



National College for
School Leadership

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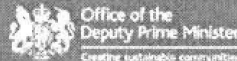
PILOT GUIDANCE

Chartered Urban Leader status

Guidance for governors,
headteachers and aspiring
school leaders

"To be a leader in most urban schools – especially those serving youngsters from families facing socio economic challenge – requires character and a range of qualities including indomitable will and a passion for success that brooks no denial"

Tim Brighouse



Chartered Urban Leader status

Pilot Guidance

This guidance applies to the pilot period March 2005 – July 2005 and may change after this period.

What is the Chartered Urban Leader status?

The Chartered Urban Leader status is a new award, designed to celebrate the particular knowledge, skills and achievements of the urban leader. There are two awards: the Chartered Urban Leader award for headteachers; and the Initial Chartered Urban Leader award for aspiring urban leaders.

This guidance accompanies the NCSL document, '*A Model of School Leadership in Challenging Urban Environments*'. The Model identifies nine competencies which are common to outstanding urban heads. The combination of these characteristics is presented as a 'new leadership challenge'.

Each competency has four levels of development. A 'target profile' has been established, which sets out the levels in each of the nine characteristics which we would expect a very effective headteacher to attain: **Chartered Urban Leader target profile.**

A target profile has also been established for aspiring urban leaders: **Initial Chartered Urban Leader target profile.**

To gain the title candidates will be assessed against the competencies. Candidates who meet the target profile will be awarded the Chartered Urban Leader title.

Who can get it?

Chartered Urban Leader status:

- London: headteachers and candidates applying for headships in London schools where the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average or another indicator of challenging circumstances can be demonstrated, for example, high pupil mobility.
- Outside London, headteachers and candidates applying for headships in Excellence in Cities areas where the percentage of pupils that are eligible for free school meals is above the national average.

Initial Chartered Urban Leader status:

- Teachers on Phase 3 of the fast track programme will have the option of being assessed against the competencies from September 2005.
- Teachers that have been teaching for a minimum of three years in an urban context can be nominated by their headteacher to attend the assessment centre.

Why focus on the Urban Leader?

The particular challenges of being a leader in an urban school are well known. These challenges include high pupil mobility, poor health, unemployment and poverty, falling rolls and difficulties in recruiting staff. Schools in neighbourhood renewal areas for example, have three times as many children in poverty as the national average. On average these communities have 30 per cent higher mortality rates than the national average and three times as much burglary. These factors impact on the work of urban schools: they do not exist in a vacuum. And yet, as research has shown, good schools make a difference and a key part of making the difference is dependent on the quality of the school's leadership.

Becoming an urban leader is not for everyone. As Tim Brighouse says, being an effective urban leader requires 'character, and a range of qualities including indomitable will and a passion for success that brooks no denial.' Very successful headteachers in one context may not be successful in another context. This is not a value judgement but simply a statement which underlines the need to ensure that the right leaders are appointed to lead in urban schools. If the ambitions for urban schools are to be achieved, it is important to get the match right. The Chartered Urban Leader status recognises this, identifies the specific challenges, and sets out a process for improving the identification, recruitment and development of the urban leader.

Chartered Urban Leader status:

The award is designed to:

- celebrate the high quality leadership skills that are required to lead schools successfully in challenging urban contexts
- recognise the distinctive challenge of leading in challenging environments
- be part and parcel of the urban leader's everyday work

- provide a clear framework and set of criteria for the selection and recruitment of headteachers in urban contexts
- provide professional development opportunities for aspiring, new and established urban leaders.
- improves career choices

What is the point of having the status?

By going through the assessment process leading to Chartered Urban Leader status you will:

- gain recognition for your day to day practice in an urban context
- receive a profile identifying strengths and areas for development in the nine competencies
- benefit from reflecting on the key competencies required to deliver the role effectively
- gain detailed feedback on your performance from a trained assessor
- access a range of professional development opportunities
- demonstrate your commitment to developing your leadership competencies

In London

In London, headteachers who achieve Chartered Urban Leader status will have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have reflected on the foci for professional development as set out in the non-statutory guidance for Chartered London Teacher status. The assessor will identify which of the reflections have been met and the headteacher will be able to use this evidence in applying for Chartered London Teacher status.

How do you gain the award?

Chartered Urban Leader:

- As part of the recruitment process – if a governing body wishes to include the Chartered Urban Leader assessment in the recruitment process, shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an assessment centre. The governing body will receive feedback on the candidate's strengths and areas for development. The process is designed to complement, rather than replace, the school's own processes.

It is for the governing body to make the decision about which candidate is appointed. Candidates will receive a profile identifying strengths and areas for development. To complement this candidates will also receive a document listing development opportunities which could be pursued. In this way the candidate will be able to shape their development to meet their particular needs and the school's context. Candidates who meet the target profile will achieve the award.

- Existing headteachers can attend an assessment centre. The assessment process will be the same as that outlined for candidates taking part in the recruitment process.

Chartered Urban Leader status is for headteachers, however, long before that we can spot teachers, perhaps early in their career, with the potential to become Chartered Urban Leaders. The Sowing the Seeds section of the Model describes how the characteristics emerge, combine and mature. This can be used to spot potential talent at an early stage and to aid personal reflection and development. In addition each characteristic is summarised in four straightforward levels. These can help with profiling and planning development.

Initial Chartered Urban Leader:

There are two routes to achieving it.

- The fast track route: teachers on phase 3 of the fast track programme can opt for an assessment against the nine competencies in the framework. Those that achieve the target profile will receive the award.
- Teachers with at least three years' experience in an eligible school can be nominated to attend the assessment centre by their school or LEA.

How long does it take to achieve Chartered Urban Leader status?

- To achieve Initial Chartered Urban Leader status, teachers will have to have taught for a minimum of three years in an urban context or be on phase 3 of the fast track programme.
- To move from the Initial status to Chartered Urban Leader status, candidates need to be appointed as a headteacher in an urban school.
- There is no minimum period from appointment as a headteacher to taking part in the assessment process.
- It is recommended that candidates leave at least a 12 month gap between assessments to allow the opportunity for progress in the areas of development identified.

What does the assessment process involve?

The assessment centre is a single, co-ordinated exercise to evaluate a candidate's strengths and areas for development in the competencies identified as being key to urban leadership in the framework. The assessment process will last a full day. The process will typically include a critical incident interview, a school improvement planning exercise, feedback on a lesson and a group exercise.

Feedback will be provided by assessors that are trained and accredited. Assessors will outline performance in each of the competencies and how areas for development could be improved. Development opportunities will also be discussed. In cases where face-to-face feedback cannot be arranged, a telephone discussion will be organised.

How will it improve the recruitment process?

Appointing the right headteacher for their school is one of the most important tasks that a governing body performs. The assessment process provides a governing body with additional evidence on each of the candidates. Part of the recruitment process involves assessors working with governors to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses, thereby providing a clear picture of the sort of leader the school needs to take it forward. The assessment process is designed to complement the recruitment process and help governing bodies in identifying the right person for their school.

What award is received for Chartered Urban Leader status?

Each candidate that meets the relevant target profile will receive the title of 'Fellow as a Chartered Urban Leader' or 'Fellow as a Chartered Urban Leader: Initial'. The awarding body will be the College of Teachers on the authority of the National College of School Leadership. The College of Teachers – originally the College of Preceptors – was awarded a Royal Charter in 1849 and a Supplement Charter in 1998.

What support is available once you have been through the process?

The development map which accompanies the framework sets out a range of professional development opportunities offered by both NCSL and other providers. It would be beneficial for candidates to share the profile and development opportunities recommended with their school improvement adviser or line manager. The information will assist candidates in choosing the most relevant development.

What does it cost?

Schools in London will be able to send shortlisted candidates to the assessment centre free of charge. Existing headteachers and aspiring headteachers from schools in the pilot LEAs go through the process at a cost of £800; for headteachers and aspiring headteachers outside the 5 LEAs, the cost will be £1,000.

Pilot LEAs are Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Lambeth and Waltham Forest.

How do I apply?

LEAs and existing headteachers can contact:

London Leadership Strategy

2nd Floor
1 Alfred Place
London
WC1E 7EB

T: 0845 015 0025

E: leadershipstrategy@ncsl.org.uk

Comments from Headteachers

"Excellent, comprehensive and detailed framework. As well as being very good for developing established heads, it will be invaluable in assisting with the identification of future leaders of urban schools."

Sir Michael Wilshaw

Principal, Mossbourne Academy, Hackney

Chartered Urban Leader

"I felt the description of the competences needed was bang on. I enjoyed Tim Brighouse's foreword. As an urban practitioner, I can't tell you how gratifying it is at last to have what we do in urban schools recognised as a high status activity rather than some sort of educational 'sweeper-up' role. I look forward to being further involved in promoting this initiative and in the whole agenda of developing model good urban education."

Mel Woodcock

Headteacher, North Manchester High School for Boys

"Exciting and inspiring. This framework recognises the qualities needed to be a successful urban headteacher. I think it will have a profound impact on the status and achievements of school leaders. Working on this has made me feel proud and privileged to be the head of an urban school."

Diana Owen

Headteacher, Huntingdon Primary School, Nottingham

"I think the higher-order head teacher characteristics are extremely useful: the positive behaviours re-affirm what good heads do, and the negative behaviours are good reminders of how not to behave, because at times we all fall in to negative behaviours and we need to be reminded of how to get out of them."

Shahed Ahmed

Headteacher, Elmhurst Primary School, Newham

Chartered Urban Leader

"The potential of the competencies is vast. They have absorbed the quintessential 'wow' factor I observed in successful colleague heads who are champions in their schools and leaders of their communities. We will definitely use this in our early identification of future leaders' programme. It has been an honour working on this."

Mo Brennan

Headteacher, The Hillcrest School & Community

College, Dudley

Chartered Urban Leader

"Excellent framework. I think it deals with the facets that are a little bit more intangible. It is particularly strong on the need for headteachers to be resilient and to have a balanced view to acknowledge the positive. I think the range of competencies has good headings and are well separated out. I think the people whom it is aimed at will find it extremely useful. The ability to forge a significant personal/professional support network in a school is important. It is also necessary to have the ability to deal with the multi-contextual things that happen in the school as well as the need to grab any opportunity to be reflective as well."

John Laws

Headteacher, Hilton Primary School, Newcastle

Chartered Urban Leader

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