

Headteacher

Also known as

- Principal

Work Activities

As a Headteacher, you will be making the school the best possible place for pupils and staff to have a positive learning experience.

You will be looking at pupil's performance and writing reports on the performance of the school which could be shown to new students and visitors.

Some Headteachers attend parent's evenings, to discuss any questions from teachers, parents or pupils.

You may also be controlling the school's finances and looking at the best way to use the resources.

Other duties include:

- developing and motivating teaching staff
- maintain, review and develop policies and procedures for promoting pupil's behaviour
- participate in the selection of new staff
- participate in appraisals of the staff
- ensure the maintenance of the school buildings and the school grounds
- working with the governors to create targets for progress of pupils



Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a Headteacher, you'll need:

- the ability to encourage, motivate and inspire teachers
- communication skills
- patience and tact
- good organisational and planning skills
- the ability to work well under pressure
- management skills

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates (per year) below are approximate.

- Starting: £37,000 - £44,500
- With experience: £50,000 - £57,500
- Senior Headteachers earn £62,000 - £69,500

In the private sector, salaries are generally higher, though they are sometimes linked to state sector pay scales.

Hours of work

Headteachers normally work from 8:30 am or 9 am to 3:30 pm or 4 pm, Monday to Friday. However, most Headteachers work extra hours. They often have to work in the evenings and at weekends as well.

Where could I work?

Employers are state and private schools.

There are also opportunities to be a Headteacher in other countries and with charities.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised by local authorities and in the local and national press, including The Guardian and The Times Educational Supplement (TES). There are also job boards, such as eTeach.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

To become a Headteacher, you usually need to have experience as a Teacher.

You can gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) through initial teacher training (ITT). There are several ITT routes.

See our career profile of 'Teacher' for more details.

You will also need to have some qualifications in school management to become a Headteacher.

One of the qualifications you will need is the national professional qualification for senior leadership or the national professional qualification for headship. You will firstly need to learn the six content areas to develop the skills needed to become a Senior Leader. These are given below:

- strategy and improvement
- teaching and curriculum excellence
- leading with impact
- working in partnership
- managing resources and risks
- increasing capability

Once you have finished learning these key six areas, you will then complete a project within your school. You will be assessed on these areas, while aiming to improve the progress of your pupils at your school.

Work Experience

Employers will want to see evidence you have the required skills and motivation to succeed as a Headteacher. This could be having paid or voluntary work experience in the classroom, or other relevant experience with children and/or young people.

Undergraduate

It's possible to achieve QTS through a BEd or BA/BSc degree with QTS. Particularly at secondary level, these are a limited number of subjects and courses. Primary education degrees with QTS sometimes allow you to specialise in a particular subject.

Postgraduate

Most postgraduates take a PGCE in a secondary education subject or primary education. Some primary education PGCEs allow you to specialise in a particular subject. Courses are usually one-year full-time. Some two-year, part-time courses are available (although not in every subject). You need to apply through UCAS Teacher Training.

There is also the employment-based school direct scheme: you'll train while working in a school. The expectation is that you'd go on to work in the school or group of schools where you trained, although there's no guarantee of employment at the end of your training.

Training

Once employed, newly qualified Teachers must complete a three-term induction period, usually within a single school year. You can then start working your way towards becoming a Headteacher.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

This career is an exception to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that you must supply information to an employer about any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, if they ask you to.

Qualifications

To enter a degree, such as a BEd, or BA/BSc with QTS, you'll need to meet other qualification requirements, depending on the course and subject. You'll usually need a further 2/3 GCSEs at grade C/4 and above and at least 2 A levels.

Alternatives to A levels include:

- BTEC level 3 qualifications
- the International Baccalaureate Diploma

However, course requirements vary, so please check prospectuses carefully.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A level.

Adult Opportunities

Skills/experience

To enter teacher training courses, you'll usually need to have at least observed some classes in a mainstream primary or secondary school. For some courses, you'll need paid or voluntary work experience in the classroom, or other relevant experience with children and/or young people.

Courses

If you don't have the qualifications you need to enter a degree course, you might be able to start one after completing a college or university Access course. You don't usually need any qualifications to start an Access course, although you should check this with the course provider.

Some PGCE courses are available part-time, over two years.

If you're not very confident about your (secondary) subject knowledge or don't have the qualifications to begin postgraduate training straight away, you might be able to take a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course first. Your course provider will assess whether you need to increase or refresh your knowledge. SKE courses are available in a limited number of subjects.

Distance learning

Some PGCE courses are available on a flexible learning basis. For example, you might be able to train by distance learning in combination with classroom-based teaching practice and campus study.

Employment-based training

Instead of going to university to do a PGCE, graduates can follow an employment-based route. This is where you train in a school. Employment-based routes include School Direct, school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) and the scheme offered by Teach First. For more information, please see 'Entry Routes and Training'.

Funding

For funding information, take a look at the GOV.UK website, or Student Finance Wales if living in Wales.

Further Information

Contacts

- **UCAS Teacher Training**
Website: www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training
- **Teach First**
Website: www.teachfirst.org.uk
- **GOV.UK**
UK government services and information
Website: www.gov.uk
- **People Exchange Cymru (PEC)**
Public sector recruitment portal for Wales
Email: peopleexchangecymru@gov.wales
Website: www.peopleexchangecymru.org.uk/home

Related Careers

- Nursery Nurse
- NVQ Assessor
- School Lunchtime Supervisor
- History Teacher
- Geography Teacher
- Modern Foreign Languages Teacher
- Teaching Assistant
- Music Teacher
- English Teacher
- Maths Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Playworker
- Special Educational Needs Teacher
- Art and Design Teacher
- Design and Technology Teacher
- Early Years Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Primary Teacher
- Secondary Teacher
- Training Manager
- Higher Education (HE) Lecturer
- School Business Manager
- Teacher of English as a Foreign Language
- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Welsh Teacher
- Nursery Assistant