

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and statutory induction for newly qualified teachers in Wales



Guidance

Guidance document no: 263/2020

Date of issue: July 2020

Replaces temporary guidance issued in March 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and statutory induction for newly qualified teachers in Wales

Audience

Newly qualified teachers (NQTs); induction mentors (IMs); external verifiers (EVs); headteachers; appropriate bodies (ABs); local authorities (LAs); regional consortia; education workforce unions; Estyn; Education Workforce Council (EWC); chairs of governors; independent schools; further education institutions (FEIs); supply agencies; trainee teachers and initial teacher education (ITE) institutions.

Overview

Changes to induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Action required

For all persons/bodies involved in statutory induction in Wales to apply and have due regard to the procedures and advice in this guidance circular.

Further information

Enquiries about this document should be directed to:
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Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.hwb.gov.wales

Related documents

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020; The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) (Amendments) Regulations 2015; Induction for newly qualified teachers in Wales Guidance 2017; *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document* (STPCD) 2019; *Professional standards for teaching and leadership* (2017); The Staffing of Maintained School (Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Contents

Introduction	2
Why are changes required?	2
What changes are we making?	2
1. Length of the induction period	3
2. Professional learning	4
Elements of induction that have not changed	5
Further advice and contact details	6
Consortia contact details	6

Introduction

We recognise that newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in Wales will understandably be anxious about the potential impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on their statutory induction. This guidance has been developed to accompany new Regulations that have been made to ensure that NQTs are not disadvantaged during this time. This guidance replaces temporary guidance published in March 2020 and supplements the [Induction Guidance for Newly Qualified Teachers \(updated in 2017\)](#).

In summary, the revised requirements allow NQTs to focus on demonstrating that they meet the professional standards and developing a comprehensive induction profile. An NQT who meets the professional standards can successfully complete induction as long as they have completed 110 sessions (one school term) of teaching.

Why are changes required?

From 23 March 2020 changes to the way schools operate due to the COVID-19 pandemic have meant that all school staff, including NQTs have had to adapt and work in innovative ways to deliver education for our learners.

The [Education \(Induction Arrangements for School Teachers\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2015](#) (“the 2015 Regulations”) require NQTs undertaking induction to complete three school terms or equivalent. NQTs who are not employed on a full-time basis must complete 380 school sessions.

Schools’ changed way of working during the COVID-19 pandemic period means that some NQTs may demonstrate that they meet all the professional standards but, under the 2015 Regulations, would not be able to complete induction in the 2019/20 academic year. They would be required to continue induction in September 2020 because they do not meet the statutory requirement to complete 380 sessions.

All NQTs are expected to undertake professional learning during their induction period. Temporary guidance recognised this and encouraged NQTs to continue reviewing their practice and progress against the professional standards and to engage in professional learning activities via Hwb or other platforms, to address any gaps that may exist against the professional standards. The 2015 Regulations do not provide for stand-alone periods of professional learning to count towards induction, and therefore the Regulatory change is being made to allow this.

What changes are we making?

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) provides for two changes (outlined below) which come into force on 15 July 2020. The 2020 Regulations will be reviewed on a termly basis to ensure they are still fit for purpose. They will expire on 31 August 2021.

The regulatory changes follow the approach set out in the temporary guidance. The changes extend and formalise the guidance and ensure that NQTs undertaking induction are not disadvantaged as a result of schools’ changed way of working due to COVID-19.

1. Length of the induction period

2015 Regulations

NQTs are required to undertake a statutory induction period of a minimum of three school terms or 380 sessions. There is no flexibility in this requirement.

2020 Regulations

The Appropriate Body (AB) has the discretion to allow an NQT to successfully complete induction after a minimum of 110 school sessions, **provided that the NQT meets the professional standards** and consents to the reduction.

What does this mean in practice?

The majority of NQTs take around three school terms or 380 sessions to demonstrate, via their induction profile, that they meet the professional standards and successfully complete induction. By introducing a minimum period of 110 sessions (which is equivalent to one term) we are providing flexibility to address the issue of NQTs who meet the standards but are prevented from successfully completing induction because they may not have completed 380 sessions. This flexibility is required at this time, when the opportunities for NQTs (especially those on short-term contracts) to complete the prescribed period of three terms / 380 sessions have been affected by COVID-19.

NQTs who meet the professional standards but have not accrued three terms / 380 sessions due to schools' changed working arrangement since 23 March 2020, will be able to successfully complete induction. For NQTs undertaking induction after the amendments made by the 2020 Regulations the change will mean that if they meet the professional standards, they will not be required to continue their induction period in September for the sole purpose of meeting the three terms / 380 sessions requirement.

In the temporary guidance, we advised NQTs to record absences of up to a maximum of 30 days or 60 sessions in order to reach the three terms / 380 sessions requirement. NQTs will no longer be required to log absences for the purpose of meeting the three terms / 380 sessions requirement (all other absences should continue to be logged in accordance with the 2017 guidance) because the 2020 Regulations reduce the number of sessions that an NQT has to complete as a minimum.

In practice, ABs will make their decision on whether an NQT passes induction in two stages:

- Firstly, the AB will assess the induction profile, to decide whether it demonstrates that the NQT meets the standards.
- If the NQT can demonstrate that he / she meets the professional standards, the second stage for the AB will be to check whether the NQT has undertaken **a minimum of 110** sessions of teaching.

If an NQT meets the requirements of both stages, then he / she will pass their induction.

An NQT has up to three terms / 380 sessions to demonstrate that they meet the professional standards. Should an NQT deem that he/she is ready to submit the induction profile for assessment before completing three terms / 380 sessions, the NQT should discuss this with the induction mentor (IM) and/or external verifier (EV). The IM or EV would then make a recommendation to the AB for assessment.

Should the AB decide that the NQT does not meet the professional standards, the NQT's induction period will continue. An extension will only be applied if the NQT requires additional time, over and above three terms / 380 sessions (in accordance with the 2015 Regulations and 2017 guidance).

For NQTs starting induction during the 2020/21 academic year, and any NQTs continuing their induction during 2020/21, the length of the induction period will remain as a minimum of 110 sessions. However, the 2020 Regulations are due to expire on 31 August 2021, therefore, any NQT who needs to continue their induction period after that date will revert to the 2015 Regulations, and be required to complete three school terms / 380 sessions of teaching.

Any NQTs working on a part-time or short-term basis, who have worked or continue to work in hub schools with the children of key workers, can record those sessions in their induction profile, and they will count towards the induction period.

In accordance with the 2015 Regulations and the 2017 guidance, NQTs undertaking induction on a part-time or short-term supply basis should continue to log all sessions with the EWC via the submission of the appropriate form. NQTs undertaking induction via short-term supply must ensure their supply agency verifies any sessions undertaken if the NQT is unable to obtain verification from the school.

2. Professional learning

2015 Regulations

There is currently no provision for the time NQTs spend on stand-alone sessions of professional learning to count towards induction.

2020 Regulations

NQTs may count time spent engaged on stand-alone professional learning towards their induction period. A maximum of 16% of the length of their induction period can be used to undertake professional learning.

The professional learning must be:

- undertaken between 26 March 2020 and 31 August 2021
- a minimum of 3 hours duration (whether consecutive or not) to count as a session, and
- approved by the AB.

What does this mean in practice?

This change reflects the significance of career-long professional learning which has even greater importance at this time, when the opportunities for NQTs to complete their induction period have been affected by COVID-19 and teachers may need to develop their skills to teach via distance or blended methods. The change enables NQTs to count a maximum of 16% of the total number of sessions that NQTs undertake in order to complete induction, to be sessions of professional learning.

It is important that NQTs and those supporting them ensure that there is a balance between professional learning and practice. An NQT with a disproportionate amount of professional learning compared to teaching practice may not have sufficient practical experience to be able to meet the professional standards and complete induction.

For example:

- if an NQT has taken three terms / 380 sessions to complete their induction profile and demonstrated that they meet the professional standards, then a maximum of 60 sessions of professional learning, approved by the AB, may count towards the total 380 sessions
- if an NQT has taken 220 sessions to complete their induction profile and demonstrate that they meet the professional standards, then a maximum of 35 of the 220 sessions could be made up of stand-alone sessions of professional learning.

16% is the maximum amount of the induction period that can be used to undertake professional learning. An NQT may undertake less than that and, provided they meet the standards, may still successfully complete induction. An NQT may also choose to complete more than 16% of their induction as professional learning but any sessions over and above 16% cannot be counted towards induction. This is to ensure that all NQTs achieve a balance of professional learning and teaching practice during their induction period.

Ultimately, the AB is required to approve the professional learning sessions undertaken by NQTs. ABs may ask IMs or EVs to verify the professional learning sessions on their behalf and make a recommendation as to whether they should be approved.

A professional learning form is available via the Professional Learning Passport (PLP) for NQTs to record any professional learning undertaken between 26 March 2020 – 31 August 2021. NQTs are asked to log any activity undertaken by the hour – 3 x 1 hour activities will count as a session. Completed forms should be uploaded to the PLP after the completion of five sessions, and every five sessions thereafter, to enable EVs / IMs to verify the professional learning and for it to be recorded on the profile.

For NQTs starting induction during the 2020/21 academic year, and any NQTs continuing their induction during 2020/21, periods of professional learning will continue to count towards their induction period, even after the 2020 Regulations have expired.

Elements of induction that have not changed

The following requirements under the 2015 Regulations have not changed. NQTs and all stakeholders involved in the delivery of induction should refer to the [Induction for newly qualified teachers in Wales \(revised 2017\)](#) guidance and the [Education \(Induction Arrangements for School Teachers\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2015](#).

- Requirement to serve an induction period.
- Institutions in which an induction period may be served.
- Periods of employment counting towards an induction period.
- Extension of an induction period before completion.
- Service of more than one induction period.
- Supervision and training during the induction period.
- Completion of an induction period.
- Extension of an induction period pursuant to a decision of the AB or EWC.
- Termination of employment following failure to complete an induction period satisfactorily.
- Appeals.

Further advice and contact details

If schools have any queries relating to induction funding, please e-mail the EWC via professionaldevelopment@ewc.wales.

Consortia contact details

Central South Consortium	Mandy Esseen: mandy.esseen@cscjes.org.uk Heather Jones: Heather.Jones@cscjes.org.uk
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Contact details for local authorities within GwE and ERW can be found at <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/induction/#contacts>.

Further information on the role of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found at <https://gov.wales/how-schools-will-work-during-coronavirus-pandemic>.