

Teacher Reference Group

Information pack for applicants

January 2016

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# The Department for Education and the Teacher Reference Group

The Department for Education (DfE) is committed to engaging practising classroom teachers in national education policy. The Teacher Reference Group acts as a confidential sounding board, advising on the potential impact of policies on the school system, including any barriers to implementation.

The Teacher Reference Group supports policy development and implementation across DfE by contributing views, offering valuable challenge and advice, and providing feedback to ministers and officials.

The group is not representative and has no power of veto over policy decisions.

Information on the Department can be found at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education). Further Information on the [Teacher Reference Group](https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/teacher-reference-group) is also available.

## The role of Teacher Reference Group members

Members will be expected to:

* Maintain confidentiality;
* Work constructively, making points in an approporiate manner, listening to the views of others, ensuring everyone gets the opportunity to speak, and accepting compromise to reach agreement of the issues;
* Be open-minded and consider the whole picture, not seeking to promote sectional or subject interests;
* Be able and willing to do follow-up work or contribute to some developments between meetings when required;
* Act as a channel of communiation between schools, the Department and other agencies, including local authorities, to convey issues pertinent to school policies (where apporopriate); and
* Pass on the views of community partners, including post-16 colleagues, business and industry partners, and inform and respond to the work of other relevant stakeholder groups and panels.

## Eligibility for the role

### Teacher members

To be considered eligible for membership of the Teacher Reference Group you must be currently employed as a teacher in an education setting, with a teaching timetable of at least 60%. You must not currently be part of a school senior leadership team, although middle leaders may apply if they have a 60% or more teaching timetable.

For the purposes of teacher regulation ‘teacher’ is defined as a person employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at: a school; a sixth-form college; relevant youth accommodation; children’s home; and 16-19 academy, in England.

Each of the following activities is defined as teaching work:

* planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
* delivering lessons to pupils (including delivering lessons through distance learning or computer aided techniques)
* assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
* reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils

You should have written agreement from your headteacher to join the group and attend up to five one-day meetings a year at the DfE offices in London.

We welcome appplications from all teachers irrespective of their gender; religious belief; disability; age; sexual orientation; or whether they are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership; or whether they have undergone or are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment.

## Person specification

To be considered for a member of the Teacher Reference Group you must be able to demonstrate that you have the relevant skills and experience as set out below.

### **Essential criteria**

We would expect you to demonstrate:

* How you use effective teaching methods in your classroom to improve educational outcomes for all of your pupils;
* How you work to improve your own subject knowledge and that of others;
* How you have used evidence to inform your teaching and school-level decisions, and/or encouraged others to do so;
* How you have implemented changes in national policy within your own classroom, department or school; and
* When you have had to think creatively and challenge the way things are done, and the result of this (for example, approaches to pedagogy, assessment, data management, professional development, lesson planning or use of resources).

### Desirable Criteria

It will also assist your application if you can demonstrate:

* Your understanding of the local and national educational context, and how it affects classroom teaching; and
* Your experience in improving education beyond your own school (e.g. training groups of teachers, sharing good practice across schools, participating in education research).

## Terms and conditions

### Remuneration

This is a voluntary, unpaid post. Standard travel expenses will be reimbursed after each meeting and supply cover can be reimbursed to schools when necessary.

### Period of Appointment

The term of appointment is for one year, with the opportunity to extend up to three years.

### Time commitment

Members will be expected to attend up to five one-day meetings per year, for which preparation time will be required. In addition to attending meetings, members will be expected to provide high quality and relevant contributions to policy development in the Department by responding to commissions via email or participating in workshops or focus groups.

### Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and follow the standards of probity required by public appointees outlined in the “Seven Principles of Public Life” set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (see [Annex](#Annex)).

You may be removed from office before the end of the term of appointment if you:

* have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence at any time in respect of a conviction which is not spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
* have had an earlier term of appointment terminated due to misconduct or performance issues
* are under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
* have been removed from trusteeship of a charity
* are subject to disciplinary/investigation for allegations of misconduct by a regulatory, governmental or professional body
* have been found guilty of misconduct by a regulatory, governmental or professional body
* breach the expectations of group members as set out in the Terms of Reference.

Should the Teacher Reference Group be dissolved, restructured or wound up during the period of your appointment, your appointment would cease with effect from that event or such other date as is specified in any relevant decision letter or legislation.

### Conflict of Interest

You should note the requirement to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of Department business and the need to declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations relevant to the business of the Department for Education.

## Your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail as a result of sending us any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes. The monitoring information you provide is not used in the selection process and will not be shared with the selection panel assessing your application. Information that you provide may be used for statistical analysis by the Department for Education but it will not be used in a way that enables you to be identified.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure that procedures are fair. The Department for Education is required by the Commissioner for Public Appointments to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments within her remit, and to make this information available to him for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Information you provide in your application may therefore be made available to the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Commissioner’s auditors on a confidential basis in order to help fulfil the Commissioner’s formal complaints investigation role and for audit purposes.

# The application process

## The timetable

This section provides an overview of the recruitment process and how your CV and application form will be considered.

Your CV and application forms must be returned to the DfE using the following mailbox:**Recruitment.TRG@education.gsi.gov.uk**.The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Friday 22 January 2016**. You will receive an acknowledgement from us on receipt of your application.

Once acknowledged we will work to the recruitment timetable below.

### Stage 1 (25 January – 29 January)

Your application will be subject to a two stage sift and will be assessed against the published criteria. Those unsuccessful at the first stage will be notified, those selected to move to Stage 2 will be invited for interview, which may be by telephone.

### Stage 2 (1 February – 5 February)

Applicants will be contacted by officials to arrange interviews. Where a candidate is unable to attend an interview on the set date then an alternative date will only be offered at the discretion of the panel. References will be requested at this point for those progressing to stage 3.

### Stage 3 (8 February – 12 February).

Interviews will be held between 8 February and 12 February.

At interview the panel will question you about your experience and expertise based on the requirements of the post. If the interview panel determine that you are suitable for the post they will make recommendations to the Secretary of State and Minister of State for Schools, who will then review the recommendations and make the final decision on appointments to the Teacher Reference Group.

### Stage 4 (22 February – 26 February)

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of interviews.

The first meeting of the Teacher Reference Group will take place on 7 March 2016.

## Dealing with your questions

For general queries, or if you are unhappy with any aspect of this recruitment exercise, please contact Recruitment.TRG@education.gsi.gov.uk.

You can also write to the following address:

Teacher Reference Group Recruitment
Teachers and Teaching Group
Level 2 Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

# Annex - The seven principles of public life

All applicants for public appointments are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service. The seven principles of public life are:

### Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

### Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



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