

# **Department for Education**

## **‘Evidence check’ memorandum**

### **National College for Teaching and Leadership**

#### **Background**

1. In October 2010, the government initiated a systematic review of its delivery mechanisms to see how efficiency could be improved. Departments were required to test each of their non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) against Cabinet Office criteria in order to determine their future status. An organisation would retain NDPB status only if it met one of Cabinet Office’s tests :

- Does it perform a technical function?
- Does it need to be politically impartial?
- Does it act independently to establish facts?

2. Following the DfE’s subsequent review, none of the NDPBs responsible for the delivery of workforce policy met the criteria. The Secretary of State decided to close the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), the National College for School Leadership, the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) and the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC), and create two new executive agencies – the Teaching Agency (TA) and the National College for School Leadership (NCSL). These were established in April 2012 as part of the Department for Education (DfE) and directly accountable to ministers.

3. The effective delivery of school workforce policy requires a high level of sector confidence and credibility. Responsibility for certain workforce functions to remain with separately identified business units within DfE, with specific aims and objectives, ensured they could focus their energy on delivering high-quality services to schools, school leaders and the wider workforce. Transferring some of the functions previously delivered by the NDPBs to executive agencies was considered to be the right option as it retained a degree of separation whilst achieving better transparency and value for money.

4. Considerable economies of scale were achieved by combining “back office” functions through shared corporate services across DfE and its agencies, leading to reductions in headcount and estates costs. Additional savings were also made by disbanding the Governing Councils and Boards of the respective NDPBs. The change also led to greater accountability for public money. The CEOs of executive agencies are required to report directly to ministers and, through them, to Parliament; staff working in executive agencies are employees of DfE.

5. The TA took on the general delivery functions of the TDA, and selected functions delivered by GTCE and CWDC (and previously, the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency) and the NCSL assumed the on-going functions of its predecessor body. However, the new agencies were not a direct replacement for the predecessor NDPBs as some functions ceased, whilst others moved to other parts of the department. Those functions that transferred to the new agencies were reconfigured to ensure that they fitted with changes in ministerial priorities.

#### **Creation of NCTL**

6. The decision to merge the TA and NCSL into a single agency<sup>1</sup> was largely influenced by the rapid growth of the school-led system. It became clear there was logic to bringing together responsibility for the delivery of key policies, such as School Direct (TA) and Teaching Schools (NCSL). This presented a strong argument for a single workforce agency, focused on promoting high-quality teaching and school leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/news/teaching-agency-and-national-college-set-to-merge](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/teaching-agency-and-national-college-set-to-merge)

7. The new agency was set up to build on the work led by the TA and the NCSL and achieve greater efficiency by bringing together expertise to eliminate duplication and overlap. NCTL's annual report 2013/14<sup>2</sup> shows that the budget has decreased from £576,237,000 in 2012/13 to £465,849,000 in 2013/14 and the average monthly staffing full time equivalent (FTE) has decreased from 457 in 2012/13 to 376 in 2013/14. More importantly, it is best placed to put schools at the heart of teacher training, professional development and school improvement.

### **Purpose and aims of NCTL**

8. *Improving the quality of the education workforce:*

- Facilitating initial teacher training (ITT), and supporting schools to take control of their own recruitment and training; whilst encouraging higher education providers to work in partnership with schools.
- Licensing providers to develop the training materials for the national professional qualifications and to decide who goes on their courses.
- Managing programmes such as Teach First, Teaching Leaders, Future Leaders and the new Talented Leaders programme;
- Overseeing the newly qualified teacher (NQT) induction process for teachers and awarding both qualified teacher status (QTS) and early years teacher status (EYTS);
- A continuing regulatory role, taking appropriate action in cases of the most serious allegations of professional misconduct.

9. *Helping schools to help each other to improve:*

- School improvement work including the sponsorship of schools in more serious difficulties.
- Enabling schools to broker support from teaching school alliances, the teaching schools council, national leaders of education (NLEs), and national support schools (NSSs).

Encouraging schools to work with their alliances and partners to deliver teacher training, high-quality continuous professional development, succession planning, support for other schools, and research projects which can underpin evidence-based practice.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/330482/42063\\_HC-133-NCTL-annual-report-and-accounts-print-ready.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330482/42063_HC-133-NCTL-annual-report-and-accounts-print-ready.pdf)