (2016) Supporting beginner teacher identity development: external mentors and the third space, Research Papers in Education, 31(2), 133-158;

reduction in teaching timetable into the second year. However, extra funding for schools will need to be made available and ring-fenced to make this possible.

We also advocate the use of 'sympathetic timetabling' for beginner teachers in secondary schools. This simple concept reduces the lesson planning workload by allowing teachers to teach the same topic to more than one class. As we have stated in our responses to questions 3 and 5, we believe that chemistry teachers should not be required to teach biology or physics content from key stage four onwards. We also recommend that for key stage three, schools allow new teachers to focus on teaching their specialist science discipline for at least the first year of the new induction period. We consider that these steps could help improve the retention rates of new chemistry teachers. Research from the USA found that first year teachers who were given a less challenging course load and taught a single subject were less likely to leave⁴.

Q9: Do you agree that the QTS assessment should be conducted internally and be independently verified by an appropriate body?

- **Yes, it should be conducted internally and independently verified by an appropriate body**
- Yes, it should be conducted internally, but we do not need any independent verification
- No, QTS assessment should be conducted by an external, independent body
- Do not know

Q10: How do you think we should strengthen the independent verification of QTS accreditation?

- Developing more detailed guidance with the Teaching Schools Council and the Local Government Association on what the appropriate body role entails
- **Setting up a national network for appropriate bodies to provide support and a forum for working through issues that arise**
- Introducing a quality assurance mechanism that might include an accreditation process, whereby appropriate bodies have to apply to take on the role, demonstrating that they understand the requirements
- Other, please provide your comments in the box below
- Do not know

As the accrediting body for chemistry degrees, the Royal Society of Chemistry would be happy to support and advise on any issues relating to the chemistry aspects of QTS accreditation.

Q11: What role do you think ITT providers could play in the assessment and accreditation of QTS?

No answer and no comment

Q12: Do you think we should maintain the limitation on how long a teacher can teach on a supply basis without completing QTS?

- Yes, keep it as a five year limit
- Yes, but shorten the time in which a teacher can teach on a supply basis without completing induction
- Yes, but lengthen the time limit
- There should be no limitation
- Do not know

⁴ https://www.nctq.org/docs/Donaldson_Johnson.EEPA.pdf

No answer and no comment

Q13: Considering all of the above, what impact would this model of a strengthened QTS have on post-ITT teachers in terms of teaching practice, retention, and morale?

	Positive impact overall	Balanced impact overall: some positive, some negative	Negative impact overall	Do not know
Teaching practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Morale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ticked positive for all of them

It is the Royal Society of Chemistry's view that the plans for a strengthened QTS will have a positive impact on teaching practice, retention and morale as long as they are properly funded and the messaging around them is supportive. Care needs to be taken to ensure that potential new teachers do not perceive the changes simply as a burden or 'more hoops to jump through' before they are deemed to be 'proper teachers'.

Q14: What impact would this model of a strengthened QTS have on the wider school system? (By the 'wider school system', we mean anything beyond the impact on the individual teacher.)

In the long-term we believe that strengthened QTS will benefit schools by improving teachers' confidence and effectiveness and consequently improve student outcomes. In addition, we expect it will improve new teachers' morale and job satisfaction and ultimately their retention in the profession.

More experienced teachers, taking on mentoring roles, will also see benefits in terms of their own professional development, and this too will have positive implications for schools.

There will be a financial cost to schools of implementing the strengthened QTS, to cover the reduced timetables for the second year of the induction, to cover teachers participating in CPD and to free-up time for more experienced teachers to carry out mentoring responsibilities. There will also be a cost associated with training and compensating mentors. Schools will need additional funding made available to them for these proposals to be effective.

Although there may be increased costs associated with the proposed plans, if teacher retention improves as a result of them, less money will need to be allocated to teacher recruitment.

Q15: Are there any other implications that we should consider, and what are your suggestions for addressing them?

Consideration needs to be given to teachers who move schools during their induction period, either through their own choice or because they are employed on short-term contracts (e.g. maternity

cover). The induction provision and early career content framework will need to be easily transferable between schools.

Q16: Do you think that there is a market for specialist NPQs – or similar – for teachers who aspire to other forms of leadership within the school system?

- **Yes, for specialist NPQs**
- Yes, but NPQs are not the right vehicle
- No, there is no need for any additional qualifications
- Do not know

Specialist NPQs (or similar) would be a welcome addition, as long as there are appropriate career pathways in schools for teachers who achieve them.

They could include credit towards Masters degree qualifications and should also help teachers demonstrate the necessary competencies for CTeach or CSciTeach.

Q17: If you answered 'yes' to question 16, what specialisms should be prioritised for these NPQs (or similar)?

- **Teacher development**
- **Assessment**
- **Curriculum design**
- **Other, please provide your comments in the box below**
- Do not know

Subject expertise would also be a valuable specialism for the leadership NPQs as would a specialism in careers guidance.

Q18: Do you think there is a market for non-leadership NPQs – or similar – aimed at further developing subject expertise? How should they differ between primary and secondary phases?

- **Yes, there is a market for further subject specialist qualifications**
- No, there is no need for any additional subject specialist qualifications
- Do not know

We would welcome opportunities and qualifications for secondary teachers to develop and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the specific science discipline in which they are trained/have expertise. For primary teachers, a qualification focussing on subject expertise in science would be beneficial for science leads in schools.

However, what is missing for teachers of the sciences is any form of certification of the basic subject-knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge required to teach particular topics for different age ranges. At secondary level, teachers are often required to teach outside the discipline they are trained in and/or have previous qualifications and expertise in, especially at key stages 3 and 4. Having a degree in chemistry for example, does not automatically give one the necessary expertise to teach key stage 3 or 4 students about particular topics in biology or physics.

Q19: What additional support should be offered for teachers who work in more challenging schools to undertake further professional qualifications?

It is important that the DfE speaks to school leaders in the most challenging schools to find out what support they would find most effective to help their teachers undertake further professional qualifications.

Q20: Do you agree that a CPD badging scheme is something that should be developed? What organisations might be best placed to deliver this service?

- **Yes, I strongly agree**
- Yes, I agree
- No, I disagree
- No, I strongly disagree
- Do not know

The Chartered College of Teaching is in a good position to lead on CPD badging, with professional bodies such as the Royal Society of Chemistry having a role in the badging of subject-specific CPD.

Q21: How should government incentivise effective professional development for teachers, particularly in the areas and schools where it is most needed?

- **Clearer entitlements to CPD, including a minimum number of hours of relevant CPD**
- **The development of a national CPD framework for early career teachers (post-QTS), similar to that proposed for NQTs**
- **Ring-fenced funding for CPD in schools where it is most needed**
- **The introduction of a personal CPD record**
- **Other, please provide your comments in the box below**
- Do not know

A clear entitlement to high-quality CPD, including a minimum number of hours, should be available for all teachers in all state-funded schools. This should emphasise subject-specific CPD.

Funding for CPD should be ring-fenced in all schools, not those just those where it is deemed to be most needed.

A national CPD framework for early career teachers would only be appropriate if it could be highly personalised to meet the differing needs and wants of individual teachers.

Ofsted and school governors should play a part in ensuring that schools adhere to these initiatives.

Q22: How can government best support the development of a genuine culture of mentoring in schools?

- **Creation of specialist NPQs that includes focus on mentoring and coaching**
- **Provide guidance on what effective mentoring looks like**
- **Collaborate with the Chartered College of Teaching in their work to identify and accredit high-quality mentor programmes**
- **Fund the provision of high-quality mentor training**
- **Work with teaching schools to identify how they can help build capacity for mentor development among school leaders**
- **Build mentoring leadership into the existing NPQ curriculum**
- **Other, please provide your comments in the box below**

To be truly effective, mentoring should be genuinely supportive, subject-specific and non-judgemental.

At the Royal Society of Chemistry, we are piloting a mentoring scheme for probationer (first year) teachers in Scotland. We have carefully matched 30 new chemistry teachers with a similar number of more experienced teachers who will mentor them throughout this academic year. We provided training for the mentors, who are all volunteers. As part of our evaluation, before the scheme officially started, our mentors were asked why they had signed up for the programme. All said that they wanted to support less experienced colleagues. Other strong influences were that they thought it would help them become better teachers, support their career progression and increase their job satisfaction.

The mentors in our scheme can clearly see benefits for their own development and career progression through mentoring others. Given the right support, we believe that the schools and teachers in England would be open to embracing a culture of mentoring too.

Q23: Do you think that a fund to pilot sabbaticals would be a positive step for the profession?

- Yes, I strongly agree
- Yes, I agree
- No, I disagree
- No, I strongly disagree
- Do not know

Q24: What would the impact be for teachers and schools of enabling more teachers to take sabbaticals, providing they are related to their teaching practice?

It could ultimately help with retention and be an excellent CPD opportunity for experienced teachers. It could allow them to bring new ideas/cutting edge science back to their schools, develop new resources or learn from experiences in different education settings. All of these have the potential to revitalise teachers and ultimately help them to inspire their students.

Although we are very supportive of sabbaticals as a concept, we acknowledge that there could be problems covering the prolonged absence of teachers in subjects which already have to cope with a shortage of specialist teachers.