

# TeachVac Newsletter

December 2016

Our Monthly Newsletter for Teachers

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## Introduction

This is the first of our newsletters to be made available to anyone, not just those already registered with TeachVac. Only the latest issue will be available without registering but we hope you will find it interesting.

For those of you who haven't registered, please take a moment to do so - it is simple and quick. TeachVac monitors jobs across the country and alerts you to any that are suitable. It is up to you whether you wish to pursue any - if you do, you simply contact the school using the details in the advert. The rest is between the school and you.

Last month's newsletter was about how to complete the application form for a teaching job. This month we offer suggestions about how to be successful at an interview. This is a challenge both trainees and existing teachers must face when looking for a teaching post. For that reason we have re-arranged the shape of this newsletter to present our interview advice in a separate section for everyone to read.

## State Of The Market

But first, the hot news on how many of you there will be competing for jobs in 2016. At the end of November, the DfE announced the ITT census numbers for 2016, effectively how many trainees there are currently preparing to become teachers. The headline number is that more than 13,000 secondary trainees are likely to be in the job market in 2017 once Teach First and School Direct salaried numbers have been removed. These routes have trainees already placed in schools and most are unlikely to be competing in the open job market in 2016. That means, if the DfE is correct in anticipating 50% of main scale post go to trainees there will need be around 25,000 vacancies in 2017 for secondary school teachers in order for the majority of trainees to find a teaching post. The other 50% of vacancies are taken by current teachers and returners.

Recruitment in many subjects has been better this year than in 2015, although not good enough to meet expected numbers in some subjects, so the exact outcome will depend upon whether or not schools advertise as many vacancies in 2017 as they did during 2016.

The position in primary is more difficult to calculate partly because of the significant number of trainees on undergraduate courses that need to be added to those on graduate courses. But, there may be around 13,000 trainees in the job market next year once Teach First and School Direct salaried trainees are excluded from the totals.



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## Trainees

The Christmas holidays are a time to start thinking about how you would pull together the information needed for an application form. Much of the basic background data will be similar to that used when applying through the UCAS teacher training admission scheme. The new part will be what you have learnt on your course. It is worth reflecting about your experiences in school and how you might make use of them if you fill your first form in early in 2017. Schools won't expect much experience but they will be looking for evidence from your time in school this term. As next term unfolds, you will need to add to your portfolio of information that will be useful in an application form; good lessons; other experiences in schools and with pupils; anything you regard as a success. Do ensure you also keep your referees up to speed on what you will be saying in case they want to draw attention to it.

Above all, ensure you take some time off over Christmas; me time after the long autumn term is absolutely necessary to set you up for the rigours of the spring term to come.

## Current Teachers & Returners

Vacancies for September are appearing earlier than in the past as schools become concerned about the supply situation in some subjects. As a result, you can probably expect to see vacancies appearing in significant numbers from January onwards. Assuming you are going for promotion, everything in the interview section applies to you if you are called for interview. It is worth reminding yourself of what matters if you haven't been for an interview for a few years. Do re-read the job description and ask a colleague to prepare some sample questions that you might be asked at interview. Why do you want the job; what will you bring to the job; how has your present post prepared you for this job and what additional skills and knowledge have you acquired from your professional development activities that fit you for promotion. This is also the time to ensure you know everything possible about the school. For state schools the DfE and Ofsted websites provide a wealth of detail that is worth looking at before you attend the interview.

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## And now for the interview

The first thing to realise is that if you are called for interview, you are appointable. After all, schools don't waste time interviewing for the sake of it. This means you have already impressed with your application form. They will want to look for reasons to appoint you, so help them out.

The interview session will probably comprise of several parts and you must assume everyone you meet will form a view of you within 10 seconds of the encounter. This includes how you walk through the door and sit down. Be confident, but not over-confident.

### First encounters

Arrive on time. Allow plenty of time for transport problems. If necessary catch an earlier train or add 10% to the journey time given on the route directions on the internet. Arriving on time means you won't be flustered.

Decide what to wear. Check the staff pages of the school's website – is there a formal dress code for staff? If so you will definitely need to adhere to it. As a rule of thumb, dress on the more formal end of what you would normally wear in school. For men, ties are generally still de rigour even though attitudes in society are changing fast. Such changes always make these kinds of decisions more difficult. Women face similar issues when fashions change.

Handshakes and eye contact can help display confidence and contribute to first impressions. Even how you address the person at Reception might be fed back through a casual remark



### *The demonstration lesson*

This is often a part of the interview process these days. Anyone who watches programme such as Masterchef will know that some good cooks go home because they try something new for the judges. Don't. Unless you are given a specific lesson to prepare, stick to what you know works in planning terms even if you change the content.

Technology will go wrong if it possibly can – you might even call this the golden rule of interviews – so be wary of using anything outside your control. Don't assume the interactive whiteboard works the same way as the one you have been using in school.

Find out numbers and bring sufficient handouts if required. Ensure timings work and you can demonstrate the key parts of a lesson and allow for teaching pupils with different abilities.

Ask questions in advance. Year group? Number of pupils with statements? Will there be teaching assistants present? Indeed, anything you would want to know if teaching the group in a school.

Try to ensure you negotiate to arrive before the pupils so you can understand the geography of the room.

### *Remember, they want you for their job*

Remain focused on the needs of the school as outlined in the job description, rather than your own wishes. Check whether anything has changed since the JD was written. If so, might this affect whether you want the job? Assuming it is still the job you applied for, check what the school wants from the successful applicants, for example: subject knowledge; secure classroom management; awareness of assessment and recording; some understanding of the school and its context; willingness to contribute to the wider life of the school community.

What is your unique selling point? Is your USP - recent experience of changes in the subject that will help with the new curriculum? - previous work with young people? - knowledge of the community the school serves or one similar to it? - excellent feedback from the schools you have been working with so far this year? Knowing what you have to offer and matching it with what the school wants is key to helping the school see how you fit their needs.

### *The interview*

Body language; tone of voice; words. That is the order of importance to the people interviewing you. Although there is more recruitment training than in the past (plus an awareness of potential discrimination and equality issues), interviews are still intimidating. Remember, interviewers are human beings too!

Take a few deep breaths before entering the room and stand confidently. Make eye contact with all those interviewing you and retain eye contact with the person asking the question. Check beforehand for unintentional nervous gestures such as playing with your hands or shifting around in your seat.

Don't drop your voice at the end of your answers; rather try to send the question back like a game of verbal tennis with the questioner. Keep answers crisp but not blunt and avoid waffle. If you haven't yet covered something you are asked about, say so - especially if it is still early in the year.

### *Advanced preparation*

Before your first interview try answering questions out loud in front of the mirror. Ask a friend or fellow trainee to conduct a mock interview if your course doesn't provide the opportunity and then ask them for an honest appraisal. You don't want to hear everything is fine when it isn't.

### *Afterwards*

You may be asked whether you would accept the job if it's offered to you. Consider whether you have learnt anything at the interview that has changed your mind. In that respect you are interviewing the school as well as them interviewing you. If you sense you wouldn't be comfortable at this school, back out. It is better to look for another job than work in a school where you will be unhappy, for whatever reasons, and risk jeopardising your future career. You were successful in winning an interview this time so probably you will be again.



## Debrief

Whatever the outcome, debrief about what you learnt about the school, the process, and especially yourself. Make it count next time you face an interview, whether next week or in the years ahead.

If successful, consider the issue of salary and starting date. If your course ends in July ask if the school will employ you over the summer? This is especially important if you are changing careers and will have no other source of income over the summer. Being paid to prepare lesson plans over the summer is only fair otherwise the school is benefitting from your time for free.

If unsuccessful, you can ask for feedback but generally you will be told that there was a better candidate on the day: more experienced; better subject knowledge; trained in a similar sort of school; better balance for the department team or whatever. Rarely will you be told that you mucked up the interview or did a poor lesson. It may be down to your own powers of deduction and analysis to try to see what you could do better next time. But sometimes it really was that there was a more suitable candidate and with another mix of interviewees you would have been selected.

**There is a job out there for you. Good luck!!**

## Other Services

Do remember to ask your school whether they use TeachVac to save them money on recruitment. TeachVac is free to schools and applicants alike.

There is a free jobs portal available to schools - details can be found on the front page of [TeachVac](#).

Our new service, [TeachSted](#) is available to support schools undergoing an Ofsted inspection.

## The Job Alert Service – How It Works

Visit [www.teachvac.co.uk](http://www.teachvac.co.uk) and register today, it's free.

TeachVac is open to all teachers looking for primary & secondary posts at any level including leadership.

You select a subject and a location. The service looks at school vacancies within your specified area and identifies any jobs that match. The system then sends you an email alert about the job so that you can decide whether to apply. As we use advanced technology to drive TeachVac, jobs often appear with us before they appear elsewhere. In such cases, you may be one of the first to see these vacancies.

Schools are told how many trainees there are in the subject, and how many vacancies have been set against this pool so that they know how challenging recruitment may be in each subject.

To contact us with ideas for future newsletters and any stories about job hunting email [newsletter@oxteachserv.com](mailto:newsletter@oxteachserv.com)

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### December 2016

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### January 2017

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## Talk To Us



<https://www.facebook.com/TeachVac/>



<https://twitter.com/TeachVac>

**You can chat with other trainee teachers and share experiences as well as question members of our team. We look forward to meeting you online!**