



GUIDANCE FOR A NEW HEADTEACHER IN A KENT SCHOOL WITH AN EXISTING QUALITY MARK AWARD

Many new Headteachers find themselves in schools who already have gained a Quality Mark award but with little knowledge of the award themselves. If you are in this position this guidance is to support you in understanding what is involved in the Quality Mark award and how to come to a decision about whether it is currently appropriate to renew the award. It also includes information about the renewal assessment and the subscription scheme.

How has my school got this award?

You will have been recommended accreditation for a Quality Mark award because your school had demonstrated to an assessor that pupil attainment/achievement in literacy and/or numeracy was improving and that it met the criteria for the following elements of the Quality Mark award

1. A whole school strategy and planning to improve performance in basic skills
2. An analysis of the assessment of pupil performance in basic skills
3. Target setting for the improvement of the school's performance in basic skills
4. Basic skills improvement planning for pupils underattaining and/or underachieving in the school
5. Regular reviews of the progress made by pupils underattaining and/or underachieving in basic skills
6. A commitment to improving the skills of staff in the school to teach and extend basic skills
7. The use of a range of teaching approaches and learning styles to improve basic skills
8. The use of appropriate teaching and learning materials to improve basic skills
9. The involvement of parents and carers in developing their children's basic skills
10. An effective procedure for monitoring planning and assessing improvement in performance in basic skills.

A Quality Mark is initially valid for three years. After this it may be renewed following a further assessment every three years, providing standards in literacy and numeracy are still on an upward trend and that there is evidence of the Quality Mark being used to improve practice in the school.

Alliance for Lifelong Learning



www.qm-alliance.co.uk

enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk

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Your school will have received an A4 certificate and a small wall-mountable plaque to celebrate its initial award. A new certificate is awarded after re-accreditation, subsequent plaques are available but would need to be purchased by e-mailing enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk. Your school is entitled to display the Quality Mark logo on school documentation, letterheads and school websites.

Detailed guidance on the criteria for the Quality Mark elements can be found in the booklets 'Quality Mark for Primary Schools' (PQM Ref A2175) which can be ordered from <https://shop.tribalgroup.co.uk/> for £5.99, including p&p and VAT. It can also be found on www.qm.alliance.co.uk (see below).

What are the benefits for my school of holding this award?

Background information about the Quality Mark and the benefits can be found on the Quality Mark's own website www.qm-alliance.co.uk. Here you will also find downloadable copies of other Quality Mark resources and case studies as well as a PDF version of the core guidance booklet if you do not wish to pay for a hard copy.

What more do I need to find out?

To be fully informed about the status and history of your school's Quality Mark award, and the support available from the Alliance of Lifelong Learning, you may like to ensure you are familiar with the following information:-

When was your school accredited/last reassessed for Quality Mark?

This information will be found on the Quality Mark Certificate(s) displayed in the school, or can be found on the Quality Mark database by searching under the school or Alliance category on www.qmdatabase.org. The 'renewal due' date will always be in multiples of three years after the initial accreditation, although actual renewal assessment visits may have been undertaken up to three months either side of the 'anniversary' date.

Is my school annually subscribed with the Alliance of Lifelong Learning?

In Autumn 2010, Kent Local Authority handed over the provision of Quality Mark in Kent directly to the Alliance. A package of initial assessment (where required to achieve a new QM award) and thereafter provision of an interim support visit every 18 months and a renewal assessment visit every 3 years, plus regular updates about local and national QM news, will be provided to an individual school in return for an annual subscription. Subscription rates are based on a school's NOR and its phase of education.

If you are a new school seeking an initial QM accreditation (i.e. for a 1st award or after any previous award has lapsed) you can pay an agreed amount for an Entry Year's subscription, which will also cover your initial assessment.

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If you are an existing accredited school (i.e. holding a currently listed but not a lapsed award) you have an introductory opportunity to pay only the lower subscription rate dependant on your NOR and phase of education from an agreed date and to then continue to pay this annually unless the subscription is cancelled or your current award lapses.

What are the subscription rates?

- **Early Years settings (any NOR) and Smallest Primary Schools** (NOR under 100): £300 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £175 for an annual renewal subscription
- **Smaller Primary School** (NOR 101 to 250): £400 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £195 for an annual renewal subscription
- **Larger Primary School** (NOR 251 to 500): £400 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £225 for an annual renewal subscription
- **All Secondary and largest Primary Schools** (NOR over 501): £510 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £250 for an annual renewal subscription
- **Primary Phase Special School** (any NOR): £400 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £195 for an annual renewal subscription
- **Secondary or Cross-Phase** (i.e. PQM & SQM) **Special School** (any NOR): £510 for an Entry Year/initial assessment and then £250 for an annual renewal subscription

Who will be used as assessors?

Many LAs already use serving or retired headteachers, or former advisers and consultants, with direct experience of QM award in their own school or LA as assessors. Harnessing their understanding of the QM framework with an enthusiasm derived from the benefits they have found in their own school or local authority provides real credibility for the value of the QM. We would be able to access the services of some such assessors to support the Kent local subscription scheme.

We would also invite expressions of interest from any headteachers or senior staff in QM primary or secondary schools who might like to become involved as an Alliance assessor in Kent.

The schools of assessors receive reasonable reimbursement for their time spent carrying out support or assessment activities. It is the cost of this, and the fees for any other Alliance assessors used, plus the provision by the Alliance of overall management for the QM service, which is funded through the annual subscriptions paid by schools.

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What happens if my school doesn't join the subscription service?

Membership of the new subscription scheme is entirely voluntary and schools may cancel their subscription at any time; however, no refund will be given for any unused entitlement that might have been due to a school during that subscription period.

Any school already holding a QM award which does not join the scheme will maintain its status until expiry of its current 3 year accreditation period. Once a QM award lapses a school is no longer entitled to use the 'Q' logo on any of its documentation or on its website and it must immediately remove the QM plaque from public display.

As an alternative to joining the new subscription scheme it is also possible for any individual school to commission a 'Pay As You Go' assessment service from the Alliance of Lifelong Learning, which would cover a single assessment visit only, at a cost of £650 + VAT, plus assessor travel costs, per new or renewal PQM or SQM assessment.

What do I need to do to join the subscription?

If you wish your school to join the proposed Kent QM Subscription Scheme please request and send us a completed Service Level Agreement (SLA) and return it as soon as possible to: The QM Team, PO Box 2827, Bristol BS2 8RR or enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk

Where can I find Quality Mark guidance for schools?

There is a Quality Mark pack which includes the self audit form and information about assessments on the website www.qm-alliance.co.uk Or you can order a hard copy by e-mailing your delivery and invoice address to enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk.

Are there any schools local to you with the Quality Mark who might provide you with advice or support?

Search on www.qmdatabase.org or contact the Quality Mark administrator, Yasmin Patel on 0117 311 5266, e-mail: enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk

How is the evidence for the 10 elements presented for assessment?

For a renewal and first time assessment In Kent schools are required to complete the self audit form cross referencing to where the evidence can be found. There is no expectation to compile a separate Quality Mark portfolio. The assessment will consist of a half day visit from a Quality Mark assessor when the assessor will look at the evidence signposted from the audit form. There will also be a learning walk round the school and the assessor will hold discussions with appropriate personnel to establish whether the school meets or in the case of a renewal continues to meet the criteria for the 10 elements.

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For the assessment the self audit form just needs to be updated before the assessment takes place. (Many schools do this in a different colour to previous submission)

If you are unable to locate the self audit form which was completed for the previous submission, the school will need to complete a new form. As mentioned previously, this can be a useful tool to establish the school's current position and to determine whether you are in a position to renew.

What was the previous planning and provision made for improving basic skills and what progress and has been made, and impact achieved?

There may be specific basic skills/Quality Mark action planning, or this work may form part of the main school development or improvement planning. There is no need to write a separate Quality Mark plan if it is included in the School Improvement plan and/or part of the Literacy and Numeracy action plans

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What should I do next?

Undertake a self-review against the 10 elements and criteria, sharing the outcomes with your senior leadership team, whole staff, governing body and SIP. This self-evaluation activity can both draw on, and contribute to, your Ofsted SEF. The last page of the Quality Mark pack makes the links with the SEF. This will then inform your decision about whether you are currently in a position to renew your award.

How do I prepare for renewal?

Your school will receive a written reminder from Tribal six months before the 'renewal due' date, with a further reminder after three months. If you have a query about your school's renewal, or require further general information about the Quality Mark, please email enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk.

Once you feel your school is ready for the assessment, you can contact the Quality Mark Associate for schools in Kent, Angela Taylor who will arrange an assessment for you. It is very important that you agree a date for your school's renewal assessment with the assessor well in advance of its 'renewal due' date.

Your staff should be actively involved in gathering and evaluating the evidence to support the renewal application. Such involvement provides an excellent general CPD opportunity and can contribute to a specific one, such as NPQH.

Your governing body should also be made aware of the process for renewal and can be actively involved in the preparation for the assessment.

What happens if my school doesn't renew its award?

Should your award lapse (i.e. not to be recommended for renewal by your Quality Mark assessor, or you choose not to re-apply) the Quality Mark plaque(s) must be taken down and the logo no longer displayed or used on school documents. The school can apply for the award on a future occasion but only after 12 months have elapsed and will need to start from a first award again.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact Yasmin Patel, Quality Mark Administrator

Tel: 0117 311 5266

Fax: 0117 315 0427

E-mail: enquiries@qm-alliance.co.uk

Post : PO Box 2827, Bristol, BS2 8RR

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