

Amendments to the induction regulations in Wales

Consultation Response Form	<p>Your name: Tom Hamilton</p> <p>Organisation (if applicable): The General Teaching Council for Scotland</p> <p>e-mail/telephone number: tom.hamilton@gpcs.org.uk / 0131 314 6000</p> <p>Your address: Clerwood House, 96 Clermiston Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6UT</p>
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Responses should be returned by **29 May 2012** to:

The Induction Team
Learning Improvement and Professional Development Division
Department for Education and Skills
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to

e-mail: inductioninfo@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Responses can come from individuals or groups. The form is set out in the order of the consultation document and the questions are grouped into sections. You do not have to answer **all** of the questions if you do not wish to; you are welcome to only answer the questions that are relevant to you, and to continue your answers on additional sheets if required.

If you are responding on behalf of your organisation, please tick here.



Periods of employment that count towards induction

Question 1 – Do you agree that all periods of employment as a teacher after 1 September 2012 of at least one school session or more should be counted towards completion of the induction period?

Yes - but this will need incredibly careful tracking and detailed record keeping if every morning or afternoon is to be counted towards the induction period.

Is an online centralised recordkeeping system a possibility or is every individual teacher going to be set requirements to follow and given appropriate guidance?

Question 2 – Do you agree that there should be no limit on when an induction period must be completed?

No, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) would advocate having time limits for the completion of induction. If not, skills become outdated.

Scotland already has two time limits for the completion of its induction period. For those who enter the Teacher Induction Scheme it is three years while for those who follow the less certain employment pattern of the Flexible Route it is five years. The GTCS is also introducing a scheme of Professional Update with a five year period seen as appropriate for teachers to show that they are not only maintaining but enhancing their skills and abilities.

We would there advocate that having a set time limit is a necessary part of ensuring that at the end of the induction period new teachers have met the necessary requirements within a reasonable time which helps to ensure the coherence of their professional learning.

It is perhaps also worth noting that in Scotland those new teachers who complete their probation period through the Teacher Induction Scheme (the vast majority) do so over a single school year while those who choose to follow the Flexible Route must complete service equivalent to a year and a term. This is to ensure that the possible lack of coherence in their employment pattern is compensated for by having more opportunity to teach and build up their skills.

Question 3 – Do you agree that the five-year limit on short-term supply teaching should be removed from the Regulations?

Yes. Supply teachers should either have already met induction requirements or be working towards meeting them.

The Scottish system would have difficulty understanding the concept of working as a supply teacher without either having achieved Full Registration with the GTCS or therefore being in the situation of working towards achieving Full Registration.

Supervision and assessment against the practising teacher standards

Question 4 – Do you agree that the appropriate body should have overall responsibility for the support and training provided to newly qualified teachers during their induction period?

Yes, but some more detailed definition of what constitutes an ‘appropriate body’ would have helped in the consultation documentation.

The term is extensively bandied about in the documentation but not properly defined until page 15 of the Draft Guidance document.

Even then, the document remains confusing.

On Page 7 of the Consultation Document, in the first paragraph of the Proposals section, there is a reference to the Welsh Government in relation to the Masters in Educational Practice. Does this mean that the Welsh Government is proposing itself as an appropriate body?

Question 5 – Do you agree that schools should be required to provide newly qualified teachers with day-to-day support and work in collaboration with the appropriate body on the development of the newly qualified teacher's induction programme?

Yes, but this has to be as standardised as possible to ensure consistent quality. For example, in Scotland considerable effort has been put into ensuring that the Supporters of new teachers within the Teacher Induction Scheme follow a broadly similar pattern of interaction and deliver as consistent messages as possible.

Question 6 – Do you agree that the requirement for the headteacher to make a recommendation to the appropriate body at the end of the induction period should be removed from the Regulations?

No. The Headteacher is very well placed to offer evidence on progress but is also the best placed person to make such a recommendation.

The Head knows the new teacher very well and has a good insight into sustained performance.

The External Mentor will also build up considerable insight on the new teacher and hence the GTCS would argue either for two recommendations of equal weight or perhaps even for the Head and External Mentor coming to a joint recommendation. (Clearly, arrangements would also need to be made for situations when there was a difference of recommendation.)

There needs to be a genuine partnership between the school and appropriate body.

Question 7 – Do you agree that headteachers should provide evidence at the end of the induction period (or at any point during the induction period if requested) to the appropriate body regarding a newly qualified teacher’s progression against the practising teacher standards?

Yes, but see above.

Question 8 – Do you agree that the appropriate body should make the final decision at the end of the induction period based on evidence, which includes that provided by the school and the external mentor?

Yes, but with a caveat.

As you would expect, we think that the system in Scotland is more appropriate than this. In Scotland it is the GTCS which is the ultimate arbiter of probation and the body which awards Full Registration. It is independent of the schools and the local authorities and hence can make a decision which is neutral.

We note the proposed involvement of GTC Wales as an appeals body would suggest that consideration be given to enhancing its role so that it is equivalent to that of the GTCS.

Teachers who qualify outside the European Economic Area (EEA)/Switzerland

Question 9 – Do you agree that teachers who qualified outside the EEA/Switzerland and who have successfully completed a period of professional experience comparable to a period of induction in the country in which they qualified should be exempt from the requirement to complete induction in Wales and assessment against the practising teacher standards?

If qualifications are checked/verified and match and if appropriate references can be provided this should be acceptable.

It is presumed that for those who have met such requirements within the UK and within Europe there would be automatic recognition.

Draft induction guidance

Question 10 – Included in this consultation is the statutory guidance that will support the revised induction regulations. This guidance aims to expand on the Regulations and provide the detail of how induction in Wales should be managed and delivered.

If you have any comments about the draft guidance that you would like to be considered, please include these in this section.

1 Page 6 refers to the reduced teaching time for induction teachers. It makes reference to 90% teaching but then goes on to say about a further 10% reduction beyond that. The understanding taken from this is that teacher completing induction in Wales are therefore teaching a maximum of 80% of the normal load of a teacher who has successfully completed the induction period.

Is this analysis correct and if so, why not just say that new teachers teach up to 80%?

2 The schedule for observation and assessment is comprehensive but will be a considerable organisational burden on all those involved. This will need careful consideration. There will also need to be time built into the system for the school and the external mentor to discuss progress. We would also advocate that opportunities should be planned into the system for triangular conversations with the inductee, the school and the external mentor present.

3 The part time, the peripatetic and supply teacher arrangements will present considerable burdens and challenges to the system and would merit very careful setting up followed by very careful monitoring to ensure the quality of experience and the validity and reliability of decisions made.

4 It is unclear from this consultation what the arrangements are for the Masters in Educational Practice but having external mentors who are also part of this process will mean very careful selection to ensure that they are appropriately qualified as well as appropriately experienced. Finding such paragons may be a challenge.

5 The reference to GTC Wales and appeals is noted but what arrangements are to be developed for a complaints process?

Is the intention simply to make use of the appropriate body's grievance mechanisms and, if so, is this sufficient?

Question 11 – 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.

Please enter here:

The Welsh Government is to be congratulated on its endeavours to develop a supportive but rigorous system for the induction of its teachers.

Responses to consultations may be made public – on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to be kept confidential, please tick here: