



Starting out in teaching



Welcome

Teaching is one of the most rewarding careers you could have chosen, but at the start you may well have a lot of questions. Here at the National Education Union, we've got lots of help and advice to support you in your new role, including specific information on the most common questions and issues faced by those new to teaching. Your union will be there for you throughout your career to empower you to be a strong voice for teachers and the children you teach.



**See our trainee and NQ hub at
www.neu.org.uk/newteachers**

Induction

Every teacher awarded qualified teacher status (QTS) is required to complete an induction period of, usually, one year. Good induction helps you to feel at home, to fit in, to make sure you know all the routines and procedures, and to understand the values, objectives and purposes of the organisation you join. Induction should be a supportive process that helps new teachers develop their professional confidence and competence. For more information, see our *Guide to induction* and our *Induction checklist* at www.neu.org.uk/publications.

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Before you start



Your first day in a new school is an exciting time, but you may also feel apprehensive.

Find out as much about the school as you can before you start, through the website, prospectus or recent inspection report.

Arrange a visit if you can, to familiarise yourself with the layout of the school, and any other information to help get you off to a good start.

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Relationships

There are lots of relationships to get used to when you first go into the classroom: with pupils, other teachers, support staff, leaders, and, of course, parents. Take your time; you don't have to get to know everyone straight away. Acknowledge the skills and expertise of your more experienced colleagues, but don't forget that your view matters. Working out, over time, how the staff relate to each other is invaluable.

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You and your mentor

For trainee or newly qualified teachers, the most important professional relationship is likely to be with your mentor, and time should be set aside for you to meet on a regular basis. There is no specific and consistent job description that applies to the role of a mentor and the word is often used to describe many different roles. Your union has practical guidance on managing this relationship, including what you should expect from the mentor and what the mentor should expect from you.



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Planning, preparation and assessment time

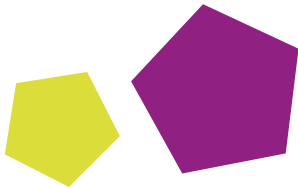
All teachers are entitled to have at least 10% of their teaching timetable for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). This time should be allocated during the school's timetabled teaching week, not bolted on to the school day, and must be in minimum blocks of 30 minutes. NQTs are also entitled to have 10% less teaching time than other main-scale teachers, so they have time to undertake induction activities.



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Professional development

It's never too early in your career to think about continuing professional development (CPD). The National Education Union's CPD programme is delivered by highly qualified trainers and offers a wide range of courses, many aimed at new teachers. Courses are designed to meet your individual needs and to have a lasting impact on teaching and learning. See www.neu.org.uk/learning for our CPD programme.



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Pay

Most newly qualified teachers will be placed at the bottom end of the main pay range. The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) permits governing bodies to place teachers with relevant experience outside teaching at a higher point. If you've been told your school will do this, ensure your pay reflects the position. If you're working in an academy, you should check the pay arrangements because these can vary significantly between academies and academy trusts. See www.neu.org.uk/pay.



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Teachers' Pension Scheme

All new teachers will automatically join the 'career average' pension scheme. This means pensions are based on your average salary over your whole career. As an NQT you will pay a minimum of 7.4% of your salary towards your pension. We understand that this is a big ask, with other pressures such as student loans and rent, but your employer pays a substantial 16.4% contribution too, so opting out is like turning down free money.

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In the classroom

Your time in the classroom should be exciting and stimulating. You will have many responsibilities, but you should also be aware of the responsibilities the school has towards you. You can find National Education Union advice on all of these on our website and through our publications, or by contacting us directly.



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Legal responsibilities



All teachers, including those on the way to gaining QTS, have a 'duty of care' towards their pupils. According to this duty of care, you are required to apply your professional training and skills to promote the well-being of pupils. Your school also has a responsibility to train and support you to do this. Your union has advice on your rights and responsibilities in meeting your duty of care.

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Child protection

Teachers are not responsible for investigating suspected physical or emotional abuse, but should know where to report concerns. Acquaint yourself with procedures in your school, academy or college for dealing with suspected abuse. Know who the designated safeguarding lead, responsible for child protection, is, and insist on receiving appropriate training on child protection issues.

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Stress

The union believes all employers should have a policy on how to reduce and prevent teacher stress. The most common causes of teacher stress include workload and inspections by Ofsted (in England) and Estyn (in Wales). If you are feeling stressed, it is likely your colleagues will be too. Speak to your National Education Union rep so they can provide support and offer suggestions on how to tackle stress and its causes.



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Work-life balance

The National Education Union believes all employers should have a policy covering work-life balance. The Department for Education also says schools should consider incorporating work-life balance into their development plan, so check to see if your workplace has one. Additionally, the DfE offers specific advice on reducing workload around marking, lesson planning, and data collection. As part of our ongoing campaign to tackle excessive workload, the National Education Union has developed many helpful resources, as well as continuing to lobby the Government to make changes to alleviate workload. See www.neu.org.uk/workload.

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Marking

Teachers should be allowed to exercise professional autonomy when it comes to the frequency and style of marking. Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook is clear that no specific type or volume of marking and feedback is expected; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. The Department for Education has said that marking should be 'motivating, meaningful and manageable'.



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Lesson plans

As a trainee or NQT, you are likely to be required to produce a plan for your lessons. The format is entirely a matter of professional judgment, as the Department for Education, Ofsted and Estyn, do not require a particular format. They should be kept to a minimum length and can be set out in bullet points or notes, including how learning objectives can be achieved. You should not be expected to hand in lesson plans for scrutiny by senior management, so speak to your union rep if you are asked to do this.

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Data

The collection of data can be a major cause of workload issues in schools. Your union has advice on ways to make it more manageable, while the Department for Education advice is that every data collection has a clear purpose, and that the process is as efficient as possible. It advises that only data that is needed to support outcomes for children should be collected, and the amount of data should be proportionate to its usefulness. Duplication should be avoided – data should be collected once and used in many ways.

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Behaviour

All teachers, whether they are new to the classroom or have many years of experience, can sometimes find pupil behaviour challenging and undermining. Establish your classroom expectations and class rules, based on school policies, and outline these with pupils at the beginning of the academic year. They are more likely to respond positively to rules that they have agreed. Make sure that you read the school's behaviour policy and discuss practice with your mentor when joining a new school. The National Education Union offers practical advice on behaviour management, including the *Managing Behaviour* guide.



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Inspections

Your first Ofsted or Estyn inspection can seem daunting, but inspections should not be an experience you have to face alone. Seek out your fellow National Education Union members and find a collective approach to inspections, which minimises additional work and ensures teachers are in control. Be aware of Ofsted and Estyn's 'mythbuster' guidance, which makes clear what inspectors should and should not look for.

Your union also has material to support you through the process.



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Observations

The union believes that classroom observation should be developmental and supportive. As an NQT you will be observed at regular intervals. There is no stipulation around the timing of observations. National Education Union policy is that a teacher should be subject to no more than three classroom observations per year, exceeding no more than three hours in total.



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Social media and electronic communication

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have changed how we communicate, but it's important to remember that careers have been wrecked over an ill-judged post. Your professional position can be compromised if inappropriate information is accessed or shared online, even if done outside work. Limit public access to accounts and don't post information you wouldn't want your employers to see. Also, never use personal email addresses, mobile phones or other personal social media accounts to contact pupils or parents.

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Extra activities

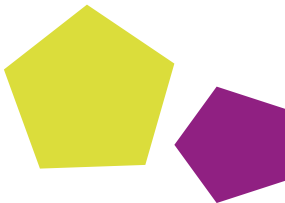
Taking on activities such as breakfast or after-school clubs must be voluntary. If you do take on additional activities, in some, rare, circumstances you can be paid for the time if employed under the STPCD. The level of payment should be set out in your school's pay policy.



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Get involved

The National Education Union is led by education professionals just like you. There are so many ways you can get involved and make a real difference in your workplace and across the education service. These include responding to surveys, taking part in the learning and development opportunities we offer, or joining our new professional network to raise and discuss the issues that affect you. See www.neu.org.uk/getinvolved.



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Here to help

The rep at your school or college will be able to offer you practical and personal support. Your local branch/district/division can also provide help and advice. If you do not know the name/telephone number of your rep or local branch/district/division secretary, or do not have a rep in your workplace, call **0345 811 8111** or see **www.neu.org.uk/contactus**.

You can also call **0345 811 8111** or email **adviceline@neu.org.uk** for advice and support at any time.

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Upgrade your membership now

It's essential that you upgrade to full membership of the National Education Union before you begin your newly qualified year – it's just £1 for the academic year 2018/19 and will ensure that you receive all the support and advice you need. Upgrade online at **www.neu.org.uk/upgrade** or call **0845 811 8111**. The National Education Union is a powerful and growing voice for all teachers and education professionals who are passionate about what they do. Upgrade today and make sure your voice is heard and you receive the support you need now and throughout your career.

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