

Early Career Teacher Policy

Responsibility for Review: School and college trust leaders
Date of Last Review: June 2026

Early Career Teacher policy: document provenance

Approver	School and college trust leaders
Date of approval	July 2026
Policy owner	School and college trust leader: safeguarding
Policy authors	Director, Centre for Growth and AVP, Centre for Growth
Version	1.0
Date of next review	September 2028
Summary of changes in this review	• Small changes arising from new trust Appropriate Body and refinements to ECFP.
Related policies and documents	•

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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1.0 Policy statement

- 1.1 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) meet the needs of their students and have the best start to their teaching career. The provision for ECTs builds on their professional learning from the ITT framework as part of the ITTECF. Their induction is facilitated in academies and their development entitlement (ECTP) is led by the Centre for Growth. 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 for teachers early in their career is vital in providing the highest standards of education.

2.0 Scope and purpose

- 2.1 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' (England).
- 2.2 This policy relates to trust ECT Induction from the start of the ECF in September 2021. The induction period for teachers is extended to two years for ECT1 and ECT2 from this date and may be completed on a pro rata basis for part-time staff.

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 The principal is responsible for making recommendations for the successful completion of the induction period to the Appropriate Body (AB; Star AB North West) 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 Co-ordinators / 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. Induction tutors support and monitor ECTs, liaising with the AB for reporting and assessment and action in a timely fashion where ECTs are at risk of failing to meet the teacher standards. Induction tutors, supported by the Centre for Growth, ensure that ECT mentoring and coaching is of a high standard.
- 3.4 ECT mentors are the first point of contact and provide support and guidance. They will contextualise training and provide instructional coaching and wellbeing support 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 optimal or preferred. Academies should work to separate these roles and could consider gaining support from another senior leader or 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 support for all roles is 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 Centre for Growth liaises with the AB and Ambition Institute as provider on behalf of academies, however, for the purposes of finance individual contracts sit with academies and the AB to serve that relationship. Academies will claim funding from the DfE for their ECTs and mentors annually and will receive invoices from Star AB for each ECT registered for assessment.

4.0 ECT appointments



- 4.1 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 can 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 a weekly mentor meeting, with a minimum expectation of fortnightly 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/fortnightly instructional 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. 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 Academy induction programmes should include one session per cycle exclusively for ECTs.
- 5.5 Induction tutors are obliged to meet ECTs as a minimum termly to conduct a progress review that is informed by their own observation and feedback from the mentor and other evidence. In larger teams, other senior leaders who are not acting as mentors can support the induction tutor in carrying out observations to inform progress reviews.
- 5.6 Induction tutors will need to ensure synergy for TeachFirst teachers with the ECF and TeachFirst training programmes.
- 5.7 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 and induction tutors where necessary.
- 5.8 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 a cycle of conferences and teacher and mentor clinics annually.
- 5.9 In cases where an ECT requires additional support, this will be in line with our trust approach to maintaining expected standards of performance and with reference to HR and the AB.
- 5.10 Induction tutors and academy PD 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.
- 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 may also be possible as above.
- 6.3 Concerns about an ECT failing to demonstrate evidence against the Teacher Standards will lead to provision of formal additional support and can lead to an ECT Support Plan and, in exceptional circumstances, 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. Trainees in difficulty are usually observed by the AB, often as part of a quality assurance visit.



- 6.4 Where there are concerns about an ECT meeting the Teachers' Standards , the AB and the Centre for Growth should be informed at the first available opportunity.
- 6.5 The ECT induction period is extended when 30 days' absence occurs in an academic year. When an ECT takes parental or carers' leave, then the ECT is placed on hold until they return. Each case is different and the time is used in a way to ensure the ECT is not disadvantaged. This is usually decided when the ECT returns. For example, for an ECT who is progressing well and where the school is happy they have the evidence to demonstrate the ECT is working well towards the standards, then the leave time may be used to count towards the ECTs induction. If the ECT would benefit from receiving their full entitlement of ECT time, then they can have their full time not using any of the leave time.
- 6.6 The ECTs, mentors, induction tutors 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. 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 induction tutor should inform the AB and an interim assessment shall be generated, to be completed by the induction tutor and signed off by the principal.
- 6.11 An ECT may not become an ECF mentor until they have successfully completed Induction.

7.0 ECT concerns

- 7.1 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.

8.0 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 The policy will be formally reviewed biennially.