



Exceed Teaching School Hub

Appropriate Body Service

Concerns, Complaints and Induction Appeals Guidance

A guidance document for Early Career Teachers, Mentors, Induction Tutors, and Headteachers who are working with Exceed Teaching School Hub as an Appropriate Body for induction.

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Introduction

As part of its remit, Exceed Teaching School Hub is an Appropriate Body for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) who are undertaking their statutory induction based on the Early Career Framework (ECF).

As an Appropriate Body, Exceed Teaching School Hub is responsible for:

- **Final Decision Making:** Involves conclusive judgements regarding whether ECTs have met the Teachers' Standards, based on recommendations provided by Headteacher's
- **Monitoring and Reviews:** Includes regular monitoring of ECT Termly Progress Reviews and Assessments throughout the Induction period to ensure progress and compliance
- **Quality Assurance:** Involves the responsibility to ensure that statutory entitlement of ECTs is being met, in terms of support and training during the induction process
- **Checks:** Conducting Induction & Fidelity Checks to support schools in providing ECTs with an Early Career Framework (ECF) based induction, ensuring alignment with established guidelines
- **Support:** Collaborating with schools and their leadership to address issues arising during induction and ensuring relevant support mechanisms are implemented to aid ECTs in their development and success

Exceed Teaching School Hub works in partnership with schools, mentors, Induction Tutors, and Headteachers to provide a positive and professional induction experience for ECTs.

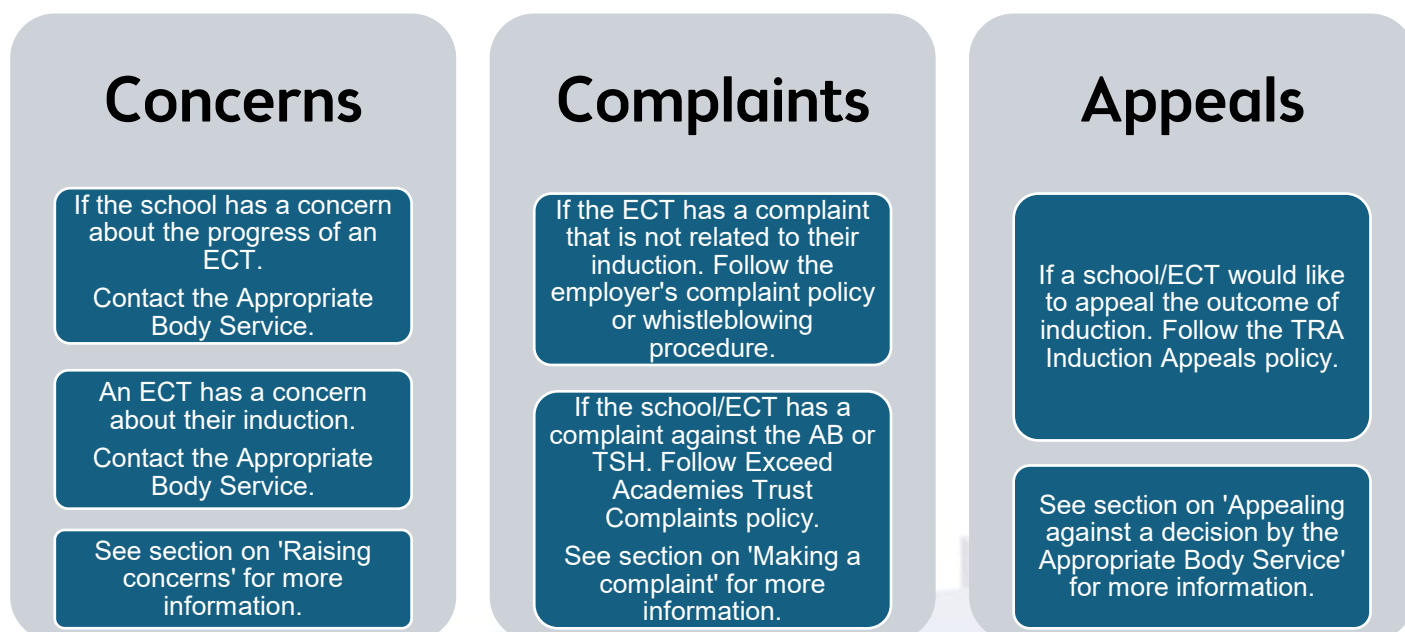
This document outlines guidance on concerns, complaints, induction appeals and the escalation policy for Exceed Teaching School Hub as an Appropriate Body. It explains the tools and mechanisms for sharing and capturing information and concerns, the complaints procedure, and the appeals process. The aim of this document is to provide clarity, transparency, and consistency for all stakeholders and to ensure that any issues or complaints are resolved in a timely and constructive manner.

For further information on ECT induction you can refer to:

- Appropriate Body Handbook – see 'Resources' area on ECT Manager
- [Appropriate Body Service Level Agreement](#)
- [Statutory Guidance for the Induction of Early Career Teachers \(April 2025\)](#)

Appropriate Channels of Communication

To support all stakeholders in directing their concerns, complaints and appeals to the right channels, please see our summary diagram below.



Tools and mechanisms for sharing and capturing information and concerns

Capturing the ECT's and the school's experience throughout the induction process is paramount. We aim to capture the voice and views of the ECT and the school in the following ways:

- Termly reporting of ECTs progress against the Teachers' Standards via a report on ECT Manager
- Termly entitlement surveys
- Quality Assurance visits to schools
- Individual Recovery Plan documentation
- Calls to the Appropriate Body directly
- Emails to the Appropriate Body directly
- Issues raised in the ECT Manager help desk
- Appropriate Body training events
- Stakeholder voice surveys

If any of these routes demonstrate elements which contradict or are misaligned with the statutory duties for each party during the induction process, this will lead to a quality assurance visit.

Please note, if you are an ECT with a concern about your induction, this should be raised in the first instance with your mentor, Induction Tutor and Headteacher. If this does not resolve your concern, please contact the Appropriate Body through the mechanisms listed above.

If you are a school with a concern about an ECT's performance or progress, this should be raised in the first instance with the ECT, the mentor, and the induction tutor. If this does not resolve your concern, please contact the Appropriate Body through the mechanisms listed above.

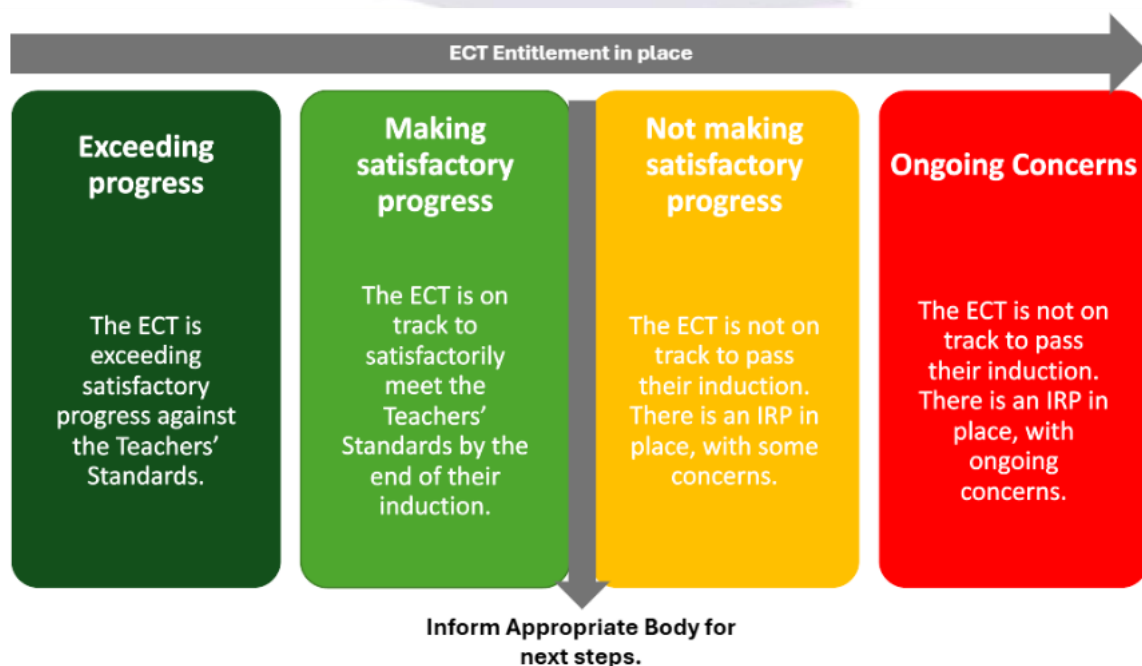
Raising Concerns

Schools Raising Concerns about an ECT

Appropriate Bodies play a key part in teacher induction. As well as ensuring that ECTs receive their statutory entitlement and that ECTs are fairly and consistently assessed, they also ensure that regard is had to the statutory guidance and that ECTs are receiving a programme of support and training based on the ECF. There are occasions when an ECT will not make the expected progress. It is important that any possibility of failure to meet the Teachers' Standards is recognised and acted upon at the earliest opportunity. Action should not be left to the Review and Assessment meetings which occur at the end of each term.

The ECT should be kept up to date on their progress throughout the Induction Period. There should be nothing unexpected.

We want to ensure that where an ECT experiences difficulties in meeting the Teachers' Standards, that rigorous and appropriate support is put into place to get the ECT back on track to meeting the Teachers' Standards by the end of their induction period. The diagram below outlines the process that schools should follow, working with the Appropriate Body Service. The Appropriate Body's role is to be fair and objective and ensure that the ECT is receiving the support they need to be successful in their induction. The aim of an Individual Recovery Plan is to provide extra support to help the ECT get back on track to meet the Teachers' Standard.



Steps for a school to take where they have a concern with an ECT

Step 1. When a school identifies a lack of sufficient progress towards the Teachers' Standards with an ECT undertaking statutory induction, they should contact Exceed Teaching School Hub Appropriate Body.

The AB will support the school to determine whether:

A) Statutory entitlement and monitoring should continue

OR

B) Bespoke additional support is required through an Individual Recovery Plan

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Email: ab@exceedacademiustrust.co.uk

Mobile: 07842 443613

Step 2. If deemed appropriate, the school will be requested to provide additional support through an Individual Recovery Plan to provide tailored support in addition to the statutory entitlement.

The AB will advise, and quality assure an **Individual Recovery Plan (IRP)** being put into place with an identified start and end point review date.

The Induction Tutor/Headteacher must meet with the ECT, to outline and discuss areas for development and set specific targets to be implemented within the IRP. IRPs should be signed by the Headteacher, Induction Tutor and ECT.

A 3-6 week timescale is recommended for the IRP, with a review at the halfway point. The IRP must be submitted to the AB to ensure it is fit for purpose prior to implementation. Example plans are available in ECT Manager's Resources.

The Appropriate Body may conduct a quality assurance visit during the IRP.

Please note: An Assessment/Progress Review cannot be submitted where the ECT is identified as 'not making satisfactory progress' without an IRP in place. This does not mean you need to wait until a reporting window for an IRP to be put in place.

Step 3. At the endpoint of the IRP, we recommend RAG rating (Red, Amber, Green) the targets set.

When reviewing the IRP, it should be decided if the ECT has made positive, some or no progress.

Appropriate actions to take:

POSITIVE PROGRESS: If after the review date, the IRP has been effective and the ECT is on track to make satisfactory progress by the end of the induction period, no further action is needed. The school should make the AB aware.

SOME PROGRESS: If after the review date, the IRP has been effective in some areas and the ECT is deemed as making some progress towards their targets, the IRP should be amended accordingly. This should be submitted to the AB for approval with a new review date.

LIMITED/NO PROGRESS: If after the review date, the IRP has been ineffective and the ECT remains not on track to make satisfactory progress by the end of the induction period, a new IRP should be submitted with ongoing concerns. This will initiate an AB quality assurance visit (see Step 4).

Step 4. If the ECT has not responded satisfactorily to the IRP in place after 'Step 3', the school should inform the AB that there are **ongoing concerns**. At this stage context should always be taken into account when deciding next steps.

An extended IRP should be put in place. A further quality assurance visit may also occur which will include a joint lesson observation, to quality assure the judgements of the Induction Tutor. Wider evidence of ECT progress may be requested as part of this visit. The AB will work with the Headteacher and Induction Tutor to recommend next steps.

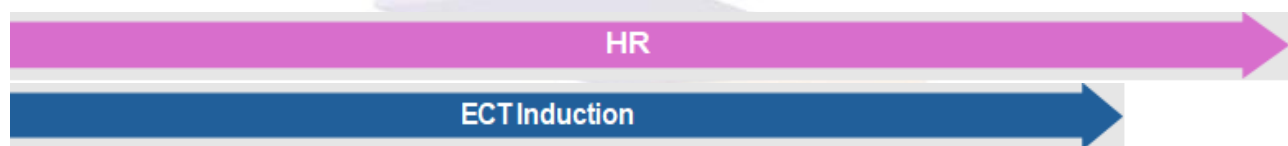
The ECT should be made aware of the implications of not meeting the standards.

HR processes alongside the ECF induction

In a few particularly serious cases it may be necessary to instigate capability procedures at a stage before the end of the induction period, which may lead to dismissal before the end of the induction period. If this is the case, for as long as the ECT remains at the institution the induction process must continue in parallel with the capability procedure. The appropriate body should be informed however it is the employer that has a responsibility to manage its capability procedures and decisions relating to the outcome of these. The role of the appropriate body relates only to the ECT's performance in relation to induction.

Dismissal on the grounds of capability before the end of the induction period does not prevent the ECT from completing induction at another institution, as all ECTs must complete a full induction period before they can be judged to have failed induction.

All organisations have their own policies and processes relating to HR. An example model of the way in which HR processes work alongside ECT Induction can be seen below.



	Term 1 Year 1	Term 2 Year 1	Term 3 Year 1	Term 1 Year 2	Term 2 Year 2	Term 3 Year 2	Term 1 Year 3
Statutory ECT Induction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Probation Policy*	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Disciplinary Incl. Conduct	Covered by probation	Covered by probation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Performance Management	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Capability	Covered by probation	Covered by probation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* PLEASE NOTE: The length and conditions of the probationary period will vary according to the policy.

ECTs Raising Concerns About a School

An ECT should raise any concerns about their induction programme with their Induction Tutor/Headteacher in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved, the ECT may notify the Appropriate Body (see 'Key Contacts') who will investigate the issues raised.

If an ECT has a concern in their place of work that is not related to their induction they should follow the school's complaints policy or whistleblowing procedures.

The Appropriate Body has a Concern About a School

We know that most schools foster strong and supportive working relationships with their Appropriate Body and Early Career Teachers. There may be circumstances which indicate that a school is not fully complying with the statutory duty of ECT induction as outlined previously within this policy. The following process will be followed in this circumstance.

Step 1. Indications of concern around the school are flagged through the AB quality assurance processes

Step 2. In the first instance, mediation and discussion with the Headteacher/Induction Tutor may take place to clarify the expectations and provide advice on the information that is required. At this point the AB lead will decide as to whether a Quality Assurance visit is necessary.

Step 3. The Appropriate Body will assess whether the school is fulfilling its statutory duties. A Quality Assurance visit will ensure compliance and capture the voices of the Headteacher/ Induction Tutor and ECT in a fair and objective way. The Appropriate Body will share a Note of Visit with a record of discussion and recommendations to be taken forward. Further advice and support will be offered, if required.

Step 4. The Appropriate Body will book in another visit to check that the actions have been implemented since the last visit if there were actions which indicated a concern around the ECT's statutory entitlement or the school's approach.

Step 5. If school continues not to fulfil their statutory duty following their second QA visit, the local Governing Body will be informed in writing.

Step 6. If the school continues with non-compliance in relation to the Appropriate Body Handbook, the Appropriate Body will then escalate this to the Local Authority/ Trust in writing.

Step 7. If steps 1-6 have not resulted in the school fulfilling their statutory duty, this will then be escalated to the DfE/ TRA in writing.

In exceptional circumstances where there is a concern that induction is not being conducted with regards to the statutory guidance and that the concern cannot be resolved with the school or its Governing Board, the Appropriate Body can notify the Department for Education who will consider appropriate action on an individual basis. Escalation to the Department should only be taken where collaborative steps to ensure regard is had to statutory guidance have been exhausted. It will not be a proportionate response in most cases where ongoing collaboration between appropriate bodies and schools is normally the most constructive route to resolving issues.

Making a Complaint

It is accepted that there may be times when complaints need to be made. In line with the policy of Exceed Academies Trust, Exceed Teaching School Hub endeavours to ensure that any concern or complaint is dealt with promptly, fairly and objectively.

In order for concerns/complaints to be dealt with quickly and effectively, it is important that they are raised as soon as practicable and in the most relevant manner.

If your complaint is related to the service you are receiving from the Appropriate Body Service or Teaching School Hub, you should follow the process in the Exceed Academies Trust Complaints Policy which can be found here: <https://www.exceedacademiestrust.co.uk/policies>.

Complaints Procedure

In line with the policy, Exceed Teaching School Hub will try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether raised formally or informally, and the appropriate procedures shall be taken.

If concerns/complaints cannot be resolved informally, the [Exceed Academies Trust Complaints Policy](#) has a formal complaints procedure consisting of four stages. For the Teaching School Hub, the stages are:

Stage 1 – Initial Formal Complaint

Deputy Director of the Teaching School Hub or other assigned investigating officer

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint Escalation

Director of the Teaching School or other assigned investigating officer

Step 3 – Formal Complaint Review

Member of the Independent Appropriate Body Advisory Panel to review actions taken and consider if further action is required

Step 4 – Complaint Review Panel

Complaint reviewed by a panel consisting of Independent Appropriate Body Advisory Panel members and/or Exceed Academies Trust governance representatives (excluding anyone involved in an earlier stage)

Decisions to fail an ECT's induction by the Appropriate Body Service

An ECT has only one chance to complete statutory induction. An ECT who has completed induction and is judged to have failed to meet the Teachers' Standards at the end of their induction period, is not permitted to repeat induction. While such an ECT does not lose their QTS, they cannot be employed lawfully as a teacher in a relevant school, including any post where they would carry out specified work.

A decision to fail an ECT's induction is extremely important and, therefore, Exceed Teaching School Hub has established an Appropriate Body Advisory Panel to moderate assessment decisions made by the Teaching School Hub's Appropriate Body Service. Any panel recommendations inform the Appropriate Body and do not replace the Appropriate Body's direct role in making a decision for each ECT's assessment. The role of the Advisory Panel is, therefore, to:

- Attend Advisory Panel meetings and actively participate in discussions.
- Hold central to the discussion and decision making, the right of every child to be educated by a teacher who is meeting the Teachers' Standards.
- Work within the statutory guidelines and time frames in the case of a TRA appeal process.
- Identify whether the Appropriate Body Service has fulfilled its statutory duties set out in the [Induction for early career teachers \(England\)](#) and [Appropriate bodies guidance: induction and the early career framework](#). in relation to the case being reviewed.
- Be fully conversant with the Early Career Induction Statutory Guidance (updated April 2024), the Appropriate Bodies Guidance (April 2024) and the TRA's Induction Appeals Procedure (updated May 2018)
- Provide strategic advice, recommendations and feedback based on individual expertise and collective insight.
- Analyse the extent to which the decision presented and made by the Appropriate Body service is fair, consistent and objective for the ECT, in light of the available evidence and circumstances. Ask for additional supporting evidence if required.
- Consider the extent to which the AB has reflected and explored all possible factors involved in the case.
- Challenge, debate and analyse the decisions made by the Appropriate Body Service, using all available evidence to support the outcome and next steps in relation to the case being presented.
- Respect confidentiality and handle sensitive information in accordance with GDPR protocols.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is consciously considered in decisions being made by the Teaching School Hub.

The full Terms of Reference of the Advisory Panel can be found here: [AB Advisory Panel Terms of Reference.docx](#)

Appealing against a decision by the Appropriate Body Service

If an ECT fails induction, or has their induction extended, the Appropriate Body must advise the ECT of their right to appeal, who to appeal to, and the grounds for doing so. Appeals must be made in writing to the Teaching Regulation Agency, within 20 working days of receiving notice that they have failed or had their induction extended.

Appeals can only be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- the institution did not provide the ECT with the necessary monitoring, support and assessments as required by the statutory guidance;

- the institution's recommendation was not fair and consistent with the evidence collected during the induction period;
- the Appropriate Body failed to apply properly the criteria for satisfactory completion of the induction period; or
- there were relevant factors that the Appropriate Body failed to take into account.

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- The ECT submits a written appeal to the Teaching Regulation Agency, setting out the grounds and evidence for their appeal, and attaching any relevant documents.
- The Teaching Regulation Agency acknowledges receipt of the appeal and informs the Appropriate Body and the institution of the appeal.
- The Appropriate Body and the institution are given an opportunity to respond to the appeal in writing, and to provide any additional evidence they wish to submit.
- The Teaching Regulation Agency reviews the appeal and the responses from the Appropriate Body and the institution, and decides whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal, or to refer it to an independent appeals panel for further consideration.
- The Teaching Regulation Agency notifies the ECT, the Appropriate Body and the institution of the outcome of the appeal, and the reasons for the decision.
- If the appeal is referred to an independent appeals panel, the panel will conduct a hearing where the ECT, the Appropriate Body and the institution can present their cases and ask questions. The panel will then make a recommendation to the Teaching Regulation Agency, who will make the final decision and communicate it to all parties.

The appeal process is intended to be fair, impartial and transparent, and to ensure that ECTs have an opportunity to challenge any decisions that affect their professional status and career prospects. Further guidance about the appeals process is available here: [Induction appeals procedures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/induction-appeals-procedures)

Conduct when interacting with the Appropriate Body service

Interactions across all forms of communication with the Appropriate Body service need to remain professional and respectful, alongside the Teachers' Professional Standards.


Unacceptable behaviour (including bullying, harassment and victimisation) may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort. Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people.

The Appropriate Body defines behaviour as being unacceptable if:

- It is unwanted by the recipient.
- It has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

Unacceptable behaviour does not have to be face-to-face, and may take many forms such as written, telephone or email communications or through social media.

Some examples of unacceptable behaviour are:

- Aggressive or abusive behaviour, such as shouting or personal insults
 - Spreading malicious rumours or gossip, or insulting someone
 - Discrimination or harassment when related to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010
 - Unwanted physical contact
 - Stalking
 - Offensive comments/jokes or body language
 - Publishing, circulating or displaying pornographic, racist, sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive material or pictures
 - Isolation, deliberate exclusion and/or non co-operation
 - Persistent and unreasonable criticism
 - Unreasonable demands
 - Coercion, such as pressure to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief
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APPENDIX A - Appropriate Body Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The purpose of the Advisory Panel for the Appropriate Body Service will advise the Appropriate Body on decision-making that will impact the outcome of an ECTs induction. This may include:

- An extension to induction,
- Failure of induction
- In the case of an ECT appealing a decision made by the Appropriate Body Service

As per the Statutory Guidance for Appropriate Body Services (April 2024), “the Appropriate Body must remain directly responsible for all functions and must directly make all key decisions, which includes: decisions on induction e.g. in every individual case, each decision required around the suitability of a post or placement for serving induction, whether an ECT’s assessment demonstrates that they have successfully met the Teachers’ Standards to complete induction or whether an extension or reduction should be applied”. The Advisory Panel, will therefore, quality assure the proposed decision of the Appropriate Body, but will not be responsible for final decision making. Therefore, if the case were to occur where the Advisory Panel did not have a consensus or disagreed with the decision of the Appropriate Body service, the Appropriate Body delegates would make the final decision.

Membership:

The advisory panel will have a total of 12 members, consisting of leaders across the region with a diverse expertise related to Early Career Teacher Induction. In one panel meeting between 3 –5 members will meet to advise the Appropriate Body.

The panel will:

- Attend Advisory Panel meetings and actively participate in discussions.
- Hold central to the discussion and decision making, the right of every child to be educated by a Teacher who is meeting the Teachers’ Standards.
- Work within the statutory guidelines and time frames in the case of a TRA appeal process.
- Identify whether the Appropriate Body Service has fulfilled its statutory duties set out in the [Induction for early career teachers \(England\)](#) and [Appropriate bodies guidance: induction and the early career framework](#). in relation to the case being reviewed.
- Be fully conversant with the Early Career Induction Statutory Guidance (updated April 2024), the Appropriate Bodies Guidance (April 2024) and the TRA’s Induction Appeals Procedure (updated May 2018)
- Provide strategic advice, recommendations and feedback based on individual expertise and collective insight.

- Analyse the extent to which the decision presented and made by the Appropriate Body service is fair, consistent and objective for the ECT, in light of the available evidence and circumstances. Ask for additional supporting evidence if required.
- Consider the extent to which the AB has reflected and explored all possible factors involved in the case.
- Challenge, debate and analyse the decisions made by the Appropriate Body Service, using all available evidence to support the outcome and next steps in relation to the case being presented.
- Respect confidentiality and handle sensitive information in accordance with GDPR protocols.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is consciously considered in decisions being made by the Teaching School Hub.

In the case of appeals:

If the Appropriate Body decides that an ECT has failed to complete induction satisfactorily or grants an extension to their induction period, the ECT has the right to appeal against this decision as per the [TRA Induction Appeals Policy](#). If this scenario was to occur, and the Advisory Panel had not already met, the Advisory Panel would convene to quality assure the decision of the Appropriate Body, before a response to the appeal was submitted to the TRA.

Please note, the Advisory Panel would not be involved in the formal TRA appeals proceedings.

These Terms of Reference may be amended or revised as necessary. Amendments will be communicated with the panel in advance.