

Gateshead Council

Raising Achievement • Learning and Culture



Higher Level Teaching Assistant Status



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Introduction

This booklet has been written to support teaching assistants and head teachers in the application process for higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) training and assessment.

The introduction of HLTAs is a key building block in the remodelling of the school workforce nationally. Gateshead Council is keen to ensure that its teaching assistant workforce has access to the highest quality training. Teaching assistants who successfully complete training and assessment will gain HLTA status, enabling them to provide greater support to teachers and schools generally.

The opportunity to achieve HLTA status enables schools and the LEA to develop a new career structure for teaching assistants and to recognise the valuable work teaching assistants do in supporting teaching and learning in our schools.

The Application Process

The application process is key to ensuring that staff are placed on the correct training or assessment route. The school's head teacher has an important role to play in helping teaching assistants to select the most appropriate training/assessment route.

There are two key steps in the application process.

Step One: is to secure funding for the training assessment process.

Step Two: is to apply for a place on a training/assessment course with one of the approved providers.

How do I secure funding?

Funding is allocated following successful application to the LEA. Application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website **www.gateshead.gov.uk/education**. The front page of the application form contains important information for candidates about the completion of the application form. Candidates should ensure that they complete Parts 1 and 2 of the application form fully and accurately.

Candidates should then pass the completed application form to their head teacher for him/her to complete Part 3. Candidates will also need to show the relevant literacy and numeracy certificates to their head teacher for him/her to copy and confirm that he/she has seen the originals. **Photocopies are not acceptable** and all candidates will be required to produce the original certificates for their training provider before achieving HLTA status.

Head teachers should return completed application forms to candidates to enable them to complete the final confidential Equal Opportunities page, before forwarding their completed application form to the address on the front cover of the application form by the date shown.

The LEA will respond in writing to all candidates shortly after the closing date to inform them of whether they have been successful in their application for funding.

I have secured funding; how do I apply for a training place?

Once candidates have received written confirmation of funding from the LEA, they should log on to **www.hlta.gov.uk** to view the list of approved providers in the region. Having selected an approved provider, candidates should complete the on-line application form to book a training/assessment place. Candidates will receive written confirmation from their selected provider, notifying them of when a place will be available in their area.

Do I need any qualifications to apply for HLTA training and assessment?

All candidates must have literacy and numeracy qualifications which are equivalent to A*-C grade in GCSE. A full list of acceptable qualifications is given on page 3.

Qualification Type	English/Literacy <i>(one of the following qualifications)</i>	Mathematics/Numeracy <i>(one of the following qualifications)</i>
GCSE	English A*-C	Mathematics A*-C
Basic Skills	Certificate in Adult Literacy Level 2	Certificate in Adult Numeracy Level 2
Key Skills	Communication Level 2 Communication Level 3	Application of Number Level 2 Application of Number Level 3
CSE	English Grade 1	Mathematics Grade 1
GCE O Level	English Language English Literature	Mathematics
GCE A Level	English Language English Literature English Language & Literature Statistics	Use of Mathematics Mathematics Further Mathematics
GCE AS Level	English Language English Literature English Language & Literature	Further Mathematics Pure Mathematics Statistics Mechanics Applied Mathematics Discrete Mathematics

How do I decide which route to apply for?

There are currently two routes to obtaining HLTA status. The TTA has produced a self-assessment document to help prospective candidates to identify whether they are ready to undertake the training or assessment. Candidates are encouraged to complete this booklet as part of the application process; discussing your self-assessment with your head teacher will help you to decide which route to apply for. This will also help you to identify any areas where you might need more experience or further professional development.

Assessment Only route

Candidates who are already displaying evidence of the HLTA Standards in their daily work may wish to consider applying for assessment only. The assessment process will take about one term to complete.

Full Training route

The full training route is sometimes described as the 50-day route, as it involves 20 days' training away from the school site, 20 days' training in school and 10 days of e-learning support. Candidates complete the normal assessment tasks following training. This route is likely to take between two and three terms to complete.

I don't feel I need the full training route, but I currently can't meet all of the Standards.

This will not be unusual and it may be that you simply need some further experience or professional development to help you to meet the Standards. Your head teacher or line manager should be able to advise you on how to gain this extra experience or professional development. The TTA are currently looking at other routes, which may be more suited to your needs. *NB These are unlikely to be available before September 2005.*

How many Standards are there and how many do I have to meet?

There are 31 Standards and **candidates must meet all of the Standards.** The Standards are organised into three key groups.

- **Professional Values and Practice**

These Standards set out the attitudes and commitment to be expected from those trained as HLTAs.

- **Knowledge and Understanding**

These Standards require all HLTAs to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge, expertise and awareness of the pupils' curriculum to work effectively with teachers as part of a professional team. They also require HLTAs to demonstrate that they know how to use their skills, expertise and experience to advance pupils' learning.

- **Teaching and Learning Activities**

These Standards require all HLTAs to demonstrate that they can work effectively with individual pupils, small groups and whole classes under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher and that they can contribute to a range of learning activities in the areas where they have expertise. They require all HLTAs to demonstrate skills in planning, monitoring, assessment and class management.

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The Standards apply to HLTAs working in all phases of education and in all areas of school life. They have been designed to be applicable to the diversity of roles in which school support staff work to support pupils' learning. The Standards are also designed to support smooth progression to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) for those HLTAs with the potential and interest to go on to qualify as teachers¹.

I am thinking about applying for Assessment Only; what skills and experience will I need?

Candidates for the Assessment Only route will normally need at least three years of recent experience in supporting pupils and teachers in a classroom situation to be able to provide consistent evidence of working at HLTA Standards.

Candidates will also need to have experience of working regularly with a whole class. This experience should be recent, i.e. generally in the last four terms prior to applying for funding.

The **table on the next page** gives a sample of some of the skills and experiences candidates will need to be able to demonstrate for the Assessment Only route.

I am still not sure which is the most appropriate route for me.

This is understandable, as this is a new area of professional development and no-one wishes to waste time or money on an inappropriate route. To help you with the decision-making process, you may wish to use the following flowchart on page 7.

¹ *Professional Standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants - September 2003* - TTA2003

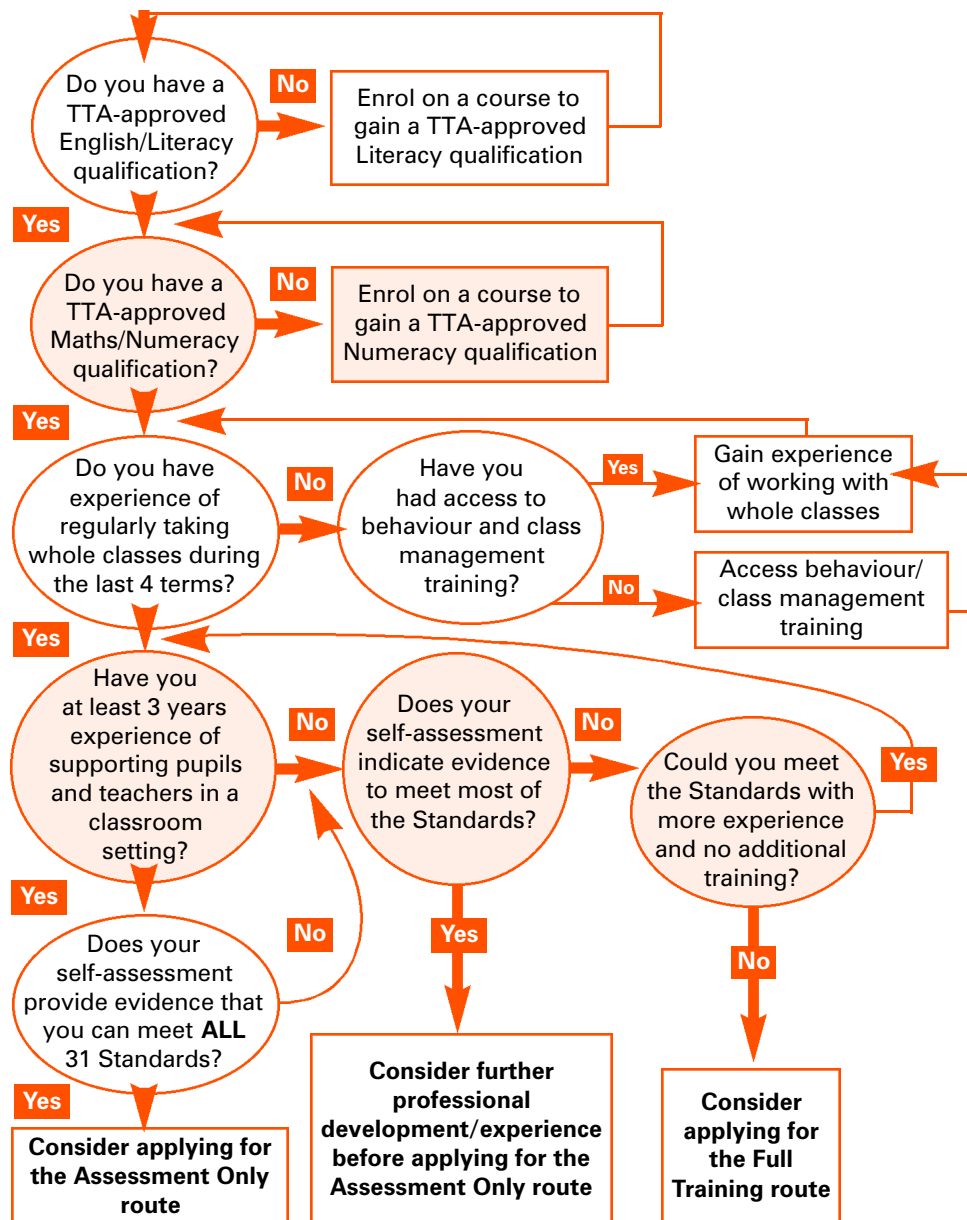
Selection Criteria for HLTA Assessment/Training	
Essential for all Candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TTA-approved Literacy and Numeracy qualifications. ● Candidates will need the support of their current head teacher. ● Ability to obtain Enhanced CRB Clearance.* ● Ability to meet the medical requirements in terms of DfEE Circular 4/99 - "Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach of Teachers and Entrants to Initial Teacher Training" (May 1999).*
Essential for Assessment Only route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recent and regular experience of working with whole classes (last four terms).# ● Three years' recent experience of supporting pupils and teachers in a classroom situation.
Essential for Assessment Only route/ Desirable for all other Candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence of high expectations for all pupils, respect for their varied backgrounds and a strong commitment to raising achievement for all pupils. ● Evidence of working collaboratively with teachers on planning, teaching, class management, monitoring and assessment of progress. ● Evidence of a clear understanding of the SEN Code of Practice, differentiated learning and inclusive education. ● Evidence of establishing productive working relationships with all pupils and the ability to set high standards and raise achievement. ● Ability to demonstrate positive behaviour management strategies. ● Ability to demonstrate a good knowledge of the National Curriculum relevant to the key stage in which you work. ● Involvement in managing the work of other adults in classroom settings. ● Evidence of taking responsibility for teaching and learning without the presence of the teacher. ● Experience of working with individuals, groups and whole classes. ● Involvement in the planning of out-of-school activities, e.g. educational visits. ● Evidence of competence in the use of ICT. ● Understanding of the statutory frameworks that apply to the work of teaching assistants. ● Awareness of and ability to respond effectively to equal opportunities issues. ● Evidence of making decisions without constant reference back to the teacher. ● Evidence of continuing professional development through involvement in observation, evaluation and discussion of classroom practice.

* The LEA's Staffing Section will carry out these checks for successful candidates.

Class sizes may vary between schools and sectors, e.g. class sizes in special schools may be much smaller than mainstream classes.

Which route is appropriate?

N.B. This flowchart is not meant to be definitive in deciding the most appropriate route, but simply as an additional tool in the decision-making process. Candidates are strongly advised to discuss any decision with their Head Teacher before finally applying for funding.



What if applications exceed the available funding?

The LEA is keen to support the continuing professional development of all employees, however funding is limited in any financial year. To ensure that the LEA obtains “best value” from the funding available, it may be necessary to establish a selection panel within the “Raising Achievement” section of Learning and Culture to allocate funding. The selection criteria listed earlier in this booklet will be used to make any selection, should it be necessary.

During the first two years of funding, the LEA will prioritise funding in favour of candidates applying for the Assessment Only route, to enable the maximum number of staff to obtain the HLTA status; however some funding will always be available to provide a small number of places on the Full Training route.

Who do I contact if I need further information or clarification?

If you feel you need to discuss any points in this booklet or feel you need further information about what is involved in attaining HLTA status, you should contact one of the LEA’s Advisory Teaching Assistants, tel. 0191 433 8660.

Useful References and Sources of Information

Websites: www.hlta.gov.uk
www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingassistants
www.remodelling.org

Publications:

- Professional Standards for Higher Level Teaching assistants - *TTA/DfES*
- Meeting the Standards - A guide to the higher level teaching assistant training and assessment. - *TTA*
- An Update on the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) Programme (Note 9) - *WAMG*
- Guidance Note for Schools on Cover Supervision - *WAMG (Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group)*
- Time for Standards: Guidance accompanying the Section 133 Regulations issued under the Education Act 2002 - *DfES*
- Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: a National Agreement - *DfES*