
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Pwnc / Subject:	Statutory induction of newly qualified teachers in Wales

Background information about Estyn

Estyn is the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, Estyn is independent of the Welsh Government.

Estyn's principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Estyn's remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and teacher education and training.

Estyn may give advice to the Welsh Parliament on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

This response is not confidential.

Response

Introduction

- We agree in principle with many of the consultation questions, however, we have identified the importance of supporting NQTs through high-quality bespoke support that includes a core programme of essential learning for all.
- There should be strong continuity between initial teacher education (ITE) and induction.
- A programme of induction should take account of the content of ITE programmes in Wales. NQTs who have trained outside of Wales should receive tailored support to teach in Welsh schools
- Access to high-quality mentoring is vital for the professional development of NQTs
- NQTs should have the opportunity to develop and consolidate their skills, knowledge and understanding through a period of learning that is based in one school for at least six weeks
- Induction should draw upon effective practice and practitioners in ITE, including the developing good practice in lead partnership schools

Consultation questions

Question 1 – Should the current requirement that an induction period of three terms/380 sessions must be undertaken in order to successfully complete induction be lifted to provide flexibility and enable newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who demonstrate effective practice and who meet the standards in a shorter period of time to complete induction?

Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree in principle. However, it is important that NQTs cover essential 'core' elements of development in their induction period (see question 11). Some of this learning may require time for NQTs to consolidate their knowledge, understanding and skills. It is important for all NQTs and induction mentors to conceptualise induction, not as something to be endured or completed, but as the beginning of a professional journey.

Question 2 – Should a nominal minimum induction period of one term (or equivalent) be introduced to allow NQTs who demonstrate effective practice and meet the professional standards to successfully complete induction? **(No NQT would be expected to complete induction in the minimum time.)**

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree in principle (see note above). Any minimum period should certainly be no shorter than one term (or two half-terms, as described below). It is important that schools understand that induction should be tailored to the needs of the NQT and that the time taken to achieve the induction standards is not simply a reflection of the school's effectiveness.

Question 3 –From September 2023, should all NQTs be required to serve a period of continuous employment in one school of at least one term/two consecutive half terms (or equivalent for part-time workers) at some point in their induction period?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree that this would be helpful, to maintain consistency of experiences and support. However, this depends on the *quality* of support provided by the school and the induction mentor. A six-week period enables NQTs to plan for a sequence of lessons. This would support the NQT to develop and sustain their practice in important areas, such as planning to meet the needs of pupils with a range of abilities, supporting pupils to develop their skills and developing their approaches to assessment.

Question 4 – Should the induction outcome be judged primarily on an NQT's ability to demonstrate effective practice and exemplify the professional standards? (Under this arrangement the requirement to complete and log individual sessions of employment would no longer be necessary for short-term supply teachers.)

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree in principle that the development of NQTs' skills, knowledge and understanding may vary from individual to individual and will take place over different spans of time. However, the progress of the NQT needs to be judged fairly, accurately and holistically.

All those assessing NQTs need to be aware of what progression against the standards looks like (without this being formulaic or atomistic). In terms of bespoke support there needs to be a recognition that some NQTs may have reached aspects of the induction standards in their ITE. Assessment processes should not be onerous for NQTs or mentors but should be supportive of NQTs' progress. An important aspect of the induction programme should be to support NQTs' self-reflection. Assessment needs to be fair, robust and objective. The quality assurance of assessment should be visible and accepted by all stakeholders.

Question 5 – Should a requirement to complete induction within a five-year window from gaining qualified teacher status (QTS) be reintroduced?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree in principle that there should be a time limit within which induction must be completed. Five years seems to be a reasonable 'window'. However, for those NQTs who fail to complete induction within this time, we suggest that there might be a 'refresher course' to update those who wish to pursue a career in teaching.

Question 6 – Should NQTs be able to count teaching time in pupil referral units that teach the new Curriculum for Wales towards their induction?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We agree in principle. We suggest that the appropriate body might ensure that the NQT is able to meet the induction standards in the PRU and, where necessary, arrange for the NQT to spend time in a complementary school setting.

Question 7 – Should the appropriate body (AB) role be separated from the induction co-ordinator role to ensure clear separation of duties?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

This would be helpful for accountability and quality assurance purposes. It is essential that induction arrangements undergo rigorous quality assurance to ensure that the programme meets the needs of NQTs and supports national strategic priorities.

Welsh Government may wish to consider that Estyn play a role in ensuring that there is a consistent nation-wide, objective and robust evaluation of induction, alongside a cycle of inspections of initial teacher education to drive system-wide improvement.

Question 8 – Should the decision regarding the outcome of induction be made by the induction mentor (IM), with external verifiers (EVs) undertaking a quality assurance role and dealing with borderline cases on behalf of the AB?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

See comments under question 9

Question 9 – Should the role of IM be funded and carried out by trained mentors who (where possible) remain with the NQT for the duration of their induction period?

Agree	✓	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

The role of induction mentor is vital to the successful development of the NQT. Quality and consistency of support are equally important. In our survey report, The Professional Learning Continuum: Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education, we identify common strengths and weaknesses in mentoring.

Mentors should:

- have dedicated, protected time to support their mentees
- undertake training that focuses on developing the skills, knowledge and understanding required to mentor and coach successfully, rather than the completion of documentation
- have a good understanding of approaches to teacher development

We note that effective mentors are often actively engaged in professional learning activities, research, or higher-level study. Although these learning opportunities are not always related directly to mentoring teachers, these mentors are able to transfer their learning to consideration of how students develop their teaching. These mentors use their skills of reflection and critical analysis to support developing teachers. They are good role models of career-long professional learning.

[The professional learning continuum: mentoring in initial teacher education \(gov.wales\)](#)

Question 10 – Except for the proposed requirement for all NQTs to undertake a continuous period of work in one school of at least a minimum of one term, or two consecutive half terms (or equivalent if part time), do you consider that the proposed changes to the induction arrangements consulted upon should be implemented in readiness for the start of the 2022/23 academic year? For any proposal you consider should **not** be implemented for the start of the 2022/23 academic year, please set out your reasons why.

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

This would seem to be an ambitious timescale, considering that the induction programme needs to be planned fully, mentors need to be trained and the collaborative work between local authorities, regional consortia and ITE partnerships must be undertaken. However, there is an urgent need to ensure that induction is supportive and consistent.

Question 11 – Please outline any specific support or professional learning opportunities that should be made available during the early career phase.

Supporting comments

It is vital that learning in induction is linked securely to learning in induction: NQTs who have trained in Wales are used to a way of learning that blends theory and practice. All the ITE partnerships provide experiences for students that explore educational research and theory within a practical context in the lead schools. It is important that induction provides a continuation of this way of learning, rather than offering 'stand-alone' or 'decontextualised' experiences. Learning in the NQT year should provide structured

learning experiences and support from effective practitioners and mentors. There should be a focus on developing NQTs' skills of research and enquiry and opportunities for NQTs to develop their own understanding through small-scale, close to practice enquiry.

The induction period should include both bespoke support and essential components.

Bespoke support should take account of the individual's learning needs. These should be drawn from the NQTs' own reflections on their progress and targets set from ITE mentors. This might also be context dependent (for example, teaching in a school with a high proportion of EAL pupils).

Essential learning should be common to all NQTs and should cover the new learning needed for the novice teacher. This learning should provide continuity between learning in the ITE programme and learning in the first years of teaching. This common core of learning should form the content of a national programme and should include such aspects as:

- Development of planning skills, with an emphasis on the skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviours for planning within the context of Curriculum for Wales; planning with others.
- Development of pedagogy – daily effective practice; developing and deepening phase and subject knowledge and pedagogy; effective differentiation; effective pedagogy to motivate and support specific groups of pupils over time (MAT, eFSM, EAL, etc); understanding barriers to learning; working alongside other practitioners; extending skills and pedagogies in the Welsh language.
- Supporting the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, digital competencies and the Welsh language.
- Development of assessment practice
- Tracking pupils' progress and using information from monitoring.
- Developing skills of professional enquiry – developing enquiry skills to support teaching and learning within a specific context; working with others in professional learning; working within a professional learning culture.
- Understanding career progression; working towards professional goals; developing leadership skills.
- Pastoral care; roles and responsibilities in school for pupil care, support and guidance.
- Teacher wellbeing and work-life balance.

These essential aspects are drawn from common areas for development in our inspection work in primary and secondary schools and in ITE (see [Estyn Annual Report 2019-2020 \(gov.wales\)](#))

Induction should also provide opportunities for team-teaching and shadowing. All NQTs should have opportunities to teach alongside effective practitioners. They should be provided with support to take on roles and responsibilities within school by shadowing experienced colleagues, for example working alongside a form tutor, or meeting parents together with another member of staff.

Question 12 – We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed changes to induction would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

An additional emphasis on encouraging Welsh-medium schools to use the strong links they already have to work together to provide a broad range of experiences for NQTs which otherwise they may not in a single (often small) school would be a positive development. It would also be advantageous for NQTs who practise in Welsh-medium schools to have some experience of working in English-medium schools in order to widen their experiences and understanding of different approaches, issues and challenges.

It is important and without exception that all materials, including research materials are available to NQTs in Welsh and English concurrently.

Question 13 – Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be changed to either reduce the negative effect or increase the positive effect on:

- opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

Question 14 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Induction should make effective use of the lead schools for ITE. We are developing a strong cohort of ‘training schools’ in Wales and need to make the best use of this resource. There is potential in the lead schools to provide an alternative context within which NQTs can observe good practice and work alongside effective practitioners. Teachers and leaders in these schools are also developing their expertise as teacher educators and understand the content and delivery models of ITE programmes. The lead schools might also provide opportunities for NQTs to explore aspects of pedagogy, and a safe space in which to test ideas and to make mistakes. Many of these schools also exemplify what it means to be a learning organisation, which is vital if NQTs are to understand what it means to develop their skills for career-long professional learning.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: