



TDT Early Career Framework Review

Led by Professor Sam Twiselton
Sponsored by the Gatsby Foundation

The Early Career Framework (ECF) is a pivotal initiative in teacher support and training, responding to the pressing challenges of teacher recruitment and retention. However, concerns have surfaced regarding its restrictiveness and the possible need for more subject-specific focus.

This research project, led by Professor Sam Twiselton OBE in collaboration with TDT, aims to delve into these concerns and explore the possibility of a more flexible, nuanced approach to the ECF. By examining gaps in the current framework, exploring subject specificity, and envisioning ongoing learning opportunities, the project, funded by the Gatsby Foundation, seeks to shape recommendations for a more adaptive and responsive support system for early career teachers.

The review focuses on the following key lines of enquiry:

1. **Subject Specificity:** There are challenges and opportunities surrounding subject specificity for early career teachers. Your expertise will help us explore how we can strike a balance between developing both subject and teaching expertise and the benefits of this. Your thoughts on developing subject-specific materials generated by subject associations will play a vital role in shaping this vision and its practical applications in the classroom.
2. **Application of Knowledge in the Classroom:** Beyond theoretical knowledge, we are interested in understanding how subjects can be practically applied in diverse classroom settings, especially considering factors such as behaviour. Your experiences and observations will provide valuable context to this discussion.
3. **Strengthening the Role of Mentors:** The quality of mentoring is of course vital to the development of professional agency and expertise in early career teachers. Your

insights into how the mentor programme can align with recommendations, better supporting the growth and satisfaction of early career teachers are highly anticipated.

4. Realistic Implementation of ECF: Working within parameters is often necessary, we are envisioning realistic and flexible recommendations for the implementation of the Early Career Framework (ECF) and want to ensure we avoid recommendations which will cause undue disruption to schools. We are interested in exploring ways to make these more flexible and subject-specific where there is evidence this will promote greater job satisfaction and retention. Your innovative ideas in this regard will greatly inform our research.

Participation in this research interview will help shape a comprehensive review report that makes recommendations to the improvement of this framework.

Role of Interviews and Focus Groups:

- Scoping and Testing: Scoping and testing our understanding with a wider group is essential.
- Assessment of ECF: We seek reflection on what is working and not working in the current and proposed versions of the ECF with particular interest in any perceived differences across phase and subject specialism.

Contributing Voices

Practitioner voices are essential when advocating for the future of teacher support and training. Each group's contribution will help create a more responsive and effective support system for early career teachers, which can ultimately lead to improved outcomes for both educators and students alike.

Early Career Teachers:

Your insights as early career teachers are invaluable in shaping the direction of the ECF. Your firsthand experiences provide crucial perspective on the effectiveness of current support systems and areas where improvements are needed. Your contribution will directly impact the quality of support provided to future generations of teachers, ensuring a more nurturing and conducive environment for professional growth.

Mentors:

As mentors, you play a pivotal role in guiding and supporting ECTs through their professional journey. Your understanding of the challenges faced by mentees, as well as your expertise in

providing effective support and guidance, are instrumental in refining the ECF. Your contribution will encourage long term changes to the framework to better align with the needs and expectations of mentors and mentees alike, fostering a more enriching mentoring experience.

School Leaders and Induction Tutors:

School leaders and induction tutors serve as key decision-makers and influencers within educational institutions. Your strategic insights and operational experience are crucial in identifying systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement within the ECF. By actively participating in this focus group, you can help make recommendations for policies and practices that not only support ECTs but also contribute to the overall success and sustainability of your schools.

Delivery Partners and Facilitators:

As delivery partners and facilitators, you are at the forefront of implementing and delivering the ECF. Your deep understanding of the framework's intricacies, as well as your expertise in facilitating professional development sessions, offer valuable perspectives on its strengths and limitations. Your input will inform recommendations for enhancing the delivery and effectiveness of ECF programmes, ensuring that they remain relevant and impactful in addressing the evolving needs of early career teachers.

Please note:

It is important to TDT and the organisations supporting this work that all views and experiences are fairly and accurately represented, and for this to happen we are committed to protecting focus group participant's anonymity. While we will offer thanks in our review publication to all participating organisations, no school, school leader, or participant of a focus group will be named nor identifying details shared.

The insights of this work will be public and available to inform any organisation's decision to bid for the ECF. We would like to make explicit that while TDT is able to run this project with impartiality given we are not a current lead provider of the ECF, we acknowledge that the insights gained will influence our decisions to bid for the contract when tender is published this spring. The project itself is not intended as a promotional activity for TDT's ability to succeed in a bid to be a lead provider. Engagement with stakeholders across the sector, through multiple providers and made anonymous where necessary, will ensure the recommendations of this review reflect and are responsive to the sector.

In the interest of working together with our colleagues in the sector for the continued improvement and success of national programmes for teachers, we will not publish any quotes or evidence which we feel unfairly represents any provider or encourages competition. Lead providers contributing to this review will be sent an advance embargoed copy of the report prior to final edit, giving opportunity to query any representations that may have been unintentionally made.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to learn more, please get in touch at tdtrust.org.