

# The Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL)

September 2009



*developing people, improving young lives*

# Masters in Teaching and Learning

## Questions and answers

### About the MTL

#### 1. What is the MTL?

The Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) is a new government-funded professional qualification for teachers. The MTL is an exciting, new programme that will provide high-level learning opportunities for further developing the professional learning, knowledge, skills and understanding of teachers and improving teaching quality. It will deliver a practice-based programme that builds progressively on initial teacher training (ITT) and induction, have immediate relevance to teaching and learning in the classroom, and focus on developing teachers' practice and professional skills through enquiry and the use of evidence. It will be primarily school-based and delivered jointly by schools and higher education institutions (HEIs). It will be highly personalised in terms of content, pace, delivery and assessment to ensure that the programme meets the teacher's needs, and validated by HEIs. MTL will provide effective, structured professional development for teachers that will serve as a platform for the next stage of their professional development.

The practice-based nature of the MTL aims to help teachers improve their teaching skills to become even better teachers. The MTL is part of a wider offer of professional development in schools in line with the changing needs of 21st century schools. Ongoing training and development is crucial to helping school staff be the best they can be and providing the best education and outcomes for our children today. By developing an ethos of shared learning, the impact of the MTL will be felt beyond the classroom and should benefit the school community as a whole.

The MTL itself has three phases. In the first, teachers develop skills of enquiry. In the second, they focus on core content areas, which include personalised learning, curriculum development, how children and young people develop and learn, and working collaboratively with the wider school workforce both in and outside schools. In the final phase, teachers deepen their professional knowledge by undertaking specialist study.

MTL participants will be supported in their learning by an in-school coach and an HEI tutor, and by working collaboratively with teachers and other members of the children's workforce in schools and beyond.

The Masters programme is expected to take approximately three years to complete, although each phase may last longer or shorter depending on the needs of the participant. Initially it is being offered to newly qualified teachers (NQTs). In time, ministers expect all teachers to have an opportunity to undertake the MTL.

The MTL will draw on what is known about the conditions for effective teacher professional learning as well as support and professional challenge from a coach. It will also utilise expert input and opportunities to improve teaching through learning from and with others. HEIs will validate that the programme is genuinely at masters level and provide a tutor for each participant.

#### 2. Why is the MTL being introduced?

The MTL is being introduced in recognition of the high quality of education currently offered to children and young people in England and the fact that, in today's world, as the learning needs of pupils are becoming increasingly challenging, complex and diverse, the demands on teachers' knowledge and skills are increasing.

The aim is that MTL will further improve the quality of education currently offered to children and young people so that schools are equipped to deal with the changing needs of the 21st century. The ambition is that teaching will become a masters level profession and that MTL will be a key lever in transforming our education system, raising the status of the profession and bringing us into line with the highest performing education systems in the world.

We know that teaching quality is central to high performing education systems. Research suggests it is teacher quality that has the biggest impact on how well pupils perform. So, while Ofsted has indicated that the quality of teaching in England is already high, we need to ensure that we do all we can to release the talent of the school workforce so they, in turn, can release the talents of our children and young people. We need to build on the talent we already have, making good teachers even better. MTL will help to deliver the very best teaching and learning to our children. It will help raise the quality of teaching so that standards of achievement rise even further, and the attainment gap is narrowed – both of which remain the Government's priorities.

Introducing the MTL programme builds on the 'new professionalism' agenda developed with stakeholders. This respects teachers as highly skilled individuals who make judgements and exercise professional autonomy in the classroom with clear frameworks of accountability, as leaders of teaching and learning and as learners who engage in professional development throughout their careers.

### **3. How will the MTL be developed and delivered?**

The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), working in collaboration with people in the education sector, those in the social partnership and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), have developed the national framework for MTL. The framework sets out the vision for MTL and the principles for the content, design and assessment of MTL, and forms the basis of the MTL programme that is being developed by MTL providers.

MTL providers (schools and HEIs working together collaboratively) will provide a programme that will deliver on the vision for MTL and is based on the national framework for MTL.

Through delivery of the programme, the intention is to further develop a collaborative culture of learning within the profession, and to build capacity in and around schools to support teacher learning.

The MTL programme will be largely classroom-based, and participants will be supported in their learning by a trained in-school coach who will be an experienced teacher – the coach role is an integral part of MTL. Higher education institutions will validate that the programme is genuinely at masters level and provide a tutor for each participant, who will have a lead role in assessing progress.

### **4. When will the MTL be available?**

MTL is available to the first cohort of eligible teachers during the academic year 2009/10. The first participants will enrol from January 2010 and start programmes from April 2010. Please see question 14 for eligibility details.

## **MTL benefits**

### **5. What are the benefits of the MTL to teachers and schools?**

Introducing the MTL programme will further embed some of the essential components of the 21st century school system. A diverse and highly expert workforce of skilled professionals is a key characteristic of the new school system.

Teachers on the MTL programme will emerge with higher level skills in developing their professional practice, leading to improved teaching and learning. They will gain the skills necessary to become lifelong learners and will be well placed to meet the demands on the teaching profession in a 21st century school.

Teachers who become MTL coaches will have the opportunity to share their expertise with and support new entrants to the teaching profession. As they participate in the MTL, they will make a wider contribution to development across the school, and support an increasingly collaborative culture in professional development. They will have the opportunity to develop their own knowledge and understanding through the professional learning that occurs simply by being a coach. They too will benefit from the expert input of the HEI tutor as they work together to provide appropriate opportunities for the teacher's collaborative learning within and beyond the school context.

There are other significant benefits for the school. By providing support to NQTs in the early years of their teaching career, MTL should help lead to higher levels of staff retention. Additionally, MTL also presents an opportunity to bring expertise into schools to support learning across the school. More broadly, the development of an enquiry- and evidence-based way of working will bring about an even more highly professional workforce capable of delivering ever better outcomes of children and young people – a key characteristic of the 21st century school system.

Schools must continue to develop and support their teachers at all stages of their careers and MTL will be an important part of helping to achieve this. The benefits of MTL will spread much wider than the individuals involved.

## **6. Why should you undertake the MTL?**

It is recognised that the early years can be among the most challenging of a teacher's career. Although there are already structures in place to support teachers through their induction year, the new MTL is designed to integrate with and build on induction, and offer support for the duration of the Masters to help teachers to develop their skills.

In addition, research suggests that early in a teacher's career is the best time to improve practice (see *McKinsey: How the world's best education systems stay on top [2007]*). Gaining the MTL qualification will help teachers to improve their skills in applying evidence and insight to their teaching and develop their skills towards being the best teacher they can be, drawing on the wealth of teaching talent that exists both within and outside their schools

As eligible teachers begin their careers, they will have an opportunity to become part of the first group of MTL candidates. This will help to forge a path for others to follow, and their CVs will show that they seized the initiative to become one of the first teachers in England to gain an MTL qualification.

## **7. Will a teacher earn more on completion of MTL?**

There is no direct link between doing the MTL and pay and progression decisions. No teacher would be penalised for not having an M-level qualification. But the increased levels of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of professional attributes that the programme provides will also mean teachers with the MTL are well placed to demonstrate professional standards at a higher level in support of applications to cross the threshold or to be assessed as excellent or advanced skills teachers.

## **8. What qualification will you get at the end of it?**

You will get an MTL that is fully accredited at masters level. NQTs who sign up now will be the first to achieve the MTL. Headteachers have already indicated that they welcome the MTL and value it as a qualification.

## **MTL roles**

### **9. What is the role of the MTL coach?**

Each participant will have an in-school coach who will be responsible for providing coaching and for arranging appropriate classroom-based activities, either in the participant's own school, in a partner school, or other learning setting. The role of the coach is based on them having a clear understanding of the professional standards for teachers and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) M-level requirements. They essentially work from a school and local perspective. They work in collaboration with the teacher undertaking MTL and in a complementary role with the HEI tutor in:

- a. identifying the teacher's professional needs, and planning for the next stage of their learning, drawing appropriately on induction and performance management outcomes
- b. advising, providing and making accessible appropriately personalised learning opportunities for the teacher
- c. providing opportunities for collaborative learning with other teachers and, as appropriate, with other members of the school and children's workforce
- d. engaging in professional dialogue to develop the teacher's understanding of the learning experience and to move the learning on
- e. supporting the teacher's reflection on the outcomes of the children and young people he or she teaches, and how the teacher's practice has impacted on these outcomes
- f. supporting the teacher's critical analysis of a range of sources of evidence in order to improve their practice
- g. supporting the teacher to analyse the impact of professional practice on outcomes that will be used towards the assessment and enable the tutor to make a summative assessment of achievement, and
- h. supporting the teacher to communicate the outcomes of their research (phase 3) to contribute to the learning of others.

### **10. Why should experienced teachers become MTL coaches?**

We know that support from a coach is the key to ensuring highly effective professional learning, which means that for the MTL to be certain of realising its full potential it needs the expertise of excellent highly skilled teachers with the ability to coach. The next generation of teachers can benefit from the wealth of understanding, knowledge and experience that more experienced teachers can offer. In addition, MTL coaches will develop their own professional skills, knowledge and understanding as participation in MTL deepens their own understanding of professional learning. They will also benefit from the expert input of the HEI tutor as they work together to support the teacher undertaking the MTL on their professional learning journey.

### **11. What guidance and support will be available for experienced teachers who decide to become MTL coaches?**

The TDA is developing a training programme for the preparation and support of in-school coaches, which will be fully funded. Guidance on becoming an MTL coach will be available on the TDA website, [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl)

## **12. What is the role of the HEI tutor?**

The tutor provided by the HEI will have the lead role in assessing the progress of the teacher undertaking the MTL. As with the coach, the role of the HEI tutor is based on them having a clear understanding of the professional standards for teachers and the QAA M-level requirements. They will work collaboratively with the teacher undertaking MTL and in a complementary role with the coach. The HEI tutor, however, works from a regional, national and international perspective and will be responsible for assessing to what extent the masters level requirements are being met. They will be jointly responsible with the coach for ensuring that participants get the most out of the MTL programme.

## **13. What is the role of the headteacher?**

Headteachers will already have plans for developing their workforce and MTL will become part of these arrangements.

Schools will receive funding to cover the additional costs of participants and their coaches being away from their classrooms. Headteachers are encouraged to use this flexibly and creatively, and to apply workforce reform principles when making decisions about how to support staff in undertaking the MTL. Information for schools is available at [www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling](http://www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling)

Headteachers are also encouraged to advertise their vacancies with MTL where appropriate. Guidance on this will be available at [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl)

## Eligibility for MTL

### 14. Who is eligible for MTL?

For 2009/10 the MTL is open to all NQTs taking up post from September 2009 in schools in the North West region, National Challenge schools, and other priority schools in challenging circumstances.

The following table sets out details of MTL eligibility and availability.

New in post from	Eligible group	MTL availability date
academic year 2009/10	Newly qualified teachers who gained qualified teacher status (QTS) in 2008/9 and take up posts in primary or secondary schools <b>in the North West</b>	Enrol January 2010 Start summer term 2009/10
academic year 2009/10	Newly qualified teachers who gained QTS in 2008/9 and take up posts in schools that receive National Challenge support (and equivalently, intensive Keys to Success/ Pathways to Achievement Schools in City Challenge areas) in all government office regions.	Enrol January 2010 Start summer term 2009/10
academic year 2009/10	Newly qualified teachers who gained QTS in 2008/9 and take up posts in other secondary schools facing challenging circumstances* <b>in all other government office regions (GORs)</b>	Enrol January 2010 Start summer term 2009/10
academic year 2009/10	Newly recruited heads of department in National Challenge schools <b>in all GORs</b>	September 2010
academic year year 2010/11	Newly recruited heads of department in other secondary schools facing challenging circumstances* <b>in all GORs</b>	September 2010

\* All secondary schools where 30 per cent or more of pupils are eligible for free school meals, where the leadership is rated good or better by Ofsted, or where it is judged by external advisers to now be effective and to have good capacity to improve to this level, where the teacher is offered the package for attracting new teachers into challenging schools which was announced in the New Opportunities white paper, published on 13 January 2009.

For details of the package see [www.tda.gov.uk/challenge](http://www.tda.gov.uk/challenge)

For more information about National Challenge schools see [www.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalchallenge](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalchallenge)

Please see [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl) for further details about eligibility.

### **15. Why is the offer of MTL mainly in the North West?**

The offer of MTL is mainly in the North West just for the first stage of the programme roll-out in the academic year 2009/10. This is because it recruits approximately 2,400 NQTs each year, has a range of existing initial teacher training and postgraduate professional development (PPD) provision, and a wide range of school contexts, including schools in challenging circumstances. Additionally, the North West has one of the highest proportions of NQTs recruited to National Challenge schools compared with the other government office regions, and it incorporates the Greater Manchester City Challenge. This aims to support those schools facing the most challenging contexts and ensure that no schools are below minimum targets by 2011, to develop more outstanding schools, and to narrow the gap between disadvantaged learners and their peers.

Outside of the North West, the offer of MTL has been made to support recruitment and retention to National Challenge Schools, schools facing challenging circumstances and Keys to Success/Pathways to Achievement schools within City Challenge.

### **16. Why are National Challenge schools and some secondary schools where 30 per cent or more of pupils are eligible for free school meals also part of the initial offer of MTL?**

Part of the government strategy for school improvement is to prioritise the development of teachers who are working in the most challenging schools. MTL in these schools will deliver effective structured professional development in the early stages of a teacher's career, focused on improving standards, and should help in the recruitment and retention of staff to these schools.

### **17. How many teachers starting work in academic year 2009/10 will MTL affect?**

Actual numbers will only be known when all teachers have taken up posts in schools. However, we estimate that at least 4,000 teachers could begin the MTL programme in 2009/10. We will provide up-to-date numbers on the website [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl) once the programme has started.

### **18. Why is MTL for NQTs?**

We know that the early years can be among the most challenging of a teacher's career, and a time when many teachers feel under pressure and would value additional support. MTL will boost significantly the support available to teachers in the early years of their career. All MTL participants will have an in-school coach supporting them throughout their period of study. In this way, the MTL is designed to provide support beyond the first induction year and to create a structure to help you develop and learn.

## How will MTL work?

### 19. How is the MTL different from existing M-level qualifications for teachers?

There are other postgraduate programmes currently available which contain elements similar to the MTL. However, the MTL is the only national masters programme for teachers, delivered locally, which combines all of the elements below.

#### *Focus on children and young people*

The MTL has been designed for you to focus on engaging children in learning more effectively. In this way, what you study and how you study it will go beyond your own professional development, and your insights should be of benefit to the school and children too.

#### *Based in your school*

The majority of what you do will be in your classroom and relevant to your day-to-day work as a teacher. You will work with your coach to identify needs relevant to you and your school context and apply evidence and educational theory to real-life situations, which will help inform and consolidate your learning.

#### *Personalised, flexible programme*

The three-phase structure of MTL means that content, pace and assessment can be personalised and flexible to meet your needs.

#### *Aligned with induction*

Induction is a statutory requirement and the MTL will be carefully designed to work alongside it.

#### *HEI and school collaboration*

The MTL programme you undertake will have been developed by HEIs and schools working together. So it will combine access to evidence and research with the realities of the school context.

#### *Your trained in-school coach*

An experienced teacher, either from your own or a nearby school, will act as a coach, providing you with ongoing support. Your coach is integral to the delivery of MTL. They will help and encourage you, as well as facilitate relevant learning opportunities with other teachers, and steer you to examine and challenge your learning. You will also be assigned a tutor from an HEI. Your tutor will assess your progress and will be jointly responsible with your coach for ensuring you get the most from the MTL programme.

### 20. How many M-level credits gained from previous study can I use towards MTL?

Up to 30 M-level credits from previous study can be taken forward where the teacher is able to demonstrate, through the use of skills of enquiry and the use of evidence, that there has been previous impact of their own practice on children's and young people's outcomes.

### 21. Do teachers have to do the Masters?

Participation in the programme will be voluntary – but we anticipate that MTL will be highly attractive to teachers and headteachers, and we expect that the great majority of eligible teachers would want to take up this valuable development opportunity. There is evidence of a great deal of interest and excitement about this qualification because it is an opportunity for new teachers to receive extra support and structure in the first few years of their career, while improving their teaching through learning from and with others.

## **22. Will this add to the workload of teachers, especially those in their first few years in the profession?**

The MTL aims to offer structure and support to the early years of a teacher's career. Teachers undertaking the MTL will not need to pursue any MTL-related activity until the summer term of their induction year at the earliest. The three-phase structure of the programme is designed to offer support to teachers participating in the programme. Phase one is a preparatory stage for the later stages of the programme and is based on an initial diagnosis, which then focuses on developing teachers' skills of enquiry and use of evidence, and on an induction into professional practice in the school context. Phases 2 and 3 broaden and embed and deepen these skills respectively. The programme is practice-based and rooted in – and adds value to – what teachers are already doing. It is expected that the MTL will take around three years to complete, and NQTs will be able to access it flexibly over the first five years of their career, enabling teachers to work at their own pace. Although MTL will be primarily school-based, teachers will be expected to undertake some study in their own time.

## **23. How long will it take to complete the MTL?**

The Masters programme is expected to take approximately three years to complete. Teachers undertaking the MTL have the opportunity to complete the MTL within the first five years of their career, which means that the latest point at which they can start the MTL will be at the start of their third year of teaching.

## **24. Will I have to remain in the same school for up to five years while I finish my MTL?**

No. If you move schools before completing your MTL you will be able to complete it at your new school.

## **25. What will the time commitments be?**

MTL programmes are currently being developed by MTL providers (schools and HEIs working together) and the TDA. The intention is to develop a practice-based Masters programme that is focused on what takes place within the classroom but also has the academic rigour of a masters level qualification. One of the key aims in developing the MTL programme is to develop a flexible programme that can be personalised to meet each teacher's learning needs, reflecting the role being undertaken by that teacher. While it is therefore not possible to provide details of specific time commitments, it is important to remember that the programme is practice-based in the classroom, and that teachers will be expected to undertake some study in their own time.

## **26. How many NQTs in my school are eligible for MTL?**

Schools will receive funding for every NQT who undertakes the MTL programme, and will need to apply the tools and techniques of remodelling as they consider how to ensure that they have sufficient capacity to support teachers undertaking the MTL throughout the entire programme. They will have already used the principles of remodelling to manage other change processes within their schools – tackling workload, for example – and so they will be aware of how remodelling can help them to realise their aspirations for how they might work in the context of MTL and the 21st century school.

## **27. Will some teachers be disadvantaged if they don't have the MTL and won't this result in a two-tier profession?**

No. The MTL is not a replacement for experience. It has been designed to develop teachers' skills and abilities so that they can increase their effectiveness in the classroom. The MTL is part of a wider offer of TDA-funded continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities available to all teachers. Information on these opportunities is available on the website [www.tda.gov.uk/cpd](http://www.tda.gov.uk/cpd) The

TDA's online CPD database provides access to information on a whole range of funded development opportunities.

## **MTL providers**

### **28. Which schools and HEIs will be involved in developing the MTL?**

MTL providers are schools working in collaboration with one or more HEIs. The names of MTL providers are listed on our website at [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl)

## **Content and quality**

### **29. What will the teachers undertaking MTL cover?**

MTL focuses on four content areas that need to be covered by the end of the programme. They are:

#### Content area 1

- teaching and learning, with particular attention to personalisation and applied learning (in the light of 14–19 reforms)
- assessment for learning, diagnostic skills, including the use of performance data for pupil tracking

#### Content area 2

- subject knowledge for teaching
- curriculum and curriculum development, literacy, numeracy, 14–19 developments and ICT

#### Content area 3

- how children and young people develop, how they learn, and the management of their behaviour
- inclusion, including SEN, EAL

#### Content area 4

- leadership and management, including for subjects or curriculum areas
- working with others, collaboratively, in and beyond the classroom – the school workforce, employers and the children's workforce, including further education – and working with parents and carers.

### **30. Will subject knowledge for teaching be covered by the MTL?**

Subject knowledge for teaching is included in one of the four MTL content areas that all teachers on the programme will cover. A key feature of the programme is to meet teachers' individual professional needs by providing opportunities for all teachers to progressively develop their subject knowledge. This will enable them to have a greater command of the subject they teach and be more effective in the classroom.

### **31. How will MTL be structured and what will it cover?**

The MTL programme is structured in three phases, although each phase may be of a different duration and will not be linked to the number of years taken to complete the programme. This means that the duration of each phase will be flexible to meet the needs of the participant. Phases 1 and 2 are core provision. Phase 3 allows participants to specialise in a particular area of interest. Each phase of the programme progressively builds on the previous stage.

Phase 1: core provision – developing skills of enquiry and use of evidence

- builds on initial teacher training, or previous professional learning

- for NQTs, aligns with induction
- develops the teacher's professional attributes, knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the four content areas (see question 29), together with enquiry skills in their practice
- prepares them to move on to the next phase in the programme.

Phase 2: core provision – broadening and embedding

- builds on phase 1
- where applicable for NQTs, aligns with induction
- continues to be based on the four content areas, enabling the teacher to broaden and embed their professional attributes, knowledge, skills and understanding.

Phase 3: specialist focus – deepening

- builds on phase 2
- gives the teacher opportunities to:
  - develop their specialism(s), drawn from the content areas, and
  - link with specialist networks, providing a basis for the next stage in their professional development.

### **32. What kind of things will be studied as part of the MTL? Will it be exactly the same qualification for every teacher?**

The level of qualification for all MTL participants will be the same regardless of an individual's subject specialism. This is because the MTL is a masters level qualification that can be personalised to meet each participant's specific needs. It is the quality of the analysis, the depth of reflection, and how this influences learning that is important. However, all participants will cover the four content areas as identified in the MTL framework.

## **Funding**

### **33. How will the MTL be funded?**

The MTL is government-funded. Money will be allocated by the TDA. Funding will be available to the MTL Provider to pay for:

- development of the programme
- HEI costs
- release time for NQTs to participate in the programme
- time for the in-school coaches to support the NQT
- time for tutors from HEIs to support the NQT in their learning

The cost of training MTL coaches and release time for coaches to attend training will be funded separately.

### **34. How much money will this mean for schools?**

£30 million is available over the next two years for the initial roll-out of MTL. It will flow from DCSF to the TDA to HEIs and schools. Funding for schools will be ring-fenced and passed on to them via HEIs.

## **Next steps for MTL**

### **35. How do teachers apply to study for the MTL?**

The timetable for the initial roll-out of MTL is:

- Most NQTs start teaching post – September 2009
- Indicate interest on the TDA website
- Enrol on MTL – January 2010
- Start MTL – summer term 2009/10.

NQTs considering the MTL can indicate their interest on the TDA website ([www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl)) and check their eligibility for enrolling for MTL in the 2009/10 academic year. Eligible participants will then have their details passed on to the MTL provider who will contact them with further details of MTL in due course.

### **36. When will mid-career teachers be able to do the MTL?**

The Government has set out its ambition to make teaching a masters level profession. The development of the MTL is a key part of starting to fulfil that ambition. However, at this initial stage of roll-out, the MTL will only be available to the teachers mentioned above. The TDA is currently exploring how to ensure that all those who wish to participate in the MTL will have an equal opportunity to do so.

### **37. Will all teachers be required to have MTL in future?**

The long-term government ambition is to build on the talents of our teachers by making teaching a masters level profession. However, there are no plans to make the MTL compulsory.

### **38. Where you can find out more**

All the latest news about the MTL is available on the TDA website [www.tda.gov.uk/mtl](http://www.tda.gov.uk/mtl) You can indicate your interest on the site and full details about enrolling for the new qualification will be sent to you as soon as they are available. There is an introduction to MTL for headteachers and one for NQTs available to download and order from the TDA website. Details of other continuing professional development opportunities are also available at <https://cpdsearch.tda.gov.uk/>

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