

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
 2. Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus outbreak (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers>)
1. Department for Education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>)

Guidance

Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus outbreak

Updated 1 May 2020

Contents

- Absences related to coronavirus
- Completion of the induction period
- NQTs who are still teaching
- Assessment points
- Deciding if the NQT has met the Teachers' Standards
- Extending the induction period



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This guidance explains the changes to the induction process for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) including information on absences related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

We recognise that the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will likely have a profound impact on the number of absences NQTs take this academic year.

We have laid regulations that, subject to parliamentary agreement, will mean that NQTs absent for reasons related to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will not have their induction period automatically extended.

Current arrangements state that ad-hoc absences totalling 30 days or more automatically extends induction by the aggregate number of days absent. However, the regulations we have laid will amend the existing provisions to ensure that any absence related to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including school closures, sickness or self-isolation, will not count towards this limit.

This means that NQTs who are currently undertaking statutory induction can complete their induction this academic year as expected, provided they meet the Teachers' Standards (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>).

Absences related to coronavirus

We want to reduce disruption caused by the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak on NQT induction. We have laid regulatory changes that, subject to parliamentary agreement, will mitigate this.

Whilst the length of the induction period should ordinarily be 3 full terms and any absences totalling 30 days or more usually automatically extends this, we have laid regulations whose effect is that any absence related to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (such as school closures, sickness or self-isolation), will not count towards this limit.

Absences that total 30 days or more, and not related to COVID-19, will continue to cause the induction period to be extended.

Completion of the induction period

As many NQTs continue to work with schools in some form during this unprecedented period we would encourage induction to continue.

Headteachers and appropriate bodies should continue to make a decision on whether an NQT has met the Teachers' Standards, based on their performance throughout their induction.

This decision is still to be made at the end of the induction period, which for most would be the end of the academic year regardless of their absence due to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

In line with regular reporting procedures, the Teaching Regulation Agency should be notified of the outcome of induction.

NQTs who are still teaching

We acknowledge that many NQTs are continuing to work in schools in some form despite many schools being closed.

Where possible, we would encourage NQTs to continue with their professional development and maintain frequent contact with their induction tutor and/or mentor.

Assessment points

Headteachers, induction tutors and appropriate bodies should continue to refer to the NQT induction statutory guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-nqts>) about the assessment process.

The final assessment meeting should remain at the end of the induction period for the majority of NQTs and evidence should continue to be collected if the NQT is still working in schools in some form. This process will be kept under review.

The Teaching Regulation Agency aims to follow existing schedules for collecting outcome data following the end of assessment. The Teaching Regulation Agency will work with appropriate bodies affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) to support them in their data returns.

Deciding if the NQT has met the Teachers' Standards

Headteachers and appropriate bodies should continue to make a decision on whether an NQT has met the Teachers' Standards throughout the period of their induction, notwithstanding absences due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

This may include looking at previous assessment records, discussions with the induction tutors and consideration of non-routine teaching practice during the coronavirus (COVID-19) disruption.

As stated in statutory guidance on NQT induction, the decision about whether an NQT's performance against the relevant standards is satisfactory upon completion of induction should take into account the NQT's work context.

It must be made on the basis of what can reasonably be expected of an NQT by the end of their induction period within the framework set out by the standards.

Extending the induction period

If at the end of the induction period there are concerns that an NQT, with absences related to coronavirus (COVID-19), has not achieved the standards, we would encourage appropriate bodies to exercise their discretion to recommend an extension, allowing the NQT further time and opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standards.