

Overview of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy and Early Career Framework

Recruitment and Retention Strategy

On 28th January 2019 the Department for Education (DfE) published their much-awaited [recruitment and retention strategy document](#). This document establishes a framework that unites the two pressing issues of teacher recruitment and teacher retention under a single approach. The strategy therefore aims to help answer the following two questions from a national perspective:

- How can we best promote teaching as a profession and ensure enough people are recruited?
- How can we minimise the number of teachers leaving the profession in the early years of their career?

The strategy has been supported and co-signed by a wide range of bodies from within the educational sector, including associations of schools and school leaders, teaching unions and Ofsted. The DfE is clear that, through this strategy, it aims to “... *strengthen and support a mix of provision led by both universities and schools*”. The strategy document outlines four main barriers to achieving the DfE’s stated objectives and how each of these might be overcome:

1. The wrong climate for headteachers and excessive workloads distracting teachers from teaching (both retention and recruitment)

The DfE intends to look into a number of ways in which teacher workload could be reduced as well creating more supportive school cultures.

2. Lack of high-quality support for early career teachers (retention)

The Early Career Framework (ECF) has been developed to support this strategy of better continued professional development for teachers in the early stages of their career. The DfE has committed to introducing specialist National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) to support teachers.

3. Inflexible or rigid working structures (retention)

Building on the work in the ECF, the DfE will invest in career development opportunities for teachers, both in terms of leadership and non-leadership pathways:

- £20 million has been promised for scholarships for reformed leadership NPQs in target areas
- £42 million for a Teacher Development Fund to support leadership and specialist NPQs

4. Initial engagement for those interested in teaching is often too complex (recruitment)

The DfE is investing in new digital systems to make the application process for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) more user-friendly. There is a stated ambition to make the ITT market work more efficiently and effectively



Early Career Framework

On 28th January, the DfE published their [new Early Career framework \(ECF\)](#), which is hoped to act as a central pillar of the new recruitment and retention strategy. The ECF will serve as to provide early career teachers with two years of fully-funded support, including fully-funded time off in the second year of teaching and support for (teacher) mentors in schools. As part of this initiative, the first specialist Teacher Developer National Professional Qualification will be closely aligned to the ECF.

The aim is to create a more long-term route of progression that is available to teachers, which can join up with previous development, benefitting the individual teacher, but also enriching the teaching environment for children and schools more broadly:

"The content of the ECF builds on and complements ITT. The ECF underpins what all early career teachers should be entitled to learn about and learn how to do based on expert guidance and the best available research evidence. As is the case for other professions, areas covered in initial training will be covered in greater depth as part of induction as teachers continue on their journey to becoming experts."

The ECF is constructed around 5 core areas:

1. behaviour management
2. pedagogy
3. curriculum
4. assessment
5. professional behaviours

The DfE state explicitly within the ECF that this initiative should **not** be used as an assessment framework. The following commitments are made within the ECF, for which the DfE are expecting "at least" an extra £130 million in funding to cover:

- 5% timetable time released in the second year of teaching for all early career teachers
- Early career teachers will continue to have a 10% timetable reduction in their first year of induction.
- Availability of ECF curricula and training materials
- High quality ECF training programmes
- Funding time for mentors to support early career teachers
- Funding for mentor training

Early roll-out of the ECF is planned to take place in North East, Bradford, Doncaster and Greater Manchester from September 2020 as part of Teacher Development Premium, with a full national programme planned for the following September. The ECF document is organised into a series of eight standards, each organised in their own table with expectations and aims.