

Supporting your NQT 2020

2020 so far has been a year of challenges to many aspects of our life. Covid-19 has affected all sectors of the workforce and has a significant impact on education. The experience of Initial Teacher Education for the 2019/20 cohort has been very different to previous years. As such those undertaking the induction year as NQTs in 2020/21 may have differing or greater needs in terms of support than previous years.

Challenges for NQTs in 2020

- Trainees have only completed two thirds of the usual time given to school placement experience.
- Term 3 is typically when trainees really begin to solidify their practice and role as a teacher - developing their autonomy and a sense of efficacy in their skills and approaches.
- This reduced experience means it is likely that NQTs may be coming to you not only without the experience and refined level of practice that you may expect, but also with a lower level of confidence and autonomy than usual.
- Typically it is in the later stages of ITE that trainees will engage with more of the pastoral elements and wider professional responsibilities of a teacher such as parents evenings, leading a tutor group and writing reports and so many trainees may not have experienced these elements of the role.
- Secondary trainees may have had a reduced time on their contrasting placement so may not have had the same exposure to differing contexts
- Trainees on the Early Years route have not had the opportunity to gain placement experience in a Reception class
- Some Primary trainees will not have had a sustained KS1 experience and therefore will not have had an extended opportunity to plan, teach and assess Phonics and Early Reading
- Some Primary trainees will not have had opportunity to teach all foundation subjects
- For some trainees their sense of teacher identity will be less well formed and their confidence in using subject specific pedagogies (for Primary) may need additional support and guidance

On the bright side...

- CTE maps a programme for all trainees which ensures more time in school than many other providers so the reduction to their time in school may not be felt as much as elsewhere. It was relatively recently that the requirement for time in school was much lower (c. 95 days) depending on their phase/route and any absence, many trainees will have been close to or exceeded this.
- Adaptability – Throughout this experience our trainees have proven time and again their flexible and adaptable approach to learning and their engagement with the 'new' online course has remained high
- Experience of Online learning / teaching online will put them in a strong position in September and beyond if they should need to provide and utilise blended approaches to learning and teaching.
- Independence from start of course is encouraged and programmes are designed to ensure a breadth of experience so even with the final placement being revoked, trainees will still have had opportunity to experience working in different settings and with different age phases.

- They have completed all of the PG assignments. Those without caring responsibilities etc. may have had more time to consider and further develop their own subject knowledge in areas of interest or in areas where they feel less confident.
- Additional sessions, which are usually not part of the taught programme have been put in place and so although there may be a reduced opportunity to engage in practical teaching experiences, some areas of understanding or knowledge regarding research in best practice may be enhanced.
- Warwick trainees are renowned for their reflective practice – we have been able to maintain this element of the course through continued engagement with their reflective logs/e-PDPs

Advice for supporting your NQT

- Take advantage of the Career Entry Development Profile (CEDP). Have a detailed conversation with your NQT at the start of the year; take time to work through and talk about the whole document and their prior experiences. Consider together what they see as their areas of strength and where their confidence is strong but also the areas in which they have had limited experience or where they had targets which they had hoped to focus on in their final placement. Where would they like support and how can you ensure that this actioned?
- If NQTs feel they have not been exposed to a particular aspect of the role, consider additional opportunities for observation to or work with and alongside colleagues outside of the department/year group.
- Consider how time and resource can be used effectively to really support with things like parents evening, report writing or pupil progress meetings.
- Early support for managing processes and systems, or approaches to expectations around planning, assessment and associated paperwork, can be helpful and reassuring.
- Regular 'check-ins' and opportunity to discuss practice and approaches with reflective, coaching style conversations will encourage NQTs to be self-reflective but also helps to ensure they are on track and coping with the demands of a new class.
- Be mindful of their well-being and time management skills. Encouraging and supporting NQTs to map and plan out their non-contact time will help them to make the most of these opportunities to refine their practice through observation, team teaching or even joint observation time.

Newly Qualified Teachers are entitled to and should receive:

- Regular, ongoing, support from an NQT/Induction mentor
- Observations and timely feedback on their teaching
- Regular progress reviews, together with a formal discussion at the end of each term to consider and formally record progress against the Teacher Standards – there should be no surprises!
- A 10% reduction in their teaching timetable (in addition to the 10% PPA time) enabling NQTs to develop their practice away from their own classroom
- The DfE has will be piloting an Early Career Framework (link below) in some parts of the country (not including West Midlands/Warwickshire), however, it may be a useful framework for guiding NQT development.

CTE Support:

NQTs can still access some support from both CTE and the wider community at Warwick. During the final weeks of the course they will have been informed about the following:

- There is a named point of contact for both Primary and Secondary NQTs. This contact is able to offer additional pastoral support if required.
- As a Warwick Graduate, NQTs have access to e-mentoring from Warwick Alumni who are teachers in local schools. This is available through www.warwickgrad.net
- Registering with WarwickGrad also provides access to online journals via the library service for keeping up to date with educational research and access to other university facilities and benefits
- Subject to further guidance, expectations and funding from the DfE, more support options may become available.

Links and additional support networks

- CTE Contacts for NQTs: <https://warwick.ac.uk/nqt>
- WarwickGrad Alumni Network: <https://www.warwickgrad.net/>
- Chartered College of Teaching Early Career Hub: <https://earlycareer.chartered.college/>
- Chartered College of Teaching events: <https://chartered.college/events/>
- NASUWT Advice for New Teachers: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/new-teachers.html>
- NEU Advice for NQTs: <https://neu.org.uk/tags/nqt>
- Education Support Partnership: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>
- DfE statutory guidance on induction for NQTs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-nqts>
- DfE Early Career Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-early-career-teachers>