

Key Skills of an Effective Subject Leader

Self-evaluation

The best place to start!

How frequently do you assess yourself against the National Standards for Subject Leaders?



This provides a comprehensive list of relevant skills and knowledge for subject leaders.

Critically & honestly assess yourself against each item on the list using the following scale, then use for your own professional development:

- **Confident**/need no support or training
- **Some confidence here**/need some training or time to read relevant documents for this area
- **Very little or no confidence/experience** and need support/training

Measuring impact

Can you answer the "So what?" question?



A large part of your role will be observations, making judgements, and strategic decisions.

The 'so what?' question comes after you've gathered evidence and you're about to make strategic decisions about next steps.

So what are you going to do with what you've found out?

So what strategic decisions will you be making?

So what will you do to measure the impact of these decisions on teaching, learning and standards? ... And how will you measure success?

Organisation

This is about being able to juggle the subject leader role with teaching and other commitments.



Make sure you have the big picture at the start of the year.

Diarise key events across the year, such as collecting assessment data ... ensure you're clear to staff about what they need to give you and by when. (Send them reminders too!)

Decide what proportion of your non-contact time you need to spend on your subject leader tasks. Include time working at home, if relevant.

Create a termly action plan so you can stay on top of the short-term & medium-term tasks (i.e. important & urgent / important & non-urgent).

Support for colleagues

Regardless how busy you are, you'll need to build in time to respond to support requests from colleagues.



You won't always be able to predict what requests you'll get, but the more you know about what's going on in your subject - the more you'll be able to anticipate requests, and even pre-empt them. **This is about knowing the staff and being proactive!**

So get to know your colleagues and how they prefer to work; e.g. which ones like to share ideas, which have low/high levels of confidence, etc.

Also set expectations about the best times to come to you for support. Make sure these are times when you don't mind being disturbed.

Which other skills do you need or use?