

# Raising Standards and Tackling Workload

## Implementing the National Agreement

April 2004

department for  
**education and skills**  
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

### AN UPDATE ON THE HIGHER LEVEL TEACHING ASSISTANT (HLTA) PROGRAMME

This note is a progress report on the introduction of HLTA training and assessment, and the work being taken forward by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA).

A new status has been introduced for those support staff who are working at a higher level to support teaching and learning. To achieve this status, support staff have to meet national Professional Standards published by the TTA in September 2003. From April 2004, training is available from TTA-approved providers to enable support staff to be assessed against the Standards and achieve HLTA status. This status will be confirmed by a letter on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which acknowledges their achievement and which can be used as proof of HLTA status.

The HLTA initiative will allow those who achieve HLTA status to offer proven skills to support teachers and pupils even more effectively and to take on additional responsibility. The deployment of support staff with HLTA status is one of the strategies schools can use to implement the workforce agreement and their plans for school remodelling. Further guidance on the deployment of support staff with HLTA status, including their deployment in support of delivering PPA time and the implications of this for OFSTED inspections, will be given in a future WAMG<sup>1</sup> note. The NJC publication "School Support Staff The Way Forward" provides guidance on grading structures and job profiles for school support staff, including school support staff with HLTA status. These job profiles should be read in conjunction with the Section 133 regulations (entitled The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003) and the accompanying guidance, agreed by WAMG.

### HLTA TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN 2004

There will be two training programmes available during 2004:

**Assessment Only** is designed for those individuals who are almost ready to be assessed against the Standards. They will complete three days of briefing and training which will prepare them for assessment.

**Full Training** is a 50-day programme for those individuals who have the potential to operate in a higher level role but who require more training before they would be in a position to be assessed against the Standards. It will involve around 20 days out of school.

The Assessment Only programme will be available from many of the approved training providers from late April and from all providers from September 2004. The Full Training programme will start in September 2004. These training programmes are not interchangeable and cannot be varied locally.

In the first year of the programme, it has been estimated that around 7,000 centrally funded places will be available. The estimated number of training places will rise to 14,000 in 2005/06 and 20,000 in 2006/07. The capacity of the training programme is being grown in this way to ensure rigorous control over quality. It may therefore be the second year of the programme before many support staff can register for the training. LEAs will need to work



<sup>1</sup> The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group is composed of representatives from ATL, DfES, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEOST, PAT, SHA, T&G, UNISON and the Welsh Assembly Government who are all signatories to the Agreement.

with their schools and support staff to ensure the best use of funds and training places. Schools and LEAs will also want to align their support staff development programmes to the Standards to help prepare those support staff who are unable to join the programme in the first year.

## HLTA Pilot Programme

The HLTA Assessment Only route was piloted by the TTA between November 2003 and February 2004. The majority of those taking part successfully completed the assessment and have been awarded HLTA status. An evaluation of the pilot found:

- the assessment approach was appropriate and allowed secure judgements to be reached;
- the approach did not create any additional undue burden on schools; and
- assessors and candidates alike felt the programme was enjoyable and worthwhile.

## Approved Training Providers

HLTA training and assessment will be delivered by training providers approved by the TTA. On 31 March 2004, the TTA published the list of 36 providers who have been awarded approved provider status to December 2005. Provision will be available throughout England. The list of providers can be viewed at [www.hlta.gov.uk](http://www.hlta.gov.uk).

## Selection and Application Process

Details of the funding available from the TTA for the HLTA programme, candidate selection and the national registration process were sent to LEAs on 27 February 2004. The TTA is running a series of regional events for LEAs to provide further briefing on the programme, including lessons learnt from the pilot, and to promote effective local practice in managing the allocation of funded places to HLTA candidates. All LEAs will be publishing details of how they will allocate funding for HLTA assessment and training within their authority, giving details of a named LEA contact. For further details schools and potential candidates should approach their LEA.

Once allocated funding, support staff choose which of the approved training providers best suits their needs. Training places are booked using the national online registration form which is available at [www.hlta.gov.uk](http://www.hlta.gov.uk). Training providers will confirm receipt of the form and inform the candidate when a place is available.

## Support for Candidates

Standards Fund Grant 25 may be used to provide support for the candidates attending the HLTA training. This may include: supply cover costs; travel and subsistence costs when candidates attend centre-based learning; childcare costs if training occurs when candidates would not normally be employed; and the costs for the loan of laptops during the training.

## Future Developments

The TTA will be piloting a number of other approaches to training during 2004 which will be more tailored to the needs of the individual candidate including one looking at ways of recognising relevant foundation and other degree programmes for assessment against the HLTA Standards.

## Further Information

The TTA has published a leaflet, **Meeting the Standards: a guide to higher level teaching assistant training and assessment**. It is available to download from [www.hlta.gov.uk](http://www.hlta.gov.uk) or can be ordered by telephone on 0845 606 0323 or by e-mail from [ttapublications@iforcegroup.com](mailto:ttapublications@iforcegroup.com). Copies of the HLTA Standards are available from the same sources. General information about the HLTA programme, latest news and publications, can be viewed at [www.hlta.gov.uk](http://www.hlta.gov.uk).

