

Greater freedom for schools to employ industry experts to work as instructors

Analysis of responses from the consultation document

Proposed Changes to allow greater freedom for schools to employ industry experts to work as instructors

Analysis of responses to the consultation document

Introduction

An on-line consultation was available between 26 March and 18 May 2012, seeking views on proposed changes to the Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012, which sets out the conditions to be satisfied by those without qualified teacher status who want to teach in England.

The proposed changes will give head teachers greater freedom to appoint industry experts, who are not qualified teachers, to work as instructors teaching (and supporting the teaching of) appropriate vocational courses, in order to drive up the quality of vocational education.

Overview

The consultation received 28 responses: 16 agreed to the proposals, 9 disagreed and 3 were unsure. Concerns were expressed that giving schools more freedom to recruit unqualified instructors could undermine the qualified profession and take work away from qualified teachers. There was also some strong support on the basis that head teachers are best placed to decide who is most qualified for a particular job. Other responses stressed that schools must strike the right balance between the need for industry expertise and the need for teaching skills.

The organisational breakdown of respondents was as follows:

Category	Responses	% Across Consultation
Headteacher:	4	14%
Other:	3	11%
Teaching Expert:	3	11%
Union:	1	3.5%
Business Sector:	1	3.5%
Professional Body/Organisation:	13	46.5%
School:	1	3.5%
Local Authority:	2	7%
Total:	28	100%

The annexe lists all respondents to the consultation.

Analysis

When considering this information please note that the majority who provided comments in response to question 1 did not go on to provide further comments in response to question 2 and others provided a single response addressing both questions. The vast majority of the comments made are, therefore, summarised under question 1.

Those consulted were asked to respond to the following questions:

Q1 Please can you comment on our proposal to give schools more freedom to choose to appoint industry experts to fill suitable vacancies?

19 people responded directly to this question, whilst 9 provided a single written response addressing both questions. Out of the 28 responses received, 16 were in agreement with the proposal, 9 disagreed with the proposal and 3 had mixed views.

The proposal received some strong support. The point was made that it was unnecessary to have statutory requirements in place to compel schools to prefer one kind of teacher over another, and that this should be decided by head teachers. Others felt that schools needed to widen the opportunity for pupils to gain a broader range of skills; not just academic qualifications.

It was also felt that pupils could benefit from being exposed to appropriate role models who are in a position to impart their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm based on real, current experience. Traditionally teachers go from university straight into teaching so have little or no experience of the business world, which could disadvantage pupils seeking advice.

The majority of those who supported the proposal made the point, however, that not all experts would make good teachers and that excellent teaching skills were of paramount importance.

Many of those who opposed the proposed changes were concerned that further deregulation could undermine the qualified profession; particularly as recent policy has raised the bar in terms of the level of qualifications for those entering teaching.

The point was made that there was a risk of creating a two-tier system, whereby vocational subjects are taught by less qualified staff. Such an approach could also reduce employment opportunities for teachers with Qualified Teacher and Learning and Skills (QTLS) who may be seeking careers as vocational teachers in schools, particularly as staff with QTLS are now classed as qualified teachers and some schools may be attracted by the cheaper option of recruiting unqualified teachers instead.

Some felt it was important to recognise that there was more to being a teacher than subject knowledge. It was suggested that industry experts employed as teachers should be required to undertake a teaching qualification once in post to ensure they are equipped with wider teaching skills.

There was some agreement that the law should continue to specify that instructors should only be appointed where special experience/qualifications are required. Some respondents were confused about the extent of this and assume that the law would

restrict the employment of instructors to particular subjects. It was also questioned whether the Regulations would specify that only those defined as industry experts could be employed as instructors, which is not the case.

Q2 Do you agree that schools should have the freedom to choose to appoint industry experts to suitable vacancies on a permanent basis?

There were 28 responses to this question. 16 agreed with the proposal, 9 disagreed and 3 were not sure.

Options	Responses	
Agree:	16	57%
Disagree:	9	32%
Not sure:	3	11%

A specific point was made that by employing an industry expert as a full time teacher that person is taken away from industry and they lose their expertise. It was suggested, therefore, that such appointments should only be made on a part-time/occasional basis.

Next Steps

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to this consultation. The responses provided useful insights into the concerns that some of the profession has around the employment of unqualified teachers to undertake specified work. The changes introduced by these amendments were supported by the majority of respondents and they will help to clarify the rules relating to the teaching of vocational content. The Department for Education will, therefore, proceed with the changes proposed in the consultation.

The changes will be introduced through amendments to the existing Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012 and will come into force from 1st September 2012. This will mean that schools will be able to appoint instructors, where special qualifications and/or experience are required.

The changes will reduce the regulatory burden on schools, giving them greater freedom to appoint the right people to teach their pupils. We want to remove the barriers that currently restrict the employment of experienced industry experts as instructors teaching vocational courses. This will help to create a fairer system that recognises the skills and experience of individuals from a wider range of backgrounds and will not require those individuals to undertake unnecessary additional training and assessment if they are the best person for a particular job.

In giving schools this freedom, the law will continue to specify that instructors should only be appointed where special qualifications and/or experience are required. The level of qualifications and experience required will not be defined in the Regulations, nor will the subject/curriculum areas that instructors can teach. In some cases it will still be more appropriate for a qualified teacher to deliver a particular vocational course, but this will ultimately be a decision for schools to make.

The *Governor's Guide to the law*, which is available on the Department's website, will be updated in September 2012 to reflect these changes.

List of respondents to the consultation

- 1 Airedale Children's Centre (K Jones)
- 2 Association of Physical Education
- 3 Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- 4 Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
- 5 Birmingham City Council
- 6 City and Guilds
- 7 Compass Association, The
- 8 Council for Dance Education and Training
- 10 Elmvine Ltd (J McGrath)
- 11 Federation of Awarding Bodies
- 12 Greenhill Primary School (J Brown)
- 13 Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)
- 14 London Borough of Enfield
- 15 National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- 16 National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
- 17 National Employers Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST)
- 18 National Union of Teachers (NUT)
- 19 Nicky Gray (Enterprise Speaker)
- 20 Nottingham City Council (S Scrivens)
- 21 Swalcliffe Park School (Catherine Smith)
- 22 Thirkell, J
- 23 Townsend, C
- 24 UNISON
- 25 Wayland Academy (M Rose)
- 26 WorkandTeach (L Coffait)

There were also 2 anonymous responses.