

Teacher Mentoring Programme (TMP): Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the TMP Professional Development Programmes

This document provides additional information to what is available on the Cognition Learning Group's (CLG) TMP website. We hope that this document answers any initial questions or queries you may have about the TMP. However, if after reading this document your question has not been addressed, please contact the TMP Team via our enquiries inbox - tmpenquiries@cognitioneducation.com

Please note that this is a live document and will be updated to include further questions and queries that we have been asked, or if any aspect of the programme changes.

The FAQs have been divided into three sections:

1. General questions
2. Eligibility
3. Application
4. Grant funding and reporting

If you are looking for FAQs in relation to the Mentoring Network Grants, please see the separate FAQ document here.

General Questions

Q1: Is the Teacher Mentoring Programme the same programme previously delivered by The Education and Training Foundation?

A: The Teacher Mentoring Programme has replaced the government-funded Mentor Training Programme that was previously delivered by The Education and Training Foundation. The Department for Education awarded a contract to CLG for 2 years until March 2025 to continue delivering a piece of work that enables and strengthens mentoring in the FE sector.

Whilst the programme is similar in some respects, there are some differences that might be worth noting:

- Providers no longer need to apply for grant funding to take part.
- For those who do require grant funding, the maximum amount available is £5,000 per mentor (previously £4,000 per mentor) for up to 5 mentors (total of £25,000 per provider).
- There is no specific grant funding for EdTech mentors.
- The programme is going to be delivered via different cohorts. For financial year 24/25, Cohort 3 starts on 06 May 2024, with Cohort 4 starting 04

November 2024. (There is a potential fifth Cohort planned, which is dependent on applicant numbers).

- Each cohort lasts for 12 weeks, with 10 weeks comprising of 27.5 hours of blended learning via live online learning with trainers and an online course for independent study (approximately three hours a week). Throughout the 12 weeks, mentors are required to undertake a minimum of 18 hours mentoring practice with mentees.
- Mentees being mentored must be early career teachers which are defined as those with three years or less teaching experience.
- There is a separate grant funding opportunity for mentoring networks to be formed with further information on this being made available in due course.

Q2. How many places are available for Cohorts starting in 24/25

A: Cohort 3 which starts on the 06 May 2024 and ends 19 July 2024 has 100* spaces available.

Cohort 4 which starts on the 04 November 2024 and ends 07 February 2025 has 200* spaces available.

*please note that CLG reserves the right to allocate more places in each Cohort where possible. Applications are awarded on a first come, first served basis with providers encouraged to apply as early as possible. 15% of places are ringfenced for those who meet certain criteria with further information on this contained in Q8.

Q3. Who can be mentored by mentors on the TMP?

A: Mentees must be FE early career teachers, who are defined as those with three years or less teaching experience.

The definition of FE teacher which is from the [Governments FE Workforce Data Collection Support Manual](#) is 'a member of staff with teaching responsibilities even if it's not their main role. Job role/title can also be known as: Advanced Practitioner, Instructor, Lecturer, Practitioner, Teacher, Trainer and Tutor'.

If mentees have previous teaching experience in a non-FE setting such as a school and they have recently started teaching in FE, they are eligible to be a mentee.

If a mentee has previous FE teaching experience of over three years and has recently joined your organisation, please note that they do not qualify as an early career teacher and cannot be a mentee for the TMP.

Q.4 How many mentoring practice hours am I expected to do?

A: Mentors taking part in both the New and Advanced courses are expected to undertake a minimum of 18 hours mentoring practice. Mentoring practice hours can begin at the start of the programme up until the end. If you require grant funding, this has been designed to enable you to claim remission time to undertake

mentoring practice during your normal teaching timetable. The programme also has built in blockages to help you have dedicated time for mentoring practice hours.

For more information on what counts as mentoring practice, please refer to our Mentoring Activities Guidance Document [which can be found on the TMP website.](#)

Q.5 Do the mentees (early career teachers) need to be qualified teachers?

A: No, mentees can be qualified, partially qualified or unqualified teachers within the FE sector. The only restriction for mentees is that they must have three years or less teaching experience.

Eligibility

Please see FAQs below specifically around eligibility. To read the TMP full eligibility criteria, [please access our eligibility document on the TMP website here.](#)

Q6. Can all types of Further Education providers take part in the TMP?

A: Public and private FE providers wanting to take part in TMP must be in direct receipt of **at least one** of the following ESFA funding contracts to be eligible to apply:

- Apprenticeships (including carry-in, procured non-levy and Apprenticeship Service non-levy and levy)
- 16-19 Programmes (excluding Academy/School Funding)
- 16-18 Traineeships
- Adult Education Budget (excluding devolved AEB)
- 19+ Traineeships
- National Careers Service
- European Social Funding
- Advanced Learner Loans Facility & Bursary
- Skills Bootcamps Funding

You cannot apply if you are a School / School Sixth Form, Academy, Studio School or University Technical College even if you're in receipt of one or more of these funding streams. Sixth Form Colleges that are currently in the process of, or planning conversion to, an academy in 2023 to 2024 academic year are also not eligible to apply for the TMP.

Please note that the TMP eligibility criteria is subject to change. CLG and the DfE reserve the right to amend and update the eligibility criteria at any point. Please make sure you have read the eligibility criteria ahead of making an application.

Q7. I want to be a mentor but I do not work within the FE sector or for an FE provider. Can I still apply for the TMP?

A: No, the TMP has been specifically designed for the FE sector and for mentors who are mentoring FE early career teachers. As outlined above in Q6, you must be or work for an FE provider in receipt of one or more of the designated ESFA funding contracts.

Q8. What is a ringfenced place and who can apply for a ringfenced place?

A: CLG and the DfE are committed to ensuring that we provide opportunities for social mobility and ensure our programmes reflect the diversity of the FE sector. To help us work towards fairer access, we have ringfenced 15% of TMP places to those who satisfy one or more of the following three criteria:

- Those working in one of the 24 Priority Education Investment Areas*
- People with a disability
- Those from black and minority ethnic communities

Organisations who are able to apply for a ringfenced place are encouraged to do so with these applications being reviewed as a priority. When submitting your expression of interest, please indicate if you will be requiring a ringfenced place. When you are invited to submit your formal application, Project / Grant Leads will need to state which of the three criteria their participant(s) meet when prompted.

* The 24 Priority Education Investment Areas are Blackpool, Bradford, Derby, Doncaster, Fenlands and East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich, North Yorkshire Coast, Norwich, Oldham, Stoke-on-Trent, West Somerset, Halton, Hartlepool, Knowsley, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Rochdale, Salford, Sandwell, Tameside, and Walsall.

Application

Q9. Who should complete the application documentation on behalf of FE providers?

A: Applications should be completed by a manager, leader or HR representative who will perform the role of Project / Grant Lead. This nominated Project / Grant Lead will submit an application on behalf of the mentors wanting to take part from their organisation.

The Project / Grant Lead from each participating organisation will be responsible for coordinating the TMP within their organisation and for completing and submitting reporting requirements to CLG.

Q10. I want to nominate a mentor for the Mentoring Skills for New Mentors course. What experience are participants on this course expected to have?

A: Participants on this course are expected to be new to mentoring or have limited mentoring experience. They must have teaching experience and the opportunity to mentor early career teachers.

Q11. I want to nominate a mentor for the Advanced Mentoring for Experienced Mentors course. What experience are participants on this course expected to have?

A: Participants on the Advanced course should:

- Have a good understanding of key mentoring theories and models of mentoring and have applied them in their mentoring practice.
- Be experienced and confident in mentoring early career teachers. CLG recommends that this requires a minimum of one year's mentoring colleagues.
- They may have previously completed the Mentoring Skills for New Mentors course or an equivalent.

Q12. Do I need to seek permission from my organisation to submit an application for the TMP?

A: Yes, you must have permission from someone in authority to apply on behalf of your organisation.

Q13. I previously completed the Mentoring Skills for New Mentors course. Can I apply for the Advanced Mentoring for Experienced Mentoring course?

A: Yes, those who have previously completed the New course are encouraged to continue their mentoring journey by applying for the Advanced course. Please state in your motivation statement that you have completed the New course.

Q14. I completed some* or all of the course previously in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 or 2023-24, can I reapply for the same course again?

A: No, you cannot apply for the same course again. If you have previously completed the New course, please note you can apply for the Advanced course.

*Please note, if you withdrew at an early stage in a previous delivery year your application may be considered on a case by case basis. Please contact the Teacher Mentoring Team to discuss this ahead of submitting.

Q15. What is the application process for the TMP?

A: To apply for a space on the TMP, you must submit an initial expression of interest which will help to determine if your organisation satisfies all the eligibility criteria. To do this, please submit an expression of interest via the [TMP website here](#).

Once you have submitted your expression of interest and been confirmed as eligible, you will be invited to submit a 'formal application' which will focus on motivation for wanting to take part and to complete a budget if you require a grant.

Please note that the formal application form will be available on the TMP website by 31 August 2023. In the meantime you will be provided with the questions via email so you can prepare your application in advance of this date.

Q16. Do I need consent from mentors before I submit an application on behalf of my organisation?

A: Yes. Before submitting an application, please make sure you have the consent of all mentors and to ensure they have availability to attend and complete all elements of the programme.

Before submitting your formal application and sharing personal mentor details with us, you will also need to ensure that all mentors have read and agree to the TMP privacy policy. You will be asked to confirm this when you submit your formal application.

Grant Funding and Reporting

Q17. Can I participate in the TMP without applying for a grant?

A: Yes, participating providers no longer have to apply for grant funding as a condition of programme participation. Organisations can take part without accessing the grant funding, providing they are able to release mentors to engage with all elements of the programme.

Q.18. Can I apply for a grant for certain costs and for some mentors and not for others?

A: Yes, if you require a grant for only certain costs or for only some mentors please complete and submit your budget alongside your formal application to reflect this.

Please refer to our Activities Guidance Document to see what can and cannot be claimed for.

Q19. What activities does the grant funding cover?

A: Organisations will be eligible for a grant of up to £5,000 per mentor (for up to 5 mentors) to cover the cost of remission from teaching and other permitted costs, which include:

- Remission time for mentors to attend programme, complete the New and Advanced online courses and for mentoring practice hours (activities which can be claimed for this outlined below)
- Preparing for a mentoring meeting (e.g., planning questions you want to ask, deciding which model or approach to adopt, finding useful resources you would like to discuss with your mentee)
- Holding an initial 'chemistry' meeting to discover the mentees needs and suitability for engaging in the mentoring meetings
- Holding a one-to-one mentoring meeting with mentees (virtually, by phone or in person)
- Following-up from a mentoring meeting (e.g., sending emails, finding a reference or resource to share, updating mentoring record sheet)
- Leading a group mentoring session with more than one mentee
- Observing mentees teach
- Holding a pre-observation conversation with mentees to find out about their plans and intentions for lessons
- Holding a post-observation conversation with mentees to find out about their initial reflections on the lesson
- Observing another teacher/trainer with mentees and discussing the lesson together afterwards
- Planning a lesson together
- Remission time for mentees who are defined as early career teachers to meet with their mentor

For those on the 'Advanced' course, the following can also be claimed for.

- Undertaking a needs analysis or review with regards to the mentoring arrangements within their organisation
- Drafting documents and plans to set up or improve the mentoring in their organisation
- Undertaking an evaluation of the mentoring arrangements in their organisation
- Running a training session or meeting in order to bring about improvements to the mentoring provision in their organisation

- Preparing to meet mentees (e.g., planning questions mentors want to ask, deciding which model or approach to adopt, finding useful resources mentors would like to discuss with their mentees).

Providers will also be able to claim for organisational and administrative costs associated with engaging with the programme:

- Administrative costs of the Primary and Secondary Project / Grant Lead who will match mentors and mentees, monitor the number of meetings taking place, attend regular check in calls with CLG and complete a three performance reports
- Conducting a mentor training needs analysis and setting up a project plan;
- Setting up and running a cross-organisational working group to bring about a whole organisational approach to mentoring
- Resource development to adopt new internal documentation/resources that are not already accessible. This enables providers to develop resources during programme lifespan, as opposed to outside of funded bracket
- A Mentoring Coordinator to manage the project and monitor or support wider mentoring taking place across their organisation
- Post-programme reviews including wash up meetings, action planning, presenting to colleagues
- Running ongoing CPD for mentors not enrolled on the programme (for example, mentor supervision, action learning sets or communities of practice).

For further information on activities which are claimable and which are not, please make sure you read our Activities Guidance Document.

Q20. What is the maximum number of grants available per organisation?

A: You can apply for a maximum of 5 grants, totalling up to £25,000.

Q21. Can I perform the role of Project / Grant Lead and be a mentor?

A: CLG recommends that the Project / Grant Lead role is undertaken by someone who is not a mentor on the TMP. This is because we believe this role is best undertaken by someone impartial and who is in a managerial, leadership or HR position.

However, if this is unavoidable, please speak to the TMP Team by contacting - tmpenquiries@cognitioneducation.com

Q22. Who should perform the role of Primary and Secondary Project / Grant Leads?

A: CLG recommends that this role is fulfilled by someone in a managerial, leadership or HR position within your organisation. The Primary Lead will be responsible for completing reports and having progress calls with CLG to check that participants are engaging with the programme and that the grant is being utilised as intended.

The Secondary Lead will need to fulfil these responsibilities in the event that the Primary Lead is absent or unavailable to fulfil reporting requirements.

Q23. When should grant claims be submitted and when will we receive payments?

A: Project / Grant Leads from organisations who are utilising a grant will need to submit grant claims alongside their progress reports which are required half way through and at the end of each cohort.

Grant leads will be able to claim for a maximum of 50% of their budgeted grant half way through and the remaining 50% at the end. Grants will only be paid against actual spend and if the grant is not fully utilised, providers will receive what was spent as opposed to the figure budgeted. If you spend more than budgeted, please note that you cannot claim for any funding above the agreed total at the start of the TMP.

Prompt payment will be made following receipt of a complete and undisputed grant claim.

Q24. What happens to grant payments if a mentor has to withdraw?

A: CLG in the first instance will work with providers and mentors to see whether action can be taken to avoid a mentor needing to withdraw from the programme. Where a withdrawal is unavoidable and the mentor required a grant, the provider will only be able to claim for the spend to date up to the withdrawal date. Any remaining budget allocated to that mentor will then no longer be claimable.

Please be aware that CLG monitors engagement on all elements of the TMP to ensure that mentors complete all milestones associated with grant payments. Should reporting documentation differ with data we have on engagement, we will undertake a review to ensure that the grant award reflects the true activity completed.

Q25. How many reports and progress calls will Project / Grant Leads be required to submit and attend?

A: Project / Grant Leads will be required to submit two reports detailing activity completed half way through the TMP and at the end. With both report submissions, the Project / Grant Lead will be required to attend a progress call. The agenda of the progress call will be based on information provided in the report. It is therefore important that reports are submitted on time so CLG can review ahead of provider progress calls.

Q26. My organisation does not require a grant for mentors to take part in the TMP, do we still need to submit reports and attend progress calls?

A: Yes. All providers whether they are utilising a grant or not will still need to submit reports and attend progress calls with CLG.

If you are not utilising a grant, your report will not require you to complete the financial information tab or require you to submit grant claim documentation.

Q27. Can we increase our grant budget during the TMP?

A: No. As part of the application process, providers who need to utilise a grant will be required to submit accurate budget information with their formal application. CLG will review submitted budgets and work with providers to finalise them. Once budgets have been finalised and agreed providers, CLG and the DfE will sign a grant offer letter which details the agreed amount, alongside T&C's. Therefore, grants will not be increased once cohorts start.

Q28. What evidence will we need to provide if we are selected for a 10% sampling check?

A: You will need to provide independent evidence to support the detail you have submitted in your progress report. Evidence that could be requested includes:

- Timesheets detailing mentoring hours and other claimable activity completed
- Payslips for mentors, mentees, grant/project leads and others involved in claimable activities to confirm hourly rates
- Invoices and bank statements to support payments made
- Redacted employment contracts, CV's and job descriptions to confirm the mentor is fulfilling an eligible role for the TMP

These are examples of what you could provide, however organisations may record activity in a different way and any documentation/evidence you have which supports your report and use of grant funding is welcomed.

Q29. Who can sign our Annex G (ii): Statement of Grant Usage?

A: Statement of Grant Usage: All providers will be required to complete a Statement of Grant Usage, which must be signed by the Chief Financial Officer or Finance Director of their organisation and returned to Cognition Learning Group within 28 days of the end of the financial year. The Statement of Grant Usages purpose is for providers to certify that grant funds were used for the purposes set out in the Grant Funding Agreement and Grant Offer Letter.