



National College for  
Teaching & Leadership

# **Supporting Returning Teachers Pilot**

**Funding for the design and delivery of  
school-led programmes**

**Guidance and Application form**

**September 2015**

## 1. Summary

<p>About this guidance</p>	<p>This guidance is being sent to School Direct lead schools and SCITTs. Lead schools, on behalf of school partnerships, are invited to bid to become a 'Supporting Returning Teachers pilot' and as a result to receive grant funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The aim of the pilot is to test whether secondary schools can improve teacher recruitment in English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects<sup>1</sup> in hard to recruit areas by providing a bespoke package of support to qualified teachers who are currently not teaching in maintained schools but wish to return, in order to overcome any barriers preventing them from returning.</li> </ul> <p>We recommend that, before applying, lead schools meet with strategic partners (schools, universities and others) to develop plans for delivering the pilot.</p> <p>In order to apply, lead schools and school partnerships must be able to demonstrate that they wish to address a shortfall in recruitment against their school-led Initial Teacher Training places. See <b>section 4</b> for more details. It would be acceptable for a lead school to nominate another school from within their School Direct partnership to lead on this application, but this should be set out in the application, along with details of the school partnership.</p>
<p>Key dates</p>	<p>Application round opens: <b>Thursday 17 September 2015</b></p> <p>Application round closes: <b>5pm Monday 12 October 2015</b></p> <p>Outcomes communicated: <b>w/c 2 November 2015</b></p> <p>Start-up meetings: <b>w/c 9 and 16 November 2015</b></p>
<p>Application Form</p>	<p>The criteria that should be addressed in bids and the evidence that should be provided are set out in <b>section 9</b>.</p> <p>Relevant questions and answers can be found in <b>Annex A</b>.</p> <p>The application form may be found as a separate document published alongside this guidance.</p>

<sup>1</sup> English, maths, science (biology, chemistry, physics), languages, history and geography.

## **2. Context and purpose of the pilot**

While teacher supply remains stable nationally, it has always been the case that some schools find it more challenging than others to recruit to vacancies.

Demographic changes mean that more secondary school teachers may be needed in coming years, especially in EBacc subjects. Qualified teachers, who are currently not teaching, are one subset of the teacher supply pool that can be mobilised back into schools, given the right type of support.

The latest National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) data (March 2013) suggests that there may be as many as 337,600 teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in England who are not currently teaching in state-funded schools<sup>2</sup>. Of these, 106,700 have never taught in state-funded schools. Not all inactive teachers will be willing, able or suitable to return to the workforce, for example, some will be retired and some will be barred from teaching.

There are more teachers trying to return to the profession than are successful in securing a teaching post; around a third of inactive teachers have tried unsuccessfully to return to teaching at some stage. A recent NCTL survey of school leaders<sup>3</sup>, carried out through the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), indicated that the main barriers were:

- Lack of evidence of recent classroom experience;
- Lack of up to date curriculum/subject knowledge;
- Poor quality applications and interview technique; and
- Lack of up to date knowledge of classroom practice, policies, assessment frameworks and general teaching requirements.

The aim of the pilot is to test whether schools can improve recruitment in EBacc subjects in hard to recruit areas, by providing a bespoke package of support to overcome any barriers that qualified inactive teachers face when looking to return to teaching. NCTL plans to robustly evaluate this pilot.

## **3. School-led Support and Training for Returners**

Lead schools, on behalf of school partnerships, are invited to bid to become a pilot, and each pilot will receive grant funding to support inactive teachers who wish to return. Through the pilot and its evaluation, we hope to gather evidence about the most effective ways to support inactive teachers back into the profession. Our intention is to support returning teachers back in to permanent teaching positions (either part time or full time) by November 2016. The key design features of this pilot are:

- School partnerships can bid for funding to support cohorts of at least 10 returners, up to a maximum of 40 returners.

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<sup>2</sup> The Database of Teacher Records (DTR), source tables - additional tables I1 and I2 at the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2014>

<sup>33</sup> Due to be published shortly.

- All bids should be based on an assessment of need so that returners will go on to employment at the end of the pilot in the partnership. A proportion of the grant funding will therefore be linked to employment outcomes.
- The type of bespoke support offered may include face-to-face or online training, coaching, lesson observation, classroom practice and mentoring and will be designed by the individual school partnership to meet the needs of the returners that they recruit.
- Schools will be responsible for quality assuring any training provided to ensure it is of high quality and where appropriate, will offer academic credits or certification.
- All returners involved in the pilot will be provided with a report/certification detailing the support they have received through the pilot.
- A national marketing campaign, planned and delivered by NCTL, will support recruitment to the pilots by encouraging interested inactive teachers to register with NCTL, after which they will be signposted to the pilot school partnerships.
- Schools will also be expected to market the pilot at a local level by using their own resources to attract and recruit prospective candidates. This could include holding briefing/taster sessions to generate interest, advertising through local networks, attending recruitment fairs, using community websites and through the use of social media.

School partnerships delivering the pilot will be required to participate fully in the evaluation. Participation in the evaluation will be proportionate and deliverable for the school partnership. Full details will be provided through the pilot start up meetings.

#### **4. Criteria for grant funding**

We invite lead schools, graded 'outstanding' or 'good' for overall effectiveness by Ofsted in their most recent inspection, on behalf of a partnership of schools, to apply to become a 'Supporting Returning Teachers' pilot. Schools will be bidding to receive grant funding to support 'returners' who are recruited to the pilot. The lead school is responsible for coordinating a single application form and will be responsible (paid and held accountable) for the grant funding.

Specific criteria for the grant funding can be found in the table at **section 10**.

This pilot is aimed at returners who are returning to teach secondary EBacc subjects. The EBacc subjects are defined as: English, maths, science (biology, chemistry, and physics), languages, history and geography.

'Returners' are defined, for the purposes of this pilot, as those who have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and who are not currently holding permanent or fixed-term posts in English schools or colleges (state-funded or independent). They, therefore, include people who, after acquiring QTS, chose not to join the teaching profession but now wish to do so.

'Returners' could include:

- People who are working in another sector outside of teaching but have had a teaching post in the past (it does not matter how long ago they left teaching);
- People who have previously taught in the independent sector and are not currently teaching;
- People who gained their QTS in England but are currently teaching outside the UK;
- People who may have had a career break to bring up children or to take on caring responsibilities (this does not include those just returning from an official period of maternity leave); and
- People who are currently supply teaching.

Lead schools should base their numbers on a realistic assessment of employment need in their partnership, their ability to recruit participants and organisational capacity.

In order to apply, lead schools and school partnerships must be able to demonstrate:

- Previous engagement with school-led ITT;
- Any involvement with ITT recruitment support activities; such as regular engagement with School Direct networks, the School Experience Programme (or school's own equivalent) and, for relevant subjects, offered access where appropriate to Subject Knowledge Enhancement programmes; and
- Under-recruitment on school-led ITT routes (e.g. School Direct or SCITT courses), which can be evidenced by a shortfall in recruitment against their allocations for those programmes in EBacc subjects.

A strong application will be one that provides:

- Appropriate proposals for attracting and recruiting to the programme;
- Robust plans for designing the support package that they will offer, including how they will tackle the barriers qualified teachers face when returning to the profession;
- A clear commitment to give those that they support the best opportunities to secure employment either in the lead school, the school partnership or in the wider region, including flexible working/part-time opportunities;
- How learning from the pilot will be embedded across the partnership when recruiting to teaching positions in the future and how this learning will be

shared and disseminated beyond the partnership; and

- Capacity to deliver the pilot.

### Teacher Subject Specialism Training (TSST)

School partnerships that are in receipt of grant funding for Teacher Subject Specialism Training (TSST) for maths and/or physics may bid for additional funding in these subjects **only where this can be justified**; for example, where a significant additional impact, over and above that delivered by TSST, can be made in returning inactive teachers to the profession. Bids will be considered from school partnerships involved in the TSST programme for the remaining EBacc subjects.

## **5. Grant funding**

Lead schools can apply for grant funding for **cohorts of ten** returners up to a maximum of 40 (i.e. 10, 20, 30 or 40). The grant funding available per recruited returner is £1,900.

It is for individual school partnerships to determine whether they bid for cohorts in a single subject or a mix of EBacc subjects, depending on the need of the particular partnership. School partnerships may wish to consider specialising in a specific subject.

In exceptional circumstances, cohorts of over 40 may be considered if the need and capacity to offer the returners permanent posts at the end of the programme can be proven.

It is expected that schools will recruit to their allocated places on the pilot by the end of March 2016. At this point, returners will not be 'employed' by the school, but taking part in the pilot. Support should be provided to returners recruited to the pilot before July 2016, although schools will be best placed to determine how and when to best deliver the support needed by the returners. To receive the full funding the returning teacher must be in employment in November 2016 (this will be evidenced through the School Workforce Census). This need not be in their school partnership.

The grant funding will be released to schools on provision of management information at specified points as follows:

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Trigger</b>	<b>Payment point</b>
50% of grant funding per returner recruited to pilot	On receipt of a full list of programme participants	By end March 2016
30% of grant funding per returner retained on pilot	On receipt of a full list of retained programme participants	June 2016
Final 20% of grant funding per returner retained beyond pilot	On receipt of a full list of employed programme participants	December 2016

As part of the Government's commitment to efficiency controls, bidders should be aware that there are restrictions on all paid-for communications, marketing and digital activities. While NCTL will be running publicity at the national level to encourage returners to the profession, none of this grant should be used for the purposes of marketing this pilot locally. Schools partnerships are expected to invest in the returners on their scheme by using their own resources, including fee income from School Direct or SCITT provision, to recruit the returners and this is reflected in the payment points of this grant.

The controls relating to communications and marketing activity include printing, publications, events and PR.

Although paid-for marketing activities are restricted under grant funding guidelines, NCTL support and marketing resources are freely available to all lead schools. These include the [marketing resource bank](#) (which offers new ready-made and adaptable marketing materials such as posters, parent letters, flyers and outdoor banners).

Bidders should indicate if any irrecoverable VAT is applicable, and if so, include VAT separately in all costings, as the full £1,900 grant is inclusive of VAT. All successful schools will be required to submit a 'certificate of expenditure' (as part of the collaborative fund evaluation) at the end of the grant cycle as assurance of expenditure.

## **6. Outputs and outcomes by December 2016**

Successful schools will be expected to:

- Design, implement and quality assure an effective support package for returners;
- Ensure an agreed number of returning teachers have received support and undertaken training in secondary EBacc subjects as was originally set out in the approved bid;
- Make materials and resources available to support other schools to develop effective practice;
- Ensure that teachers supported by the pilot are in employment in November 2016 and gain robust evidence of training and development that can be used as currency when pursuing future teaching positions; and
- Participate fully in the external evaluation of the pilot.

## **7. Terms and conditions**

Successful schools will be required to:

- Attend a start-up meeting in the week commencing 9 or 16 November;
- Collate and submit participant data, including NCTL returner reference

numbers<sup>4</sup>. We will provide a template;

- Provide case studies and participant feedback;
- Complete delivery of support to returners by the end of July 2016;
- Provide termly progress reports to NCTL;
- Participate fully in the external evaluation to be commissioned by NCTL;
- Report against spend through the NCTL collaborative fund evaluation process; and
- Share effective practice and participate in network meetings (including engagement with School Direct networks where appropriate).

Staged funding can only be released at the stated payment points upon receipt of signed grant Terms and Conditions and dependent upon submission of satisfactory progress reports. All grant funding is subject to NCTL Collaborative Fund Grant Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions.

A full copy of the collaborative fund terms and conditions can be found at this web address; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collaborative-fund-grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions>

## **8. Application guidance and evidence that we will look for**

- ✓ The lead school is responsible for coordinating a single application form with details of all schools involved.
- ✓ The application form can be found at **Annex B**.
- ✓ Applications **must** be submitted on the application form and emailed to [Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk)
- ✓ Applications must adhere to the word count.
- ✓ Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will not be returned.
- ✓ The deadline for receipt of all completed applications is **5pm on Monday 12 October 2015**. Any applications received after this deadline will not be accepted even if the delay is due to technical difficulties.
- ✓ Applicant schools will be notified of the outcome in the **week commencing 2 and 9 November 2015**. Notification will be by email so please ensure you supply a monitored email address.

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<sup>4</sup> The data is required by NCTL in order to understand the take up and success of the provision. The data will be matched to administrative datasets held by NCTL for analytical purposes. All analysis will be aggregated at headline level and individual teachers will not be identified.



- ✓ Lead schools are responsible for the grant funding, and for providing NCTL with progress and final reports.

An assessment panel will assess each application form, against the criteria set out at section 10, using a pre-defined scoring matrix.

**Scoring matrix**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Definition</b>
0	The response does not demonstrate any evidence that the application meets this requirement
1	The response demonstrates insufficient evidence that the application meets this requirement
2	The response demonstrates some evidence that the application meets this requirement
3	The response demonstrates sufficient evidence that the application meets this requirement
4	The response demonstrates sufficient evidence that the application meets this requirement, and furthermore demonstrates additional appropriate evidence beyond that required
5	The response demonstrates multiple examples of evidence that the application meets this requirement, and furthermore demonstrates additional high value and/or impact in this area

The following factors will also be taken into account when assessing bids but are not criteria:

- Geographical spread
- Balance between the EBacc Subjects

**9. Applicant schools should provide evidence against the following questions:**

<b>QUESTION:</b>	<b>EVIDENCE LOOK FORs:</b>
<p><b>1. How many returner places on the pilot are you applying for and in which subjects?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of 10 places, maximum of 40 and in multiples of 10.</li> <li>• EBacc subjects only. It is for individual school partnerships to determine whether they bid for cohorts in a single subject or a mix of EBacc subjects, depending on the need of the particular partnership. School partnerships may wish to consider specialising in a specific subject and working with other school partnerships that specialise in different subjects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. What is your rationale in applying for these returner places/subjects on the pilot?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of difficulty in filling allocated places on school-led ITT routes and contact with School Direct as a result.</li> <li>• Evidence of engagement with support initiatives such as subject knowledge enhancement, school experience and School Direct networks.</li> <li>• Evidence of particular need in EBacc subjects and justification of number of places. How these places will be supported to employ at the end of the programme across the school partnership.</li> <li>• Evidence of how this pilot will contribute to workforce planning across the school partnership and demonstrate a clear intention to employ those recruited beyond the end of pilot.</li> <li>• Evidence of what the school partnership will deliver over and above the funding provided by NCTL, for example, local marketing of the pilot (please note that no grant funding can be spent on marketing).</li> </ul>

QUESTION:	EVIDENCE LOOK FORS:
<p><b>3. How will the school partnership recruit qualified but inactive teachers who are interested in returning?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of use of local networks to promote the pilot and raise its profile among inactive teachers.</li> <li>• Targeted marketing locally to reach and attract inactive teachers.</li> <li>• Evidence of a suitable process for selecting returners to the limited places on the pilot.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. How will the school partnership use its experience and expertise to identify the returners support needs?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear process defined to determine what support returners need, involving the gathering of paper evidence and practical evidence.</li> <li>• An account of the skills of the staff to be involved in the delivery of the pilot demonstrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High levels of expertise in the relevant subject;</li> <li>○ High levels of skill in relating to/mentoring teachers;</li> <li>○ Flexibility of approach in tailoring training to meet the needs of individuals; and</li> <li>○ • The value placed on review of training and support, and continuous improvement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>5. How will the school partnership design a package of support to meet the specific needs of the returners recruited?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear process by which the needs of the returners recruited to the pilot will be translated into a support package.</li> <li>• Capacity to create a joint team on behalf of the school partnership to design, develop and deliver a high quality training and support package.</li> <li>• A description of what a proposed package of support would look like to respond to the specific barriers faced by returning teachers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. How will the school partnership embed learning from this pilot and share this beyond the partnership?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of how the lead school will embed learning across all partnership schools.</li> <li>• Plans of how the school partnership will engage with other local schools to raise awareness of the pilot and its aims and disseminate learning from the pilot.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. What are the key milestones?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail of key milestones to enable you to plan, design, recruit to and deliver your support.</li> </ul>

## Annex A: Relevant Questions and Answers

### **Q1 – When is the deadline to submit bids?**

A – All bids must be submitted to [Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk) by 5pm on Monday 12 October 2015.

### **Q2 – Whom do I contact if I have any questions about the project or my bid?**

A – If you have any questions about the project or the process for submitting bids please contact [Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Returntoteaching.NCTL@education.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Q3 – Can I over-recruit against the number of places I am successful in bidding for?**

A – Yes, however no extra funding will be provided for them by NCTL. This is because the number of places you request for the pilot programme should reflect a realistic assessment of your recruitment needs. In exceptional circumstances, where you think you may be able to deliver more places than you bid for during the course of the pilot, you should approach NCTL who will consider the circumstances.

### **Q4 – Can I bid for more than 40 places?**

A – In exceptional circumstances, cohorts of over 40 may be considered if the need and capacity to offer the returners permanent posts at the end of the programme can be proven.

### **Q5 – Can we develop the pilot programme around subjects other than EBacc subjects?**

A – No. Schools should recruit returners in EBacc subjects only for their pilot programmes.

### **Q6- What are the EBacc subjects?**

A – English, maths, Science (biology, chemistry, physics), languages, history and geography

### **Q7- What is the definition of a returner?**

A – ‘Returners’, for the purposes of this pilot, are described in Section 4 of this guidance.

### **Q8- Can we start delivery later than November 2015?**

A – It is for each school partnership to set delivery milestones. Returners must be recruited to the pilot by the end of March 2016 and must be given the support they need by the end July 2016.

### **Q9- Can we charge participants?**

A – No. The support should be available to the participants at no charge.

### **Q10- What is the definition of ‘employment’ that we need to supply following successful completion of the course?**

A – A permanent teaching position (can be part time or full time) in an EBacc subject in November 2016.

**Q11- Can I claim expenses for the work that has goes into writing a bid?**

A – No.

**Q12- Why is assessment criteria weighted heavily in favour of schools that are able to evidence difficulty in recruiting to school led ITT places?**

A – In order to target support most effectively, we require strong evidence that schools have previously engaged with programmes that will help with workforce planning and still had difficulty recruiting to teaching positions. That is why we are specifying that schools must have had involvement with school led ITT. However, if schools have not been involved with school led ITT but can properly evidence their difficulty recruiting to positions by alternative means, they may still bid and may be successful.



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Write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

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