

NQTs – getting your first job

When to start looking:

- Some schools start to recruit for September as early as January.
- The peak recruitment time is from March to late May.
- After this the number of advertisements falls, but some NQTs get their jobs as late as mid July.



Where to look for jobs: Jobs are generally advertised online. Most secondary posts are advertised on national sites like www.SchoolJobSearch.co.uk and www.TES.co.uk. Primary posts are often advertised more locally, perhaps on the LEA website, or in the local paper. Most schools will only use teaching agencies for supply teachers or when time is very short. A lot of schools now let you apply online or by email, but there are still quite a few that expect paper – and maybe a handwritten application form.

Take time over your applications – each will take 2-3 hours to sell yourself well - this IS what you have to do!



You are likely to stay in your first job for 2-3 years at least so choose with care:

- Is there inbuilt support for your induction year?
- Look at the school website: be thorough.
- Consider location and school performance (every state school at www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports, independent schools at www.isi.net/reports)
- Avoid posts not in your subject area
- Check the age range is right for you

Some NQTs get offered jobs in their placement schools, which is great if you really like the school. Otherwise you need to look for Your Perfect Job:



Few people get their perfect job – consider what compromises you can make.



CV or Application Form

You may be asked to complete either. Do your CV now!

Basic rules: put dates of education and training in reverse chronological order (start with the most recent dates) and do not leave any long periods unexplained. Word process when you can and check spelling. Schools really do reject imperfect applications.

Letter of Application

When you receive the application information, read it carefully and ensure you respond by addressing directly the information you are given (age ranges/ courses/ experience/ school ethos). Do not write about your experience of teaching vectors or poetry if the job will not require that. Use relevant examples only.

Be succinct. Usually 1 page of A4 is sufficient. Don't give a blow by blow account of lessons you have taught – you can deliver this information at interview. Mention instead that you have experience of teaching and assessing X at KS3 and Y at KS4/5. When complete, show it to your mentor or tutor for a second opinion.

Have a standard letter, but always personalise it for each job you apply for.



Mention:

- Your approach to classroom management and behaviour
- How you mark/ evaluate/ record/ feedback students' work
- Contact with parents and its importance
- Experience of mixed ability or team teaching
- Differentiation
- Hobbies/ interests/ extra curricular things you could offer the school (sports/ clubs/ music/ drama/ ICT/ enrichments)
- Your own subject knowledge
- 'Every Child Matters', SEAL, AfL and other recent initiatives

Help them to choose you for interview by writing a letter of application which is clear, interesting, relevant, but not too long.





Dear Ms Smith

I wish to apply for the post of full-time Spanish teacher at Hopworth School, advertised on 'schooljobsearch'.

I am currently completing my second PGCE placement at Oaktree School and have had experience of teaching Spanish, and a little French, at all key stages and in mixed ability and setted classes...

My approach to language teaching is ...

I feel that behaviour in the classroom ...

Target setting and marking are integral ...

My particular interests in Spanish are ...

Recent initiatives in teaching have led me to...

I am keen to teach at Hopworth School because...



find out name

Dear Sir/Madam

don't duplicate information

I am applying for the job of science teacher at your school. I'm doing a PGCE at ... I'm just finishing my teaching practise at a school in Wrexham at the moment where I managed to teach communications and also taught a year 8 class on my own. I planned and carried out a series of lessons to see which foods had too much sodium chloride (salt) in them...

too informal

spelling

don't patronise

is this relevant?

Science teaching is great because ...

I love being in charge of a class ...

Oh dear!

Liason between parents and pupils is very ...

One cannot stress enough ...

spelling

patrons



waiting for your interview

Interviews:

When called for interview, be punctual and wear fairly formal clothes that you feel comfortable in.

You may be shown around the school and get to meet pupils and future colleagues – remember this is part of the interview too! Get involved / ask questions. Try to see pupils arriving before school, or at break.

Many schools will also ask you to teach a lesson – be well prepared with lesson plans and your own materials. Phone in advance to check about IWBs or other equipment you might wish to use. You are being observed to see how you interact with the students, rather than the quality of your worksheet. Make sure you do Q+As, get around the class, and have a beginning, middle and end. Nothing too ambitious!

Be prepared to evaluate your lesson with your observer afterwards. Acknowledge what you felt went badly too.



* Ask if you can have a practice interview at your placement school with the Head or Deputy – and debrief afterwards.*

Interview questions:

Don't be afraid to ask for a question to be clarified.

Be prepared to discuss:

- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Equal opportunities
- Behaviour and bullying. How you would respond to different levels of challenging behaviour.
- Differentiation
- National curriculum issues
- Target setting
- A successful lesson you have taught
- Your subject knowledge and interests

And ask about (if not already covered):

- The NQT support programme
- Salary, if you have relevant previous experience
- How you could use your skills to support after school sports, drama, music, subject clubs, etc.
- But don't ask questions that you really should have researched before.

Often the successful candidate is announced at the end of the same day.