



Claim<sup>YOUR</sup>  
College

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**THE BIG STAFF  
MEETING**



# YOUR INVITATION TO

## THE BIG STAFF MEETING

The College of Teaching – an opportunity for the profession to come together to set its own standards.

**Find out more, tell us what you think.**



[claimyourcollege.org/  
big-staff-meeting](https://claimyourcollege.org/big-staff-meeting)

# Find half an hour to **change the profession!**

The College of Teaching<sup>1</sup> is the new chartered professional body for the teaching profession.

This **BIG STAFF MEETING** pack introduces the College's place in the professional landscape of teaching in the UK. We are inviting teachers **across all phases and stages** to respond to key questions on the future membership of the College.

The development of the College has been carefully designed to benefit the profession as a whole. We want every teacher to be well informed on the developing plans and share views on who should be part of the College and what the College should offer its members.

By setting aside **half an hour of discussion time** in your school on either **January 6th** or another time that suits you, you can use this pack and the supporting resources to bring these important questions and debate to staff's attention.

The Big Staff Meeting pack will help you organise the meeting and supportive resources are available including organisers advice, a PowerPoint and a downloadable poster at [claimyourcollege.org/big-staff-meeting](http://claimyourcollege.org/big-staff-meeting).

The College of Teaching is an idea whose time has come. We have the potential to work together to reshape how the profession

governs itself and is perceived. The work to date by the Claim Your College campaign, a movement backed by over 450 individuals and organisations, has created an opportunity to come together and take a stand.

The College must be owned by its future members if it is to be truly independent and contribute significantly to the professional autonomy of teachers.

**The College cannot happen without you.** In addition to leading by example by hosting The Big Staff Meeting, you can help make the College a reality by supporting our crowdfunding campaign and encouraging your colleagues to do the same.

Find out more at [claimyourcollege.hubbub.net](http://claimyourcollege.hubbub.net).

As the designated Big Staff Meeting organiser, make sure you encourage staff to share their views online following your meeting at [www.research.net/r/N3L3KMC](http://www.research.net/r/N3L3KMC). The consultation is open until the end of February.

This will then feed in to the national membership consultation and ensure each and every teacher's views are counted.

<sup>1</sup> The College of Teaching has been established as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The Founding Trustees of the College of Teaching have been recruited by teachers and heads with additional professional support. Progress so far has been supported through grants, primarily from the Mercers' Charitable Foundation.

# Membership of the College of Teaching – who should be eligible? **Share your views!**

## **What is a College of Teaching?**

There is widespread agreement that a chartered professional body would raise the status of teaching. Teachers would be empowered and enabled to develop a culture of rigorous professional development and recognition through collaborative professional support.

A meaningful professional body is an **independent** organisation **run by its members for its members**, and which supports them to be more effective in their profession.

These organisations are often known as Colleges or Chartered Institutes – they are not trade unions or a government regulator. Instead, they work to complement these organisations by **advancing standards of professional practice**.

A Chartered Teacher programme, developed by and for the profession, is designed to establish a universally accepted badge of excellence, equivalent in time to those of other professions such as Chartered Engineer.

The College of Teaching is an independent, voluntary organisation set up to provide the teaching profession with such a programme.

Its object will be to support excellence in teaching to better serve children and young people.



# Chartered status

A Royal Charter is a guarantee of independence and autonomy. When founded under a Royal Charter, such a professional association has rights, in perpetuity, to recognise achievement, set standards and hold members to account for upholding those standards.

There is already a Royal Charter for the teaching profession: **we are halfway there.**

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# Governance

The new College will have its own constitution, setting out rules for membership, appointments to offices and governance structures, including a body of Trustees.

Between them, the Trustees represent classroom teaching and school leadership, as well as other professional skills needed to run an effective College; accreditation, research and professional development and related fields such as finance and law.

It is important that the constitution of the new College is constructed through an inclusive and consultative process that generates a sense of ownership by the profession, and that takes account of good practice among other established professions in the UK, and among successful teaching professionalisation schemes in other countries.



# Founding the College of Teaching

**Standards:** Establishing, in perpetuity, an independent College of Teaching recognises the long term and evolutionary nature of continuous improvement in standards of professional practice, keeping pace with new research and with society's changing expectations.

The College is mapping existing standards and is committed to build on the best that already exists to determine the principles and protocols to be used to decide eligibility for Chartered Teacher status.

A consultation on the design and development of the Chartered teacher programme will begin in Spring/Summer 2016 and will ultimately be decided by members.

**CPD:** The College will provide a community of practice where evidence of effective CPD is shared and collaboration is facilitated. The path to chartered membership will be a process of formative professional development, valued by those who follow it. Assessors and mentors will have training and support. Peer collaboration will be supported and encouraged.

**Research:** Research-based evidence of effective teaching and learning will be at the heart of the College. Qualification for chartered membership will include evidence of the professional skills of self-reflection, application of sound evidence, design of interventions and evaluation of their outcomes for learners.

**Membership:** The first question to be addressed by the College of Teaching is who can join and what will membership offer them? This consultation will inform the future membership and services offered by the College.

# What are the options for membership?

## Who is a teacher?

There is an active debate as to who can be a 'member' of the College.

Views on this cover a wide range, from those who believe only those actively teaching in the 5-18 sector with no leadership role should be admitted to membership in any form, to those who see a College as a broad community of educators. This community would embrace a wide range of contexts including out-of-school educators, e.g. museum educators, and any age range including Higher Education (HE).

However, there is widespread agreement that the control of the organisation should reside with active teachers. A survey undertaken by The Education Company in April / May 2015 on behalf of the Claim Your College coalition highlighted that out of 13,000 responses - 75% from classroom teachers and subject leaders - 68% of respondents opted for a model of membership led by teachers but including others who work in education.

This debate is not unique to teaching. Other professions have resolved this through a structured membership where only those who have achieved recognition of excellence, as judged by their peers through Chartered Status, have rights to make decisions on policy, strategy and governance (i.e. they can elect and serve on the Board of Trustees and legally act as Members of the College).

Others working in a profession can become affiliates of a College, enjoying access to resources, events and professional networks. Alternatively, they could become associates – individuals who are working towards Chartered Status but they do not have the standing or rights of Chartered Members.

Throughout the process of developing the proposed model for the College there has been widespread and on-going consultation and debate. Some of the opposing arguments are given below.



# The Arguments

## Teachers only.

One of the most passionate arguments in favour of a teacher only College can be found in full here: [teachingbattleground.wordpress.com/2015/01/14/why-there-should-only-be-teachers-in-the-college-of-teaching](http://teachingbattleground.wordpress.com/2015/01/14/why-there-should-only-be-teachers-in-the-college-of-teaching)  
[bit.ly/1NqBaiq](http://bit.ly/1NqBaiq)

The author is a teacher in a secondary academy currently on a 0.6 contract and very active on Twitter. (Andrew Old [@oldandrewuk](https://twitter.com/oldandrewuk))

...Whatever things the College of Teaching does must be things that help establish teachers as professionals. This key purpose is utterly undermined if many of the members are not what would normally be called “teachers”. There were a number of educationalists on Twitter last night, utterly furious that because they are not employed to teach children, I wouldn’t recognise them as teachers. Yet, amazingly, none of them actually claimed to be a teacher in their Twitter bio. You cannot have a professional body for teachers where the rank and file are not people who would say “teacher” when asked to describe what they do, who would not join a teaching union, and do not teach anyone below undergraduate level. Part of what teachers need to be a profession, is a professional identity. Dilute that and you dilute, rather than develop, our professionalism. If you wish to speak for teachers, then for pity’s sake, be a teacher.

Another strand of this argument is that, even if they were not let into full membership, then ex-teachers have a lot of expertise to contribute. They could be associate members, or advisors. That they have expertise may well be true, but it is missing some of the the (sic) key points of a profession. A profession has expertise and its members exercise autonomy. We can all learn a lot from ex-teachers, even from some of those who have become consultants or university lecturers, but if we need that expertise we are not a profession. We are not, in ourselves, a body of experts in teaching. Worse, not only would we be declaring that those who teach now are so

lacking in expertise that they need the help of outside experts in teaching, but a large proportion of those experts would already be employed to tell teachers what to do. Far from developing our professional autonomy, we would actually be replicating our lack of autonomy. Instead of saying “we are a profession, we don’t need anyone to tell us what to do” we would be inviting the people who tell us what to do in to do it some more. A professional body for teachers needs to be organised on the basis of advancing professional autonomy and professional expertise.

Now, to me, a large part of this was obvious from the beginning. The assumption that we needed a new professional body, along with the acceptance that it could not be a regulator or a government quango and that it needed to be teacher led, all seemed to imply a shared vision of what teachers needed. Teachers lacked a professional identity; they were not confident in exercising professional autonomy, and there was a lack of recognition of their professional expertise. Perhaps I was mistaken, perhaps what people really wanted was a club for anyone working in education to network with the education establishment and (if they are teachers) learn from their betters. But if it is genuinely to be about teachers acting as a profession, then they need to act as autonomous experts with a clear professional identity. None of that can happen in a (sic) organisation where eligibility for membership, decision-making power, or the expertise about teaching don’t lie exclusively with teachers.





# A wider definition of teachers:

A broader perspective on who constitutes a teacher and should be eligible for membership is given in full here: [teachingscienceinallweather.wordpress.com/2015/02/02/on-the-college-of-teaching-and-what-defines-a-teacher](http://teachingscienceinallweather.wordpress.com/2015/02/02/on-the-college-of-teaching-and-what-defines-a-teacher)  
<http://bit.ly/20LJYcw>

The author is a full-time teacher in a secondary academy (Alex Weatherall @a\_weatherall)

...definitions of what constitutes a teacher have been raised again to support, in my opinion, an idealistic attempt to ensure some control for teachers in the fledgling College of Teaching...

I am setting out why I think the College of Teaching needs to be inclusive in the definition of “teacher” and also why I think the people behind the latest proposal have settled on the membership structure they have. (Note the membership structure has not been settled – hence this consultation Ed.)

The problem, as I see it, is that those advocating a very tightly guarded membership structure in the College of Teaching for current teachers of school children only (or those within 2 years of a teaching post), are making the same sort of mistake as the #NoQTSNoTeacher tweeters of 2012. Teaching as a profession spans the teaching of children as young as 3 in Early Years settings all the way up to 19 in sixth form, both in school and 6th form colleges. But does it stop there? Some would say yes; some would say that already the net is cast too wide.

Who do I think are teachers? Well I’ll provide some anecdotal examples: My daughter is currently four years old, passing through the last year of the EYFS of her education. It started at pre-school when she was 3 and will continue until she moves up into Y1 aged 5. She is currently taught by a teacher and teaching assistant (who is a fully trained teacher – who has taken a role as a TA). She was taught in pre-school and now in school following the same curriculum and the people providing her education

are subject to Ofsted judgements, and so, whilst the setting is different I would argue that the qualified people running the preschool count as teachers; all of the people in this example are teachers in my opinion. Others disagree.

My wife worked at a (sic) F.E. college, teaching students Childcare Studies. She was training to be a teacher, following the PTLLS, CTLLS and DTLLS route. She stopped to be a full time mum, but had she not, she would have continued to teach 16-19 year olds as well as the same course to adult learners in the evening. She marked, planned, wrote schemes of work, wrote reports, did parents’ evenings, and taught lessons. This sounds very familiar. She didn’t class herself as a teacher by the time she stopped as she was still in the middle of her training, but had she carried on she would have been a teacher in my opinion.

My PGCE tutor Dr A\*\*\* S\*\*\*\* was a Biology teacher for 10 years in state schools after completing her PhD, including being Head of Department in a large state comprehensive school. She has been a PGCE tutor at the University of \*\*\*\*\* for the last 15 years, also undertaking work to develop curricula for Biology for Nuffield foundation. I can testify that she had to mark my assignments as well as provide effective feedback and support through my 1st year of learning to teach. She taught many sessions to her students – she was and still is a teacher (IMO).

Phillip M\*\*\*\* is a Professor of Physics at the renowned University of N\*\*\*\*. He carries out research, but he also teaches courses to undergraduate

Physicists and has a “very keen interest in outreach activities and primary and secondary teaching”. He has told me he would definitely consider himself a teacher (as would I), and depending on the distinction between teachers would possibly join a College of Teaching.

Four different examples of teachers who would possibly not be allowed in the College of Teaching (not Teachers, Teaching!) if some had their way. They would not be allowed to gain from the advantages the CoT proposes to provide.

The proposals are not perfect. I think the membership structure is not yet right. And should anyone be allowed to join as lay members but without voting rights? Possibly, probably not. But I believe the argument about what defines a teacher is one of the reasons the current proposals for the College of Teaching are staged as they are; to allow the sorts of teachers I describe above to join no matter what their status, and to work towards chartered membership should they so wish and if the College leadership decides they fit the bill...





# A more inclusive model:

The full post can be found here: [staffrm.io/@informededu/yGDxII6Yvm](https://staffrm.io/@informededu/yGDxII6Yvm)

The author is David Weston (@informed\_edu) founder of the Teacher Development Trust (TDT), chair of an expert group advising the Department for Education (DfE) on teacher professional development and a founder of the Claim Your College campaign.

## The main argument is this:

We have somehow allowed ourselves to become a fractured profession, with those at the chalk face ending up with the most diminished voices. Passionate ex-teachers, researchers, leaders and teacher-educators contribute, in so many cases, enormous value to our collective endeavours, but the balance of voices has been wrong too many times, and too often those who \*do\* the most with young people also have the most \*done\* to them by well-meaning others.

Some voices (whom I greatly respect) have advocated an “antidote model” to this issue, proposing a new body that is entirely restricted to those practising in the school classroom. I completely understand why this is appealing - it would allow these voices to club together to drown out others.

But, as I've argued before..., the huge shifts we want for our profession won't be brought about, I believe, through divisiveness, staking out territory or denigrating groups. I feel our power lies in coming together \*and\* elevating our practising professionals.

This is a well-trodden path. Hugely respected bodies such as the Institute of Physics, Royal Society of Chemistry, Institute of Mechanical Engineering and British Computing Society (to name a few close to my heart) have levels of affiliate membership that are for everyone with an interest or association with those subjects. By doing so they bring anyone with an interest in to their tents: to influence, to unify, to safeguard standards.

It is hard to sensibly argue that these institutions are anything but prestigious and influential. In the same way we aspire for teaching, they invest powers of governance in those who have achieved the most in their practice. They create other levels of affiliate membership for those who teach the subjects (even if no longer practising the science), but constitutionally enshrine the need for practising and eminent members to maintain the purpose and prestige of the institution. By coming together, they influence more greatly and maintain standards more firmly, while having the broadest and most influential voice heard by the public and by the government.



# How can teachers possibly **make time for this?**

Good teachers know good teaching. Setting up the College needs teacher time and this requires funds that will support teacher release.

This is why the Claim Your College coalition is raising funds directly from the profession to unlock the power of teachers to create their College.

**A College of Teaching** – the profession coming together to set its own standards.

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YOU CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN  
**THE TIME IS NOW**  
[Claimyourcollege.hubbub.net](https://claimyourcollege.hubbub.net)



# It's your turn to have your say!

## QUESTION 1:

Would you favour a College of Teaching membership that is **(choose one)**:

- ☐ Only for practising teachers in schools and colleges (0-18)
- ☐ Only for practising teachers in schools and colleges (5-18)
- ☐ Only for practising teachers in schools and colleges including FE colleges (aged 19 and above)
- ☐ Admits all with an involvement in teaching (pre-school, schools, colleges, Further Education, Higher Education / Universities, education research etc.)
- ☐ Another option – please explain.

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## QUESTION 2:

Should all members have the right to become Chartered Members and so govern the College of Teaching?

Practising teachers in EYFS? – **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Practising teachers in schools and colleges (up to 18) – **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Practising teachers in schools and colleges (including FE colleges aged 19 and above) – **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Practising teachers in higher education – **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

All with an involvement in teaching – **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Another option – please explain.

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## QUESTION 3:

What expertise and experience would you like members of the College of Teaching to have? (**Choose all that apply**)

### Teaching in:

- ☐ Early Years / EYFS
- ☐ Primary
- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ SEN
- ☐ Further Education
- ☐ Higher Education

- ☐ Research
- ☐ Initial teacher education
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Headship
- ☐ Other – (**please explain research etc.**)

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#### QUESTION 4:

Which of the following membership benefits of the College would you value?

*Please use a scale of **1** to **5** where 1 is no value at all and 5 is extremely valuable.*

**Professional standards.** Members will be accredited against valid, portable, respected, sector-led standards; these will provide opportunities for career development, confer status and inspire respect.

**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

**Professional development.** The College will provide a career pathway that informs access to high-quality professional development and learning and enables its members to build a validated portfolio documenting professional impact and to be supported by a College Mentor.

**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

**Professional knowledge.** The College will provide access to a quality assured and diverse professional knowledge base, drawing from academic research and teachers' judgements of the best ways to help children succeed in specific contexts.

**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

**Recognition by schools.** Organisational affiliation will demonstrate a school's commitment to providing access to professional learning and accreditation, including peer-to-peer review.

**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

**A common code of practice** that reflects aspirational standards of teaching, an evidence informed approach to practice, ethical behaviour, promotion of the profession and the best possible opportunities for learners.

**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

## Make your views count

Thank you for your time and interest in taking part in The Big Staff Meeting.

Now you have had a staff discussion, and started thinking about what a College of Teaching means to you, please encourage staff to register their views online at [www.research.net/r/N3L3KMC](http://www.research.net/r/N3L3KMC)

- For further information, or to have your say, visit [www.claimyourcollege.org](http://www.claimyourcollege.org).
- Resources including fact boxes on hot topics, animations and videos of teachers and school leaders sharing their views are available from the Claim Your College site.
- Pledge your support [claimyourcollege.hubbub.net](http://claimyourcollege.hubbub.net).

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