



# ASSIGNMENT 1

## Understand the Higher-Level Teaching Assistant Role

**M/616/7083**

Please read through the underpinning knowledge in this unit and then attempt the assignment questions at the end. Do not copy from the text: All answers must be submitted in your own words.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this assignment you will:

- ❖ Understand the functions of and requirements for being a higher level teaching assistant
- ❖ Understand the requirements for continuing professional development specific to the role of the higher level teaching assistant
- ❖ Understand how to work as a team and share effective practice with colleagues

## Assignment One: Understand the Higher Level Teaching Assistant Role

*[Assessment Criteria (AC) 1.1.1]*

The HLTA status started in 2003 as part of a major overhaul of school support reform. The HLTA Professional Standards provide assurance to teachers and schools about the quality of their staff and HLTAs need to demonstrate that they meet all Professional Standards.

Until September 2012, the Teaching Agency were responsible for the training and assessment of HLTAs and they did this through Regional Providers of Assessment (RPAs). Since September 2012, RPAs have collaborated to become the HLTA National Assessment Partnership; they are responsible for quality assuring the assessment in each region.

Statutory requirements associated with the deployment of HLTAs are outlined in The Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012.

There are many different support roles within a school, college, training provider and other education settings. These can include Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Learning Mentor and Support Workers. For this qualification, we shall use the term or 'HLTA' to include all the different job roles and titles. There are also many education settings, such as schools, college, and training providers. For the purpose of this qualification we shall use the term 'setting' to cover these.

## **Role and Responsibilities of a HTLA**

*[AC 1.1.2; 1.1.3]*

The role of a HLTA is to work closely with a class teacher to support learners in their learning. A HLTA is responsible for a range of activities, these include:

- ❖ Promoting positive behaviour with learners
- ❖ Developing effective relationships with both colleagues and learners
- ❖ Supporting teaching and learning
- ❖ Working with individual learners
- ❖ Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion
- ❖ Planning and delivering learning activities, under the direction of a teacher
- ❖ Helping to assess pupils
- ❖ Helping with exam access (such as scribing or reading)
- ❖ Covering planned absences: standing in for the teacher
- ❖ Teaching classes on their own
- ❖ Teaching in small groups or 1:1
- ❖ Helping with transition programmes
- ❖ Specialising in literacy, numeracy, or SEN
- ❖ Line managing and supporting teaching assistants

## **The HLTA Professional Standards**

*[AC 1.1.1 1.1.2; 1.1.3]*

The HLTA Professional Standards are the standards to which you must work and demonstrate capability in. The standards are split up into 5 sections:

- ❖ Professional attributes. Standards 1 – 7
- ❖ Professional knowledge and understanding. Standards 8 – 16
- ❖ Planning and expectations. Standards 17 – 21
- ❖ Monitoring and assessment. Standards 22 – 25
- ❖ Teaching and learning activities. Standards 26 – 33

To review the Professional Standards in full, visit the following link: [HLTA Professional Standards](#)

## **Continuing Professional Development**

*[AC 1.2.1; 1.2.2]*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the development of an employee's skills and knowledge. The aim of CPD is to improve and broaden the knowledge and skills required to undertake a role efficiently and effectively.

CPD should be undertaken regularly through the updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competencies. CPD enables a HLTA to keep their skills up to date and improve their knowledge. It also allows for possible career development.

CPD allows HLTA to keep up to date with what is happening in the education sector and understand any changes or new initiatives.

The value of continual professional development (CPD) is that it allows for:

- ✓ the updating of professional knowledge
- ✓ the updating of professional skills and competences
- ✓ the commitment to being professional within a particular industry
- ✓ the opportunity for recognition and promotion.

It is good practice for an education setting to invest in CPD so they can increase the productivity of their staff members, including HLTAs.

It is vital for HLTAs to obtain feedback from colleagues on their performance and review their progress. In doing this, a HLTA can identify areas for development which they may have and work with colleagues to discuss how they can improve in their practice. Feedback from colleagues may also be positive and highlight areas a HLTA performs well in. Any areas of good practice should be shared amongst colleagues, so other HLTAs can learn best practice initiatives from each other.

## **Implementing Feedback**

*[AC 1.2.3]*

Acting on feedback is part of reflective practice; it is important to try not to read improvements as a criticism. Planning and reviewing your own development are ways of improving your practice; receiving feedback is helping you along that path.

Suggestions for improvements which have been stated in feedback are reflective of your skills; pay attention to how it has been suggested you fine-tune those skills. Feedback is guidance and, as such, to follow the guidance is to accept the feedback; apply it to your practice.

Responding to feedback and implementing advice given enables you to continuously assess your working practice and improve on it so look for the guidance and recommendations in the feedback: What is going well? What can you change and how? What support might you need to implement the recommendations?

## **Advantages of Working in a Team**

*[AC 1.3.1]*

According to BusinessDirectory.com (2018) a team is 'A group of people with a full set of complementary skills required to complete a task, job, or project'.

Settings will have a mix of teams undertaking different activities, depending on the size of the setting.

In a setting, employees may be asked to work together to undertake an activity for a short period of time. Although this team may work well in general, most teams can take time to grow and to develop, before showing good results.

Effective communication skills and relationship building are vital to support learners and work effectively with colleagues. To work effectively in a team, a HLTA must have excellent communication skills so they are seen as being

approachable, not only by the learners they work with, but by colleagues, parents and other agencies they may associate with.

When communication is effective, positive relationships can be built and teamwork will be strong.

There are several principles to building a positive relationship with learners and colleagues that a HLTA must be aware of. These include:

- ❖ *Effective Communication* – being able to hold positive conversations with learners
- ❖ *Showing respect* – being courteous and acknowledging the views of others
- ❖ *Being considerate* – taking time to consider the position of others and being understanding
- ❖ *Remembering issues learners may have* – ensuring you are aware of aspects of others' lives, which may impact on their behaviour
- ❖ *Taking time to listen* – Taking time to listen to others, if they are seeking help, support, or advice
- ❖ *Being clear on key points* – ensuring any information you share with others is clear
- ❖ *Maintaining a sense of humour* – although the nature of work in a setting is important, it is vital to ensure activities and situations can be made interesting and fun for learners.

There are a clear range of advantages of working within a team. To summarise, these include:

- ❖ Teams can accomplish more than an individual member can do alone
- ❖ Team members will have different skills, which can be utilised effectively within a team to solve problems or meet objectives
- ❖ Increased efficiency as several people can work together to achieve objectives
- ❖ Teams can provide a support network to each other. Team members can help and rely on each other for support and guidance
- ❖ Strong and positive relationships amongst members can be established

## **Identifying Roles in Your Team**

[AC 1.3.2]

HLTAs will be part of a much larger team. Within a typical team, there may be a:

- ❖ Headteacher
- ❖ Deputy Head
- ❖ Assistant Deputy Head
- ❖ Year Leader
- ❖ Subject Leader
- ❖ Phase Leader
- ❖ Class Teacher

As well as being aware of these specific roles, it may be of benefit to explore how these roles are allocated and formed. To do this, it is worth consulting research studies.

### ***Tuckman's Team Development Model***

The Educational Psychologist Bruce W Tuckman devised a team development theory which he believed was the basis for creating a highly productive team. He suggested that any good team will go through four stages before they can become effective. The four stages according to Tuckman are:



### ***Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing.***

**Stage 1 - Forming.** In this stage team members try to fit into the team and will avoid conflict or problems. Not a lot of work or activity will be completed during this stage.

**Stage 2 - Storming.** In this stage team members are likely to have conflict or disagreements with regards to who is responsible for what. The way in which conflicts and disagreements are dealt with during this stage will set the tone for resolving issues and future challenges. This stage can be the most difficult to deal with, but it is essential for a team to develop ways of working and solving conflict.

**Stage 3 - Norming.** In this stage the team members will agree how to work together, and they will establish procedures, processes, and responsibilities for team members.

**Stage 4 - Performing:** In the final stage, team members can work well either independently or together. Team members are fully aware of know who is responsible for which activity or task and there is a high level of trust and loyalty between team members.










### ***Team Role Theory***

Dr Meredith Belbin and his colleagues identified the theory of 'Team Roles' in the early 1980s. Belbin stated that there were a number of behaviours demonstrated by different members within a team. Belbin suggested there were nine different Team Roles within a team and most employees prefer one role.

The chart on the next page gives specific detail on each of these roles and it is helpful to analyse your own position as well as that of your colleagues.

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**Team Role Summary Descriptions**

Team Role	Contribution	Allowable Weaknesses
<b>Plant</b> 	Creative, imaginative, free-thinking. Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.	Ignores incidentals. Too pre-occupied to communicate effectively.
<b>Resource Investigator</b> 	Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities and develops contacts.	Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.
<b>Co-ordinator</b> 	Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.	Can be seen as manipulative. Offloads own share of the work.
<b>Shaper</b> 	Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.	Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.
<b>Monitor Evaluator</b> 	Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately.	Lacks drive and ability to inspire others. Can be overly critical.
<b>Teamworker</b> 	Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction.	Indecisive in crunch situations. Avoids confrontation.
<b>Implementer</b> 	Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organizes work that needs to be done.	Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities.
<b>Completer Finisher</b> 	Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.	Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.
<b>Specialist</b> 	Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.	Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities.

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Having a good understanding of team roles enables managers to select appropriate team members for activities and tasks. Having a balanced team allows for the potential to be highly productive and achieve all objectives.

To work effectively as a team member, it is important that a HLTA:

- ❖ Understands their role in a team
- ❖ Shares best practice initiatives and ideas with team members
- ❖ Supports other team members
- ❖ Communicates effectively with all team members
- ❖ Can resolve issues or conflicts with team members

- ❖ Undertakes regular CPD to ensure their knowledge and skills are up to date

### **Opportunities for Collaborative Working**

*[AC 1.3.3]*

When you are completing this part of your assignment, you need to be specific in the examples you include. Make sure you refer to your own experiences in your placement setting now.

You need to consider that:

- ❖ Collaborative working refers to the idea of teachers working together as a collective in planning, delivery, and evaluation
- ❖ Collaborative working is a required approach of HLTAs
- ❖ Co-Teaching is where the lesson is delivered at the same time by two staff; it allows for more opportunity for small group-work and 1:1 learning but can be time consuming
- ❖ Co-Planning, as a process, encourages teachers to bounce ideas off each other to deliver strong and creative lessons
- ❖ Attending PPA time with teachers will assist in a collaborative approach being taken to lesson planning and resource allocation
- ❖ Team-Teaching involves the class teacher leading the main structure of the lesson while the HLTA will usually work with a smaller group, helping them to keep up with the main lesson but usually in an adapted manner. Here, the HLTA may need to deliver on-the-spot additional guidance and teaching to the smaller group for them to understand a particular word, meaning or activity linked to the teacher's work

Collaborative working - also known as joint or partnership working - covers a variety of ways that two or more colleagues or organisations can work together.

Collaborative working can last for a fixed length of time or can form a permanent arrangement. What these options have in common is that they involve some sort of exchange, for mutual advantage, that ultimately benefits end users.

Collaboratively working with others can offer opportunities to:

- ❖ deliver new, improved services
- ❖ develop a stronger relationship with others
- ❖ share knowledge and information.

### **Types of collaborative working**

- ❖ Separate organisations maintain their independence, but work jointly on some activities or functions
- ❖ Organisations with resources or expertise aid other organisations, for example, social services may support a school in working with a family or learner

### **Contributing to Development of Effective Practice**

*[AC 1.3.4]*

Historically, teaching assistants have been those who work with children who have SEN. However, this is no longer the case and HLTAs, especially, have key roles to play in the class.

To contribute to the development of others in your team, you can consider the following:

- ❖ Modelling the class teacher's example and emulating them will allow you to be the 2nd teacher in the room
- ❖ Observing other colleagues and their practice is good practice for you to pass on to others
- ❖ Working alongside other staff and discussing important issues such as classroom strategies will allow you to contribute to the overall success of the C&YP present
- ❖ You can inform other TAs, who may be assigned on 1:1 work, on how the lesson you are a part of can be adapted to the children and young people they are working with. You can suggest alternative resources and books, for example
- ❖ By discussing and planning resources carefully, you will be contributing to effective practice

- ❖ Attend and contribute to the daily planning meetings, review meetings and phase meetings to contribute your skills and knowledge to the outcomes being discussed
- ❖ Providing constructive feedback to the class teacher is a great way to demonstrate how you contribute to effective practice
- ❖ Amending your own practice after reflecting on feedback allows you to contribute to the overall team effort

### **Further Reading:**

#### **HLTA Standards**

[https://www.strictlyeducation4s.co.uk/strictly\\_education4s/Improving-Schools-and-Settings/Teaching-and-Learning/HLTA/HLTA\\_Standards.pdf](https://www.strictlyeducation4s.co.uk/strictly_education4s/Improving-Schools-and-Settings/Teaching-and-Learning/HLTA/HLTA_Standards.pdf)