



School Direct: your rights and expectations

National Education Union
charter for School Direct
trainees



Training to teach can be a fantastic experience and is the first step into the best career in the world.

In 2016/17, for the first time, School Direct trainees made up approximately half the trainee teachers working towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in the UK. However, the experiences of School Direct trainees across England can vary, from the excellent to the not so good; and if the Government, schools, and training providers don't get it right they run the risk of losing passionate teachers before they are even qualified.

With this in mind the National Education Union has produced this 22-point checklist as a guide for School Direct trainee teachers setting out the minimum expectations for their teacher training year.

If you are not already a member of the National Education Union, you can join us by phoning 0345 811 8111 or visit www.neu.org.uk/join.

Starting out

1. Induction before the start of training

Starting out in teaching can be daunting enough, so your school should make it as easy as possible by blocking out time to properly welcome you to the school, guide you around the site, and answer practical questions you might have.

2. Receive an induction pack

This should include information about safeguarding procedures and the name of the designated safeguarding lead, pupil behaviour policy and the name of the SENCO, bullying and harassment policy, equality and diversity policy, health and safety information, and the names of trade union representatives.

3. Receive a statement of particulars of employment within two months of beginning your role (salaried route only)

Your written particulars might be included in your letter of appointment or given to you as a separate document. The statement should contain your job title; your rate of pay and how often you will be paid; the hours you will work; your entitlements in relation to holiday pay; sick pay; notice pay; pension and any collective agreements which directly affect your terms and conditions of employment. If there is a change to any of the terms in your statement of particulars, your employer should let you know in writing within a month of the change, and any changes made with your agreement.

Mentors and teacher training

School Direct is a programme of professional education and training. Ofsted's inspection framework for initial teacher education sets out expectations for a system based on high-quality training and support for trainees. The capacity of the school to provide high-quality mentoring, and to access academic support, is vital to the success of School Direct.

4. Access to good quality mentoring, teaching, supervision and tutorial support

Delivered by appropriately experienced, qualified and trained staff, including expert mentors.

5. Regular, preferably weekly, meetings with your mentor

Providing appropriate feedback on your teaching, and opportunities to comment on any difficulties you are experiencing. You should expect mentoring which is both phase specific (related to the age groups you are working with) and subject specific.

6. An entitlement to additional support if you are making less than satisfactory progress

With clear indication of targets to be met.

7. A right to request a change of mentor by mutual agreement

Having a good relationship with a supportive mentor, who has time to work with you, is key to your success as a School Direct trainee. Your school or training provider should have a clear and supportive process for addressing issues if you do not feel comfortable with your current mentor or mentoring programme.

8. Access to resources

Including appropriate research, to support you in your learning and teaching.

9. Access to a training programme arranged by your school

Including subject-based pedagogy and training in assessment and behaviour management, as well as access to all INSET day and training opportunities provided to other teachers at the school.

10. Access to a broad learning experience

This should include the observation of good teaching.

11. Recognition that trainees should not be subject to the same level of expectations as qualified teachers

It is not fair or realistic to expect the same standards, particularly in terms of responsibility and performance, from a teacher in training to that of an experienced teacher with QTS.

12. Appropriate support in managing behaviour in the classroom

Your mentor or line manager should provide you with the behaviour management policy for the school and in some schools will also provide in-house training. It is important to get behaviour right from the start so do not be afraid to ask for support and advice from colleagues. All teachers experience behaviour management issues in their class at different points in their career, new teachers are no different.

The National Education Union runs behaviour management courses specifically for student members and NQTs. Find out more at www.neu.org.uk. Tips on managing behaviour are also available and can be found at www.neu.org.uk/behaviourtips.

13. Access to counselling service

Teaching, and training to teach, can be immensely challenging and stressful at times and your school has a duty to look after you and all employees. If your employer/placement school provides access to a counselling service, you should be entitled to access the same during your training. Many counselling support services provide telephone, live chat and email support. If you do not have access to an employer funded counselling service, you may contact the Education Support Partnership. Their details are available at www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk.

Your rights in school

14. Full and equal access to recognised trade unions and support in being an active member

When you commence your training you are welcome to seek advice and support from the National Education Union. It is very likely that the union has a rep in your school so please seek them out and introduce yourself if they haven't done so to you.

15. No requirement to provide classroom cover except in exceptional circumstances

The School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) states that “Teachers should be required to provide cover only rarely, and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable (this does not apply to teachers who are employed wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing such cover).” This should apply to all teachers and trainee teachers, including School Direct trainees regardless of route, equally.

16. No expectation to routinely undertake admin and clerical tasks

This includes, but is not limited to, help with putting up posters and displays and bulk photocopying.

17. A right to work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment

Teachers are protected from discrimination in employment on grounds of age, disability, marital or civil partnership status, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, trans status (protected characteristics), trade union membership or activity, and by reason of working part-time or on a fixed-term contract. It is unlawful for employers to discriminate in recruitment or selection procedures, or to treat employees differently, in ways that amount to direct or indirect discrimination.

Discrimination might occur, for instance, in promotion opportunities or training; access to benefits or services; in disciplinary, grievance or other procedures; or in dismissal or other detrimental treatment. Teachers are protected from direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment. Employers must take steps to avoid discrimination in contractual provision and working practices and must take steps to prevent teachers from being harassed by colleagues, parents and pupils. Further, good employers should take an inclusive approach, ensuring that their employment practices are supportive and widen access to opportunity for those with a protected characteristic or those with caring responsibilities. For more information about discrimination and harassment speak with your workplace rep or go to either www.atl.org.uk or www.teachers.org.uk.

Pay and conditions (salaried route only)

18. The same terms, conditions, and entitlements as other teachers at the school/academy (salaried route only)

Including, but not limited to, the same rights as NQT colleagues to teachers' sickness and maternity rights and other leave of absence rights.

For more information please go to www.atl.org.uk or www.teachers.org.uk.

You should also read our NQT Pay, Pensions and Conditions guide:

www.teachers.org.uk/members-reps/new-teachers.

19. Pay derived from the teacher pay scales (salaried route only)

During your period of training you will be employed by the school or local authority as an unqualified teacher. The salary you receive will be dependent on the school you apply to and the subject you wish to teach. However, you will usually be paid as an unqualified teacher on point one or above of the unqualified teacher scale.

20. Full-time pay for full-time work (salaried route only)

School Direct (salaried) trainees are normally paid on the unqualified teacher pay scales. However, some trainees have been told that because they have a reduced timetable, they will be paid only a percentage of the FT salary, e.g. if you have 80 per cent of the teaching timetable, you will be paid 0.8 FTE on the unqualified teacher pay scales. The National Education Union completely rejects this. You work a reduced teaching timetable because you are learning on the job and need space to manage your time as both a teacher and a student. You should not be made to suffer a diminution in pay because of this.

21. A right to access the Teachers' Pension Scheme (salaried route only)

As a School Direct (salaried) trainee you are eligible to join the scheme and will have the same rights and entitlements as other teachers in relation to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS). We strongly encourage eligible teachers to join the TPS. Joining the TPS is the major step towards securing your financial future – don't opt out! For further information on the TPS visit www.teachers.org.uk/pay-pensions-conditions/pensions or www.atl.org.uk/pensions.

22. Teaching no more than 80 per cent of a full-time teachers' timetable with no less than 20 per cent planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time

The National Education Union is committed to reducing workload for all teachers and believes that new teachers especially should be given additional protected time to plan and prepare for the classroom. For more information on the National Education Union's campaign on workload, see www.neu.org.uk/workload.

If you believe that your school or training provider is currently not meeting these minimum expectations then you need to take action immediately:

- ◆ Speak with your workplace rep or local NEU officer. If you do not know who your rep or local NEU officer is then please call us on **0345 811 8111** or visit www.neu.org.uk/contactus.
- ◆ Speak with other School Direct trainees at your school and make them aware of this document. The NEU can help organise a meeting so you and other new teachers can talk about your experiences and start making positive changes.
- ◆ Go to www.neu.org.uk for more information and advice about starting out in teaching.

TRAINEE APPLICATION FREE MEMBERSHIP



www.neu.org.uk/join 0345 811 8111

Please detach here and return to Freepost RSKC-HCRC-HGYJ, National Education Union, Hamilton House, Mableton Place, London WC1H 9BD

Please complete in capital letters

Title	First name	Surname
Date of birth DD MM YYYY	Permanent home address	
Mobile	Postcode	
Home telephone	Email	

Training routes

School-led training

Programme

- School Direct (salaried)
 School Direct (non-salaried)
 SCITT
 Teach First
 GTP Wales

Other (please specify)

School
Postcode

Training provider

University-led training

Qualification

- BA (QTS)
 BSc (QTS)
 PGCE
 PGCE (FE)
 BED

Other (please specify)

University / college / SCITT

When does your course/programme finish?

MM YYYY

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MM YYYY

Terms and conditions available at www.neu.org.uk/terms

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