

Relationship between the induction training materials for teaching assistants developed by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) for Teaching Assistants

Information for Headteachers and mentors

We anticipate that the new National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) for teaching assistants will be available in summer 2002. Although not specifically designed to provide the underpinning knowledge for an NVQ, there are many links between the DfES induction programmes for teaching assistants and the new qualifications.

A mapping exercise has been carried out to show the relationships between the induction training materials and the national occupational standards for teaching assistants. The results of this exercise show how a teaching assistant who completes the induction programme, including course activities, will have a sound foundation upon which to develop occupational competence as defined by the new NVQs for teaching assistants.

NVQs are awarded to people who have demonstrated that they can work to nationally agreed standards of competence. The NVQs for teaching assistants are based on national occupational standards developed by the Local Government National Training Organisation (LGNTO) working closely with headteachers, LEA advisers and practitioners themselves. In line with Government policy for education in England, which includes plans to improve training and development opportunities for classroom support staff and the development of new national qualifications, their development also had the support of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

National occupational standards describe performance - what people are expected to do at work. Because they are developed from a detailed analysis of best practice, national occupational standards and NVQs describe the key roles and responsibilities of teaching assistants and define the quality of work expected in relation to these.

The benefits to the school of using NVQs for supporting the professional development of teaching assistants include:

- encouraging teaching assistants to develop their own knowledge and skills and improve their performance and to gain credit through qualifications for their achievements;
- promoting best practice in supporting pupils, teachers, the curriculum and the school;
- having a framework for identifying learning needs and defining learning outcomes that individuals need to achieve;
- helping to identify appropriate training and support;
- recognising and valuing individuals' achievement through nationally recognised qualifications;
- demonstrating the governors' commitment to supporting staff development;
- assuring teachers, governors, parents and others of the quality of support staff employed by the school.

Headteachers and mentors can support teaching assistants in capitalising on their learning from the induction programme by:

- talking through their experience on the course and answering any questions they might have about relating learning to their working practice;
- helping to organise opportunities for them to carry out course activities;
- including them in relevant school-based INSET;
- helping them to identify and access other learning opportunities;
- using the relevant national occupational standards as the basis for performance management and appraisal;

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- facilitating opportunities for the assessment of performance by a qualified NVQ assessor.

Copies of the national occupational standards for teaching assistants and the maps showing the relationship between these and the DfES induction training materials, are available on the LGNTO web site at www.lgnto.gov.uk.

Further information about the new National Vocational Qualifications for teaching assistants is available from any of the Awarding Bodies listed below. It may be worthwhile checking with your LEA first to find out what, if any, arrangements they are making for providing access to the NVQs.

Useful Contacts

Awarding Bodies

The following Awarding Bodies offer the NVQs for teaching assistants:

City and Guilds

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD

Tel: 020 7294 2800
Fax: 020 7294 2400
e-mail: enquiry@city-and-guilds.co.uk

Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE)

8 Chequer Street
St Albans
Herts
AL1 3XZ

Tel: 01727 847636
Fax: 01727 867609
e-mail: info@cache.org.uk

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)

Westwood Way
Coventry
CV4 8JQ

Tel: 024 7647 0033
Fax: 024 7642 1944
e-mail: cib@ocr.org.uk

Department for Education and Skills

Teaching Assistants and School Support
School Workforce Unit
Department for Education and Skills

Area 6B
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 0207 925 5907
Fax: 0207 925 6699
e-mail: assistants.teaching@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Copies of the maps showing the links between the induction training materials and the national occupational standards are available by accessing the DfES web site www.teachernet.gov.uk and typing "teaching assistants" into the search engine.

Local Government National Training Organisation

Local Government National Training Organisation

Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

Tel: 0207 296 6708
Fax: 0207 296 6666
e-mail: lynne.butler@lg-employers.gov.uk

Information about the NVQs including copies of the national occupational standards for teaching assistants are available on the LGNTO web site www.lgnto.gov.uk.