

# Higher Level Teaching Assistant Assessment Process - Headteachers' Briefing Note

## Introduction

School support staff make a vital contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. With the introduction of assessment against national professional Standards, support staff who achieve the status of higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) will be able to offer proven skills to support teachers even more effectively in the future. Deployment of support staff with HLTA status is one strategy you can use to implement the workforce agreement and school remodelling.

This briefing note provides:

- a brief overview of HLTA assessment;
- guidance on the roles and responsibilities of all partners

## HLTA assessment

The Professional Standards for HLTA's in Wales were published in December 2004 and revised in August 2008, following wide consultation. The Standards identify what candidates need to demonstrate in order to be awarded HLTA status and can be found in Welsh Assembly Government Circular 029/2008

In Wales, the programme is aimed at support staff who are already undertaking the type of activities expected from this higher level role. Selection is limited to candidates who are already working in this role (equivalent to that set out in NJC guidance Level 4) or where it is planned that they will take on such a role in their school.

**Please note this should not be considered as solely a training or development opportunity.** It costs approximately £1000 to put a candidate through the assessment procedure and there are a limited number of spaces available each year. If a candidate is recommended to undertake assessment and subsequently it is found that they were not ready to undertake assessment other, more suitable, candidates may have been excluded from the assessment process. **It is essential that you are clear that you consider that your candidate is ready for assessment.**

## Assessment process

Candidates have to meet all of the standards in order to achieve HLTA status. They demonstrate that they have done so through the completion of four assessment tasks which will involve delivering learning with individual pupils, groups of pupils and a whole class. Evidence to support these tasks should be generated through normal work activity: the tasks are snapshots of the candidate's work in school. The evidence that they supply for each of these tasks is then verified by half-day visit to their school by an independent assessor.

Candidates can use supporting evidence such as: samples of pupils' work, lesson plans, assessment sheets, reports, planning sheets, case studies, certificates for training, letters/cards of endorsement/thanks, witness statements, observation notes, meeting agenda, minutes and notes; classroom resources.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### School mentor

The role of the school mentor is to

- Be a point of contact during the briefing and assessment
- Provide advice and support
- The school mentor may be someone who the candidate already has a professional relationship with
- Be familiar with the standards

### Assessor

The role of the assessor is to

- Carry out the assessment including the school visit
- Abide by the code of conduct for assessors

Assessors will not assess candidates from their LEA or any candidate with whom they have connectivity

### Consortia Cymru

The role of Consortia Cymru is to

- coordinate the programme on behalf of wag
- regional consortia ensure the smooth running of the programme
- process applications
- lead hlta briefing days
- lead the school based assessment visit
- be the first point of contact for administrative queries
- quality assure the programme

### Welsh Assembly Government

The role of the Welsh Assembly Government is to

- Develop the HLTA programme
- Arrange external moderation
- Prepare and issue results letters/ certificates

### Briefer

The role of the briefer is to

- Provide guidance on the standards and the completion of the tasks during three briefing days
- Provide clarification on the standards and tasks during the briefing days
- Provide summative generic feedback on briefing Day 3

Briefers will not provide feedback to candidates they will be assessing.

### Headteacher

The role of the headteacher is to

- Ensure the candidate has Level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications
- Ensure that the candidate is able to meet all the HLTA standards prior to application
- Endorse the application form
- Support the candidate during the HLTA programme
- Ensure candidate has the opportunity to meet Standard 31 (whole class teaching )

### HLTA Candidate

The role of the candidate is to

- Provide verification of literacy and numeracy results
- Undertake the briefing days
- Complete all tasks and documentation described in the candidates handbook
- Submit assessment evidence on time
- Undertake the assessment process
- Keep school based colleagues informed