

Early Career Teacher Policy

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1.0 Policy statement

Dixons Academies Trust is committed to providing consistently high-quality teaching and learning in order to meet our mission. Our academies are committed to providing the culture and level of support to ensure that Early Career Teachers (ECT1 and ECT2, previously NQTs and RQTs) meet the needs of their students and have the best start to their teaching career. The support given to ECTs will ensure that they have the knowledge and skills they need to carry out their role, help them continually improve their performance and develop to their full potential which will in turn improve outcomes for our young people. Support to teachers early in their career is vital in providing highest standards of education.

2.0 Scope and purpose

This policy relates to the appointment, induction, development, monitoring and assessment of Dixons ECTs. It has regard for the latest statutory guidance, 'Induction for Early Career Teachers'.

This policy relates to Trust ECT Induction from September 2021. The induction period for teachers is extended to two years for ECT1 and ECT2 from this date and pro rata for part-time staff.

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 The principal is responsible for making recommendation for the successful completion of the induction period to the appropriate body (AB) on behalf of the academy and for holding senior and middle leaders to account for providing effective monitoring and support for ECTs. In cases of unsatisfactory progress, the principal should ensure that judgements have been quality assured and communication with the ECT and AB is effective and timely. Principals should ensure that Induction Tutors (formerly Induction Coordinators / ECF Leads) have the expertise and time to fulfil their role.
- 3.2 Senior leaders (usually one is nominated) are responsible for holding Induction tutors to account and ensuring that the support, development, monitoring and assessment processes follow statutory guidance, are kept up to date and reviewed annually. Senior leaders should ensure that identified subject mentors are highly effective teachers and have at least the potential to be highly effective mentors with sufficient time dedicated to the role. ECT mentors should be trained and undergo observation and feedback on their mentoring. Academies should build stable teams of expert mentors with capacity in order to best serve our early career talent.
- 3.3 School induction tutors are responsible for the timely registration and assessment process for ECTs. They are responsible for holding ECT mentors to account and ensuring that ECT provision is formal, structured and flexible enough to provide bespoke support. The induction tutor has responsibility for the training of ECT mentors, engagement with the ECT training programme, regular observations and verification of the formal assessment of each ECT. This is a departure from previous policy where assessment was undertaken by the mentor and induction tutors. Induction tutors liaise with the AB for reporting and assessment and where ECTs are at risk of failing to meet the teacher standards. Induction Tutors ensure that ECT mentoring and coaching is of a high standard.
- 3.4 ECT mentors provide support and guidance on a daily basis and will support training and provide instructional coaching to ECTs. They offer knowledge and resources including schemes of learning to support ECT workload. They communicate with the induction tutor regarding ECT progress but are not responsible for making a judgement for the final assessment against teacher standards as this is undertaken by the induction tutor. Coaching is provided weekly to all year 1 ECTs and fortnightly for ECT2s.
- 3.5 The role of the induction tutor and ECT mentor could be held by the same person in smaller academies, but this is not ideal. Academies should work to separate these roles and could consider gaining support from another academy for assessment purposes.
- 3.6 The ECT has responsibility to participate in the training, self-study, coaching and monitoring activities which support the ECF.
- 3.7 Additional QA or support can also be provided by Dixons Centre for Growth.
- 3.8 Formal QA is provided by the AB. The AB for Dixons Academies Trust (Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester) is Star Institute as of 1 September 2023.
- 3.9 The local governing body has a role in ensuring compliance to this policy and will hold principals to account for the numbers of ECTs successfully completing the programme and meeting teacher standards.

4.0 ECT appointments

The appointment of ECTs will be made with consideration of the capacity of the academy to provide appropriate mentoring and support and fulfil the statutory obligations of monitoring, support and assessment.

5.0 ECT induction support and development

- 5.1 The statutory monitoring and assessment period is two academic years for full time teachers. This is also the duration of the statutory entitlement to the ECF training programme. At the end of this period ECTs will be formally assessed against the DfE teacher standards. Pro- rata adjustments will be made for part- time ECTs. These are statutory expectations and the trust baseline expectation for professional practice and conduct. As with all Dixons staff, there is an expectation of high alignment with our mission and values.



- 5.2 Support for ECTs should be provided in the form of a formal ECT induction programme for ECT1 teachers (alongside other new staff), support for engagement with the formal ECF programme delivered by Dixons Centre for Growth, provision of a suitable ECT mentor and regular observation and feedback with instructional coaching. ECT1 staff should have a teaching timetable of no more than 90% of that of a main scale teacher and weekly instructional coaching to enable professional learning and the application of the ECF. The timetable reduction for ECT2 staff is 5% with fortnightly coaching.
- 5.3 A majority of academy training and induction is delivered through ECT mentors and weekly coaching rather than extensive additional training sessions. This should include modelling on the part of the mentor and opportunities to practise, receive feedback and re-practice, both activity-based scenarios and tasks such as planning. Subject knowledge and subject pedagogy can be enhanced by observing and working with team members. Academy ECT1 induction programmes should include one meeting per term exclusively for ECT1s. They should also be supported to understand aligned autonomy across Dixons Academies Trust. ECTs should also be supported to form positive relationships and be an active part of their academy and trust community. Support for teacher workload and well-being should form part of weekly mentoring.
- 5.4 Induction tutors will need to ensure synergy for TeachFirst teachers with the ECF and TeachFirst training programmes.
- 5.5 New ECT mentors should receive training from Dixons Centre for Growth / Ambition Institute as ECF Delivery Partner and Lead Provider (respectively) and the induction tutor to prepare them for the role. Training should focus on the requirements of the ECF, the induction process and timeline and effective mentoring. Dixons Centre for Growth will provide enhanced support for ECT mentors.
- 5.6 The development of ECT knowledge, understanding and peer support will be enhanced by the Dixons Centre for Growth ECF training and associated networking. All Dixons ECTs participate in an ECF programme, including Teach First ECT1 teachers. This is comprised of conferences and teacher and mentor clinics annually.
- 5.7 In cases where an ECT requires additional support, this will be in line with our trust Appraisal policy and with reference to HR and the AB.
- 5.8 Induction tutors and academy CPD Leads need to be conversant with the content of the ECF framework and the sequencing of the ECT programme and adjust academy CPD accordingly.

6.0 ECT monitoring and assessment

- 6.1 ECT mentors will provide weekly / fortnightly short observations to support instructional coaching. Induction tutors will observe ECTs at least once per cycle with written feedback that will contribute to the ECT assessment against the teacher standards and incorporate reference to the ECT career entry and development record as a baseline at the start of ECT1.
- 6.2 The period of employment that can contribute to the assessment of an ECT against the teacher standards can be reduced in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the AB and on recommendation from the principal. The minimum period for assessment is two Dixons terms. Early assessment must be with the agreement of the ECT and if they wish to serve the full induction period, this must be permitted. Early assessment should be wholly justified by the principal as access to the ECF programme, its associated funding and accompanying reduction in timetable is a two - year entitlement for all ECTs. The induction period for part-time ECTs will be the equivalent of two full-time academic years, although acceleration is also possible as above.
- 6.3 Concerns about an ECT failing to meet professional standards will lead to provision of formal additional support and can, in exceptional circumstances, lead to the extension of the formal induction period in conjunction with the AB. In these instances, clear targets and support will be identified and reviewed as soon as concerns arise. The ECT should be made aware of the required improvements, support programme and timeline mentor observations, and assessment judgements will be quality assured by induction tutors.
- 6.4 Where concerns about the programme of an ECT against teacher standards remain, an additional support plan should be implemented with reference to the AB.
- 6.5 The ECT induction period can be extended for special circumstances such as maternity or extended absence.
- 6.6 The ECTs and principals should remain up to date about progress against teacher standards.
- 6.7 Induction tutors will ensure that AB assessment and reporting deadlines are met.
- 6.8 Weekly / fortnightly targets set by the ECT mentor will form the focus for professional learning during the induction period. At the end of the induction period teachers will receive instructional coaching as per the academy approach including zoom-out conversations about mid-long term goals as per our trust approach to professional growth.
- 6.9 The two-year induction period has no adverse impact on pay or career progression. The ECTs are able to progress before the end of their induction.
- 6.10 If an ECT leaves an institution having started but before completing their assessment, including an extension, the principal should complete an interim assessment report and notify the AB.

7.0 ECT concerns

Where ECTs have concerns about their support or assessment, these should be raised with their induction tutor in the first instance and then with senior leadership team if unresolved. Concerns that remain unresolved in school should be referred to the AB.

