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Guidance

# COVID-19: induction for newly qualified teachers guidance

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We recognise that the current COVID-19 public health emergency will likely have a profound impact on the number of absences newly qualified teachers (NQTs) take this academic year.

We will be making regulatory changes that, subject to parliamentary agreement, will mean that NQTs absent for reasons related to the current COVID-19 public health emergency will not have their induction period automatically extended.

Current arrangements state that ad-hoc absences totalling 30 days or more automatically extends induction by the aggregate number of days absent. However, we intend to amend the regulations to ensure that any absence related to the current COVID-19 public health emergency (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>), including school closures, sickness or self-isolation, will not count towards this limit. This means that NQTs who are currently undertaking statutory induction can complete their induction this academic year as expected, provided they meet the Teachers' Standards (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>).

Headteachers and appropriate bodies should continue to judge whether a NQT has met the Teachers' Standards upon completion of the induction period, which for most, will be the end of the academic year.

If there are concerns that a NQT has not achieved the standards by the end of their induction period, we would strongly encourage headteachers and appropriate bodies to exercise their discretion to recommend an extension, allowing the NQT further time and opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standards.

We will continue to keep the situation under review, working with the sector on the practical implications of this approach, and will publish further information in due course.

## **DfE coronavirus helpline**

### **DfE coronavirus helpline**

Email [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Telephone 0800 046 8687

If you have a query about coronavirus (COVID-19), relating to schools and other educational establishments in England contact our helpline.

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **If a NQT misses 30 days or more of their statutory induction due to absences caused by COVID-19, will their induction be automatically extended to account for these absences?**

No. We want to reduce disruption caused by the current COVID-19 public health emergency on NQT induction. Subject to parliamentary agreement, we are planning to make regulatory changes to mitigate this. Whilst the length of the induction period should ordinarily be 3 full terms and any absences totalling 30 days or more usually automatically extends this, we plan to change the secondary legislation so that any absence related to the current COVID-19 public health emergency (such as school closures, sickness or self-isolation), will not count towards this limit.

Absences that total 30 days or more, and not related to COVID-19, will continue to cause the induction period to be extended.

### **Can NQT induction end now?**

No - as many NQTs continue to work with schools in some form during this unprecedented period we would encourage induction to continue. Headteachers and appropriate bodies should then take into account the change which, subject to parliamentary agreement, we will introduce on absences related to COVID-19.

### **What is the expectation of those NQTs who are still teaching?**

We acknowledge that many NQTs are continuing to work in schools in some form despite many schools being closed. Where possible, we would encourage NQTs to continue with their professional development and maintain frequent contact with their induction tutor and/or mentor.

### **What happens at the end of the induction period?**

Headteachers and appropriate bodies should continue to make a decision on whether a NQT has met the Teachers' Standards based on their performance throughout their induction. This decision is still to be made at the end of the induction period, which for most would be the end of the academic year regardless of their absence due to the current COVID-19 public health emergency. In line with regular reporting procedures, the Teaching Regulation Agency should be notified of the outcome of induction.

### **How will the assessment process work?**

Headteachers, induction tutors and appropriate bodies should continue to refer to the NQT induction statutory guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-nqts>) about the assessment process. The final assessment meeting should remain at the end of the induction period for the majority of NQTs and evidence should continue to be collected if the NQT is still working in schools in some form. This process will be kept under review.

The Teaching Regulation Agency aims to follow existing schedules for collecting outcome data following the end of assessment. The Teaching Regulation Agency will work with appropriate bodies affected by COVID-19 to support them in their data returns.

### **How do I know if a NQT has met the Teachers' Standards if they have not been in school for the full 3 terms?**

Headteachers and appropriate bodies should continue to make a decision on whether a NQT has met the Teachers' Standards throughout the period of their induction, notwithstanding absences due to COVID-19. This may include looking at previous assessment records, discussions with the induction tutors and consideration of non-routine teaching practice during the COVID-19 disruption.

As stated in statutory guidance on NQT induction, the decision about whether a NQT's performance against the relevant standards is satisfactory upon completion of induction should take into account the NQT's work context. It must be made on the basis of what can reasonably be expected of an NQT by the end of their induction period within the framework set out by the standards.

### **What about NQTs who do not meet the Teachers' Standards?**

If at the end of the induction period there are concerns that a NQT, with absences related to COVID-19, has not achieved the standards, we would encourage appropriate bodies to exercise their discretion to recommend an extension, allowing the NQT further time and opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standards.