



Department
for Education

Consultation Response Form

Consultation closing date: 3 February 2015

Your comments must reach us by that date

A World-Class Teaching Profession

If you would prefer to respond online to this consultation please use the following link: <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

The Government is committed to improving teacher quality as a key part of our plan for education. The teaching profession is fortunate to include many thousands of dedicated, hard-working individuals transforming the lives of children and young people while working to improve their own professional practice. We want to help teachers to go even further in raising the standards of their profession, and so we are seeking views on:

- Improving the quality of professional development and learning undertaken by all teachers; and
- Facilitating the establishment of a new independent professional body for teaching (a “College of Teaching”).

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

Reason for confidentiality:

Name: David Reedy	
Please tick if you are responding on behalf of your organisation.	Yes
Name of Organisation (if applicable): United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA)	
Address: University of Leicester Leicester LE1 7RH	

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

Please insert an 'x' into one of the following boxes which best describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> Academies	<input type="checkbox"/> Colleges	<input type="checkbox"/> Early years setting
<input type="checkbox"/> Free school	<input type="checkbox"/> Further education college	<input type="checkbox"/> Headteachers
<input type="checkbox"/> Higher education institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Local authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Local-authority maintained school
<input type="checkbox"/> School governors	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools	<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth-form college
<input type="checkbox"/> Special school	<input type="checkbox"/> Studio school	<input type="checkbox"/> Subject associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> UTC	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisations representing school teachers and lecturers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

<p>Please Specify:</p> <p>UKLA is a registered charity, which has as its sole object the advancement of education in literacy. UKLA is committed to promoting good practice nationally and internationally in literacy and language teaching and research.</p>
--

1 What are the greatest impediments teachers and schools face in regularly undertaking high-quality professional development?

Comments:

1. Lack of time: focus on curriculum requirements, particularly those related to raising attainment in high stakes testing, leaves little space for reflective professional development (PD). In order for professional development to be high quality it needs time for colleagues to work on collaborative projects within a school, or within a cluster of schools, undertaking their own investigations or research - however small-scale - in order to understand through active participation rather than merely being told 'what works'. The recent BE-RA/RSA document (2014) "Research and the teaching profession: Building the capacity for a self-improving education system", puts it unequivocally: teachers need to be research-literate, research-active and work in research-rich environments. 'Research' here can be substituted for 'effective and long-lasting professional development'.

Further time will be needed draw on a range of kinds of evidence, not just quantitative, but also including qualitative evidence that supports in-depth insights into teachers and children's experience and critical reflection on existing practices. Evidence of effectiveness is not just about numbers; the quality of experience counts fundamentally too.

Time will also be needed to share good practice across the school once quality PD has been undertaken. Because of time constraints, it is often difficult to implement good practice discovered by active and reflective classroom/ school research.

2. Time is also needed to identify research that is reliable, and will improve outcomes for learners. It takes time to engage with a range of kinds of research. If schools only have time to engage with 'research headlines' they are likely to miss the complex insights gained through research, and/or that they prioritise 'impact' studies that draw on quantitative approaches that provide little information about the context in which approaches were implemented or about different responses in different contexts. Thus whilst taking account of such studies is important, teachers also need to be able to engage critically and reflectively with qualitative research. Gaining access to rich qualitative research could be a problem if only 'impact' research is seen as worth consideration.

The ignoring of qualitative research which takes into account context and experience can lead to teachers not being always convinced that what PD they are offered is relevant to their classrooms and needs and thus they need richer and clearer information so that they will engage enthusiastically.

3. Cost will always be a factor. Schools are continually having to make their budgets go further, which can mean that professional development is given less funding than other, equally important, aspects of running a successful school.

In line with the Carter Report (January 2015) Recommendation 1, UKLA agrees

that:

DfE should make funded in-service subject knowledge enhancement courses available for primary teachers to access as professional development.

4. In prioritising aspects of school development, it is often those which are dictated by the huge focus on accountability - inspection, data and pupil outcomes – which are seen as the highest priorities.

In an educational culture which favours the ‘quick fix’ and recommends specific types of programmes, for example, for teaching reading, it is often difficult for schools to determine what constitutes high quality professional development - and not just flavour of the month that needs to be undertaken to 'tick an Ofsted box'.

5. A key impediment is knowledge of and access to ‘high quality’ PD providers. In the past, schools have drawn on Local Authority advisory support as well as national structures such as the National Primary Strategy. These no longer exist, or are severely diminished, in many parts of the country. Teaching schools and Subject Associations have not yet filled the gap and Teaching Schools themselves need to draw on expert advice too.
6. The market place is full of new providers and it is difficult for schools to discern their effectiveness, aims and value.

2 To what extent, and how, do teachers currently evaluate their professional development? What would support more rigorous evaluation?

Comments:

Teachers are constantly evaluating their professional standards and seeking to develop them but the extent to which it happens and by whom varies widely. If the PD is part of appraisal then senior leaders will be evaluating its effectiveness. If it is whole school PD then it may be evaluated through lesson observation, data regarding pupil outcomes or more formally through a link with a University. In the end it is about impact in classrooms both qualitatively and quantitatively. However UKLA would argue that structured support and funding plus a commitment to longer-term investigation/research would support more thorough – and effective – development.

Some schools are already establishing active research groups in order to meet individual teachers' research and professional development needs. This is sensible, since teachers are genuinely able to pursue the professional issues relevant to their own level of experience and interests; it is therefore a more effective way of using time and other resources.

Such groups are likely to benefit from input from a range of bodies- professional and subject associations, arts organisations, universities, local authority advisers and expert teachers – to enable diverse perspectives, generate new directions, and gain critical distance on existing practices.

3 Where should the balance of responsibility lie between teachers, schools and Government for ensuring that appropriate professional development is undertaken? How, in the longer term, might responsibility sit with a new independent professional body?

Comments:

Teachers should take the responsibility for this, as is the case in other jurisdictions. In Singapore, for example, there are 'Professional Learning Communities' in schools i.e. meetings of groups of teachers to learn together, not just for administration. Teachers understand the needs of their children. Head teachers understand the needs of their schools. The aim is to learn together about teaching and learning. For far too long in England there has been systematic de-professionalisation of teachers, and an independent body might offer an opportunity to raise the professional status of teachers, as well as raise morale. This would be particularly effective if schools were encouraged to work in conjunction with Higher Education Institutions where teachers would be encouraged to be 'research-active', not merely passive recipients of other people's research digests.

Responsibility for professional development should lie with the teacher/school, and could be linked to requirements of Teaching Standards - if designed by the profession and not DfE or other Government department.

Local Government should also play a key role, possibly in quality assurance and holding schools to account if a lack of PD is being made available to particular schools in the local area..

4 Despite the growing reach of the Teaching Schools network, are there areas where coverage of schools would remain a concern? How could any gaps be addressed?

Comments:

Gaps might be addressed through:

- Creating effective online platforms for teacher exchanges of views. There are already several sites which act as informal 'advice lines'.
- Working with ITE providers, who already have such networks in place.
- Working with Subject Associations which already have committed networks of professionals.

Such networks need to be stable and sustainable, not subject to the vagaries of school inspections (e.g. Teaching Schools losing their status if they drop from being outstanding or lose their headteacher). HEI-school ITE partnerships often have a much wider reach, involve staff who work in other areas of professional development, and offer other qualifications as well. So do subject organisations like UKLA which have not only been in the business for 50 years, but also have a very wide national and international reach and therefore have the potential to address any gaps in teaching school alliances' needs.

5 What should the funding criteria be for Teaching Schools wishing to draw on the new funding pot for professional development? Should there, for example, be a requirement for Teaching Schools to work with a predetermined proportion of schools which are not already “good” or “outstanding”?

Comments:

It is a matter of concern if schools would have to take precious time away from professional development in order to bid for funding. It would make more sense to allocate the funding fairly and, if necessary, add stipulations which will necessitate schools working with one another. This could be done via subject associations, for example, rather than relying on the vagaries of who might be in the local neighbourhood or teaching alliance which may not make for the most productive mix.

Part of the role should be to work with RI schools, and those in challenging circumstances. Predetermined proportions would be unworkable since NCTL or the DfE would have to develop criteria of ‘worth’.

In line with the Carter Report (January 2015) Recommendation 1, UKLA agrees that:

DfE should make funded in-service subject knowledge enhancement courses available for all primary teachers to access as professional development.

6 Will teachers benefit from an online platform that collates and presents evidence-based best practice?

Comments:

Yes. This would enable access for all but there is an issue of who would manage the platform and how it would be funded. However, there is still a question of how schools would discern what constitutes ‘best practice’ and who decides what constitutes ‘evidence-based best practice’. Recently, there has been too strong an emphasis by the government on quantitative evidence at the expense of qualitative evidence. And even where quantitative evidence has been used by government, DfE has often been selective and partial in reporting the full extent and implications of research results.

UKLA would wish to emphasise the value of the kinds of peer-reviewed ‘evidence-based best practice’ which we publish in our journals.

In line with the Carter Report (January, 2015) Recommendation 6, UKLA holds that: **The Teachers’ Standards should be amended to be more explicit about the importance of teachers taking an evidence-based approach.**

Any platform should be a matter of collaboration between a provider and ITE and research institutes in order to guarantee a valid and reliable evidence base.

Teachers would also need to be fully informed of such a platform, be convinced that access

to it is straightforward and the suggestions for PD manageable and practical.

The content should be fully, rather than selectively, informed by research, which in turn would clarify the conditions for effective learning and teaching.

Following Recommendation 7 of the Carter Report (January, 2015) UKLA agrees that: **A central portal of synthesised executive summaries, providing practical advice on research findings about effective teaching in different subjects and phases, should be developed. A future College of Teaching would be well placed to develop this.**

7 In addition to the proposals outlined here, what other approaches would help schools to remove barriers and incentivise effective professional development for teachers?

Comments:

A move away from current top-down imposition of particular ideologies by governments on education and a genuine commitment to listen to the views of the profession. This will help to re-professionalise teaching, and give 'space' for teachers to focus on professional development. Any such professional conversations would need to be long-term and iterative, with the opportunity to consider issues at depth and with critical reflection.

Enable educational professionals – teachers and lecturers in ITE - to articulate a clear vision for what teaching should be, and honour their professional experience and expertise.

Link professional development to a new set of teaching standards - created by the profession and subject to the same thorough process suggested above. Such an opportunity is not a time for quickly conceived bright ideas but for thoughtful, critical thinking about the values of the teaching profession.

Classroom and school based PD involves making practical pedagogical changes. To do this teachers and schools have to take risks and have the freedom to experiment and the opportunity to analyse the effect on learning development and outcomes. The accountability framework can be seen as an impediment to risk taking as there will always be aspects that don't work or take time to work and therefore a fear of negative judgements in the short term exists. This needs to change.

If you are a teacher or lecturer, please specify.

8 a) Which phase of education are you currently working in?

<input type="checkbox"/> Early years	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth-form	<input type="checkbox"/> Further education	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher education
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)		

Comments:

8 b) If you work in a designated Teaching School?

Yes

No

Don't Know

Comments:

8 c) If not a designated Teaching School, is your school part of one or more Teaching School Alliances?

Yes

No

Not applicable

Dont know

Comments:

8 d) How long have you been teaching?

NQT

2-5 years

6-10 years

11+ years

Comments:

8 e) If you currently work full or part time?

Full-time

Part-time

Comments:

8 f) The highest level qualification you have obtained?

Comments:

8 g) Your subject specialism(s), and if you currently teach in this specialism?

Comments:

8 h) If you have any additional responsibilities in school, for example SENCO; NLE/LLE/SLE; Lead Practitioner; Head of Year; Head of Department; assistant/deputy/headteacher?

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply.	
Email address for acknowledgement:	

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, please confirm below if you would be willing to be contacted again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	-----------------------------

All DfE public consultations are required to meet the Cabinet Office [Principles on Consultation](#)

The key Consultation Principles are:

- departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before
- departments will need to give more thought to how they engage with and use real discussion with affected parties and experts as well as the expertise of civil service learning to make well informed decisions
- departments should explain what responses they have received and how these have been used in formulating policy
- consultation should be 'digital by default', but other forms should be used where these are needed to reach the groups affected by a policy
- the principles of the Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector will continue to be respected.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Aileen Shaw, DfE Consultation Coordinator, tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: aileen.shaw@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed responses should be sent to the address shown below by 3 February 2015

Send by email to: world-classteachers.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk

Send by post to:

Joanne Kemp
Teacher Quality Policy Unit
Department for Education
6th Floor, 2 St Pauls Place
125 Norfolk Street
Sheffield
S1 2FL