

Pamphlet on ACTEQ's Teacher Induction Scheme

Introduction

This pamphlet has been prepared to support school-based induction of beginning teachers. It should be read in conjunction with the document “Professional Development for Beginning Teachers – An Induction Tool Kit” (Induction Tool Kit) issued by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ). The Induction Tool Kit, which provides support to schools in setting up or refining their school-based teacher induction systems, is available on the ACTEQ webpage at www.acteq.hk.

Teachers' first year of experience is crucial to their career outlook. Induction helps beginning teachers settle in to teaching quickly and effectively. Successful experiences at this initial stage enhance new teachers' commitment, enthusiasm and positive feelings about the profession and equip them better to meet the increasing demands as their careers progress. Effective induction builds early-career teachers' capacity and confidence. Support for beginning teachers can best be done through on-site sharing and learning with experienced colleagues, and the provision of timely feedback and review in the workplace.

Stakeholders, especially parents, have high expectations of teachers. Like their experienced colleagues, beginning teachers are expected to be accountable for their work, and so it is essential to provide opportunities for their early professional development. It is a mark of professionalism for more experienced members of the school community to support new ones through sharing their practices and expertise. Induction programmes can strengthen teacher collaboration within a school and therefore help to transform the entire school into a learning community that works professionally and cooperatively to improve student learning.

It should be noted that the development of the key features of the Teacher Induction Scheme and the related tools have been based on a three-phase pilot exercise which began in October 2005. To enhance the practicability and effectiveness of school-based induction programmes, ACTEQ and the Education Bureau (EDB) will continue to forge partnerships with schools, education professionals and teacher education institutions to review the Scheme and its related tools. Comments and suggestions are welcome and can be directed to the ACTEQ Secretariat at:

Address : Professional Development and Training Division,
Education Bureau, Room 1703, Murray Building,
Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong.
Telephone : 3150-8005
Fax : 2537-2446
E-mail address : spdotpd1@edb.gov.hk

1. What are the key features of the Teacher Induction Scheme?



Induction takes place in teachers' first year, post-qualification, as full members of the teaching profession. Beginning teachers should be provided with encouragement and support so that they enjoy positive learning experiences and a pleasant start to their careers. Schools have a responsibility for providing such a

supportive environment and ensuring that new teachers derive as much benefit as possible from a system of teacher induction.

The Induction Tool Kit helps schools address the baseline expectations of an effective induction system, which include the following key features:

- a [scheme](#) with clear objectives, concrete plans, committed human resources and effective coordination;
- a [mentoring system](#) where each beginning teacher is given individual attention;
- a planned effort to provide all beginning teachers with [comprehensive learning experiences](#);
- an element of [self-reflection](#);
- [an instrument](#) to document each beginning teacher's path of development; and
- [evaluation](#) to inform the future development of schools' induction systems.

The Induction Tool Kit also provides schools with suggested tools and processes so that beginning teachers are given ample opportunities to focus and reflect on advancing their professionalism, knowledge, understanding and skills.

2. For whom is the Teacher Induction Scheme intended?

All schools are encouraged to put in place a well-conceived and structured learning programme that supports the professional growth of beginning teachers. The Teacher Induction Scheme recommended here is primarily intended for full-time teachers who are new to the teaching profession, not for experienced teachers who change schools.

3. What kinds of support do beginning teachers expect to receive from schools in their first year of experience?

The types of support offered to beginning teachers by schools may include:

- a comprehensive school-based induction system, with well-planned and effective mentoring and induction programmes;
- support and guidance from mentors which help beginning teachers fulfil their daily school duties satisfactorily and meet their schools' professional requirements;
- administrative arrangements in the school to facilitate frequent interaction, and the exchange of information and views on professional issues, between beginning teachers and mentors, such as the allocation of common free periods and convenient seating arrangements in the staffroom;
- both formal and informal sharing and training programmes for beginning teachers in areas that meet their immediate needs, for example in classroom management, communicating with parents and students, and teaching strategies for handling learner diversity; and
- the provision of an environment in which there is a strong culture of collegiality, involving professional collaboration and reflective practice among teachers.



4. What experiences are beginning teachers expected to undergo in the induction process?

The induction process should be rigorous enough to provide beginning teachers with the range of experiences necessary to help them meet the demands of a real workplace setting. The Induction Tool Kit builds on the Teacher Competencies Framework (TCF) released by ACTEQ in November 2003, and provides both a focus and direction for beginning teachers' professional development in the following domains:

- Teaching and learning
- Student development
- School development
- Professional relationships and services

Due emphasis is also placed on the six core values of the profession, viz.

- The belief that all students can learn
- Love and care for students
- Respect for diversity
- Commitment and dedication to the profession
- Collaboration, sharing and team spirit
- Passion for continuous learning and excellence.

The Induction Tool Kit also sets out some quantitative demands for the induction year, which include:

- teaching a minimum of 360 periods (or 210 hours);
- teaching a minimum of 240 periods (or 140 hours) in the major Key Learning Area (KLA) or subject;
- experience of mutual lesson observation with peers or mentors, with pre- and post-observation sharing;
- reflections on the effectiveness of their teaching and its impact on student learning, carrying out a case study on student development, and expressing their “philosophy of education”;
- meeting the requirements of Basic Information Technology and being observed once teaching a lesson using multi-media teaching strategies;
- a review of their progress in early professional development; and
- participation in duties related to an extra-curricular activity.



5. What are the induction processes and modes?



The Induction Tool Kit lays out the key induction processes, together with examples of an induction timetable and an action plan for key tasks for schools' reference.

The induction processes should focus on helping beginning teachers develop professionally and on improving teaching quality, and they should be based on ethical practice.

Mentor-mentee relationships must be sustained and of high quality. In this regard, an effective induction system can adopt a variety of models, e.g.

- Mentors may or may not be subject-oriented;
- The mentor-mentee matching may be on a one-on-one or other basis; and
- The mentors may or may not be the administrative supervisors of the new teachers.

The induction processes are also a learning experience for the mentors.

Throughout these processes, an element of self-reflection is essential for beginning teachers' professional engagement. Such reflection can be achieved through several professional activities, such as:

- analysis of their own and others' lessons;
- analysis of a case of student development;
- an expression of their "philosophy of education"; and
- self-evaluation through interim and final reviews with mentors' guidance and support.



6. How can schools record beginning teachers' learning experiences?

An instrument for charting beginning teachers' learning experiences and reflection is useful for ensuring consistency and sustainability in the induction system. It can:

- take the typical form of a portfolio or a journal for each beginning teacher;
- be based on an analytic or holistic approach;
- serve as a reminder of the various aspects of experience that a beginning teacher should go through;
- draw on the TCF as a frame of reference for completing induction; and
- include beginning teachers' records and reflections as well as their mentors' comments.

Schools can also make reference to the Induction Tool Kit to develop their own instruments for recording beginning teachers' learning experiences.

7. What qualities are expected of mentors?

To be successful, mentors should, for example, be:

- open-minded and willing to try new approaches;
- prepared to share their knowledge and expertise with others;
- sympathetic and happy to provide help to other teachers; and
- confident as teachers, and be dedicated to and have respect for the teaching profession.

Having a high level of subject matter knowledge is important, but it is not essential, provided that mentors are willing to learn and pursue continuing professional development.



8. What are the parts to be played by the various school stakeholders?

Effective school leadership, a climate of care and help and a culture of professional sharing are conducive to the success of school-based induction programmes. Thus, all the following members of the school community have a part to play:

- **The School Management Committee (SMC)** – to formulate policy to support teacher induction and provide the necessary resources to assist beginning teachers in their professional development;
- **The Principal** – to oversee the planning of teachers' professional development in school and promote the early professional training of beginning teachers through implementing appropriate policies and allocating the resources required;
- **Beginning teachers** – to be accountable for their own professional learning and duties, and work closely with mentors in professional reflection and work performance with a view to meeting the required standards of the school-based induction programmes;
- **Mentors** – to establish productive, congenial relationships with mentees, provide them with professional, administrative and emotional support, and liaise with other school members to promote collegiality and professional sharing; and
- **Other subject/ KLA-related panel/ functional group heads and members** – to provide mentoring support to mentees, within a learning organisation.

9. What support will be available to schools in implementing the Teacher Induction Scheme?

The support offered will include:

- briefing sessions and workshops on the use of the Induction Tool Kit and other details about the implementation of the Teacher Induction Scheme, to be organised by the ACTEQ Secretariat;
- on-going school-based support on teachers' professional development, to be provided by the respective School Development Officers;
- networking activities for sharing experience among schools, to be organised by the ACTEQ Secretariat and the Regional Education Offices (REOs);
- the provision, through resource schools, of school-based support to interested/ needy schools and the sharing of experience in networking programmes; and
- the dissemination of resources and good practices in teacher induction, as well as the exchange of professional experience and views via the Discussion Forum on the ACTEQ webpage.



10. How can flexibility and a diversity of approaches to teacher induction be accommodated?



For schools to reap the optimum benefits from the Teacher Induction Scheme, they must have freedom to exercise their professional judgement. The Scheme also needs to operate in an environment that encourages collegiality and reflective practice.

When developing proformas and tools for teacher induction, schools can refer to those recommended in the Induction Tool Kit and integrate them into their existing practices. For example, the proformas on “Personal Statement on Philosophy of Education”, “Professional Development Activities”, “Reflective Journal on Teaching, Learning and Assessment” and “Case Study on Student Development”, as well as the lesson observation forms in the Induction Tool Kit, can be adapted to suit schools’ needs, while keeping the processes simple.

Paperwork needs to be minimised, and documentation kept as brief and concise as possible. What counts is the quality of learning of the mentees.

To help ensure that the threshold professional requirements embedded in the Teacher Induction Scheme are met, schools are recommended to cover the core items set out in the Induction Tool Kit, with the mechanisms used being at schools’ professional discretion.

11. How should teacher induction be distinguished from performance appraisal?

The aim of the entire experience of teacher induction as recommended in the Teacher Induction Scheme is to **empower** beginning teachers rather than **regulate** them. Schools should therefore guard against using induction as an arena for appraisal for which a very different type of approach is needed.

12. What is the difference between induction and the pre-service practicum?

The practicum, which is part and parcel of initial teacher education, provides an opportunity for teacher trainees to put theory into practice. However, given its relatively short duration, in the practicum, trainees have to concentrate mainly on the business of teaching and learning. In contrast, induction provides support to beginning teachers in carrying out the full range of day-to-day duties, both teaching and non-teaching, in a school-specific context. The practicum and induction are therefore complementary, not mutually exclusive, experiences that contribute to laying a strong professional foundation for a teaching career.

13. What is the next stage of development in the Teacher Induction Scheme?

Schools are encouraged to take forward or refine their school-based teacher induction programmes by referring to ACTEQ's recommended framework and tools on teacher induction and to provide feedback to the ACTEQ Secretariat for further improvement of the Teacher Induction Scheme.

It is envisaged that in the near future, beginning teachers can expect a favourable environment and support for their first year of experience in school. Schools can also develop their capacity for providing positive learning experiences for their beginning teachers.

