



First Round (recommended) Submission Deadline:

Received up to Friday 11th December 2015

Second Round Deadline: 31st January 2016

Commonwealth Teacher Exchange Programme (CTEP)

Guidance Notes for Applicants and Head Teachers

Please read this information sheet carefully before completing the application form.

The CYEC - a subsidiary charity of the Royal Commonwealth Society - an educational charity, is the recognised UK body for administering the reciprocal Commonwealth Teacher Exchange Programme (CTEP), having taken over management of the programme from the League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers (LECT/CfBT). The CTEP is long-established and operates under protocols developed between cooperating exchange programme coordination bodies/authorities which are reviewed annually. CTEP is a Tier 5 (UK Borders) UK Government authorised Exchange Scheme and CYEC has licensed sponsor status to enable overseas teachers to work as temporary workers in UK. Whilst the scheme is recognised by the UK Departments of Education, there is no government financial support/subsidy and the programme must necessarily be fee-based in order to cover administrative costs.

A CTEP exchange gives participants the opportunity to exchange teaching positions and homes with a colleague from Australia and Canada for an agreed period, while remaining employed by their home jurisdiction. Exchanges can be for any period between one term and a full year, although most placements are for a year. Exchanges to **Canada** take place from September to August, whilst exchanges to **Australia** normally run from January to December.

We can arrange exchanges for periods of less than a year to some jurisdictions - if you are interested in a shorter exchange (i.e. six months, or one term) please email Helen.Jones@thercs.org

Applicants should make themselves aware of the in-country geographical spread (rural and urban) of the exchange destinations. Participants should research any offer of exchange destination in order to manage personal expectations.

However, as places are limited candidates should also take into account that turning down the offer on the basis of location may result in being unmatched for that year. Unmatched applicants will be rolled over to the following year.

PROGRAMME GOALS:

The CTEP programme aims to

- enhance the educational profile of the four nations/UK
- broaden the personal and professional experience of participating teachers by providing an opportunity to enhance skills and knowledge gained in a different teaching environment
- contribute to the enrichment of participating host schools
- promote networking between teachers, schools and students
- foster communication and the exchange of education ideas between Commonwealth countries

BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMME:

Teachers

- develop professionally and personally by experiencing life in, and learning about, another education system and culture
- broaden educational horizons through a global perspective
- are exposed to new teaching methods and can resource new skills
- can experience 'time out' to reflect on, and re-invigorate, their professional practice

Students and Schools

- are taught by an international teacher who can bring fresh perspectives, knowledge and experiences to the classroom
- benefit when international teachers are able to share new ideas and teaching methodologies with colleagues
- have the opportunity to develop school links and international projects
- benefit from the professional development and renewed motivation of returned exchange participants

ELIGIBILITY:

The programme is open to **permanent** teachers from 'schools' of all status (e.g. Local Authority maintained, Academies, Independent); and in all settings and phases (e.g. nursery, primary, special and secondary education). Head Teachers and Deputy Heads are eligible but are most likely to be offered an exchange at the level of classroom teacher, and financial adjustments may need to be made depending on the attitude of the employer. People working part-time may apply, but it is unlikely that a part-time exchange will be available and they may have to be willing to work full-time in their exchange assignment.

We endeavour to match applicants with international colleagues from a similar professional background who can take over each other's professional responsibilities relatively easily.

NOTE: We cannot accept applications from teachers in schools in special measures, or in schools about to go into special measures or other failing categories.

We are not able to accept applications for exchange from teachers in schools which have been given notice to improve or have been placed in special measures by OfSTED/HMI. It is also important that Headteachers in schools that have been judged by OfSTED/HMI to be in "serious difficulties" consider carefully whether they and their schools will have the capacity to support an international teacher. Exchange teachers are not in the position to deal with any "improvement measures". It is inevitable that in such circumstances the exchange will break down at cost to both schools and both teachers.

If your school is in "special measures" or performed poorly in the most recent OfSTED/HMI report it is of crucial importance that you make it clear to RCS and if necessary delay the exchange until the school is in a better position to support an exchange.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Taking on an exchange involves the acceptance of a number of responsibilities by all parties to the exchange. Of these the most important is that both participating teachers understand that in accepting the exchange they are committing themselves to completing the agreed exchange period **in full**. All school students have the right to uninterrupted teaching.

Early withdrawal from an exchange can result in huge costs to both participating schools and to the overseas participant. There is the 'cost' to pupils' education, expectations and trust. There is also an impact on the partner school and staff. It is therefore vitally important that anyone considering an exchange is fully committed to spending the full period overseas.

An exchange can only be terminated early with the agreement of all the parties involved. Early withdrawal from an exchange without the written agreement of RCS for any reason will result in the teacher being charged all the costs resulting from the breakdown of the exchange. These may include an extensive period of supply/substitute cover as well as any costs the international participant incurs in returning home early and may in some cases total several thousand pounds.

APPLICANTS MUST:

- be a qualified, permanent, current and normally full-time school-based employee
- have a minimum of five (5) years full-time and consecutive teaching experience, by 31 July 2016, inclusive of the probationary teaching year.
- be registered with the GTC (England exempt)
- hold QTS / a degree plus PGCE certificate / BEd
- be able to demonstrate any professional, academic and legal requirements set by the host jurisdiction
- be in satisfactory health (you may be required to undergo a medical examination as part of the visa application process for some jurisdictions)
- declare any previous convictions in the last ten years (including drink driving convictions) and comply with normal immigration/entry requirements of the host country)
- provide suitable accommodation for their exchange partner, usually their own home, although alternative rented accommodation may be arranged. Both participants must have sole occupancy of accommodation
- have an excellent professional record
- be prepared to adapt to varied and potentially challenging situations and commit to making the exchange period a success
- be able to commit to the full agreed exchange period.

EMPLOYMENT:

Exchange participants remain in the employment of their home institution or authority and continue to be paid their salary in the normal way, including deductions for national insurance, income tax, pensions etc.

EXCHANGE DESTINATIONS:

To maximise the chances of finding a match, applicants are advised to keep the choice of destination as open as possible. We are currently able to arrange exchanges to the following jurisdictions:

Canada (Academic year 2016-17)

Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan

Australia (NB Calendar year 2017)

New South Wales, ACT, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland

UK applicants wishing to maximise their chances of getting a match should be as unspecific as possible in prioritising exchange destinations. For example, an applicant specifying 'Australia' as first choice is more likely to be matched than an applicant specifying 'Sydney'.

Unfortunately, no guarantee of a match can be made, and sometimes applicants need to re-apply in subsequent years.

FINANCE:

There are considerable costs (direct and indirect) associated with the exchange. Applicants need to consider these carefully before applying:

Fees to RCS:

Initial non-refundable registration fee	£100
Programme fee for confirmed participants	£450

Exchange costs:

Please note that participants are responsible for travel costs and arrangements for travel and health insurance.

Flight	£700-£1300 per adult
Insurance	£300-£600 per adult
Medical examinations	Up to £300 per adult
DBS check	£50 (approximately)
Visa / work permit processing	Variable
Overseas teacher registration fees/permits	Variable
Overseas school fees for accompanying children	Variable

There can also be costs associated with mortgage, utility and insurance providers who may charge if the property is not being lived in by the person whose name appears on the bills.

Each exchange participant continues to pay the mortgage repayments or rent on their home property, but should pay the utility bills of their exchange property for the duration of the exchange period.

Applicants should check whether any benefits/allowances they are entitled to in the UK will also be payable while overseas. This is particularly important in relation to Child Benefit and Tax Credits

ACCOMMODATION:

RCS and its overseas partners are responsible for arranging the professional part of the exchange.

Most exchange participants exchange their homes, but this is a private arrangement that RCS are not involved in.

It is important that before agreeing an exchange that proper consideration is given to the arrangements for the home and an agreement is drawn up between the partners.

Disagreements over any aspect of home exchanges are not valid reasons to withdraw from an exchange.

ACCOMPANYING PARTNER / FAMILY:

Exchange participants are able to travel with their de facto partner / spouse and children. In most cases the de facto partner / spouse will be granted a visa / work permit for the year by the relevant immigration authority. Exchange partners help one another to secure local school places for children.

Sometimes double exchanges are possible ie for both partners/spouses if both are teachers.

HOW TO APPLY:

The programme for 2016 – 2017 is now open; the application form is available by email or on our website

<https://www.thercs.org/youth/teachers/>

Applicants should:

- Arrange a meeting with their Headteacher to discuss their application for exchange. The Headteacher's support is mandatory and in supporting the application form, s/he is recommending your suitability for the programme and willingness to provide full professional placement/support for the incoming teacher.
- Download the form and complete it fully, answering ALL questions.
- Email the completed application form to Teacher.Exchange@thercs.org
- Please send a hard copy of the completed application form and the registration fee cheque in the post. The **non-refundable registration fee** - £100 cheque should be made payable to Royal Commonwealth Society. Please post both the application form and cheque to:

Commonwealth Teacher Exchange Programme (CTEP)
c/o The Royal Commonwealth Society
Award House,
7-11 St Matthew Street,
London,
SW1P 2JT

All applications will be acknowledged by email.

If you have any questions about how to fill the form in or need more specific information about the programme, please email Helen.Jones@thercs.org or call 0203 727 4300

CLOSING DATES:

Please return your application to us as soon as you are ready – you do not need to wait until the last possible moment to submit. This helps us process applications speedily and enables us to get back to you with any queries.

The first round will close on **Friday 11th December**, and applicants meeting this deadline will receive priority matching. It is essential that applicants interested in Canada make this round.

A second round will operate in early 2016, closing in the middle of January 2016. Submit as soon as you are ready and as early as possible.

INFORMATION FOR HEAD TEACHERS:

The Headteacher's approval is a mandatory requirement of an application. The Headteacher is crucial to the success of an exchange and should be involved in the process right from the start. It is vital that they consider whether an exchange is right for the school and the individual applying for an exchange placement, and only support an application where they are confident that both their teacher can cope with the stresses of adapting to a new and sometimes challenging work environment, and that their school can provide a supportive environment for an international teacher. Schools facing challenging circumstances should be open about this, as we do get applications from international teachers experienced at teaching in challenging circumstances.

We cannot accept applications from teachers in schools in special measures, or in schools about to go into special measures.

We are not able to accept applications for exchanges from teachers in schools which have been given notice to improve or have been placed in special measures by OfSTED/HMI. It is also important that Headteachers in schools that have been judged by OfSTED/HMI to be in 'serious difficulties' consider carefully whether they and their schools will have the capacity to support an international teacher. Exchange teachers are not in the position to deal with any 'improvement measures'. It is inevitable that in such circumstances the exchange will break down at great costs to both schools and both teachers. If your school is in 'special measures' or performed poorly in the recent OfSTED/HMI report it is of crucial importance that you make it clear to RCS and if necessary delay the exchange until the school is in the better position to support an exchange.

Headteachers should meet with the UK applicant and discuss all aspects of the proposed exchange in detail before the registration form is submitted, including:

- their reasons for applying for the programme
- their suitability for a professional exchange
- the most likely teaching assignment for the international teacher
- the UK school's capacity to host a successful exchange (including meeting exchange costs, see below)

In giving approval to the application form, the Headteacher is recommending the applicant's suitability for what can be an exciting but also challenging and stressful year (or period) and their resumption to the UK school on return. Before recommending the teacher for the exchange programme, Headteachers should consider the applicant's effectiveness as an educator, including:

- their track record of successful and effective teaching (minimum five years, including the probationary teaching year)
- their professionalism as an educator
- ability to manage students and to gain their respect
- ability to gain the respect of colleagues
- classroom management, planning and organisation skills
- involvement in professional activities in and outside the school/work location
- general contribution to the school/college/work place
- general outlook and attitude
- resourcefulness and initiative
- proven communication skills
- flexibility and adaptability
- tolerance of divergent points of view
- general emotional, medical and physical fitness to undertake an exchange

If you have doubts about the applicant's suitability for exchange, these concerns should be discussed openly with her/him.

CONFIDENTIAL REFERENCE:

The Headteacher will be required to write a confidential reference. Once the application is received by RCS the Headteacher will be contacted to provide a reference. For the sake of the participating schools, it is crucial that this is a frank and honest assessment.

RCS are not able to propose an exchange if the reference indicates qualities that are below average. In this situation it is very likely that the applicant will want to know why the exchange proposal cannot go ahead. If the Headteacher is unable to write a positive reference, they should not endorse the application form.

Headteachers should be aware that although the reference remains confidential from the applicant, the fact that a reference was written confidentially does not exempt it from the disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Legislation.

LEAVE and SICK LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS:

Teachers on exchange must work to the pattern of working hours and holidays in the jurisdiction of their exchange. Overseas jurisdictions grant UK exchange teachers between 3 and 5 days **professional development leave** in addition to this.

Arrangements for **sick pay** differ depending on the jurisdiction with which the exchange is taking place.

The situation for various jurisdictions is set out below. Exchange schools will be expected to cover sickness and other absence for the number of days listed below and additional days will need to be met by the home school or jurisdiction. The periods listed below are for the total duration of the exchange and are cumulative.

Independent Schools

Arrangements for sick leave must be negotiated between both schools taking part in the exchange. Sick leave arrangements must be agreed when the exchange is confirmed. Please ensure your Headteacher contacts the exchange school as soon as the exchange is confirmed to begin negotiations.

State Schools

The following jurisdictions will cover the costs of sick leave in excess of the following number of days:

CANADA	Alberta	20 Days
	British Columbia	20 Days
	New Brunswick	20 Days
	Ontario	20 Days
AUSTRALIA	South Australia	10 Days
	New South Wales	15 Days
	Queensland	10 Days
	Victoria	30 Days
	Western Australia	15 Days
	ACT independent	15 Days

THE MATCHING PROCESS

Success in finding an exchange partner is dependent on an international teacher in a similar professional situation with suitable accommodation applying for an exchange of similar duration. UK applicants for exchange often outnumber international applicants and unfortunately a match cannot be guaranteed. In most cases only one offer of exchange will be made per year. Applicants can re-apply/roll over their application the following year if they are initially unsuccessful.

The UK Headteacher and the overseas Principal have the right to veto any proposal which they feel will not be appropriate for their school. However, as UK applicants outnumber international applicants, it is unlikely that more than one exchange offer will be made. The decision to refuse an exchange should therefore be considered carefully. If, for instance, the proposed international teacher is not an exact match for the UK teacher, but has a skill mix which would be of benefit to the school, a degree of flexibility might enable the exchange to go ahead.

1. The application form is used by RCS and our international partners to make initial matches so please fill the form in as fully as possible. Please do not enclose any additional leaflets or booklets about the school or the area you live in at the stage of submitting your application. These can be provided later directly to your exchange partner when the match is confirmed.

2. If applicants are found a match they will normally be notified between February and July 2016. The detailed application forms of exchange partners will be posted to each Headteacher/Principal for consideration. There is usually a two-week window in which to discuss the exchange proposal and accept or decline.

3. Applicants should expect a period of uncertainty whilst each party considers the exchange proposal and follows up potential questions. **It is compulsory for the Headteachers and overseas Principals to speak to each other and to their proposed exchange teacher before the exchange is confirmed, to ensure confidence that the exchangee is suitable for their school.**

4. If the Headteacher finds the proposed incoming exchange teacher suitable, the proposed exchangee's application will be forwarded to the UK applicant for consideration.

5. The exchange is considered confirmed [BETWEEN RCS AND THE OVERSEAS SCHOOL] once RCS have received a signed agreement from the participant, Headteacher/Principal and Local Authority/Board of Governors (and international counterparts).

6. RCS then issues a formal letter and certificate of confirmation. When a match has been accepted both parties are committed to the exchange. Successful UK participants are expected to pay a non-refundable programme fee of £450 upon confirmation stage.

7. The process of dialogue between exchange partners about such matters as accommodation, transport, special requirements etc then follows. All matters should be agreed to in writing, including an accommodation agreement, in advance of travel. RCS provides advice to assist.

8. Some overseas jurisdictions will require you to register under an overseas teacher registration body (eg the equivalent of the GTC). This will be arranged with the overseas coordinating department. RCS and our overseas partners will provide support, **but it is the individual's responsibility to provide the necessary information and evidence for registration in a timely manner.** Failure to start their teaching obligations on time may result in a liability for supply cover costs.

Pre-Exchange Meeting

9. All UK participants with a confirmed match, as well as those whose exchange is close to confirmation, must normally attend a pre-exchange meeting held in London (dates and venues to be confirmed closer to the date).

EXCHANGE TIME-LINE:

November 2015 – January 2016	Candidates submit applications for the programme
January 2016 – July 2016	If a match is found, applicants are notified by email between late January and July (dependent upon destination)
March 2016 / May 2016	Matches with Canada are confirmed; visa applications made Pre Exchange Meetings for teachers going to Canada
June 2016/ September 2016	Australia matches finalised; visa applications made
August and September 2016	Canada exchanges start Pre Exchange Meetings for teachers going to Australia
January 2017	Australia Exchanges start

COST OF EXCHANGE FOR THE UK SCHOOL

There are a number of costs associated with confirmed exchanges that must be met by the UK school. These should be considered carefully at the start of the application process and include:

- supply cover to release UK participant for attending the compulsory pre-exchange meeting
- supply cover to release the international teacher for five days for Continuing Professional Development activities throughout the exchange year/period (this includes the induction course)

WHO DOES WHAT.....

RCS:

- Processes initial applications
- Liaises with overseas education departments
- Negotiates the match based on similar professional experience
- Provides information and support to exchange participants and schools
- Provides a compulsory pre-exchange meeting for UK exchange participants
- Provides a compulsory one-day induction for the overseas teacher on arrival
- Provides Tier 5 Certificate of Sponsorship for the overseas teacher's visa application
- Supports overseas teacher during UK placement

UK Exchange Participant:

- Ensures full consideration and understanding of the Exchange requirements prior to application
- Makes a firm commitment to the exchange
- Applies for VISA
- Attends the pre-exchange meeting
- Fulfils all professional, academic and legal requirements of the host jurisdiction
- Arranges and pays the cost of flight, travel insurance, registrations and medical requirements
- Returns to home school upon completion of exchange

UK Headteacher and School

- Approves initial application and subsequent reference request (ensuring the knowledge and consent of Government body, Local Authority and other relevant Bodies)
- Communicates with the UK teacher and overseas Principal and teacher
- Ensures appropriate professional and pastoral support for the overseas teacher
- Arranges a formal induction plan that introduces overseas teacher to school policies
- Releases the international teacher for a one-day RCS induction and an additional four days for professional development needs
- Releases the UK teacher for pre exchange meeting
- Ensures continuation of pay and conditions of service to UK teacher
- Facilitates smooth return into school of UK teacher

Notes:

Procedures are in place to assist UK and international participants in the case of an accident or extended period of sickness. RCS can also assist where there is illness, bereavement or an urgent family crisis in their home country. Adequate travel and health insurance is essential. Each situation is considered individually and we will work with all parties to devise a solution, which all parties are satisfied with.

Confirmation of an Exchange is subject to all professional, academic and legal requirements of the host jurisdiction being fulfilled/in place. (Professional and academic requirements could include the participant being able to demonstrate required qualifications for the host jurisdiction, for example).

Participants are advised NOT to buy flights or enter into any other financial commitments until all professional, academic and legal matters have been confirmed. This includes completing the VISA process for entry into the host country.