INTRODUCTION

This NUT guidance provides practical advice to applicants on the threshold standards and threshold application process in England for 2005-06.

When you complete your threshold application form you will need to set out in your own terms the work and achievements that you wish to be considered against the standards. These guidelines help you present your case to the best effect.

The DfES’ website contains detailed guidance in the “DfES Threshold Application Support Pack for Schools” (referred to in this NUT document as “the DfES guidance”), together with a model Threshold Assessment Application Form for applicants, at www.teachernet.gov.uk/performancethreshold. You can also obtain further information on performance threshold assessment by contacting your head teacher or LEA. It is essential that applicants read all the documents referred to above before completing this application.

The DfES guidance should be read carefully and completely. The DfES has provided its own guidance with regard to each of the standards in the application form. The NUT’s guidance complements that of the DfES on the standards.

SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY & PROCEDURE FOR THRESHOLD APPLICATIONS IN ROUND 6 (2005-06)

ELIGIBILITY

All qualified teachers employed in LEA maintained schools paid on point M6 of the Main Pay Scale, including part-time and supply teachers, are entitled to apply for threshold assessment. Teachers can apply for threshold assessment once only in any school year.

There are two “cohorts” for Round 6 threshold applications, Cohort 9 and Cohort 10. The date on which successful applicants move onto the Upper Pay Scale depends on which Cohort they are in. Teachers reaching Point M6 of the Main Pay Scale for the first time on or after 1 September 2005 will be in Cohort 10 and, if successful, will move to Point 1 of the Upper Pay Scale with effect from 1 September 2006.

Cohort 10

Applicants in Round 6 Cohort 10 who are successful will move to UPS1 with effect from 1 September 2006. Cohort 10 consists of:

* teachers reaching Point M6 of the Main Scale for the first time on or after 1 September 2005; and
• teachers eligible in Round 5 Cohort 8 who applied but were not successful.

**Cohort 9**

Applicants in Round 6 Cohort 9 who are successful will move to UPS1 backdated to 1 September 2005. Cohort 9 consists of:

• teachers eligible in Round 5 Cohort 7 who chose not to apply in that round;
• teachers eligible in Round 5 Cohort 7 who applied but did not cross the threshold in that round; and
• teachers eligible in Round 5 Cohort 8 who chose not to apply in that round.

Full details of the rules governing the cohorts are set out in Annex 1 to this NUT guidance and in the DfES guidance.

Teachers employed by LEAs in other non-standard settings, such as LEA advisory and support teams, peripatetic teams, EMAG teams and PRUs, are also entitled to apply for threshold assessment. Where they are not able to identify head teachers who will evaluate their application forms, they should ask their line managers or service managers.

Other groups of qualified teachers also entitled to apply for threshold assessment include teachers in CTCs, Academies and residential special schools. Some groups of teachers are entitled to be paid on the Upper Pay Scale *without* threshold assessment. See Annex 2 to this NUT guidance for details of the rules applying to these groups and others such as teachers working in independent schools or for supply agencies.

For 2005-06, the threshold standards are unaltered.

**PROCESS FOR APPLICATIONS**

There is now no national deadline for submitting threshold applications other than that teachers who want to apply in Round 6 must do so in the school year 2005-06 and no later than 31 August 2006.

From 2004-05 onwards there has no longer been any external assessment or verification of head teachers’ decisions on threshold applications. Appeals against decisions to deny threshold applications are heard according to the school’s procedure for hearing teachers’ pay grievances.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING**

The threshold application form asks applicants to provide information on their gender, ethnic origin and any disability. The NUT supports the DfES’ intention to monitor the profile of those applying for threshold assessment and the outcomes using the information provided by applicants. The purpose of this information is to ensure that the threshold assessment process operates in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. Applicants are strongly advised to complete the section on ‘Personal Details’ in full. In previous years, the DfES has said that it had insufficient data from which to carry out adequate equal opportunities monitoring.
SECTION 3:
MAKING YOUR APPLICATION

TIMETABLE FOR APPLICATIONS

As noted earlier, teachers who want to make a threshold application in Round 6 must do so no later than 31 August 2006. Some headteachers, however, have sought to put in place their own deadlines for threshold applications. The DfES advice on this matter is as follows:

“A school may set a local date for administrative purposes for receipt of applications, but this is not binding on teachers, who are still free to apply at any time in the year.”

(DfES Model Pay Policy for Schools)

ABOUT THE FORM

The national application form for the threshold assessment is no longer mandatory but the DfES advises that this form should be used in Round 6 to ensure consistency. The model application form is available as part of the DfES guidance.

The threshold application form covers five key areas in which there are eight standards. The five key areas are:

• knowledge and understanding;
• teaching and assessment – planning lessons/ classroom management/ monitoring progress;
• pupil progress;
• wider professional effectiveness/personal development/school development;
• professional characteristics.

You are required to meet each standard, as judged by your head teacher or line manager. Your head teacher or line manager is required to note areas for further professional development against each of the standards whether or not, as an applicant, you meet the standards overall. These areas for development will form the basis for feedback that your head teacher or line manager must give you at the end of the process.

You should provide evidence for all the standards to show that you have worked at the standard for the last 2-3 years. In exceptional circumstances, where you have been absent from teaching in the two years prior to application, you can refer to evidence shown in the preceding three years of work.

Your head teacher’s or line manager’s assessment must be based primarily on the evidence included in your application form.

You should not assume that because your head teacher or line manager knows you, it is not necessary to describe your successes and approaches to teaching. The application should be treated as if it were an application for a post.

The evidence of teaching must be taken from all educational settings where the applicant has taught children up to 19 years of age in the two years immediately preceding applying.

You are entitled to oral feedback on the outcome of your application. You should ask your head teacher or line manager when that feedback will be available to you.
SECTION 4:
The Threshold Standards

GENERAL

The following advice refers to completing the pages on standards set out in the DfES model application form. You should ask the head teacher or relevant line manager to see the DfES guidance. It contains a range of information including a compendium of potential sources of school and pupil level data. The NUT’s advice on sources of evidence for each standard complements the DfES guidance. You should refer to both sections when completing the form.

You should provide evidence for all the standards to show that you have worked at the standard for the last 2-3 years.

There can be no standardised response within threshold applications. You will have different contexts and experiences to describe. The NUT’s advice is not intended to provide a template for responses; rather, it is intended as a checklist against which you can review your own experiences and expertise and, in doing so, identify the skills, knowledge and understanding which you have developed.

This advice does not contain exemplar application forms. An exemplar can never reflect the unique circumstances in which teachers work. Where applicants come across exemplars, they should be very careful not to copy them. The consequence of following an exemplar application form could be detrimental in that you might be tempted to limit the amount of information you provide because it does not conform with the exemplar. The NUT also believes that it would not be helpful to have the quality of applications measured by head teachers or line managers against model exemplars.

STANDARD 1: PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

“Have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the teaching of their subjects and take account of wider curriculum developments which are relevant to their work”.

A sound and up-to-date knowledge of teaching techniques and of subject or of specialisms is required. If you have a particular interest in a discipline connected to your teaching which you have pursued outside school, it is important to refer to it in your application form. As noted above, you should provide evidence to show that you have worked at the standard for the last 2-3 years. If you are new to the school, indicate verifiable evidence covering the last 2-3 years (up to and including the date of application) from previous school(s).

You should refer to curriculum developments which are relevant to you, or which are about to be introduced or have been introduced, for example:

- the implications of the National Curriculum for your subject and for the Key Stage(s) relevant to you;
- the application of the primary and secondary national strategies;
- knowledge and understanding of the inclusion requirements within the revised National Curriculum;
- the implications of the new examination qualifications for post-16 students;
• a knowledge of new examination specifications and how they have been applied to teaching/learning;
• the implications of the Foundation Stage Curriculum;
• knowledge and understanding gained by being an examiner/assessor in any of the Key Stage(s) relevant to you;
• curriculum developments outside your immediate area of interest but which may impact on your own work, for example, teachers of pupils at Key Stage 2 having awareness of the Early Learning Goals;
• the framework and guidance for personal, health, and social education and the new curriculum for citizenship;
• where relevant, meeting the educational needs of minority ethnic pupils, including those with English as an additional language, Traveller pupils and refugee pupils;
• knowledge of good practice in teaching pupils with English as an additional language and refugee and Traveller pupils;
• knowledge of and contribution made to the quality of education in schools/LEAs for pupils with special educational needs;
• schemes of work linked to the School Development Plan, e.g. showing use of ICT;
• CPD records (including evidence of curriculum development, experience of external marking/moderation or any other relevant information about professional development activities;
• performance management evidence;
• external evidence, e.g. OFSTED, LEA;
• knowledge and understanding of how the SEN Code of Practice has developed the skills needed to teach pupils with special educational needs. The Code can be found at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sen/documents/SENCodeofPractice.pdf; and
• discussions with team leaders, senior staff.

The QCA website at www.qca.org.uk is worth exploring for the latest developments in the curriculum.

Training for information and communications technology is of variable quantity and quality. There are still too many teachers who have been given inadequate training for ICT and its application to teaching. That should not prevent teachers from applying for threshold assessment. It is important to note that the DfES recognises that the use of information and communications technology should be considered in the context of the job, the level of training teachers have received, and the experience they have had of equipment and software.

Applicants need to show that they are aware of wider curriculum developments. It will be important to outline the level of training which is being offered and the training which you intend to take in the future.

Under this standard, to refer to conferences and courses and other CPD activities in which you have participated. In addition, it is worth referring to reading materials, such as books, websites, National Curriculum documents, journals, reports – such as inspection reports and research evidence when describing wider curriculum developments.

Ask yourself whether you can provide evidence, including CPD certificates, on any specific projects, visits, surveys, and research which can demonstrate the breadth and depth of your subject and curriculum knowledge.

Give reasons why you have adopted different approaches for pupils with different needs and abilities.
You may wish to identify the work of individual pupils or groups of pupils which you can use as specific examples to demonstrate your curriculum/subject knowledge and understanding.

It is essential that you illustrate what you perceive to be the impact or effect of the activities you have undertaken in order to remain up-to-date on classroom practice.

STANDARDS 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

This section contains three separate standards. Make sure that you can refer to and signpost in the application form substantive and qualitative evidence for these three standards. One of the highest percentage of “not yet met” standards are those under this group of standards. Evidence from previous rounds of applications show that some of the most effective application forms from teachers took the following approach.

Standard 2.1: Teaching and Assessment: Planning Lessons

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

“Consistently and effectively plan lessons and sequences of lessons to meet pupils’ individual learning needs.”

Standard 2.1 can include a short statement outlining the context of teaching and assessment in your school. Within it, you can:

- explain how school policies on assessment and planning impact on your work;
- describe the schemes of work which you use;
- describe how you plan lessons and how learning outcomes are communicated for each lesson;
- describe the relationship of the work undertaken by pupils in your classes to the homework or extension work which you set;
- describe also how you communicate your views about how pupils should improve their work;
- it is essential that you show how school policies, whether on homework or an assessment, are reflected practically in your own practice; and
- describe how the school’s equal opportunities policy impacts on your lesson planning.

You may have adopted particular approaches such as thinking skills’ programmes. You may be using the national primary or secondary strategies. You should describe your approaches to those programmes and strategies. Where relevant you should relate them to strategies and schemes of work for other subjects such as humanities and the arts. If you teach children and young people with English as an additional language, you should certainly describe under this standard the strategies which you have adopted.

The DfES guidance says that evidence for Standard 2.1 should demonstrate that teachers “consistently and effectively plan lessons and sequences of lessons to meet pupils’ individual learning needs”. Such evidence might include “planning records showing appropriate support/extension use of IEPs”. This evidence can also be drawn on for Standard 2.3, “Teaching and Assessment – Monitoring Progress” and Standard 5, “Professional Characteristics”.

The requirement for planning to be used as evidence to support teachers’ threshold applications should not involve additional work. There is no prescribed format or length for
teachers’ plans. The joint guidance on planning from OFSTED, the DfES and QCA suggests that plans should be selective and focus mainly on the key aspects of learning which will be assessed.

It is worth showing evidence of liaison with other teachers on lesson planning. Where relevant, you should describe also how you have planned your use of classroom assistants and specialist support assistants, and your relationship with any support teachers who work also in your classroom.

**Standard 2.2: Teaching and Assessment: Classroom Management**

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

> **“Consistently and effectively use a range of appropriate strategies for teaching and classroom management.”**

Under 2.2, you need to describe how you differentiate your lesson content and planning to meet the different needs of pupils. Explain the teaching strategies you use and when, how and why you select them and how you pace your lessons. Explain further the strategies you adopt to manage pupil behaviour, how good behaviour can be reinforced positively and how you maintain a positive relationship with your pupils.

If you are responsible for teaching pupils with specific needs, it is worth outlining the strategies you have adopted for those pupils. You should also indicate a knowledge of the policies of your school for special educational needs and discipline, and for pupils with English as an additional language. Describe your contributions to those policies.

You should describe, for example, what approaches you take to classroom organisation including whole class teaching and discussion, group work, and whether you give individual pupils or groups of pupils’ specific assignments. A knowledge of behavioural management strategies and their relative merits would be useful. If your school is involved in the Government funded behavioural improvement programme you could refer to if relevant, to your involvement in the programme.

**Standard 2.3 Teaching and Assessment: Monitoring Progress**

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

> **“Consistently and effectively use information about prior attainment to set well-grounded expectations for pupils and monitor progress to give clear and constructive feedback.”**

Under this section, you need to describe how you assess and record pupils’ work. You can certainly use this standard to provide specific examples, or signposts to specific examples of the work, of individual pupils.

You need to describe:

- how you record and measure pupils’ prior attainment;
- how you approach the marking of pupils’ work;
- the approach you take to identify any expectations of pupil progress through targets for improvement;
- how you approach monitoring progress of particular groups of pupils, if appropriate – for example. Traveller pupils, refugee and other minority ethnic pupils; and
• how you provide constructive feedback to pupils.

Under this section, head teachers will be looking for evidence of teacher assessment judgements and for the physical evidence that pupils’ work has been, and is being, monitored and marked. This is a standard which seeks to ensure that you are a confident teacher and understand the processes of assessment, monitoring and evaluation.

STANDARD 3: PUPIL PROGRESS

This standard requires evidence that as a result of the teacher’s teaching:

“their pupils achieve well relative to the pupils’ prior attainments, making progress as good, or better, than similar pupils nationally. This should be shown in marks and grades in any relevant national tests or examinations, or school-based assessment for pupils where national tests and examinations are not taken.”

The DfES guidance provides extensive information on the application of this standard.

Head teachers are required to consider the context in which teachers work. The DfES’s view is that teachers doing a good job in challenging circumstances should be given full credit. When completing the application, therefore, describe briefly the background of the pupils you teach. Classes may contain pupils who are deemed to be at risk by Social Services; there may be a high turnover of pupils; your school may have received a number of refugees; or there may be a consensus amongst staff that a child’s or children’s’ behaviour needs careful management. Whatever the nature of the challenging circumstances, those circumstances should be summarised by applicants alongside the positive strategies adopted to meet the specific needs of pupils.

Under this standard, it is essential that you draw on a wide range of data which is available to the school. There is evidence from previous rounds that some applicants were not aware of the data available to their schools. As an applicant, it is essential that you ask for such data and use the data relevant to the pupils in your class or classes. The appendix on sources of evidence provides examples of the data available to your school under this standard.

Teachers of pupils with special educational needs whether they are in mainstream schools, special schools or non-maintained special schools can use “child-specific examples of progress against individual education plans”.

Where external examinations, test result data and other data are not available, you should use your assessment records to describe your effect on pupils’ achievements.

STANDARDS 4.1 AND 4.2: WIDER PROFESSIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Standard 4.1: Wider Professional Effectiveness: Personal Development

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

“Take responsibility for their professional development and use the outcomes to improve their teaching and pupils’ learning.”

While provision for professional development varies and many teachers may not have been offered adequate professional development, it is important to recognise that the definition of professional development is not that of simply attending courses.
While you should describe the in-service training courses and higher education courses which you may have attended, you should also see professional development as represented by visits to other schools, contact with other teachers to look at different programmes and courses and any studies or research which you may have conducted on the needs of pupils in your school.

Any school-based activity will be relevant as professional development; particularly training for Government national strategies including literacy and numeracy and information and communications technology.

You should refer to the professional development performance management objective, which you have agreed with your reviewer, within standard 4.1. Describe how you intend to achieve that objective and place the objective in the context of the past and current professional development which you have been involved in.

You may have received funding from the DfES in the last two or three years for bursaries or Best Practice Research Scholarships. You may be taking part in courses which lead to qualifications such as Masters degrees and diplomas or you may have already gained such qualifications. These are all relevant to this standard and should be described.

Many of these developments will impact on your future intentions for professional development. Your intentions for future professional development are relevant and should be used as an indication of the fact that you take responsibility for your own professional development.

Of particular interest in the form would be any future studies or research on the needs of pupils in your school which you may be planning. The use of self-evaluation instruments of pupils’ views are a good example of pupil-focused studies.

Involvement in the NUT’s own professional development programme and/or in its Union Learning Fund basic ICT skills courses represent a very good source of evidence under this standard. Information on these is available on the NUT’s website, www.teachers.org.uk.

**Standard 4.2: Wider Professional Effectiveness: School Development**

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

“Make an active contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school.”

Under this standard, you should refer to any specific paper which you have drafted for your School’s Development Improvement plan. The same applies to your contribution to school policies. Descriptions of oral contributions, as well as written contributions to school policies and plans, would be useful.

You may have also given talks to your governing body about your work, or have had responsibility for helping individual governors understand the work of your school. Such activity would be worth describing in the form. Your role in any organised school activity with parents would be important to record.

You may be involved yourself in providing training or in curriculum development, both inside your schools and outside. It is important to record such work under this standard.
When referring to the professional development you have received, emphasise the impact upon your own classroom practice of professional development. You must illustrate the link between the courses you have attended and professional development which you have undertaken and its effect on your teaching. It is not sufficient to list all the courses you have attended. Include illustrations of how courses have impacted on your classroom practice.

**STANDARD 5: PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

This standard requires evidence that teachers:

“…are effective professionals who challenge and support all pupils to do their best.”

The characteristics of effective teaching are drawn from the research conducted by Hay McBer Management Consultants. Hay McBer was commissioned by the DfES to identify the characteristics of effective teaching as part of the Government’s exercise to define national standards for threshold assessment. It is clear from the evidence the NUT has received from the threshold rounds that Hay McBer’s identification of professional characteristics are accurate.

Under this standard, it will be important for applicants to reflect on their successes with pupils. Set out below are the headings from the research, which may be useful to you as a checklist when completing this section of your application form.

| Professionalism:          | Respect for others |
|                         | Challenge and support |
|                         | Confidence |
|                         | Creating trust |
| Leading:                | Managing pupils |
|                         | Passion for learning |
|                         | Flexibility |
|                         | Holding people accountable |
| Thinking:               | Analytical thinking |
|                         | Conceptual thinking |
| Relating to Others:     | Understanding others |
|                         | Impact and influence |
|                         | Teamworking |
| Planning and Setting Expectations: | Drive for improvement |
|                         | Initiative |
|                         | Information-seeking |

This section is intended by the DfES to enable candidates to describe successful examples of their work, which are not easily placed under the other standards setting. The standard provides an opportunity to applicants to bring together and summarise relevant points under the previous standards in a concise and coherent summary.

Set out below is an extract from a ‘plain English’ summary of Hay McBer’s research on the characteristics of effective teaching. The summary may be useful to you as a further reference.
**Characteristics of an Effective Teacher**

Good teachers know their subject. They know the appropriate teaching methods for their subjects and the ways pupils learn. This is the baseline that all teachers must achieve.

Effective teachers make the most of their professional knowledge in two linked ways. One is the extent to which they deploy good teaching practice in the course of all their lessons – the sort of things that can be observed when they are at work in the classroom. The other is the range and sophistication of their professional characteristics – ongoing patterns of behaviour which make them effective.

Pupil progress results from the successful development of knowledge of subject and method of using a combination of good teaching practice and professional characteristics. A large part of pupil progress is also predictable from the classroom climate the teacher creates through the way they teach and the behaviour they display. Professional characteristics and classroom climate can be measures, and good teaching practice can be observed.

**SECTION 5: SOURCES OF EVIDENCE**

Applicants are expected to signpost sources of evidence under each of the standards. Set out below is an additional and non-inclusive checklist of possible sources of evidence.

**Standard 1: Knowledge and Understanding**

Evidence can include:

- the approach you have taken to co-ordinating a National Curriculum subject or the Foundation Stage Curriculum or EAL across the school;
- websites;
- the knowledge of your school’s OFSTED report and subsequent action plan;
- the results of classroom observations and performance management;
- your use of and contribution to the development of schemes of work;
- references to your understanding of educational publications, including articles in ‘The Times Educational Supplement’; other educational publications, including the NUT’s own ‘Education Review’ and research publications;
- use of computers for research purposes;
- helping with school policies/taking account of curriculum developments outside your immediate area of interest which is relevant to your work, e.g. awareness of Early Learning Goals of teachers at Key Stage 2;
- learning forums;
- any participation in the press or media;
- experience, including previous experience in other careers;
- participation in any working parties, such as those on the curriculum, assessment or pastoral issues, whether at national, local or school level;
- knowledge of good practice in teaching pupils with English as an additional language and refugee and Traveller pupils;
- schemes of work linked to the School Development/Improvement Plan, e.g. showing use of ICT.

**Standard 2.1: Teaching and Assessment: Planning Lessons**
Evidence can include:

- evidence from weekly, termly or yearly lesson plans and schemes of work;
- pupils’ work and assessment records;
- use of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs;
- signposts to approaches to strategies, such as literacy, numeracy and ICT teaching strategies;
- your contribution to special educational needs statements and annual reviews;
- evidence from plans and schemes of work developed by and with EMAG teachers to meet the specific needs of EAL pupils;
- evidence from internal school evaluations;
- evidence from curriculum audits;
- performance management data;
- CPD records or any other relevant information about professional development activities;
- monitoring data (including lesson observations).

**Standard 2.2: Teaching and Assessment: Monitoring Progress**

Evidence can include:

- reasons for specific types of classroom organisation ranging from the organisation of small groups to whole class interaction;
- CPD records or any other relevant information about professional development activities;
- being able to articulate why different approaches to questioning, discussion and information-giving are used;
- where relevant, the management and direction of support staff, such as teaching assistants and bilingual classroom assistants;
- where relevant, the partnership with specialist support teachers, such as EMAG teachers;
- the practical application of different types of teaching methods;
- the organisation of, and your contribution to, the behaviour policy of your school;
- the application and adaptation of external advice, such as advice on interventions with individual pupils;
- specific examples of the application of school policies on behaviour, discipline and classroom management;
- examples of how policies on homework and parent/teacher links are operated;
- the use of external inspection evidence for practical application within the school;
- performance management evidence.

**Standard 2.3: Teaching and Assessment: Monitoring Progress**

Evidence can include:

- the use of lesson observations;
- the use of information from consultation with parents;
- the use of external examination and test results;
- knowledge of the targets set by the school for pupils, including targets for raising minority ethnic achievement and the type of objectives set for individual pupils;
- monitoring and using the information from individual education plans, pupil behaviour plans and statements of special educational needs;
- use of data broken down by ethnicity;
• describing collaboration with colleagues, such as moderation exercises;
• use of school level value-added measures for tracking pupil achievement;
• use of information from pupils mentoring other pupils;
• use of the results of classroom tests and quizzes;
• use of information from outside agencies;
• use of pupil records of achievement;
• use of assessment results of pupils entering schools;
• performance management evidence arising from the relevant performance management objective.

Standard 3: Pupil Progress

You should identify sources of data and show that you understand how the data demonstrates the progress of the pupils you teach. Such sources include:

• LEA-generated performance information;
• baseline assessment;
• in-school pupil tracking data, data received from benchmarking on admission;
• knowledge of the ethnic profile and achievement trends by different ethnic groups and data from ethnic monitoring of pupil progress;
• schools using National Foundation for Educational Research tests;
• data from cognitive assessment tests (CATs);
• any data from thinking skills projects;
• data from pupil attitude surveys;
• data from school applied schemes, such as PIPS, ALLIS, YELLIS;
• information about each pupil’s progress compared with baseline data and their subsequent outcome results;
• other data arising from comparisons of pupils’ tests and assessment results at the end of one key stage compared with the results they receive at the next key stage (matching baseline data with the outcomes of the next key stage);
• information about national correlations between baseline and outcome data and explanations of differences between national baseline data and outcome data, including data for individual pupils and school groups;
• performance management evidence (including feedback from lesson observations).

There are many schools which have access to all the data described above. Head teachers and senior managers, such as curriculum managers, will be able to access such data from local authorities, from OFSTED and from national data held by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, for example.

Members are advised to ask their head teachers for all the data that is available for their classes and subjects and, if necessary, to seek advice about how to interpret and present the data. As suggested in the main body of the advice, the most economic way of interpreting data is for the head teacher or a member of the leadership group to convene a meeting of all applicants to examine the data sources available and to answer questions.

Standard 4.1: Wider Professional Effectiveness: Personal Development

You should list all your own interests which you think have helped your teaching, as well as the specific professional development which you have experienced. You can draw from:

• evidence of professional development acting on the relevant performance management objective;
• membership of professional bodies and organisations;
• hobbies;
• membership of governing bodies, including teacher governors, elected or co-opted governing body membership;
• voluntary work in the community;
• universities, adult education institutes and other courses;
• attendance at school-based and external courses;
• involvement in curriculum co-ordination and departmental discussions;
• development of schemes of work and writing papers and articles;
• involvement in the work of external testing examination boards;
• mentoring trainee teachers, new teachers and teaching staff and other adults who work in school/support staff;
• involvement in the training and professional development of colleagues;
• introducing and developing initiatives within the school and with other schools;
• CPD records or any other relevant information about professional development activities;
• personal research/use of professional bursaries;
• evidence from work shadowing;
• organising events outside school, including school trips.

Availability of some of these sources will depend on the circumstances of the school.

**Standard 4.2: Wider Professional Effectiveness: School Development**

You can describe your role within the school, advisory service or support service, including:

• school development/improvement plan, action plans, plying record;
• your role as post holder;
• any levels of responsibility allocated to you;
• your role as curriculum co-ordinator;
• your role as mentor;
• your role as head of department;
• pastoral responsibilities or child protection responsibilities;
• responsibilities for liaising with parents and the community;
• parents/teacher association activities;
• contribution to the School’s Race Equality Policy under the recently enacted Race Relations (Amendment) Act;
• CPD records or any other relevant information about professional development activities; and
• performance management evidence.

**Standard 5: Professional Characteristics**

As indicated in the main body of the document, this standard provides an opportunity for applicants to identify two or three areas under ‘Professional Characteristics’ with signposts to verifiable evidence. The standard provides applicants the chance to describe their teaching relationships with their pupils.

In addition to the characteristics of effective teaching, Hay McBer has described the nine dimensions of ‘classroom climate’. The dimensions provide a useful framework that can be referred to in completing this section of the application form.

‘Order’ – discipline, order and civilised behaviour are maintained in the classroom.
‘Participation’ – discussion, questioning, giving out materials – active involvement in learning.
‘Standards’ – how each pupil should behave, what each pupil should do; and focusing on high, rather than minimum, standards.
‘Clarity’ – around the purpose of each lesson, how the lesson relates to the subject and aims of the school.
‘Emotional support’ – so pupils try new things, learn from mistakes.
‘Fairness’ – absence of favouritism, a consistent link for reward and performance.
‘Safety’ – the class is a safe place where pupils are free from emotional or physical intimidation.
‘Environment’ – comfortable, well-organised, clean, attractive physical environment, and
‘Interest’ – the classroom is an exciting place – pupils feel stimulated to learn.

Draw also upon CPD records or any other relevant information about professional development activities, performance management evidence and lesson observations.

SECTION 6:
COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

This NUT advice on completion of the application form should be read in conjunction with the DfES guidance. You should read both sets of guidance carefully and the application form should be studied in detail before you begin to complete it.

Before setting pen to paper or word processing your application, you will need to prepare thoroughly and collect all the evidence and data necessary for reference and to be cited in your application. This preparation is an essential stage in the process of completing your application. The sooner you begin to bring it together, the more confident you will be and the better will be your application.

If necessary, you should seek the appropriate data from your head teacher or ‘line manager’. You may need to seek advice about how to interpret and present the data and this is best done well before you begin to complete the form.

It is likely that you will have available a wide range of documents giving advice and hints on how to succeed in crossing the threshold. Some will give ‘model answers or exemplars’. The NUT’s advice is to be cautious about moulding your circumstances on the models of others and to focus your efforts on telling your story in your own detail and your own words.

If you do not work in a school, references to “head teachers” should be read as referring to “line managers” or “service managers” as appropriate. Teachers working in a support or advisory capacity will draw on evidence which relates to their specific role. Where they do not have direct contact with pupils, they should demonstrate that they meet the standards through the advice and support that they provide. They should be able to show that they have made a contribution to the progress made by pupils taught by those to whom they provide advice.

In completing the application form, the points set out below will be helpful.

• Almost invariably, mistakes are made when application forms are completed for the first time. If possible, word-process the completion of your form. Where the form is not completed electronically, it is a good idea to photocopy your application before submission.
• When writing an application form, it is vital that each idea and theme has its own physical space. An undifferentiated block of text in the form of a long paragraph, is hard to read. One method of keeping each response as concise as possible is to confine each idea to a single paragraph and to highlight that paragraph by a bullet point.

• Be concise. The DfES recommends that you use no more than 250 words for each standard.

• Keep sentences short. A good rule is, “one thought, one sentence”.

• It is essential that repetition and overlap is minimised.

• References to other documents, reports or examples of pupils’ work should be referred to in order to support evidence of pupil achievement.

• Back each statement under each standard with evidence. The forms of those who have applied successfully previously have generally contained concise ‘sign-posts’ to where evidence could be found, rather than detailed descriptions of the evidence itself. Emphasise in your application form evidence that is broadly representative of your practice. When you cite the evidence, you need to explain briefly why the evidence is broadly representative.

• Your application form must demonstrate and provide evidence. One way of providing concrete and practical evidence is to describe the achievements of individual pupils or groups of pupils. Sign-posted examples of evidence can include the highlighting of the work of identifiable pupils and must be verifiable as broadly representative of the work of the pupils you teach.

• You should not attach anything to the completed ‘model’ application form. It is essential, however, that your evidence is ready or readily available, should it be called for by your head teacher when verifying your application.

• Demonstrate that you can cope with and teach the range of pupils in your school. Applicants must have access to all evidence cited on the form and any key supporting material such as feedback from classroom observation, pupils’ work, their own records or schemes of work.

• If you are a teacher in different circumstances, you may find it hard to provide direct evidence for standards, for example, those numbered 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 3. This should not inhibit you, however, from identifying the impact that you have had indirectly either on the work of schools, or on local education authority policies relating to the standards. It is essential, however, even though you are working in a non-standard setting, that where you make an assertion, you can verify it by actual evidence.

• Make a copy of your application form before handing it to your head teacher or line manager. Keep a record of the evidence to which you have referred under each standard.

HELP AND SUPPORT FROM WITHIN THE SCHOOL

The DfES makes it clear that the application form and all other documents associated with an application should be kept ‘confidential’. Head teachers may disclose, however, all or part of teachers’ applications to other members of the Leadership Group, other teachers with management responsibility for the applicant, and any other person with responsibility for quality assurance of assessments or monitoring equal opportunities.

How you complete the form and whom you consult is entirely up to you.

You should ask your head teacher, or appropriate member of the senior management team, what guidance and support is available to help you fill in your application form. Such guidance and support may come from your head teacher, from your line manager or curriculum co-ordinator, or from the reviewer responsible for reviewing your performance
management objectives. Ask your head teacher/line manager if training is available to help you to complete your threshold application form correctly. Some schools have produced internal guidelines for application. Ask your head teacher or line manager whether any guidelines are available.

The most difficult aspect of completing an application form is overcoming a natural reticence to focus on your own expertise and achievements. It may not be easy to articulate the processes and knowledge involved in your work, particularly when such work requires considerable knowledge, understanding and skills. You will find it helpful to make a full list of all the aspects of teaching that you enjoy and that you believe you are good at.

The evidence from previous rounds is that where applicants worked collaboratively, they often felt more confident about having covered all the standards in the application form. ‘Brainstorming’ your approach to the form with colleagues, with a friend, or with a partner, can therefore be helpful. It will be a matter of considered judgement from whom to seek advice, and with whom to share ideas when completing an application form. It is sensible for applicants not to make conflicting claims about their achievements or circumstances in the school. In some schools discussion groups have been set up to examine the guidance on completing applications with a member of a leadership group or head teacher leading the discussions on ways of approaching completing application forms.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND THRESHOLD ASSESSMENT

Threshold assessment works alongside performance management arrangements. Information from performance reviews – including information from classroom observation – can provide an important part of the evidence to support threshold applications.

In addition to formal performance management procedures, applicants should draw on the information provided by any school self-evaluation procedures, such as those involved in ‘Investors in People’ programmes, to inform applications.

The NUT has advised members to agree with reviewers, up to three objectives. Those objectives should cover pupil progress, professional development and one other objective. Where applicants consider that the objectives and the information drawn from monitoring of progress towards the objective provide relevant information for the completion of application forms, they should use that information.

The setting of objectives should be about individual professional development and developing teacher practice.

Applicants should agree objectives in the context of consensus and agreement within the performance management framework. Agreement should be agreed between teachers and reviewers on the setting of “appropriate objectives”. Applicants should not agree to objectives that cause unreasonable burdens; are inappropriate to them personally; or are unachievable. It may be useful to ensure that an appropriate job description is referred to as a prerequisite to the review process.

Information from lesson observations, conducted as part of formal performance management procedures or from observations where teachers have observed each other’s teaching voluntarily, can be drawn on when completing the application form.

SECTION 6:
HOW YOUR APPLICATION IS PROCESSED

EVALUATION BY THE HEAD TEACHER

When you have completed your threshold application, copied it for your reference and handed it to your head teacher, your head teacher will begin the process of evaluation. He/she should take account of your classroom performance as well as your work on the overall context of the achievements of your school service.

Your head teacher will read your form, check it for eligibility and then check whether valid evidence has been cited.

Your head teacher may decide to seek confirmation from line managers of the validity of the references to evidence in your application form.

The head teacher will evaluate the pupil progress information in relation to the national information available, as well as that from local schools.

A judgement will then be made on whether each standard has been met.

FEEDBACK TO THRESHOLD APPLICANTS

Your head teacher should notify you promptly of the decision, no later than 20 working days after the governing body is notified.

Your original assessed application forms should be returned, showing the head teacher’s comments on each standard, the reasons for the outcome of the applications and advice on aspects of performance that would benefit from further development.

You are also entitled to oral feedback from the head teacher which should be sensitive, informative and developmental and identify clear priorities for future professional development.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Unsuccessful applicants should receive written feedback on the reasons for the outcome of the application, standard by standard, including those where the standards have been met, no later than 20 working days after the governing body is notified of their decision.

The head teacher should record details of any additional evidence used in determining that the standard(s) are not yet met.

The DfES advises that specific comments on the application form giving specific reasons against each standard should provide sufficient written feedback, but that the head teacher may supplement this. In all cases, the aim should be to give clear advice in oral feedback about how the teacher needs to develop in order to read the standard.

APPEALS BY UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS
Unsuccessful applicants must be allowed a right of appeal against the head teacher’s decision.

The appeal procedure should be set out in the governing body’s pay policy which must set out its procedures for determining any appeals against pay decisions. The procedure should set out the timetable for lodging appeals and hearing appeals. The DfES requires that any appeals against pay decisions should be notified in writing within ten working days.

All governing bodies are statutorily required to have a pay policy and appeal procedure in place. The DfES model pay policy and pay appeals procedure can be accessed at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/pay/

For outstanding threshold reviews from Round 5 or before, consult the DfES guidance for information.

All NUT members considering an appeal against a head teacher’s decision that they have not met the threshold standards should seek advice and assistance from their NUT division secretary or the NUT regional office or, in Wales, NUT Cymru.

National Union of Teachers
September 2005
ANNEX 1
COHORTS FOR ROUND 6


DFES GUIDANCE 2005-06
PARAS 10 TO 12

10. Application periods and the date from which successful teachers move to point 1 of the Upper Pay Scale

10.1 At Annex C a table is provided to assist teachers in determining their eligibility and payment dates, and supplements the information in this section.

10.2 Round 6 cohort 9 teachers (see definition in paragraph 11 below and the table at Annex C)

10.3 Eligible Round 6 cohort 9 teachers must submit their written application to their current headteacher in the 2005/06 school year and definitely no later than 31 August 2006. All successful applicants in Round 6 cohort 9 will move up to the first point of the Upper Pay Scale, backdated to 1 September 2005.

10.4 Round 6 cohort 10 teachers (see definition in paragraph 11 below and the table at Annex C)

10.5 Eligible Round 6 cohort 10 teachers must submit their written application to their current headteacher in the 2005/06 school year and definitely no later than 31 August 2006.

10.6 All successful applicants in Round 6 cohort 10 will move to the first point of the Upper Pay Scale on 1 September 2006.

10.7 There is no quota on successful assessments for either cohort.

11. Determination of Round 6 cohorts (see also table at Annex C)

11.1 Round 6 cohort 9 teachers

11.1.1 This includes eligible teachers who were:

• eligible in Round 5 cohort 7 and either chose not to apply or applied and were assessed as not having met the standards in Round 5; or
• eligible in Round 5 cohort 8 but chose not to apply in Round 5.

11.2 Round 6 cohort 10 teachers

11.2.1 This includes eligible teachers who were:

• first appointed to M6 of the main pay scale for classroom teachers on or after 1 September 2005 but on or before 31 August 2006; or
• eligible in Round 5 cohort 8 and were assessed as not having met the standards in Round 5.

12. Teachers who are unsuccessful in Round 6 or do not apply in Round 6 even though they are eligible

12.1 These teachers may make a new application in a subsequent Round, so long as they still meet the eligibility criteria at the time they apply. Only one application may be made in any Round.

12.2 Teachers who first became eligible to apply in Round 5 (2004/2005), or any earlier Round, and are unsuccessful in Round 6 (2005/2006), but who subsequently apply and are successful in Round 7 (2006/2007), will move to UPS1 from 1 September 2006.

12.3 Teachers who first became eligible to apply in Round 6 (2005/2006) and apply but are unsuccessful, but who subsequently apply and are successful in Round 7 (2006/2007), will move to UPS1 on 1 September 2007.

12.4 Teachers who were eligible to apply in Round 6 (2005/2006) but chose not to apply, for whatever reason, but who subsequently apply and are successful in Round 7 (2006/2007), will move to UPS from 1 September 2006.
ANNEX 2
ELIGIBILITY OF SPECIFIC GROUPS OF TEACHERS

TEACHERS AUTOMATICALLY ENTITLED TO BE PAID ON THE UPPER PAY SCALE

The following are, subject to certain conditions, entitled to be paid as post-threshold teachers without having to apply for threshold assessment:

• teachers previously employed as head teachers, deputy head teachers or assistant head teachers;
• teachers previously employed as Advanced Skills Teachers or successful in the AST assessment procedure;
• teachers previously employed as LEA advisers or inspectors paid on the Soulbury pay spine;
• sixth form college teachers assessed as meeting the sixth form college professional standards;
• and teachers previously assessed as meeting the Northern Ireland threshold standards.


ELIGIBILITY OF OTHER GROUPS TO APPLY

The following is taken from the DfES guidance for 2005-06, which can be accessed at www.teachernet.gov.uk/performancethreshold

Teachers in Academies, CTCs, residential special schools, non-maintained special schools and independent schools and supply teachers employed by agencies should consult the guidance referred to in the final paragraph.

DfES Guidance 2005–06
Para 6: Eligibility to apply for threshold in Round 6 (2005/06)

9.1 Threshold assessment is open to all qualified teachers who:

• are statutorily covered by the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2005
• have Qualified Teacher Status
• are paid on point M6 of the main pay scale for qualified classroom teachers; relevant points are those for qualifications and experience, including experience points awarded on a discretionary basis by governing bodies
• meet all the above conditions on the date when they apply; and
• apply within the 2005/06 school year (no later than 31 August 2006).

9.2 Threshold assessment is also open to qualified teachers who:

• would have met the above criteria had they not been temporarily paid on the leadership pay scale
• have stepped down/will be stepping down to the classroom teachers’ pay scale
• do not/will not qualify to be paid on the post threshold teachers’ pay scale without applying for and meeting the threshold standards.

9.3 In such cases, as teachers have the whole of the school year in which to apply they should submit their application before the circumstances above or when they revert to M6 or are first placed on M6 in the school year 2005/06, and definitely no later than 31 August 2006. If the teacher is still temporarily paid on the leadership spine towards the end of the school year and therefore cannot apply by 31 August 2006 they can still apply in the next school year and, if they meet the standards, be backdated to UPS1 as though they had applied no later than 31 August 2006.

9.4 Headteachers or teachers in unusual circumstances or where eligibility is not clear should refer to the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2005 or contact the Department’s Public Enquiry Unit on 0870 000 2288. A separate information sheet on eligibility for threshold assessment of teachers who are not statutorily covered by the STPCD is available on the DfES website at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/performance_threshold