



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

National College for Teaching and Leadership

Framework Document

April 2014

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Ministerial foreword



I am pleased to introduce the Framework Document for the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). It sets out the arrangements for the governance, accountability, financing, staffing and operation of the NCTL.

NCTL has two key aims: to improve the quality of the education workforce; and to help schools to help each other to improve. It will work towards developing a 0-18 education system which will allow new ways of working to support the best schools, leaders, and teachers to lead improvements in the quality of the school workforce.

I look forward to closely working with the Chief Executive and staff of the NCTL and wish them every success in their work.

David Laws
Minister of State for Schools

Introduction

1. The National College for Teaching and Leadership ('the Agency') was formed on 29 March 2013 by merging the activities of the National College for School Leadership and the Teaching Agency. It is an executive agency of the Department for Education ('the Department').
2. The Agency has responsibility, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education ('the Secretary of State'), for improving the quality of the education workforce; and helping schools to help each other improve.
3. This Framework Document sets out the arrangements for the governance, accountability, financing, staffing and operation of the Agency, agreed between the Secretary of State, the Director General for Education Standards and the Chief Executive of the Agency, and approved by Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT).
4. This Framework Document and the operation of the Agency will be reviewed under arrangements agreed between the Secretary of State and the Chief Executive after two years, in April 2016 (but may be reviewed at any time if they so wish). The period before the next review will be agreed in April 2016 and will not exceed three years, in accordance with Cabinet Office guidance.
5. Any amendments to this Framework Document must be agreed by the Secretary of State and the Chief Executive, and by HMT. Any departure from the provision of this Framework Document must be agreed in writing on a case-by-case basis between the Secretary of State, or delegate, and Chief Executive, and a HMT Minister if appropriate.
6. Any questions concerning the interpretation of this Framework Document will be resolved, if possible, by agreement between the Chief Executive and the Director General with responsibility for the Agency and, in default of agreement, will be referred for decision to the Secretary of State.
7. Copies of this Framework Document will be published on the Department's website and placed in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Aims and Objectives

8. The Department for Education's vision is for a highly educated society in which opportunity is more equal for children and young people no matter what their background or family circumstances. For 2014, the Department's priorities are:
 - i. increase the number of high quality schools
 - ii. introduce fair funding
 - iii. reform the school curriculum and qualifications
 - iv. reduce bureaucracy and improve accountability
 - v. train and develop the professionals who work with children
 - vi. improve services for children in the early years
 - vii. improve support for children, young people and families, focusing on the most disadvantaged
9. Central to these priorities is the need to have excellent headteachers, academy principals, teachers, early years and other leaders to drive improvement in the school system and to foster a decentralised culture of self-improvement.
10. The Agency has two strategic aims:
 - i. Improving the quality of the education workforce; and
 - ii. Helping schools to help each other to improve.
11. The Agency will also deliver other functions on behalf of the Secretary of State which, at present include:
 - i. NCTL will support the quality and status of the teaching profession by ensuring that in cases of serious **professional misconduct**, teachers are prohibited from teaching.
 - ii. overseeing the induction process for teachers and award Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Teacher Status; and
 - iii. supporting exam officers in schools, promoting best practice and facilitating the efficient collection of examination scripts. NCTL will phase out the support currently provided and will expect schools to identify and plan the most appropriate training and support required at a local level.
12. The Agency will publish a business plan setting out its annual and longer-term strategic objectives and key targets as agreed with the Secretary of State at the start of each financial year.

Roles, responsibilities and governance

Permanent Secretary (Principal Accounting Officer)

13. The Permanent Secretary is the Principal Accounting Officer for the Department for Education and, as such, is responsible to Ministers for the overall leadership and operation of the Department, including the Agency, and for advising on, and setting, policies and frameworks and allocation of resources and expenditure for the Department as a whole.
14. The Permanent Secretary's responsibilities as Principal Accounting Officer include:
 - i. ensuring that the Department, including the Agency, uses its resources efficiently, economically and effectively;
 - ii. ensuring the Agency conforms to Departmental and Government policy;
 - iii. being satisfied that the Agency (as with the Department as a whole) has adequate financial management systems and procedures in line with Government standards, operates with propriety and regularity, and is using its funds for the purposes intended by Parliament.
15. The Permanent Secretary will appoint the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer for the Agency.

Director General for Education Standards

16. The Secretary of State has asked the Director General for Education Standards ('the Director General') to take responsibility for oversight of the Agency and to line manage the Chief Executive. In doing so, the Director General will support the work of the Agency by:
 - i. agreeing the budget, strategic long-term and annual objectives (as set out in the annual business plan), strategic performance and management framework, and impact indicators for the Agency before submitting these for agreement by the Secretary of State;
 - ii. monitoring and challenging the Agency's performance against these objectives (including financial performance, risk management and forward planning);
 - iii. advising Ministers and the Permanent Secretary on the Agency's performance;

- iv. ensuring the Agency has the overall delegations and authorities it needs for effective delivery and continuous improvement;
- v. ensuring that the Agency is engaged in Departmental policy developments that affect it and consulted in a timely way on Government-wide policy developments.

Chief Executive

- 17. The appointment of the Chief Executive will be made in accordance with the Recruitment Principles set out by the Civil Service Commissioners.¹ Chief Executive remuneration will normally be agreed in accordance with the performance and reward arrangements for members of the Department's Senior Civil Service.
- 18. The Permanent Secretary, as Principal Accounting Officer, will designate the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer for the Agency. The Chief Executive will be accountable to the Secretary of State, the Principal Accounting Officer, and the Director General Sponsor. The Chief Executive as Accounting Officer is accountable to Parliament for those responsibilities, which are set out in an appointment letter. The CEO is responsible for ensuring the requirement of the HM Treasury Managing Public Money and Cabinet Office guidance, are met.
- 19. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Secretary of State for the performance, leadership and day to day management of the Agency. The Secretary of State is responsible for the policy framework within which the Agency operates; for determining its strategic objectives; for setting its annual key financial and performance targets (which are announced to Parliament by Ministerial statement); approving Business Plans; and for monitoring performance against targets.
- 20. Ordinarily, the Director General will perform an oversight role on behalf of the Secretary of State, but the Chief Executive and Secretary of State will also meet regularly to discuss matters of concern with one another directly as necessary. Specifically, the Chief Executive and Secretary of State will meet at least annually to discuss and review the Agency's performance. The Chief Executive will also meet regularly with the Minister of State for Schools and will engage with other responsible Ministers as appropriate.
- 21. The Secretary of State is accountable to Parliament on all matters concerning the Agency, and accordingly retains the right to intervene in the operations of the Agency if public or parliamentary concerns justify it.

¹ Subject to change by the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners.

22. The Chief Executive's responsibilities include:
- i. advising on and effectively implementing the strategic policy set by Ministers;
 - ii. preparing the Agency 's annual business plan;
 - iii. efficient and cost-effective management of the Agency so as to ensure it achieves its objectives and targets within the financial parameters set out in the Delegation letter issued annually and supported by Departmental and HMT guidance;
 - iv. effective leadership and management of the staff of the Agency ;
 - v. ensuring robust financial planning and a full understanding of the costs of the Agency's activities;
 - vi. reporting regularly to the Permanent Secretary and Ministers via the Director General on Agency delivery performance, finance, risk management and forward planning;
 - vii. informing senior officials or Ministers of any novel or contentious issues which could give rise to substantial media, public, Parliamentary or Ministerial concern;
 - viii. ensuring that the Agency and any providers it commissions comply fully with all relevant legislative and corporate governance arrangements.

External Support and Challenge

23. The Department will put in place arrangements to provide the Chief Executive with additional support and challenge. One of the Department's Non-Executive Board Members will have oversight of the Agency.
24. The Chair of the teaching schools council will also provide support and challenge to the Chief Executive of the Agency. This will ensure that there is a strong schools' perspective included in the oversight of the work of the Agency.

Governance

25. The Agency will follow the principles of good governance that are set out by the Governance Strand of the Department for Education Review. Therefore the Agency's governance will:
- be designed so that there is a clear line of sight through the system with feedback loops at each level from the top down, supporting the Department's Board and its sub-committees;
 - be light touch as far as possible, not increasing burdens but increasing prospects of successful delivery;
 - be streamlined with as few layers and reporting lines as possible;
 - be fit for purpose: not every activity needs to be managed by a board or using PPM techniques;
 - include clarity of accountabilities and remits (including focus on inputs, outputs or outcomes as necessary and the decisions and courses of action open) across all parts of the structure – with minimal duplication or overlap and clear routes and rationale for escalation;
 - include standardised reporting which is as light touch as possible – and as much as possible, provide a single set of information which can be synthesised for the next tier;
 - have external/independent scrutiny and challenge;
 - involve regular self-evaluation to assess whether the governance mechanisms are effective and adding value, and;
 - be supported by clear structures and processes, good communication and the right people.

The Agency Senior Management Team

26. The Agency will have a Senior Management Team (SMT) chaired by the Chief Executive. Senior officials from within the Department's Education Standards Directorate will attend as appropriate.
27. The SMT will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Agency's programme of work and managing risks and issues.

Bilateral Meetings

28. Monthly bilateral meetings will be held between the Director General and the Chief Executive for the clearance of monthly updates prior to reporting to the Performance Committee (see paras 32 & 33). This includes updates on monthly delivery plan and programme reports, non-delivery plan business and risk escalation.

Quarterly Strategic Review

29. The Director General will hold strategic performance reviews with the Chief Executive, along with Agency Directors. The quarterly meeting cycle that the Director General holds will constitute part of the Department's governance structure for managing the Agency and will inform the termly reporting cycle to the Department Board. This will allow the Chief Executive to present the work of the Agency (for example, delivery performance, expenditure, risk management and forward planning) in the round, and allow the Non-Executive Board Member and the Director General as well as the other attendees to scrutinise and challenge that work in some depth.

Strategy and Challenge Board

30. The Agency will report to the Strategy and Challenge Board on a monthly basis. The Board will consider medium and long term strategic matters or cross cutting matters that cannot be engaged locally. The Board will also periodically, and through a peer review process, review the impact of the Teachers and Teaching Delivery Plan and the effectiveness of plans for managing the Teachers Supply and Quality Building Block Risk.

Department for Education Boards

31. The Department Board provides strategic and operational leadership for the Department, with a major emphasis on monitoring progress against the Departmental Delivery Plans. All Ministers sit on this Board, along with the Permanent Secretary, the Directors General and four Non-Executive Board Members.
32. The Department Board has three main committees; The Performance Committee; the Management Committee; and the Audit and Risk Committee. This governance structure will ensure that Ministers and senior officials supported by the Non-Executive Board Members can provide strategic leadership for the whole Department. It ensures the efficient and effective management of the Department.
33. The Agency's work will feature in the Teachers and Teaching and Childcare Reform Delivery Plans as well as in the Director General's regular reporting. The Chief Executive may be asked to attend any of the Committees or the Department Board to answer questions about the Agency's work.

Department's Audit and Risk Committee

34. The work of the Agency will also be subject to scrutiny by the Department's Audit and Risk Committee, a sub-committee of the Department Board which focuses on departmental and Executive Agency accounts, financial risks, accountability and propriety, as well as providing independent assurance to the Permanent Secretary in his role as Principal Accounting Officer. It may also make recommendations to the Principal Accounting Officer and the Board on the Agency's risk management.

Relationships within the Department and with other bodies

35. The Agency will work with Departmental policy teams and other Agencies to advise on and effectively implement the strategic policy set by Ministers. The Agency will also work collaboratively with other bodies, including other government departments that have an interest in its work.

Accountability to Parliament

Parliamentary Committees

36. The Permanent Secretary and the Chief Executive may be asked to appear before the Public Accounts Committee concerning their respective Accounting Officer responsibilities.
37. The Chief Executive may be asked to represent and answer for the Secretary of State at hearings of Parliamentary Committees when operational matters concerning the Agency are discussed.

Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration

38. The Agency is subject to the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (PCA). Cases may be referred to the PCA by an MP once the Department's complaints procedure has been exhausted.
39. The Permanent Secretary is the Principal Officer of the Department for Education for the purposes of PCA referrals but delegates the responsibility for handling any matters concerning the Agency to the Chief Executive through this Framework Document.

Parliamentary Questions and Parliamentary Correspondence

40. The Chief Executive, or nominated representative, will advise Ministers on Parliamentary Questions and Parliamentary Correspondence addressed to Ministers as required on all Agency matters. The Agency and policy teams will work closely on responses to Parliamentary Questions and Correspondence on delivery and policy, respectively, according to operational processes to be agreed. The Secretary of State may ask the Chief Executive to reply direct to correspondence and written PQs that concern issues delegated to the Chief Executive.

Fulfilling the Accounting Officer role

41. As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive is personally responsible for propriety and regularity, value for money, efficient and effective use of resources for which he is accountable and the organisation and management of the Agency.
42. The Agency's Accounting Officer is required to provide assurance that the Agency's funds are used for the purposes intended by Parliament, are properly accounted for, and that the Agency has in place an effective and appropriate

system of internal control. That assurance will be provided through the Agency's Governance Statement which must be signed annually by the Accounting Officer.

Financial Management and Reporting

General Accounting Rules

43. The Agency is subject to public expenditure controls as well as the rules and policies laid down by the Department and by HMT in Managing Public Money, Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, Financial Reporting Manual and other accounting instructions that are issued from time to time.

Funding Allocation

44. The Secretary of State agrees the budget and resource allocation for the Agency on the advice of the Director General as part of the Departmental Annual Business Planning or Spending Review process.

Delegations

45. The Director General, ESD, will delegate responsibility for all financial matters relating to the Agency's functions to the Chief Executive in a formal delegation letter. The Agency will operate within the limits confirmed in the letter, which will be reviewed at least annually.
46. The Chief Executive is accountable for expenditure incurred within the Agency in delivering its services and any income it receives, including income and expenditure of the International Business Unit (the International Business Unit is expected to be transferred out of NCTL by December 2014). The Chief Executive has the right to approve all items of expenditure, use of receipts, authorise write-off losses and make special payments within limits specified which are within the provision of the Director General's delegation letter. This delegation is subject to the financial delegations, controls and approval processes set by the Department, HMT and the Cabinet Office.

Financial Management and Reporting

47. Monthly Financial Management reports will be provided as part of shared services provision. The Agency will use this financial information for its monthly performance reports. The Chief Executive will approve the report for submission to the Department's governance structures.

Annual Report and Accounts

48. As part of shared services provision, the Department's Finance team will prepare the Annual Report and Accounts in accordance with the guidance and accounting policy set out by the Cabinet Office and HMT. The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for signing the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts and the Governance Statement and passing them to the Comptroller and Auditor General for external audit.
49. The Audit and Risk Committee will provide independent advice and challenge of the Accounts.
50. The Annual Report and Accounts will be prepared and audited according to an agreed timeline and will be submitted to the Secretary of State following endorsement by the Permanent Secretary and the Director General. The Report and Accounts will form part of the Whole of Government Accounts return for the Departmental group. The Secretary of State will lay the Annual Report and Accounts in Parliament.

Audit and Assurance

Internal Audit

51. The Agency will receive internal audit and assurance services from the Cross Departmental Internal Audit Service (XDIAS) who will provide independent and objective assurance to the Accounting Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Agency framework of governance, risk management and control by measuring and evaluating the Agency's effectiveness in achieving its agreed objectives. This will be timed to support the Accounting Officer's annual Governance Statement.
52. The Agency will be included in any cross-Department compliance and themed audits where relevant, and in any audits based on the resource management (RM) system.
53. All Audit Work will be carried out in accordance with the Government Internal Audit Standards, the Institute of Internal Auditors Code of Ethics and relevant legislation.

External Audit

54. The Comptroller and Auditor General will, in line with an audit timetable agreed with the Department:
 - i. conduct a financial audit of the Agency's accounts;

- ii. examine their regularity and propriety of transactions;
 - iii. give an opinion on the accounts and transactions to Parliament; and may
 - iv. carry out investigations into the value for money of Agency spending.
55. The Comptroller and Auditor General will have access to any books and records of the Agency in order to follow up any concerns over matters of regularity and propriety, and to carry out examinations into economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Agency has used its resources in discharging its functions.

Risk Management

56. The Agency will develop and maintain a risk management process that is consistent with the Department's risk management framework and principles of good risk management.
57. The Agency will work jointly with the Teachers and Teaching and Childcare and Early Years policy families to manage its elements of the Building Block Risks. This will include the definition, role and responsibilities of Building Block 'sub-risk' owners so that there is clarity regarding the actions that the Agency and the policy families are taking to manage the risks.
58. The Agency will share other risk information with the Department and notify the Department of other risks that need or may need action by the Department as necessary as part of its ongoing joint working. Any risk that meets the escalation criteria, as set out in the Department's risk management framework, will be considered by the Management Committee.
59. The Agency's risk management process will be scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee.

National College for Teaching and Leadership Staff

60. All staff working in the Agency are civil servants employed by the Department for Education on Departmental terms and conditions of service. As such, posts in central Department functions and the Department's Executive Agencies are open to all Departmental staff. In the case of recruitment to the senior civil service, the Agency should observe the requirements and processes set out by the Civil Service Commissioners.
61. The Agency will follow Civil Service and Departmental human resources policy and guidance.

Shared Services

62. A number of corporate functions will be provided as a shared service across the Department reflecting the Department for Education operating model. The quality of service provision will be reviewed at regular intervals and any issues discussed between the Chief Executive and the Director responsible for the relevant shared service. The relationship between NCTL and shared services are outlined in sections 63 to 87.

Human Resources

63. The Department's HR Group will be responsible for the delivery of HR services to the Agency, including the provision of advice and guidance on matters such as training and development, performance management, case work and recruitment/brokerage advice. In addition, the Agency will be able to call on the services of Education Standards Directorate's dedicated HR Business Partner for advice at a strategic level.
64. On behalf of the Agency, the Department's HR Group will also manage those elements of the HR service which are provided by third party providers. This includes, for instance, payroll and administration of pensions, occupational health and childcare funding.

Estates and Facilities Management

65. The Department's Property Asset Management Unit (PAMU) will deliver Estates and Facilities Management services to the Agency and will also manage those elements of the facilities management service which are provided by third parties.
66. Services provided will include health and safety management, cleaning, security, helpdesk, building maintenance, reprographics, mail delivery and distribution, catering services where appropriate and the disaster recovery component of business continuity planning. The Agency will adopt the Department's Flexible Workspace policy.
67. PAMU will seek to run and maintain buildings to high environmental standards with environmental management programmes in place and sustainability being a key component of the building maintenance and operation regime.

Communications

68. The Agency will retain responsibility for internal and external communications, working closely with the Department's central communication function, especially

in relation to strategy and approach, sourcing specialist skills and using relevant Departmental contracts.

69. The Agency will be responsible for the management and delivery of operational communications which are required to carry out its core business areas.
70. The Department's Communications Group will provide communications activity and services including media handling, digital, web and social media communications, strategy and insight, publishing, and correspondence and call handling for public enquiries.
71. Communications for the Agency will be planned and coordinated in line with Agency and Departmental priorities set out in their respective business plans. A Communications Adviser will represent the Agency's interests, liaising between the Chief Executive, management and operational teams and the Communications Group, to plan and execute the Agency's corporate and strategic communications and ensure fair access to the communications shared service.

Finance and Procurement

72. The Department's Finance & Commercial Group (FCG) will provide professional finance and commercial services, including provision of heads of profession for finance and procurement, to ensure that the Agency has the commercial skills and capability that it needs. FCG will set finance and commercial policy and standards for the Department as a whole, including the Agency. The Agency will have a small dedicated team focused on specialist commercial support for its operational associates, licensing, leadership and training frameworks and income generation work. A forward workplan will be agreed with Commercial Division to establish levels of support and timescales applicable to this commercial activity.
73. Financial management support for the Agency will include production of the Agency's statutory annual report and resource accounts, Board Reporting, financial accounting, management accounting and budget loading. FCG will consolidate the Agency's annual report and accounts into the Department's Whole of Government Accounts return.
74. FCG will provide procurement policy and procurement advice to the Agency as well as procurement support for the Agency's Major Procurements defined as high risk, high value or complex which are outside of the scope of the Agency's small dedicated commercial team. In addition FCG will ensure that the Agency has access to deals for common goods and services either from the Department's own deals or by providing access to the Government Procurement Service deals and, where necessary, FCG will put in place bespoke deals for the Agency.

75. FCG will provide advice on governance, propriety & regularity, and wider data and information solutions and processes.
76. All processing of finance and commercial transactions will be provided by the DWP Oracle RM system. As part of the Department, the Agency will be covered by the Department's assurance processes with DWP shared services.
77. DWP shared services also undertake all procurements with a value under £100 which are not within the specialist areas covered by NCTL's small dedicated team.
78. The Department's Business Insight and Reporting team will interrogate the resource management system and provide routine workforce reports and analysis covering the Agency.
79. The Agency can procure, Educational Specialist Services using their e-procurement system sourced from the Dynamic Purchasing System: (Operational Associates framework and Leadership and Training framework); provided that applicable HMRC advice is followed, they are competed within these frameworks and adhere to the Agency's day rates policy and that the delegated financial authority for proposed spend continues to be obtained within the Agency and is exempt from Efficiency Controls².
80. The Agency will provide access and support to the Department and its agencies to the Dynamic Purchasing System (OA Framework) and the Leadership and Training Framework to procure Educational Professional Services in line with the terms and conditions of the frameworks and the e-procurement system.

Legal Services

81. The Legal Adviser's Office (LAO) will provide the Agency with flexible, timely and high quality legal services to enable it to operate effectively within the law, achieve best legal outcomes and minimise legal risk. These services involve legal advice on operational and policy issues, primary legislation and secondary legislation, public law and European law. They also include enhancing the legal awareness of staff and supporting the procurement, management and quality assurance of external legal services.
82. LAO and the Agency will work in partnership to maximise the value for money of legal services. LAO's service provision is specified in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Treasury Solicitor's Department (of which LAO is a division) and the Department.

² As agreed by Department for Education Ministers in April 2013

Information, Communication and Technology Services

83. All IT services will be provided under four categories ranging from core services to bespoke services developed in conjunction with the Agency. Agency staff will receive the same level of service as other Departmental staff.
84. The Chief Information Officer's Group (CIO Group) will work with the Agency to agree the arrangements for service delivery and supplier relationships. CIO Group will appoint an Agency Business Partner to manage and oversee these arrangements.
85. The CIO Group will assume responsibility for the development, delivery and support of its customer facing ICT systems, and the Data Warehouse systems. It will agree an Operating Level Agreement with the Agency to describe the scope of the services provided and describe how CIOG and the Agency will work together to safeguard and secure the delivery of services and business requirements to deliver the work of the Agency.

Internal Audit and Assurance

86. The internal audit service will be provided by the Department as described in paragraphs 51 to 53 as part of the shared service programme. In providing this service the Internal Audit Unit will have unrestricted access to the National College for Teaching and Leadership staff, documents and records. NCTL will report any suspected instances of fraud, error and irregularity to the Department Fraud, Error and Debt (FED) Champion and Internal Audit.
87. It will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive, as the Agency's Accounting Officer, to agree the audit programme for the Agency with the Head of Internal Audit.



National College for Teaching & Leadership

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