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Guidance

Early-career payments: guidance for teachers and schools

Eligible mathematics, physics, chemistry and languages teachers can apply for early-career payments of up to £9,000 after tax.

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Register your interest

Teachers, schools and local authorities can register their interest and receive updates from the Department for Education.

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Overview

Early-career payments are available to teachers starting their initial teacher training (ITT) in the 2018 to 2019, 2019 to 2020 or 2020 to 2021 academic year. This is in addition to receiving a bursary or scholarship during ITT.

The following teachers are eligible:

- mathematics teachers who started postgraduate ITT in the 2018 to 2019 academic year will receive early-career payments of £5,000 each in their third (2021 to 2022) and fifth (2023 to 2024) years of teaching. Teachers in one of the listed local authorities will receive an additional £2,500 per payment, making each payment £7,500 in total
- mathematics teachers who started postgraduate ITT in the 2019 to 2020 academic year will receive early-career payments of £5,000 each in their third (2022 to 2023) and fifth (2024 to 2025) years of teaching. Teachers in one of the listed local authorities will receive an additional £2,500 per payment, making each payment £7,500 in total
- mathematics, physics, chemistry and languages teachers starting postgraduate ITT in the 2020 to 2021 academic year will receive early-career payments of £2,000 each in their second (2022 to 2023), third (2023 to 2024) and fourth (2024 to 2025) years of teaching. Teachers in one of the listed local authorities will receive an additional £1,000 per payment, making each payment £3,000 in total

This guidance explains who is eligible.

Details about the application process will be available soon.

Eligibility criteria

Teachers must meet the training, employment, and subject and performance criteria.

Training eligibility criteria

Teachers will be eligible if they started a non-salaried postgraduate ITT course in the subject and academic year specified below:

- mathematics in the 2018 to 2019, 2019 to 2020 or 2020 to 2021 academic year

- physics, chemistry and languages in the 2020 to 2021 academic year

Teachers will need to have received an ITT bursary or scholarship during the ITT course.

Employment eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the payments, teachers must have qualified teacher status (QTS) or qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS).

Teachers must be employed in a state-funded secondary (including middle-deemed secondary) school in England in a:

- local-authority-maintained school
- academy or free school
- local-authority-maintained or non-maintained special school

Teachers must:

- still be working as a teacher in a state-funded school in England when they claim for an early-career payment
- have been continuously employed in a state-funded school in England between their newly qualified teacher (NQT) year and claiming the early-career payment
- have started their NQT year the academic year after they completed ITT

Some breaks in normal employment still count towards a continuous employment period.

These are:

- sickness, maternity, paternity, parental or adoption leave
- annual leave
- time between unfair dismissal and an employee being reinstated
- military service, for example with a reserve force
- temporary lay-offs

Teachers who hold QTLS status must be a member of the Society for Education and Training (SET) and have completed an ITT course in the 2018 to 2019, 2019 to 2020 or 2020 to 2021 academic year.

Part-time teachers are eligible for the same early-career payment amounts as full-time teachers, providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

Supply teachers are eligible if their contract is for at least one term and they are not employed by private agencies.

Teachers in private schools and sixth-form colleges are not eligible.

Subject and performance eligibility criteria

Teachers must:

- have at least 50% of their contracted hours allocated to teaching their ITT subject at the time of the application
- meet the teachers' standards as of the first Monday in September of each payment year

If a teacher fails to meet the teachers' standards, they will not fulfil the performance eligibility criteria. If a teacher subsequently meets the teachers' standards during the payment year, they will become eligible for the payment.

Uplifted payment criteria

Teachers must meet all of the above criteria and teach in a school located in one of the following local authorities to receive larger payments of £7,500 (for teachers who started ITT in the 2018 to 2019 or 2019 to 2020 academic year) or £3,000 (for teachers who started ITT in the 2020 to 2021 academic year):

- Barnsley
- Blackpool
- Bracknell Forest
- Bradford
- Coventry
- Derby
- Doncaster
- Dudley
- East Riding of Yorkshire
- Halton
- Isle of Wight
- Kingston Upon Hull, City of
- Kirklees
- Knowsley
- Leicester
- Liverpool
- Luton
- Middlesbrough
- Milton Keynes
- North Lincolnshire
- Northumberland
- Nottingham

- Oldham
- Peterborough
- Portsmouth
- Reading
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Sandwell
- Sefton
- Sheffield
- St. Helens
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Swindon
- Tameside
- Telford and Wrekin
- Walsall
- Warrington
- Wolverhampton

Eligibility for an uplifted payment is dependent on a teacher's employment in an eligible local authority at the time of application.

If the teacher has moved to a school in an eligible local authority at any point before an early-career payment is made, they will be eligible for the uplifted payment.

Apply for early-career payments

Teachers must apply in the following academic years:

For teachers who started postgraduate ITT in the 2018 to 2019 academic year:

- 2021 to 2022 for the third year payments
- 2023 to 2024 for the fifth year payments

For teachers who started postgraduate ITT in the 2019 to 2020 academic year:

- 2022 to 2023 for the third year payments
- 2024 to 2025 for the fifth year payments

For teachers starting postgraduate ITT in the 2020 to 2021 academic year:

- 2022 to 2023 for the second year payments

- 2023 to 2024 for the third year payments
- 2024 to 2025 for the fourth year payments

Early-career payments are:

- not part of a teacher's pay and should not be treated as pensionable payments
- subject to income tax and National Insurance (NI); Department for Education will pay this cost to HMRC. Neither the teacher nor the employing school will need to pay income tax or NI contributions on the early-career payments

We will publish details of the application process in due course and prior to the first payment year.

Contact

If you have any questions about the early-career payments, email us at financial.incentives@education.gov.uk.

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