

Voluntary experience and work placements

Information on what the Refugees into Teaching project can provide.

Experience in schools is a requirement for candidates who want to do teacher training. The project provides support for potential candidates in finding and obtaining voluntary work experience in schools, and in completing work placements in schools. The project partners provide supported programmes in the West London and West Midlands areas.

West London Partnership

The West London Partnership provides support for school experience placements allowing refugee teachers to gain experience of teaching in London schools as well as the opportunity to start collecting a portfolio of evidence. The WLP identifies schools willing to offer placements and contacts the schools to negotiate the placements, and offers a Support Tutor.

The programme includes:

- Familiarisation sessions as preparation for work placement. These are held over four days including sessions on the [National Curriculum](#), behaviour management, cultural perspectives and legal responsibilities, amongst others.
- Six week school placement. At the beginning of the placement, the candidate goes through a needs assessment undertaken by a Support Tutor to see what they need to do in order to gain QTS. This assessment feeds into a placement training plan during the 6 week placement. During the placement the school provides mentoring support to the candidate, and there is a follow up visit at the end of the placement.
- Bursaries to help participants with travel and childcare costs are available.

[Visit the West London Partnership \(GTP/OTTP\) website](#)

Newman College

Newman College works closely with 300 primary schools and 100 secondary schools in the West Midlands area, amongst others. As a partner of Refugees into Teaching, Newman College also works in cooperation with Lifeline, Birmingham City Council Directorate of Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) and the College of International Citizenship.

The college offers the following programmes.

The Familiarization Training Programme

The Familiarization Training Programme is informed by participants' feedback and evaluation. Some of the following modules are delivered by project and Newman College staff. These include:

- Background to the National Curriculum, School Organisation and Structure
- Developing Speaking and Listening Skills
- Developing Literacy Skills
- Inducting Pupils from Overseas into UK Schools
- Developing Numeracy Skills
- English as an Additional Language Planning/Teaching
- Classroom Management
- Behaviour Management
- Working with Parents
- Using Story as a Teaching Tool
- Child Protection
- Supporting pupils with specific learning needs

School Voluntary Placements

School Voluntary Placements are arranged using the language match between the participants and newly arrived pupils in school as a starting point. These are evaluated by participants to improve the support on offer. They involve:

- Support from the school, from visiting lecturers from Newman College funded through Refugees into Teaching.
- The completion of a placement file which is a portfolio of the student's qualifications sent out to school districts to help students get a job and complete the application process.
- Support from the Ethnic Minority Pupil Support Unit within the Birmingham City Council Directorate of Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Directorate.

Additional support

Additional support is also given including:

- Skills Audit which provides the opportunity to record skills and experience
- Job application skills and interview techniques
- Individual interviews with staff from the project and The Schools Plus Recruitment and Retention which provides a professional recruitment service to schools and Birmingham City Council Directorates to signpost participants according to their individual aspirations

Success is measured by the numbers of refugees who:

- contact the Steering Group for Pathways into Education
- take part in the Familiarisation Training Programme
- receive positive evaluation from their schools
- are signposted to further training
- train towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- find employment in educational settings

The expectation is to deliver the Familiarisation Training Programme to two intakes of participants each academic year, dependant on success and available funding of the project.

[Visit the Newman College website](#)

Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit (RAGU)

RAGU, a new project partner since April 2007, have run, and will be running again in 2008, courses for refugee teachers in London. In addition to providing direct services to clients, RAGU have produced a [research report](#) on delivering placements in schools for refugees, drawing on lessons learnt and giving guidance to other organisations who may be setting up their own placement programmes.

[Find out about the RAGU work placement programme](#)

Other areas

If you live in another area, outside of London or the West Midlands, we can still help you in the following ways:

- Once you register, the RiT Referral Officer, will be able to signpost you to any appropriate provision in your local area.
- If you live in an area where specific provision exists, you will be referred on to this, e.g. in the Yorkshire and Humberside area, you will be referred on to [Education Leeds](#) or the [New Arrivals Project](#) in Sheffield, who will be able to offer direct client services in advice and guidance.
- If you live in an area where there is no specific provision, the Referral Officer will be happy to provide initial information, e.g. about routes into teaching, and will signpost you on to appropriate local providers of teacher training, local refugee organisations, or other organisations who may be able to offer you more in depth face to face advice. In such cases, the Referral Officer and other RiT project staff are happy to be contacted by those involved to discuss specific issues relating to refugee teacher employment and training. This website and the online assessment tool are also invaluable sources of information in such cases.
- The Referral Officer and other project staff will also be happy to provide information on how to best go about

obtaining work experience in schools yourself.

Some tips for gaining work experience

If you have existing links with a school, e.g. through children, neighbours, try contacting the school through these. Ask to speak to the headteacher and/or training coordinator.

From speaking to headteachers, many would prefer you to do the following:

- write a letter setting out your current situation and what you wish to gain from the experience, e.g. you need the experience to apply for teacher training programmes
- say what your situation is with regard to CRB checks. If you have had one recently, say this; if not, offer to do this should the school be willing to give you experience
- state clearly what specific, added value skills you have to offer, e.g. languages or maths/science skills

If you do not hear back from the school, follow this up with a phone call a few days later. If the result is not positive, ask for reasons so you can better focus your next application; also ask if they would suggest other schools in the area.

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