

## Response ID ANON-8URX-234C-K

Submitted to **Strengthening Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and Improving Career Progression for Teachers**  
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### Your Details

#### 1 What is your name?

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#### 3 What is your organisation?

**Organisation:**

London Mathematical Society

#### 4 Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

**Reason for confidentiality:**

#### 5 What is your primary role?

**List of roles:**

Other, please provide in the box below

**Text box for Role:**

Mathematical Learned Society

#### 6 What local authority area are you based in?

**Please select:**

Camden

### Strengthening Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and Continuing Professional Development

#### 1 Do you think that QTS should be awarded after a period of sustained professional practice rather than the end of initial teacher training (ITT), as it is currently?

Yes, I agree, but with caveats. Please provide your comments in the box below

**Text box for comments:**

The current system of initial teacher training is clearly not working for mathematics. It fails to supply enough mathematics teachers. Furthermore, retention is poor. Mathematics has an unusually high proportion of teachers leaving the profession within their first five years.

Strengthening QTS will erect further hurdles and make it harder for trainees to become fully fledged teachers. This will cause a further reduction in teacher supply in a subject already in crisis. So while many of the proposals are highly laudable and to be welcomed, to apply them at this time will ultimately be damaging.

The current system of ITT is fragmentary and fails to develop subject expertise. Successful systems in other countries focus its initial phase in a limited number of specialised institutions, which develop an expertise over time, and which can ensure a relatively consistent level of training. In Singapore, this is done through the NIE; in Shanghai through the East China Normal University; in Finland through a handful of dedicated centres; etc.

With regard to changing the definition. It is not clear why the definition of QTS needs to be changed. Currently, everyone knows what it means: the holder may start teaching. To change it could lead to confusion.

However, if the definition is to change, then QTS should not merely be awarded for a period of sustained professional practice. It should include some further reflection upon subject specific knowledge. Classroom experience is highly valuable but needs to be coupled with a theoretical underpinning and this cannot come purely from ITT.

#### 2 Do you agree that a core early career content framework and a continuing professional development (CPD) offer for new teachers should be fundamental to a strengthened QTS?

Yes, I strongly agree

**Text box for comments:**

In comparison with other subjects mathematics has a larger than usual proportion of teachers that are not subject specialists (in the sense that they may not hold a mathematics degree or in many cases do not even hold a numerate degree). For this reason effective CPD is vital to the health of mathematics in schools. Without it, many teachers, including those with mathematics degrees may not be able to present mathematics as a subject to be enjoyed and that has relevance to the world outside the classroom rather than teaching to the test.

Again, if there were specialised institutions (in particular nationally) as mentioned in our answer to Q1, this would be much easier to deliver and ensure consistency. These could deliver the required subject specialist knowledge.

**3 What core competencies, knowledge areas or particular skills do you think should be developed in a structured way during the induction period?**

**Text box for comments:**

All of these are important. As mentioned in the response to Q2, for mathematics subject and curriculum knowledge is often lacking and so this aspect should form an important part of the induction period (and of course beyond). Again, specialised institutions (see Q1) with subject knowledge could play a crucial role here.

**4 Do you think we should extend the induction period?**

Yes, extend to two years

**Text box for comments:**

This is said with some reservation. An increased induction period will obviously bring benefits to the teacher and to schools. However, it will be damaging to retention and to the attractiveness of teaching as NQTs have to spend longer before they finish their "training". Add to this the extra cost for schools, then a two-year induction does not look so appealing. A balance will need to be struck here.

**5 We have used the names QTS(P) and QTS throughout this document. Do you think that these terms are appropriate?**

Language - QTS (Provisional)/QTS(P) followed by QTS:

Language - Certificate of Completion of ITT followed by QTS:

Language - Associate Teacher Status followed by QTS:

We should not change the name of QTS at all

**Text box for comments:**

Keep the same. As in the response to Q1, changing the name does not seem to bring clarity or benefit.

**Mentoring and Development Time**

**6 From the options set out in paragraph 47 of the consultation, which of these proposals do you think would help improve the quality and quantity of mentoring for all new teachers?**

Strengthening statutory guidance to require schools to provide more frequent mentoring sessions, Development of high-quality mentor training

**Text box for comments:**

Mentoring is a vital component of becoming an excellent teacher. It benefits the mentor and mentee. For mathematics there may be a shortage of mentors with the subject knowledge required to fully develop the mentee. Hence the development of high quality mentor training is needed for mathematics. Again, special institutions (see Q1) could provide the coordination for this, particularly for subject specialist knowledge.

**7 How else can we improve the quality and quantity of mentoring for all new teachers?**

**Text box for comments:**

A specialised institution could oversee mentoring. In any event it is important that the mentor and mentee receive adequate funding. Mentoring opportunities that contribute to a Masters qualification would also help.

**8 How should we ensure that new teachers get sufficient time to focus on their professional development?**

Different teaching timetable reduction. Please provide your comments in the box below

**Text box for comments:**

A 20% reduction seems more realistic given that the current workload is high and that everything, eg planning and marking, takes much longer for new teachers. However the precise figure should depend on schools, teachers and upon the subject. The cost involved is small compared with the benefit of a well-trained and competent workforce. With this amount of time available teachers will be able to attend a local centre for PD.

**Assessment and Accreditation**

**9 Do you agree that the QTS assessment should be conducted internally and be independently verified by an appropriate body?**

No, QTS assessment should be conducted by an external, independent body

**Text box for comments:**

The current system involving Ofsted and external examiners in the current context is fine as these are sufficiently external. A specialist institution could also provide this role.

**10 How do you think we should strengthen the independent verification of QTS accreditation?**

Other, please provide your comments in the box below

**Text box for comments:**

The current system is working in its context.

**11 What role do you think ITT providers could play in the assessment and accreditation of QTS?**

**Text box for comments:**

Currently, the fragmentary system of ITT provision allows sub-standard providers but in principle there is no need to change their current involvement.

**Supply Teaching and Additional Considerations**

**12 Do you think we should maintain the limitation on how long a teacher can teach on a supply basis without completing QTS?**

Yes, keep it as a five year limit

**Text box for time limitation:**

**13 What impact do you think this model of a strengthened QTS would have on post-ITT teachers in terms of teaching practice, retention, and morale?**

**impact - Teaching practice:**

Balanced impact overall: some positive, some negative

**impact - Retention:**

Balanced impact overall: some positive, some negative

**impact - Morale:**

Balanced impact overall: some positive, some negative

**Text box for comments:**

A carefully conceived and well-run system would be positive in all these areas. However, what determines these areas is not the QTS model. Far more significant inputs include, but are not restricted to, high workload, poor staffing levels and inadequate funding. Changes to the QTS model will have a lot smaller effect than changes to these inputs. An important task in this area is fix the weakness in the system described in our response to Q1. Providing subject specialist knowledge is vital in mathematics teacher training as there is a large number of trainees without a mathematics degree. A focus on this in the strengthened QTS will help all the above.

**14 What impact would the proposed model of a strengthened QTS have on the wider school system?**

**Text box for comments:**

A two-year induction period could lead to students not moving schools after their first year. (This can be detrimental or beneficial depending on the situation.) With more and better mentoring morale should increase.

**15 Are there any other implications that we should consider that have not been addressed above, and what are your suggestions for addressing them?**

**Text box for comments:**

This comes back to the response to Q8. Teacher workload is a significant cause of new teachers leaving the profession. Teacher retention in mathematics is particularly poor and so workload needs to be taken seriously.

**Post-QTS: Professional Qualifications**

**16 Do you think that there is a market for specialist National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) – or similar – for teachers who aspire to other forms of leadership within the school system?**

No, there is no need for any additional qualifications

**Text box for comments:**

Adding an extra set of qualifications often seems attractive as important areas can be targeted and rewarded. However, it often leads to a complicated system that no one understands. As noted in the consultation document, teachers who aspire to leadership within the school system already have the opportunity to take Masters-level qualifications. Adding more qualifications dilutes the system and makes it harder for providers to run programmes.

**17 If you answered 'yes' to question 16, what specialisms should be prioritised for these NPQs (or similar)?**

**Text box for comments:**

N/A

**18 Do you think there is a market for non-leadership NPQs – or similar – aimed at further developing subject expertise? How should they differ between primary and secondary?**

No, there is no need for any additional subject specialist qualifications

**Text box for comments:**

We are not aware of any significant demand.

**19 What additional support should be offered for teachers who work in more challenging schools to undertake further professional qualifications?**

**Text box for comments:**

Again, a reduction in workload would be helpful but here it is particularly important that a rigorous and effective mentoring system is in place.

### **Post-QTS: Continuing Professional Development and Mentoring**

**20 Do you agree that a CPD badging scheme is something that should be developed? What organisations might be best placed to deliver this service?**

Yes, I agree

**Text box for comments:**

A CPD badging system already exists for mathematics in the form of the Continuing Professional Development Standard of The National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM). Alternatively, a specialist institution (see Q1) could provide this.

**21 How should government incentivise effective professional development for teachers, particularly in the areas and schools where it is most needed?**

Other, please provide your comments in the box below

**Text box for comments:**

All of these are good incentives and there will be a variation in where they need to be applied but currently the most important for mathematics is a clearer entitlement to CPD, particularly for those teachers without a mathematical or numerate degree.

**22 How can government best support the development of a genuine culture of mentoring in schools?**

Fund the provision of high-quality mentor training

**Text box for comments:**

The funding of high quality mentor programmes is crucial. These programmes do exist (for example in ITE providers) but without funding schools are unable to send those that need it. Also, they may only be able to send to a course one person who is expected to replicate all they have learned for their colleagues.

### **Post-QTS: Sabbaticals**

**23 Do you think that a fund to pilot sabbaticals would be a positive step for the profession?**

Yes, I strongly agree

**Text box for comments:**

A pilot scheme (as described in the consultation document) is to be welcomed as it may help with teacher development and retention. Care needs to be taken that it is financed correctly and that it does not contribute to a higher workload in other parts of the school.

**24 What would the impact be for teachers and schools of enabling more teachers to take sabbaticals, providing they are related to their teaching practice?**

**Text box for comments:**

See response to Q23.