**ECF FAQ**

# Purpose

The early career framework (ECF) was launched across England in September 2021. The department has been engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to monitor its impact on early career teachers (ECTs), mentors and induction tutors within the teaching workforce and to continually develop and improve the ECF’s implementation.

We have heard from numerous stakeholders that the department could provide clarity on a number of key delivery areas. We have created an FAQ to provide answers to these areas. We are keen to ensure we are capturing and answering any areas that are causing confusion. If you have any further questions/ queries, please do let us know and we can ensure they are included before we send out to the sector.

# ECT

Is the ECF an assessment tool?

**NO.** Teachers are not assessed on the ECF. This is a package of support and anything you do in the **ECF will NOT be used for assessment.**

Your headteacher is responsible for ensuring you are assessed against the Teacher’s Standards as part of your progress reviews and formal assessments as part of your statutory induction.

If I don’t complete the assignments/tasks in the funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP)) will I fail my induction?

**NO**. ECTs are expected to participate fully in the ECF provider-led programme, however, it should not be used as an assessment tool.

Separately to the provider-led programme, ECTs will be assessed against the Teacher’s Standards as part of their statutory induction.

Do I still have to do induction on top of the ECF?

**NO.** The ECF-based training is expected to provide the core training element in an ECT’s programme of statutory induction. This is also supported by an entitlement to regular mentoring and assessment against the Teachers’ Standards; it is **not an additional training programme**.

I work part-time; can I complete a funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP))?

Yes. All lead providers have a policy in place for non-standard inductions. Speak to your school, appropriate body, and delivery partner about the most appropriate route for you to complete.

I didn’t start in September; can I complete a funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP))?

Yes. All lead providers have a policy in place for non-standard inductions. Speak to your school, appropriate body, and delivery partner about the most appropriate route for you to complete.

What should I do if I have concerns about my induction programme or statutory entitlements?

If you have any concerns about your time off timetable, or entitlements set out in the statutory guidance, you should speak to your induction tutor in the first instance. If your induction tutor is unable to resolve the issue, then you should raise the matter directly with your appropriate body whose role it is to check that ECTs receive their statutory entitlements.

If an ECT is serving a reduced induction, do they need to cover the full ECF?

All ECTs serving a statutory induction should receive a programme of support based on the ECF. In exceptional circumstances, where a reduced induction period has been agreed, headteachers should work with induction tutors and appropriate bodies (and providers, where appropriate) to ensure the training is appropriate in each individual circumstance. There is **no expectation** that an ECT serving a reduced induction period **covers the breadth and depth of the ECF** in full.

What happens if I or my mentor is struggling to engage with the programme?

Participants should talk to their training provider who will be able to provide further guidance.

# Mentors

As a mentor do I have to collect data on my ECTs performance?

**NO**. The ECF is not an assessment tool. The mentor role is separate to that of the induction tutor and should focus on supporting the ECT through the 2-year programme.

Do ECTs have to collect evidence for the ECF?

**NO**. The ECF is not an assessment tool, and ECTs are not required to collect evidence against their ECF-based training programme.

Do ECTs have to collect evidence for their statutory induction?

ECTs may be asked by their induction tutor to provide evidence for formal assessments. This evidence is against the Teachers’ Standards and **not against the ECF**. This evidence should consist of existing documents only (e.g lesson plans, or feedback from observations etc) and there is no need for ECTs to create anything new for a formal assessment.

What happens if an ECT or mentor is struggling to engage with the programme?

Participants should talk to their training provider who will be able to provide further guidance.

If an ECT doesn’t complete the assignments/tasks in the funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP)) will they fail their induction?

**NO**. ECTs are expected to participate fully in the ECF provider-led programme, however, it should not be used as an assessment tool.

Separately to the provider-led programme, ECTs will be assessed against the Teacher’s Standards as part of their statutory induction.

Do ECTs still have to do induction on top of the ECF?

**NO.** The ECF-based training is expected provide the core training element in an ECT’s programme of statutory induction, supported also by an entitlement to regular mentoring and assessment against the teacher standards; it is not an additional training programme.

Who should observe an ECT’s teaching practice?

An ECT’s teaching is expected to be observed at regular intervals throughout their induction period to facilitate a fair and effective assessment of the ECT’s teaching practice, conduct and efficiency against the Teachers’ Standards. Observations of the ECT may be undertaken by the Induction tutor or another suitable person from inside or outside the institution.

What should an ECT do if they have concerns about their induction programme or statutory entitlements?

If an ECT has any concerns about their time off timetable, or entitlements set out in the statutory guidance, they should speak to their Induction tutor in the first instance; if the Induction tutor is unable to resolve the issue, then ECTs should raise the matter directly with their appropriate body whose role it is to check that ECTs receive their statutory entitlements.

# School leaders

Do mentors need to dedicate time to complete the ECF?

**YES.** There is additional funding to cover mentors’ time with the mentee in the second year of teaching and there is funding to cover time off timetable to participate in the mentor training. Mentoring is a very important element of the induction process, and the mentor is expected to be given adequate time to carry out the role effectively and to meet the needs of the ECT. This includes attending regular mentoring sessions and mentor training where appropriate.

Why do participants need to provide their personal details (Teacher Reference Number, full name, date of birth and email address)?

This information is required to ensure the appropriate funding is distributed by the department. If participants are unable to submit this information their Lead Provider may not be able to continue delivering the training and the school may have to deliver an alternative ECF based induction.

If an ECT doesn’t complete the assignments in funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP)) will they fail their induction?

**NO**. ECTs are expected to participate fully in the ECF provider-led programme, however, it should not be used as an assessment tool.

Separately to the provider-led programme, ECTs will be assessed against the Teacher’s Standards as part of their statutory induction.

What happens if an ECT doesn’t engage with the funded provider-led programme (also referred to as the Full Induction Programme (FIP))?

Lead Providers will have minimum requirements for engagement to ensure ECTs receive their statutory entitlement to an ECF based induction. If an ECT is unable to participate sufficiently in the Lead Provider’s programme their school may have to deliver an alternative ECF based induction.

Do ECTs still have to do induction on top of the ECF?

**NO.** The ECF-based training is expected to provide the core training element in an ECT’s programme of statutory induction. This is also supported by an entitlement to regular mentoring and assessment against the Teachers’ Standards; it is **not an additional training programme**.

Do schools enrolled on a provider-led programme still need an appropriate body?

**YES.** The roles of appropriate body and ECF delivery partner are distinct. Schools who have enrolled on a lead provider’s ECF programme must also ensure that they have registered with an appropriate body, whose role it is to ensure that the induction meets the statutory requirements.

What is the difference between Ofsted’s role and the role of appropriate bodies? How will induction and the ECF be quality assured?

Ofsted’s role is to inspect DfE-funded lead providers of the Early Career Framework (ECF) and the National Professional Qualifications (NPQs). They will not inspect schools that are delivering their own ECF-based induction to their early career teachers (ECTs).

The inspections will focus on the quality of professional development and training, and the leadership and management of the lead provider. Although Ofsted will visit a sample of delivery partners, and talk to a sample of ECTs or NPQ participants and their mentors and trainers (where applicable) as part of the inspection, they will not be inspected or judged themselves.

Appropriate bodies (ABs) act as a separate quality assurance function for statutory teacher induction. All schools who have ECTs serving a statutory induction, including schools who are working with an ECF Lead Provider, must register with an appropriate body. The role of the AB is to check that the monitoring, support, assessment and guidance procedures in place for statutory induction are fair and appropriate, and that the induction is being conducted in accordance with the statutory requirements. Where a school is delivering their own ECF-based induction, the AB will also check that the programme of training and support in place is based on the ECF.

The quality assurance conducted by ABs is separate and distinct to the role of Ofsted. Ofsted will inspect the Lead Providers whereas ABs are only responsible for checking ECF provision where a school are delivering their own ECF-based induction. ABs will only check that the induction is conducted in accordance with the statutory requirements.

What should an ECT do if they have concerns about their induction programme or statutory entitlements?

If an ECT has any concerns about their time off timetable, or entitlements set out in the statutory guidance, they should speak to their induction tutor in the first instance; if the Induction tutor is unable to resolve the issue, then ECTs should raise the matter directly with their appropriate body whose role it is to check that ECTs receive their statutory entitlements.

If a school is delivering their own ECF-based induction programme, how is that quality assured?

All schools with ECTs who are serving a statutory induction must register with an appropriate body. One of the responsibilities of the appropriate body is to ensure that an ECF-based induction programme of support is in place for the ECT. Where a school is delivering their own induction programme, this will include checking that the planning and delivery of the programme of support is clearly based on the ECF; this process is known as ‘fidelity checking’.

Do all mentors at my school need to attend the training or can some attend and disseminate the training to their colleagues?

There is an expectation that each mentor will participate in the training; additional funding to backfill mentor time spent undertaking training is paid directly to schools. Lead Providers will have minimum requirements for engagement to ensure mentors receive the full benefit of their training programme.

Do I have to engage with the DfE’s ‘Manage training for your early career teachers’ service?

**Yes**, unless your school is designing and delivering its own programme of training based on the early career framework.

If you want to use a DfE-funded training provider, you need to add your ECT and mentor details to the service and they need to supply additional information to confirm their eligibility for training. This ensures the training provider is paid for training your ECTs and mentors.

If you want to deliver the DfE-accredited training materials yourself, you need to add your ECT and mentor details to the service so they can be given access to the materials.

Read [our step-by-step guidance](https://manage-training-for-early-career-teachers.education.gov.uk/how-to-set-up-your-programme) on how to set up your programme on the service.

Do I have to report which training provider I intend to use on the DfE service?

**No**, your training provider needs to confirm this with the DfE directly. When a training provider confirms they are delivering training to your school, your school’s profile will be updated. If you cannot see the training provider listed, direct them to confirm the partnership with their lead provider.

What is the role of the appropriate body? What is the role of the ECF funded provider?

A funded provider led programme - Schools can choose to work with providers accredited by the Department for Education who will design and deliver an ECF programme of face-to-face and online training to ECTs and their mentors.

Every school with ECTs serving a statutory induction must register with an appropriate body, regardless of the type of ECF-based induction they have chosen. The role of the appropriate body is separate to that of the ECF Lead Providers and Delivery Partners. Appropriate bodies have the main quality assurance role within the induction process and will check that the monitoring, support, assessment, and guidance procedures in place for statutory induction are fair and appropriate. They are also responsible for checking that the programme of support in place for the ECT is clearly based on the ECF. For further guidance on the role of the appropriate body, please see section 5.8 of the [Statutory Induction Guidance.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972316/Statutory_Induction_Guidance_2021_final__002_____1___1_.pdf)

What is the role of the induction tutor?

The headteacher/principal should identify a person to act as the ECT’s induction tutor, to provide regular monitoring and support, and coordination of assessment. The induction tutor is expected to hold QTS and have the necessary skills and knowledge to work successfully in this role and be able to assess the ECT’s progress against the Teachers’ Standards. This is a very important element of the induction process, and the induction tutor must be given sufficient time to carry out the role effectively and to meet the needs of the ECT.

The induction tutor will need to be able to make rigorous and fair judgements about the ECT’s progress in relation to the Teachers’ Standards. They will need to be able to recognise when early action is needed in the case of an ECT who is experiencing difficulties. For further guidance on the role of the induction tutor, please see section 5.6 of the [Statutory Induction Guidance.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972316/Statutory_Induction_Guidance_2021_final__002_____1___1_.pdf)

Does my ECT need to do half-termly assessment?

**NO.** An ECT’s performance will continue to be assessed against the Teachers’ Standards. The ECF is not and should not be used as an assessment tool. From September 2021 there will be two formal assessment points: one midway through induction and one at the end. These will be supported by regular reviews to monitor progress, to take place in each term where a formal assessment does not.

What happens if our school does not have a teacher with QTS to fulfil the mentor role?

The statutory induction guidance sets out who can be appointed as a mentor and the requirements they are expected to fulfil. It is expected that the mentor should hold QTS although in exceptional circumstances the headteacher may identify another member of staff to fulfil this role who has the necessary skills and knowledge to work successfully in the role. They should also have sufficient time to carry out their role effectively.

The headteacher should ensure that the ECT’s post is suitable for induction See sections 2.17-2.18 of the [Statutory Induction Guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972316/Statutory_Induction_Guidance_2021_final__002_____1___1_.pdf) for further information on a suitable post for induction.

Are Special schools who are listed as independent schools but receive full funding via their Local Authority entitled to access the DfE funded Full Induction Programme?

All special schools in receipt of Section 41 funding are entitled to access the DfE fully funded full induction programme.