

**National Foundation  
for Educational Research**

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**Research into the deployment and impact  
of support staff who have achieved HLTA  
status**

**Final Report**

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**HLTA**

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In August 2006, the NFER was commissioned by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) to carry out research into the deployment and impact of support staff who have achieved Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status. The HLTA role was introduced as part of the *National Agreement* (ATL *et al.*, 2003) to reinforce and improve the skills of support staff, thus allowing them to take on additional roles and responsibilities and in doing so raise standards and reduce teacher workload.

## Aims and objectives

The research aimed to find out about the deployment of those who have achieved HLTA status in England and to assess the impact or effect they are having in schools. The study had the following objectives:

- To identify the range of ways that support staff with HLTA status are being employed and deployed in schools.
- To establish the extent to which support staff roles have developed and changed since achieving HLTA status.
- To identify good practice in the deployment of support staff with HLTA status and how this is facilitated; as well as to highlight any barriers that may exist for effective deployment.
- To explore the perceptions and experiences of those with HLTA status in relation to their work; including job satisfaction and morale, experience of performance reviews, aspirations for future training and development, and career progression.
- To explore and assess the impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status in schools – in particular how their work supports the learning, engagement, motivation and involvement of pupils; in addition how they support the teachers they work with and the whole school.

## About the study

The research consisted of two strands. Strand One comprised two questionnaire surveys. The first was completed by 1560 people with HLTA status working in primary, secondary and special schools in England (a response rate of 56 per cent). The second was completed by 1108 senior leaders working in primary, secondary and special schools within England which employed HLTAs (a response rate of 54 per cent). Strand Two of the research comprised in-depth interviews with 19 HLTAs, nine senior leaders and eight teachers in nine case-study schools (four primary schools, four secondary schools and one special school). The project took place from August 2006 to August 2007.

## Key findings

### How are HLTAs being employed and deployed?

- Just over one third (36 per cent) of those with HLTA status worked exclusively as HLTAs on a full-time or part-time basis.
- A third (33 per cent) of HLTAs reported working in split roles; 65 per cent of these reported being paid differently for HLTA and non-HLTA duties. Similarly, 42 per cent of senior leaders reported that they employed one or more HLTAs in split roles and 67 per cent of these reported that such staff received different rates of pay for HLTA and non-HLTA duties.
- Most HLTAs (59 per cent) were paid for working during term time, although payments were spread out to cover school holidays. A further 19 per cent were paid throughout the year. Thirteen per cent said they were paid during term time only.
- Eighty per cent of senior leaders were aware of a LA-recommended pay structure for HLTAs, and where such recommendations were known about they were utilised in eight out of ten cases (84 per cent).
- Most schools in the sample (68 per cent) had one or two members of staff with HLTA status, but not all of these worked in an HLTA post since only 53 per cent of schools employed either one or two members of staff to carry out HLTA-level duties. Larger schools tended to have more HLTAs than smaller ones.
- Both HLTAs and senior leaders identified a range of ways in which HLTAs were being deployed, including working with pupils on a one-to-one basis (e.g. providing support to pupils with special needs), with small groups of pupils and with whole classes.
- According to senior leaders, HLTAs in primary schools were considerably more likely than those in secondary schools to work with whole classes without a class teacher being present (73 per cent and 31 per cent). They also reported that HLTAs in primary schools were also less likely to work in specified subject areas (19 per cent and 33 per cent).
- Sixty per cent of HLTA respondents reported that they had a specialist role, most commonly in special education needs (SEN).
- Line management responsibility for HLTAs was undertaken by headteachers in 56 per cent of primary schools and four per cent in secondary schools. Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) were involved in the line management of HLTAs in 17 per cent of primary schools and 57 per cent in secondary schools.

### How far have roles developed and changed?

The evidence suggested that some HLTA respondents felt certain aspects of their role had changed since achieving HLTA status, especially in relation to planning and preparing lessons. However, many felt their role had remained the same.

- Over one third of respondents with HLTA status reported an increase in planning and preparing lessons.
- There was a general increase in liaison with parents/carers and some HLTAs did more line management.

- Just under one third of respondents (31 per cent) were very pleased with the way in which their role had developed since achieving HLTA status. A further 19 per cent did not expect any changes because their role was already at HLTA-level. Additionally, 16 per cent noted some positive changes, but not as many as they would have liked.
- Only four per cent of respondents said their role had changed but not in the direction they would have liked. A further 13 per cent were disappointed with the lack of change to their role and 12 per cent did not expect any changes given the circumstances of their school.

### **How do HLTAs view their new role?**

- Almost three quarters (74 per cent) of the surveyed HLTAs thought that achieving HLTA status had led to increased confidence/self-esteem. Over half thought it had resulted in greater job satisfaction (54 per cent) and increased pay (53 per cent). Sixty four per cent said it had brought an increased workload.
- Greater job satisfaction among HLTAs was associated with greater levels of responsibility, having a recognised HLTA post and having a specialist role. Lower job satisfaction was associated with a lack of time for planning, and experiencing a range of difficulties in their school.
- Increased stress among HLTAs was associated most strongly with a lack of time to plan and prepare their work.
- HLTAs who were employed in full-time HLTA posts were more likely to report greater job satisfaction compared with HLTAs who were employed in part-time HLTA posts.

### **What has been the impact of the HLTA role?**

- Both HLTAs and senior leaders felt the HLTA role was having a positive impact on supporting pupil learning.
- HLTAs reported that they had the greatest impact on pupils by supporting learning with individuals and small groups. Senior leaders overwhelmingly felt that HLTAs had had a positive impact through supporting pupil learning within their school.
- Between 80 and 83 per cent of HLTAs responding to open-ended questions were able to identify at least one contribution they had made as HLTAs that had positively affected pupil performance, the work of teachers and their school as a whole.
- HLTAs reported that their greatest impact on teachers was enabling them to have time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). This was also identified by senior leaders, especially in primary schools.
- HLTAs identified the greatest impacts on schools as being able to provide lesson cover at short notice, managing TAs and providing continuity for pupils during teacher absence.
- Between 90 and 91 per cent of senior leaders responding to open-ended questions were able to identify at least one contribution made by an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect on pupil performance and also within their school more widely.
- Almost three-quarters of senior leaders (73 per cent) indicated that the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload, at least to some extent.

- Senior leaders suggested that the main ways in which the work of HLTAs could be made more effective was through improved/ongoing training (23 per cent), increased funding (17 per cent), the availability of more planning and preparation time with teachers (ten per cent) and further development of the HLTA role (ten per cent).

### **What difficulties have been experienced?**

- Twenty-two per cent of senior leaders reported no difficulties in deploying HLTAs effectively. The most commonly cited difficulty was a lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan/prepare (44 per cent). Another difficulty reported by senior leaders was conflict with HLTAs' other duties in their schools (26 per cent).
- A lack of HLTA posts was identified as a barrier to the effective utilisation of the role by 29 per cent of HLTA survey respondents. Sixteen per cent of senior leaders also viewed lack of HLTA vacancies as a difficulty associated with their deployment.
- Other barriers identified by HLTAs included a lack of time to plan and prepare lessons with teachers (25 per cent) and a lack of time to plan work themselves (23 per cent). Some (22 per cent) felt that teachers and/or senior leaders did not fully understand the HLTA role.
- Regarding training for teachers working with HLTAs, 24 per cent of senior leaders in secondary schools thought this was a difficulty associated with HLTA deployment, but only nine per cent identified this difficulty in primary schools.
- HLTAs working part-time reported more barriers than those working full-time.

### **What is considered good practice in HLTA deployment?**

The NFER's research team developed a model of good practice in HLTA deployment based on case-study visits to nine schools. The model identified six steps for schools to consider, as follows:

1. Take a whole school review of staffing, including deciding on the number of HLTA posts and matching the needs of one's school with HLTA interests and skills.
2. Consult with HLTAs about a specialist role, for example a subject, pastoral, SEN or intervention role.
3. Allocate HLTAs to staff teams and develop teamwork, including identifying a 'close' line manager.
4. Define role requirements and responsibilities, including differentiating HLTA from TA roles.
5. Raise awareness of the HLTA role among staff and parents.
6. Support and develop HLTAs in their role, including continuing professional development (CPD), performance reviews, resource allocation (especially planning time) and role/career development.



## **Conclusions**

The NFER's research into the deployment and impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status reveals a largely positive picture. The HLTA role has clearly grown and developed since it was introduced in 2003. In line with its original purpose, HLTA status is offering recognition and valuable development opportunities to support staff as well as providing assistance to pupils, teachers and schools. It is clear that the HLTA role has the potential to change the way in which education is delivered and to make a positive difference to school life. It offers greater flexibility to school leaders as well as greater job satisfaction for staff. However, as with any new educational development of this magnitude, some initial difficulties and challenges are to be expected. The NFER's research draws attention to a range of issues that those involved in the HLTA programme nationally and locally should find useful in moving the programme forwards.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 About the report

This report details the findings of two surveys designed to investigate the deployment and impact of support staff who have achieved higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) status in England, along with interview data collected from nine case-study schools.

## 1.2 About the project

In August 2006, the NFER was commissioned by the TDA to carry out research into the deployment and impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status. The HLTA role was introduced in 2003 by the then Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Children, Schools and Families) to recognise the work already being undertaken by a considerable number of support staff in English schools. As part of the remodelling the workforce agenda (see ATL *et al.*, 2003), it was also intended that the new and higher status would provide an opportunity for support staff to reinforce and improve their skills, thus allowing them to take on additional roles and responsibilities and in doing so reduce teacher workloads. An important part of the reform was the introduction of a set of professional standards that recognise high level support for teaching and learning.

The TDA was assigned responsibility for the development and implementation of the HLTA Standards and appropriate training, preparation and assessment in 2003. During Phase 1 of the HLTA programme (April 2004 to December 2005), over 11,000 people in England achieved the status and an additional 1,805 people achieved the status in Phase 2 (January to August 2006). The most recent figures provided by the TDA in June 2007 show that over 17,000 people have so far achieved HLTA status in England. Based on figures published in Statistical First Release 15/2007, this amounts to approximately ten per cent of the teaching assistant (TA) population and five per cent of the total number of support staff (FTE) population in the local authority maintained school sector in England (see DfES, 2007).

As the HLTA role is relatively new, research on the subject is limited, particularly in terms of deployment and impact. A study recently completed for the TDA provided useful insights into Phase 1 of the programme (see Pye Tait, 2006) and these have informed the design and implementation of Phase 2. Similarly, Foulkes (2005) provides useful data on the perceptions of individuals with HLTA status, but uses a limited sample. Overall, there is limited information about what happens to HLTAs once they have completed the programme. Sharpe (2005) does provide some useful insights but the report focuses exclusively on schools in Surrey. Likewise, research by Bedford *et al.* (2006) only gives details of the Edge Hill Consortium. The

NFER's research, detailed within this report, is intended to provide much broader insight into the work being undertaken by HLTAs and the impact they are having in schools by using a nationally representative sample.

The research reported here forms part of a wider body of TDA-commissioned research on teaching assistants and school support staff more generally. The findings contained within this report also add to recently published work on the deployment and impact of support staff in schools (Blatchford *et al.*, 2007). This large-scale study describes the types of support staff in school, their characteristics and deployment in schools, and how these change over time. It also analyses the impact or effect of support staff on teaching and learning, along with management and administration in schools, and how this changes over time.

In addition, the findings contained within this report build upon previous NFER research on the attitudes and experiences of classroom assistants (Lee and Mawson, 1998) and two projects on the employment and deployment of teaching assistants (Lee, 2002; Smith *et al.*, 2004). These projects, completed before the introduction of the HLTA role, showed teaching assistants to be playing an important role in supporting teachers and pupils, but also identified some dissatisfaction with career development opportunities. The present research details how the HLTA role has developed across the country, in terms of deployment and impact, since the HLTA role was established.

### **1.3 Aims and objectives**

The NFER's research aims to find out about the deployment of those who have achieved HLTA status in England and to assess the impact or effect they are having in schools. The study has the following objectives:

- To identify the range of ways that support staff with HLTA status are being employed and deployed in schools
- To establish the extent to which support staff roles have developed and changed since achieving HLTA status
- To explore the perceptions and experiences of those with HLTA status in relation to their work; including job satisfaction and morale, experience of performance reviews, aspirations for future training and development, and career progression
- To explore and assess the impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status in schools – in particular how their work supports the learning, engagement, motivation and involvement of pupils; in addition how they support the teachers they work with and the whole school.
- To identify good practice in the deployment of support staff with HLTA status and how this is facilitated; as well as to highlight any barriers that may exist for effective deployment.

## 2 Data Collection and Analysis

### 2.1 Introduction

The NFER's research into the deployment and impact of HLTAs consisted of two strands. Strand One comprised two questionnaire surveys. The first was completed by 1560 HLTAs working in primary, secondary and special schools within England. The second was completed by 1108 senior leaders working in primary, secondary and special schools within England which employ HLTAs. Strand Two of the research comprised in-depth interviews with HLTAs, teachers and senior leaders in nine case study schools. This chapter details how data was collected for both strands.

### 2.2 Questionnaire survey

#### 2.2.1 Sampling

The TDA provided the NFER with a dataset of HLTAs involved in Phases 1 and 2 of the assessment programme (i.e. up to 31 July 2006). Of these 13,199 individuals, it was possible to match 9758 to the NFER's survey administration database<sup>1</sup>. As originally proposed, 25 per cent of the HLTAs listed in the database were sampled with the expectation that ten per cent of these would respond (based on a 40 per cent response rate to the questionnaire from those drawn in the sample). The database was split into three groups comprising HLTAs working in primary, secondary and special schools. The primary and secondary samples were drawn through stratified random sampling. Due to small numbers, all special schools were included in the special sample, which removed the need for sampling. The primary and secondary samples were stratified by two school characteristics and one respondent characteristic. These were: school size (based on pupil rather than staff numbers), England's nine government regions and age of respondent. Gender was considered as a stratifier, but rejected because male/female numbers were too imbalanced.

In addition, people registered on the maths and science HLTA pilot were included in the sample. The registration database sent to the NFER indicated that 49 people were working as maths and science HLTAs, but it was only possible to match 36 of these to the NFER's register of schools – 35 were deployed in secondary schools and one in a special school<sup>2</sup>. On the basis of

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<sup>1</sup> This database contains details of every school in primary, secondary, special and further education in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It enables the NFER to draw samples taking into account the requirements of sponsors by stratifying the samples drawn for particular projects according to specific variables. The dataset provided by the TDA did not entirely match the NFER's dataset because identification numbers or postcodes were incorrect or missing in either file.

<sup>2</sup> This figure is based on the whole population prior to the exclusion of schools outlined below. Following the exclusions, only 25 maths and science HLTAs were included in the sample – all of whom worked in secondary schools.

this, maths and science HLTAs were not treated as a separate sample and were included in those detailed above. As well as the HLTA samples, senior leaders were surveyed. A questionnaire was sent to the headteacher of each school contained within the HLTA samples for completion by the headteacher or another senior leader.

Initially, all schools maintained by local authorities in England were included in the sampling frame. However, in order to reduce the burden on schools, those participating in similar research projects for the TDA and others were omitted from the sample (see below). Also, some HLTAs specified on their registration form a desire not to be involved in research – these were not included in the sample<sup>3</sup>. The schools/HLTAs that were discounted from the sampling process were:

- Schools invited to participate in the TDA's training and development testbed schools project (n=45);
- Schools invited to participate in the Institute of Education's case studies or systematic observations on the deployment and impact of support staff in schools (n=59 and n=23, respectively);
- Schools invited to participate in the NFER's study on support staff experiences of training and development (n= 1,793);
- All HLTAs who had requested not to be included in research, as indicated on the HLTA registration database (n=1,559).

### **2.2.2 Design and pilot**

The questionnaire surveys were designed by NFER researchers, in discussion with NFER statisticians, the TDA and consultants from VT FourS Ltd<sup>4</sup>. The questionnaires were designed as A4 booklets. The front pages gave instructions on how to complete and return the questionnaire. A covering letter accompanied the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the research project. The questionnaires comprised largely multiple-choice questions (some of which used scale measures) and a small number of open-ended questions. This was intended to ease completion, lessening the burden on school staff and helping to increase the response rate. The HLTA questionnaire was 12 pages long and the senior leader questionnaire was four pages. Completion time was estimated to be 20 minutes for HLTAs and ten minutes for senior leaders. The questionnaires were piloted by HLTAs and senior leaders in one infant school, one primary school, one junior school and one secondary school.

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<sup>3</sup> There were 1559 opt outs of which 1070 were matched to the NFER's Survey Administration Database.

<sup>4</sup> VT FourS Ltd is a public-private organisation working in partnership with a large local authority, over 500 schools, a number of children's services authorities, along with government agencies and departments. It also a regional provider of HLTA assessment and the largest national contractor of HLTA services in England. Consultants from VT FourS Ltd contributed to the design of research instruments through their specialist knowledge and professional expertise.

### **2.2.3 Survey administration**

A paper questionnaire was sent to all sampled HLTAs in November 2006 at their school address. A questionnaire was also sent to the headteacher at each school at the same time. Headteachers were invited to complete the questionnaire or pass it to a senior colleague whom they thought was well placed to comment on the role of HLTAs in the school. A reply-paid envelope was provided in which completed questionnaires could be returned.

A reminder letter was sent to all non-respondents a few weeks later, followed by email and telephone reminding in December. HLTAs working in special schools where an e-mail address had not been supplied were subsequently targeted for telephone reminding, as this was the lowest responding group. Although the general response from senior leaders was better than expected, a targeted telephone reminding strategy was adopted to increase the number of questionnaires from senior leaders in secondary schools.

The advertised deadline for responding was 1 December 2006, but late returns were accepted until 15 December 2006. Approximately 40 questionnaires were returned from HLTAs after the final deadline and about ten from senior leaders. These have not been analysed, but a manual scan of the questionnaires indicated that respondents' views largely corresponded with those included in the main analysis.<sup>5</sup>

### **2.2.4 Response rates**

The anticipated 40 per cent response rate was exceeded in all cases. Indeed, the survey was completed by 14 per cent of the entire HLTA population rather than the expected ten per cent. The number of questionnaires received from HLTAs and senior leaders is detailed in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. Details of sample representation are provided in Appendix A and B. The tables show that the achieved HLTA and senior leader samples are broadly representative of the whole school population for achievement, region, local authority type and free school meals.

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<sup>5</sup> In addition, 47 HLTAs provided letters to accompany or substitute for their questionnaire. The most common remark, provided by 28 people, was that they had never been employed as an HLTA. Eighteen late respondents expressed the view that HLTA status had made little or no difference to their role, 16 said their school did not have any HLTA posts at present and 13 said they had been carrying out HLTA duties for some time before gaining the status.

**Table 2.1** Response by HLTAs

<b>Sample</b>	<b>No of questionnaires despatched</b>	<b>No of questionnaires completed</b>	<b>% of questionnaires completed</b>
Primary schools	1200	692	58
Secondary schools* (including maths and science specialists)	1225	695**	58
Special schools	369	173	47
<b>N =</b>	<b>2794</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>56</b>

\* 20 out of 25 questionnaires were received from maths and science HLTAs, as anticipated.

\*\* 699 questionnaires were returned but four were removed because their ID number had been obscured.

**Table 2.2** Response by senior leaders

<b>Sample</b>	<b>No of questionnaires despatched</b>	<b>No of questionnaires completed</b>	<b>% of questionnaires completed</b>
Primary schools	1104	622	56
Secondary schools	754	367	49
Special schools	195	119	61
<b>N =</b>	<b>2053</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>54</b>

8 out of 20 questionnaires sent to senior leaders in schools with maths and science HLTAs were received.

Those completing a questionnaire were almost exclusively female (99 per cent in primaries and 95 per cent secondaries and special schools), which reflects the total population of HLTAs (see Appendix A). Most of the primary schools respondents were aged between 41 and 45 years (31 per cent) and most of those from secondary schools were between 46 and 50 years (29 per cent), also reflecting the age groups of the total population of HLTAs for the respective sectors. However, the largest percentage of special schools respondents were 51 years old or above (23 per cent), which is slightly different to the national picture of 17 per cent aged 51 and over (see Appendix A).

The majority of senior leader surveys were completed by headteachers, with almost all of the remainder completed by deputy or assistant headteachers and special needs coordinators (SENCOs) (see Table 4.1). In the majority of cases, questionnaires were received from a senior leader and at least one HLTA from



the same school. There were some cases where questionnaires were received from an HLTA but not a senior leader. There were a few cases where questionnaires were received from a senior leader but not an HLTA.

### **2.2.5 Survey analysis**

To begin, basic descriptive analysis was carried out to enable an examination of the frequency distribution of responses for each question item. This technique provided an overview of responses to individual questions and enabled the research team to identify issues for further analysis. This technique was carried out on the two aggregated datasets (i.e. the data was not split by phase of education for either HLTAs or senior leaders). In addition, cross-tabulations were then carried out to enable the research team to describe patterns and general trends in the data set. Further statistical analysis<sup>6</sup> was carried out in some cases to test for significant differences between groups (e.g. HLTAs working in primary and secondary schools) and the probability of particular outcomes (e.g. whether or not HLTAs reporting a higher level of responsibility at work also reported a higher level of recognition of their work by other staff).

## **2.3 Case studies**

### **2.3.1 Sample of case study schools**

The NFER proposed to carry out nine case studies of HLTA deployment and impact. In selecting schools, the research team sought to recruit those that would provide interesting, rich and contextual data to set against and help explain the quantitative findings. It was also important to recruit schools that would enable us to explore a range of examples in relation to the deployment and impact of HLTAs across and within differing contexts, since variety was crucial in showing how HLTAs can support learning in different ways. To assist the selection, respondents were asked at the end of the questionnaire if they would be happy to participate further. Approximately 280 schools responded positively (positive responses from HLTAs were cross-referenced with those given by senior leaders and HLTAs to ensure general school agreement).

Due to the overwhelming support for case study visits, a short-list was produced on the basis of whether or not schools had collected any data to show the impact of the HLTA role (as indicated on the senior leader questionnaire). This resulted in 45 schools being selected. The responses given by these schools were then reviewed with the aim of selecting the following:

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<sup>6</sup> Further analysis made use of ordinary least squared regression and logistic regression. A p value of 0.01 was used for all cross tabulations, while all other p values used a default setting of 0.05 (see Appendix D, Table D1).

- An HLTA in a subject role within a secondary school – not necessarily maths and science – who is line managed within a subject department.
- An HLTA supporting pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and/or those who are considered gifted and talented.
- At least one HLTA in assistant head of year/pastoral roles.
- A school with a small budget which had implemented an innovative approach to deploying HLTA, or a school with a staged approach to embedding the HLTA role.
- A school that had taken a strategic approach to the deployment of HLTAs i.e. multiple HLTAs in various roles.

On the basis of the above, nine priority schools were selected (four primaries, four secondaries and one special school). A further seven reserve schools were selected (four primaries, two secondaries and one special school), so that if a school declined to be involved or withdrew its participation, a replacement could easily be selected and approached. In addition to the criteria outlined above, it was also intended that case-study schools would represent a good geographical spread and an urban/rural mix. However, the main objective was to visit schools demonstrating good practice in the deployment of HLTAs and where the impact of the HLTA role was most noticeable. Table 2.3 gives details of case-study schools.

**Table 2.3** Details of case-study schools

Region	Urban/ Rural	Phase	Type	Age	Roll
Yorkshire and The Humber	Town	P	C	4-11	243
Yorkshire and The Humber	Village	P	VA	4-11	85
Yorkshire and The Humber	Town	P	C	4-11	150
Yorkshire and The Humber	Urban	P	C	7-11	351
South East	Village	S	C	11-16	848
South East	Urban	S	C	11-18	1932
London	Urban	S	C	11-16	1290
East Midlands	Town	S	C	11-18	1257
East of England	Urban	Sp	C Sp	3-19	81

Source: <http://www.edubase.gov.uk/>

All schools were co-educational

Phase: P = primary, S = secondary, Sp = special

Type: C = community and VA = voluntary-aided

### **2.3.2 Design and piloting of interview schedules**

To carry out the case study work, researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with headteachers/senior leaders, teachers and HLTAs working in nine schools across England<sup>7</sup>. The work sought to illuminate and provide greater depth to the issues emerging from the questionnaires. It also sought to situate the deployment and impact of HLTAs in the context of particular schools. Interviewees were asked to reflect on examples of good practice (and barriers to its development), which could be disseminated to, and perhaps adopted by, other schools in the future. The areas of discussion, developed in liaison with TDA and consultants from VT FourS Ltd, centred on forming a strategy for HLTAs; HLTA roles and responsibilities; working relationships; management and support; outcomes of the HLTA role; and future developments.

### **2.3.3 Case study visits**

During March, April and May 2007, the research team made contact with the senior leader respondent from each selected school, explaining the research project and inviting participation. Subject to their agreement, a plan for research activity appropriate to the school was arranged. As proposed, schools were invited to put forward a maximum of seven interviewees, and were encouraged to ensure that at least one senior leader, teacher and HLTA participated. In actuality, most put forward three or four interviewees (see Table 2.3). The interview questions were appropriate to each category of respondent and were designed to last about 35 minutes. Subject to the permission of participants, interviews were audio recorded and hand-written notes were taken. All interviews were held face-to-face with a researcher at the interviewees' respective schools during April and May 2007.

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<sup>7</sup> The team did consider using focus groups and/or group interviews with a mixture of school staff, but decided this was unwise as such sessions could be perceived as singling out the work of HLTAs, thus running the risk of causing unnecessary concern to HLTAs and their colleagues. Also, the team did not think it appropriate to involve HLTAs in group discussions, as individuals may wish to speak in confidence about issues affecting them.

**Table 2.3** Details of interviewees

<b>School No</b>	<b>Senior leader</b>	<b>Class teacher</b>	<b>HLTA</b>
1	Headteacher	One class teacher	Two HLTAs
2	Headteacher/teacher	None	Two HLTAs
3	Headteacher	One class teacher	One HLTA
4	Assistant headteacher/teacher	None	One HLTA
5	Deputy headteacher	None	Three HLTAs
6	Deputy headteacher	One class teacher	One HLTA
7	Assistant headteacher	Two class teachers	Three HLTAs
8	Deputy headteacher	Two class teachers	Four HLTAs
9	Headteacher	One class teacher	Two HLTAs

#### **2.3.4 Case study analysis**

The interviews were written up in electronic form to assist their distribution among the research team. The data were then analysed in relation to: good practice in deployment of HLTAs; good practice in relation to job satisfaction; and impact of HLTAs in schools. A series of questions were then posed in relation to these themes. Although data from primary, secondary and special schools was analysed together, particular consideration was given to any strong differences occurring between phases. Likewise, attention was paid to any differences between respondent groups. Consideration was also paid to issues associated with other contextual factors e.g. school location, school size, intake and region. Vignettes were used to illustrate aspects of good practice.

## 3 HLTA Survey Findings

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of a national survey of people with HLTA status who were asked about their employment and deployment, along with their perceived impact within schools. The first section looks at issues concerning HLTA employment such as key stages worked with, specialist roles, contracts and payments. The second section examines aspects of HLTA<sup>8</sup> deployment such as work with whole classes and support provided to pupils and teachers. The third section considers the impact of the HLTA role. This is followed by sections on HLTAs' perceptions and experiences of working in a higher level role and their future plans.

The data included in the chapter was gathered from 1560 HLTAs in primary, secondary and special schools in England between November and December 2006. This represents approximately 14 per cent of the entire HLTA population. Respondents were broadly representative of all eligible HLTAs in relation to the characteristics of their schools, including geographical location, size and type, level of disadvantage and achievement (see Appendix A).

This chapter presents the frequency of responses for each question along with more detailed analysis in some cases (including cross-tabulations, logistic regression and ordinary least squared regression, see Chapter 2). The chapter draws on aggregated data: i.e. the responses from primary, secondary and special school respondents are considered together. However, details of statistically significant differences in the distribution of responses given by respondents in primary and secondary schools are given where these occur<sup>9</sup>. This comparison did not consider special schools because cell sizes were too small to allow for meaningful analysis. Differences in responses to all questions were also investigated for HLTAs working in the nine government regions: all statistically significant differences are reported in the text.

### 3.2 Key Findings

#### **HLTA employment:**

- Forty per cent of responding HLTAs were SEN specialists, 13 per cent specialised in English/literacy and 12 per cent specialised in maths/numeracy. However, 34 per cent reported having no specialist role and the majority of these people worked in primary schools.
- There was a fairly even split in the proportion of HLTAs working full-time and part-time.

<sup>8</sup> Please note that we use the term 'HLTA' to refer to people with HLTA status even though not all of these people were working in HLTA posts.

<sup>9</sup> A p value of 0.01 was used for all cross tabulations due to a larger n. All other p values used the default setting of 0.05.

- Overall, 36 per cent of respondents were working exclusively as an HLTA (either full-time or part-time), 33 per cent were working in split roles (including some HLTA duties) and 29 per cent were working in other roles.
- The majority of respondents who reported having split roles (65 per cent) said they were paid differently for working in these roles, whereas 33 per cent said they were not paid differently.
- The majority of respondents (59 per cent) were paid for working during term time, although payments were spread out to cover school holidays. A further 19 per cent were paid throughout the year. Thirteen per cent said they were paid during term time only.

### **HLTA deployment**

- Since achieving HLTA status, respondents were mostly involved in teaching tasks. HLTAs in primary schools were more frequently involved in planning and preparing lessons and team-teaching whole classes compared to those in secondary schools (59 per cent and 49 per cent respectively). In contrast, HLTAs in secondary schools were more frequently involved in monitoring pupils' responses and supporting pupils with SEN compared to HLTAs in primary schools (43 per cent and 31 per cent respectively).
- Nearly 40 per cent of HLTAs said they had become more involved in organising and managing learning environments and resources since achieving HLTA status.
- HLTAs working in secondary schools were more frequently involved in management activities compared to those working in primary schools.
- About one third of primary and secondary HLTAs worked with whole classes without a teacher being present on a daily basis (34 per cent). However, 30 per cent of secondary HLTAs said they rarely or never oversaw a whole class, whereas this was true of only 11 per cent of primary HLTAs.
- The circumstances for working with whole classes varied significantly between HLTAs in primary and secondary schools. HLTAs in primary schools were more likely to support PPA time (77 per cent), whereas those in secondary schools were more likely to teach a specialist lesson (46 per cent).

### **Impact of HLTA role**

- Most of the surveyed HLTAs thought their school made effective use of them, with 29 per cent saying their school used them effectively 'to a great extent'. A minority (23 per cent) said their school did not make effective use of them at all.
- Of those responding to an open-ended question, 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected pupil performance. Respondents reported that 'teaching individual and small groups of pupils' was the major positive contribution they made to pupils' performance.
- Of those responding to an open-ended question, 83 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively

affected the work of teachers. Respondents reported that ‘allowing teachers planning time’ and ‘helping with teaching when needed’ were the major positive contributions they made to the work of teachers.

- Of those responding to an open-ended question, 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had made a positive effect within their school. Respondents reported that ‘providing cover at short notice’ was the major positive contribution they made within their school as a whole.

## **Perceptions and experiences**

- A larger number of the surveyed HLTAs said they were satisfied with the changes to their role since achieving HLTA status compared to those who said they were not.
- Just under one third of respondents (31 per cent) were very pleased with the way in which their role had developed since achieving HLTA status. A further 19 per cent did not expect any changes because their role was already at HLTA-level. In addition, 16 per cent noted some positive changes, but not as many as they would have liked.
- Only four per cent of respondents said their role had changed but not in the direction they would have liked. A further 13 per cent were disappointed with the lack of change to their role and 12 per cent did not expect any changes, given the circumstances of their school.
- The main barriers reported by HLTAs were: a shortage of HLTA vacancies (29 per cent), teachers’ lack of time to prepare lessons with them (25 per cent), a lack of time to prepare their own work effectively (23 per cent) and a perceived lack of understanding of the HLTA role (22 per cent).
- Part-time HLTAs (either part-time only or full-time staff carrying out HLTA work on a part-time basis) seemed to face more difficulties in utilising the skills associated with their HLTA status than full-time HLTAs.
- The most common barriers identified by part-time HLTAs included: having personal commitments outside school (44 per cent); a lack of time to plan work effectively (39 per cent); other commitments within school (37 per cent), teachers’ lack of time to plan and prepare lesson with HLTAs (36 per cent) and teachers’ reluctance to delegate work (31 per cent).
- The most common barriers reported by those with HLTA status working in a non-HLTA post included a lack of HLTA vacancies at school (28 per cent), senior leaders being resistant towards deploying HLTAs (21 per cent) and a reluctance of teachers to delegate work (20 per cent).
- The majority of the surveyed HLTAs were positive about the personal and professional changes that had occurred as a result of gaining HLTA status. Just under three quarters (74 per cent) reported an increase in their self-esteem/confidence. However, some comments were less positive, for example, 41 per cent reported a lack of opportunities for career development and/or promotion to a post at HLTA grade.
- HLTAs who thought their school made best use of them were most positive about changes to their role; reported having greater levels of responsibility; and held an HLTA post rather than a TA post.

- HLTAs were more likely to state they had greater job satisfaction if they had greater levels of responsibility; had increased specialism; and worked in an HLTA post rather than a TA post.
- HLTAs were more likely to report an increase in confidence and recognition among colleagues if they said they had become more specialised and had a greater level of responsibility.

### **Future plans**

- Regarding future career plans, HLTAs who were employed full-time were more likely than part-time HLTAs to indicate that they planned to stay in the same post (57 per cent and 42 per cent respectively). Moreover, a larger number of full-time HLTAs said they wanted to specialise in a particular subject compared to those who worked part-time (13 per cent and seven per cent respectively).
- A quarter of HLTAs who were working part-time (25 per cent) indicated that they planned to increase their contractual hours as HLTAs.

## **3.3 HLTA Employment**

This section reports on the employment of HLTAs in schools. Respondents were asked to report on the key stages they worked with, whether or not they worked in a specialist area, if they worked full-time or part-time, the number or hours they were contracted to work and the type of payment they received for their work in school.

### **3.3.1 Key stage areas**

Respondents were asked about the key stage(s) in which they worked. The responses are given in Table 3.0 and show that the surveyed HLTAs were working within all the key stages of education.



**Table 3.0** Key stages the surveyed HLTAs worked with

<b>Area:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>	<b>Primary %</b>	<b>Secondary %</b>	<b>Special %</b>
Foundation stage	22	42	<1	22
Key stage 1	32	61	2	36
Key stage 2	40	68	10	45
Key stage 3	48	2	91	54
Key stage 4	43	<1	84	47
Key stage 5	8	<1	13	22
No response	1	2	<1	1
<b>*N =</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>173</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*1544 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

*\* Throughout this chapter, the final row is used to display N rather than %*

As shown above, respondents were working in a variety of key stages. Some of those in primary schools indicated that they were working in secondary key stages (and vice versa). It is possible that these people were noting their responsibility for liaising with pupils from other schools (for example, as part of a responsibility for supporting pupils during transition).

### 3.3.2 Specialist areas

To assess the areas in which HLTAs had expertise and the areas in which pupils were receiving least/most support from HLTAs, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they were employed in a specialist area. A list of options was provided and respondents were invited to tick all those that applied to their own situation. (Respondents were not invited to provide information about any 'other' specialist subjects/areas). Responses are shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1** Specialist area

Area:	All schools %	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
SEN	40	22	55	55
English/literacy (incl. drama)	13	8	20	10
Maths/numeracy	12	8	19	6
ICT	7	9	5	9
Science	6	2	9	5
PSHE	5	6	3	4
Design and technology	4	3	6	4
RE	4	5	3	4
Art and design	4	5	3	5
Geography	3	1	5	2
History	3	1	6	3
Modern languages	3	3	4	1
Citizenship	2	1	2	3
Music	2	3	1	3
Business studies	<1	0	1	0
No specialist role	34	55	14	25
No response	6	6	5	7
<b>N =</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>173</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*1470 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

Sixty per cent of respondents said they were employed in a specialist area. Those who were employed in a specialist role were asked to give details of their specialism. Overall, 40 per cent reported specialising in supporting SEN pupils (although this specialism was less common in primary schools). Thirteen per cent specialised in the area of English/literacy and 12 per cent in maths/numeracy (although this specialism was more common in secondary schools).

It is not clear from the questionnaire data whether or not HLTAs who worked in a specialist role did so only because they were interested and/or trained in this area or if it was a strategic decision made by senior leaders on the basis of

school need. A third of the respondents reported that they did not have a specialist role, with the majority of these working in primary schools.

### 3.3.3 Type of Employment

To assess staffing structures, HLTAs who took part in the survey were asked to indicate their type of employment. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in the way in which primary and secondary HLTAs were employed – hence Table 3.2 presents the overall figures for all three phases of education (i.e. primary, secondary and special).

**Table 3.2** Employment status

Type of employment	All schools %
Full-time HLTA only	27
Senior TA with some HLTA duties <sup>10</sup>	17
Part-time HLTA with other part-time roles	16
Part-time HLTA only	9
Other <sup>11</sup>	29
No response	4
<b>N = 1560</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1502 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, just over one quarter of respondents were employed full-time as an HLTA while one quarter worked part-time. Seventeen per cent of respondents were employed as a senior teaching assistant (TA) with some HLTA duties. The majority of part-timers indicated that they also had other duties within the school. Over one quarter of respondents indicated that they had some other type of employment status, half of whom said they were employed as a TA while ten per cent were employed as a learning support assistant. In total, therefore, 36 per cent of respondents were working exclusively as an HLTA, 33 per cent of respondents were working in split roles and 29 per cent were working in other roles.

<sup>10</sup> These individuals had achieved HLTA status but were not employed in an HLTA post.

<sup>11</sup> Fifty per cent of these said they were employed as a TA, ten per cent were learning support assistants, six per cent referred to themselves as ‘unqualified teachers’ and five per cent were cover supervisors. A range of other responses were also given, but were reported by less than five per cent of those carrying out ‘other’ roles.

### 3.3.4 Number of hours worked

Respondents who worked part-time were asked to indicate the number of hours per week they were contracted to work in HLTA roles. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in the way primary and secondary HLTAs were employed – hence Table 3.3 presents the overall figures for all three phases of education.

**Table 3.3** Hours per week contracted to work in an HLTA role

Hours per week:	All schools %
1 to 7 hours	27
8 to 14 hours	13
15 to 21 hours	16
22 to 28 hours	18
29 to 35 hours	21
More than 35 hours	5
<b>N = 632</b>	

*A single response item – filtered to exclude those who reported full-time working*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*632 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, over one quarter of part-time HLTAs (27 per cent) reported working between one to seven hours per week while 21 per cent said they worked between 29 and 35 hours per week. Contracted working between 29 and 35 hours is considered part-time. For example, an employee working in a local authority in a full-time position might be contracted to work 35 hours per week during 52 weeks per year with holiday entitlement. However, an HLTA working in a school may be contracted to work 35 hours per week but would not be required to work during the school closures (therefore working 39 weeks rather than 52 weeks per year). Within a school community such an arrangement would be considered ‘full-time’, although the role is in fact part-time in contract terms.

### 3.3.5 Payment received

To examine the ways in which HLTAs were being remunerated, HLTAs were asked about the kind of payment they received. Further analysis revealed that both primary and secondary HLTAs received similar types of payments as no statistically significant differences were found between the two phases. The overall responses are shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4** Payment received

<b>Payment:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Term time with spreadover pay (i.e. paid during school holidays)	59
Throughout the year (i.e. paid 52 weeks per year)	19
Term time only (i.e. paid for 38 or 39 weeks per year)	13
Not sure	2
Other	2
No response	5
<b>N = 1560</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1484 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, the majority of HLTAs (59 per cent) said they were paid term time with 'spreadover pay'. Under this type of arrangement, someone may be paid for 38 or 39 weeks' work (i.e. they work during term time only) but the actual payment is spread out over 52 weeks. Nearly one fifth of respondents said they were paid throughout the year (i.e. paid for holiday as well as for their work during school terms) and 13 per cent were paid term time only.

### 3.3.6 Payment arrangement for HLTAs with split roles

To assess the number of those with hybrid pay arrangements, respondents were asked about rates of pay for carrying out HLTA and non-HLTA duties. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in the rates of pay between primary and secondary HLTAs. Overall responses of the three phases of education are shown in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5** Rates of pay for HLTAs with split roles

<b>Different rates across HLTA and non-HLTA roles:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Yes	65
No	33
Not sure	2
<b>N= 443*</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*\*443 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question. It should be noted that a number of those who indicated that they had a split role in response to the question for Table 3.2, subsequently indicated, in the question for this table, that they did not have a split role*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, the majority of respondents who reported having split roles (65 per cent) said they were paid differently for their different duties, whereas 33 per cent said they were not paid differently.

### 3.4 HLTA Deployment

This section reports on the deployment of HLTAs in schools. Respondents were asked for their views on a range of issues, including work with whole classes, support provided to pupils, support provided to teachers, support provided to schools and line management responsibilities.

#### 3.4.1 Frequency of teaching a whole class

HLTAs were asked how often they were responsible for teaching a whole class in a teacher's absence. Because there was a significant difference in the distribution of responses given by HLTAs in primary and secondary schools, Table 3.6 shows the responses for these two groups separately.

**Table 3.6** Frequency of teaching a whole class among HLTAs in primary and secondary schools

Frequency:	All schools %	Primary %	Secondary %
Every day	34	33	34
About once per week	31	41	22
About once per half-term	8	8	8
About once per term	3	2	3
About once per year/rarely	12	8	17
Never	8	3	13
No response	5	5	4
<b>N=</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>695</b>

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1490 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

About one third of primary and secondary HLTAs worked with whole classes without a teacher being present on a daily basis (see Table C1 in Appendix C). However, as shown in Table 3.6, HLTAs working in secondary schools were less likely to work with whole classes compared to those in primary. Thirty per cent of secondary respondents said they rarely or never worked with whole classes, whereas this was true of only 11 per cent of primary HLTAs.

#### 3.4.2 Circumstances for overseeing a whole class

HLTAs who reported taking responsibility for whole classes were asked to indicate the circumstances in which this took place. There was a significant difference in the distribution of responses given by HLTAs in primary and secondary schools, hence Table 3.7 presents the results of primary and

secondary phases separately (the breakdown for the special schools is not shown). Note that this table does not include those who said they had no responsibility for working with whole classes.

**Table 3.7** Circumstances for working with whole classes

<b>Circumstances:</b>	<b>All schools</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
When a teacher deals with an incident elsewhere	63	65	63
When a teacher attends a meeting	55	62	47
When a teacher on sick/medical leave	54	54	51
When a teacher attends a training course	48	49	44
When a teacher has PPA time	44	77	10
When I teach a specialist lesson	33	21	46
When a teacher conducts pupil assessment/observation	25	30	22
When a teacher goes on a school trip	22	12	34
When there is a vacant teaching position	9	4	13
No response	3	2	5
<b>N=</b>	<b>1369</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>576</b>

*A multiple response item – filtered by those who said they had this responsibility*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*A total of 1322 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

Overall, the circumstances in which HLTAs worked with whole classes can be split into planned and unplanned reasons. The most common reason for overseeing a whole class was unplanned – when a teacher had to deal with incidents elsewhere (63 per cent of HLTAs in all schools). However, the planned circumstances for working with whole classes varied significantly between HLTAs in primary and secondary schools. While the majority of primary HLTAs were involved in supporting PPA time (77 per cent), this was reported by only ten per cent of respondents in secondary schools. In contrast, while 46 per cent of secondary HLTAs taught specialist lessons without the presence of a class teacher this was only true for 21 per cent of the HLTAs in primary schools. Regarding unplanned circumstances, both primary and secondary HLTAs covered for teachers when they attended meetings, although this was more common in primary schools<sup>12</sup>. These differences may indicate the differing needs of primary and secondary schools.

<sup>12</sup> The term ‘cover’ can be used to refer to a range of circumstance. Therefore, references to ‘cover’ within this report allude to respondents’ perception of the term.

### 3.4.3 HLTA roles with pupils

The survey asked respondents to report on the extent to which they carried out certain roles with individual pupils, small groups and whole classes, as a result of achieving HLTA status. Table 3.8 presents the responses of HLTAs in primary and secondary schools separately (for further information on the overall figures see Table C2 appendix C).

**Table 3.8** Type of pupil support

<b>Roles carried out as a result of achieving HLTA status</b>	<b>Type of pupil support</b>	<b>Primary %</b>	<b>Secondary %</b>
Delivering learning activities	individual	31	46
	small groups	40	55
	whole classes	69	43
	no response	22	28
Delivering work set by teachers	individual	24	29
	small groups	35	37
	whole classes	61	40
	no response	30	41
Helping pupils access the curriculum	individual	34	53
	small groups	35	51
	whole classes	19	26
	no response	50	33
Delivering catch up activities	individual	17	32
	small groups	26	37
	whole classes	8	9
	no response	68	53
Providing literacy support	individual	28	36
	small groups	43	39
	whole classes	24	18
	no response	47	48
Providing numeracy support	individual	26	28
	small groups	42	29
	whole classes	24	16
	no response	49	59
Developing and implementing individual education plans	individual	32	38
	small groups	18	22
	whole classes	8	9
	no response	60	54
Providing feedback to pupils on their learning	individual	31	45
	small groups	35	40
	whole classes	36	25
	no response	47	39
Maintaining records of pupils' progress	individual	32	45
	small groups	35	40
	whole classes	38	29
	no response	43	36
<b>N=</b>		<b>692</b>	<b>695</b>

*A series of multiple response items*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*The number of respondents answering these questions, across all school phases, ranged from 605 to 1181 depending on the specific question posed*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*



As shown above, HLTAs working in primary and secondary schools differed to some extent in the way they carried out the roles listed in Table 3.8 (i.e. with individual groups, small groups and whole classes). Over two thirds of respondents working in primary schools (69 per cent) reported delivering learning activities to whole classes, compared with less than half of those in secondary schools. Over half of those working in secondary schools said they delivered learning activities to small groups compared with two fifths in primary schools. While more than half of respondents in secondary schools reported helping individual pupils access the curriculum, just over one third of those in primary schools said this was the case. Moreover, 45 per cent of secondary school respondents reported providing and maintaining records of pupils' progress for individual pupils, compared to less than one third in primary schools. Respondents in primary schools were more likely to report that they did such record keeping for whole classes (38 per cent), with less than one third of secondary school staff saying that they had such responsibility.

The research team anticipated that certain types of support provided for individual pupils by HLTAs might vary according to whether or not they had a specialist role in the school. Therefore, further analysis was carried out on certain activities carried out by respondents with the three most common specialist roles (i.e. SEN, maths/numeracy and English/literacy). The results are shown in Tables 3.9.

**Table 3.9** Deployment of HLTAs with speciality in SEN, English/literacy and numeracy/maths

<b>Specialist area</b>		<b>Yes %</b>	<b>No %</b>	<b>Total N</b>
<b>Helping individual pupils access the curriculum (e.g. SEN pupils)</b>	HLTAs with SEN specialism	58	42	629
	HLTAs without SEN specialism	35	65	849
<b>Providing literacy support for individual pupils</b>	HLTAs with English/literacy specialism	46	54	206
	HLTAs without English/literacy specialism	31	69	1272
<b>Providing numeracy support for individual pupils</b>	HLTAs with maths/numeracy specialism	40	60	193
	HLTAs without maths/numeracy specialism	26	74	1285

*A series of multiple response items*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*The number of respondents answering these questions, across all school phases, ranged from 730 to 943 depending on the specific question posed*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

The above table reveals that the majority (58 per cent) of HLTAs with a specialism in SEN were helping individual pupils access the curriculum (particularly those with SEN). However, this was not the case for over 40 per cent of HLTAs in this category. Interestingly over one third of those who did not indicate a speciality in SEN were also helping individual pupils access the curriculum. In relation to HLTAs with a speciality in literacy, just under half of them (46 per cent) reported providing literacy support while over one half (54 per cent) said this was not the case. On the other hand, nearly one third of those who did not have a speciality in literacy said they were providing individual literacy support. With regard to numeracy, 40 per cent of HLTAs with a specialism in maths reported providing numeracy and maths support while 60 per cent did not. These results reveal that HLTAs with specialist roles in SEN, numeracy and literacy may not always have been deployed to take advantage of their specialisms one-to-one with pupils. It might be the case, of course, that at the time when the survey was conducted there was limited need for this in the schools in which they were based.

#### **3.4.4 Types of teaching support provided by HLTAs**

With regard to supporting teachers, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they carried out certain tasks from a list of 11 items. They

were asked to indicate if they carried out these tasks less frequently, more frequently or to the same extent as before achieving HLTA status. There was a significant difference in the distribution of responses given by HLTAs in primary and secondary schools. The results are presented in Table 3.10. Those who did not respond to an individual item or indicated that it was not applicable were not included in this stage of the analysis, so the total number of respondents per item varies.

**Table 3.10** Teacher support activities

Frequency of tasks since achieving HLTA status:	More frequent %		About the same %		Less frequent %	
	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec
Planning/preparing lessons	59	49	38	46	3	5
Team-teaching whole class	50	42	47	49	4	9
Providing feedback on pupils learning behaviour	33	40	67	59	1	1
Monitoring pupils responses/suggesting alternative learning approaches	31	43	69	54	1	3
Identifying/supporting issues SEN pupils	17	29	78	65	5	6
Identifying/reporting issues relating to the welfare of pupils	16	31	83	68	1	2

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*The total number of respondents per item from primary schools ranged from 475 to 665*

*The total number of respondents per item from secondary schools ranged from 425 to 657*

*A total of 1536 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown in Table 3.10, since achieving HLTA status, the duties of many respondents in primary and secondary schools had increased, particularly in relation to planning or team-teaching. This was most evident in primary schools, in which HLTAs were more likely report more frequent involvement in planning and preparing lessons and team-teaching whole classes than HLTAs in secondary schools. In contrast, HLTAs in secondary schools were more likely to report an increased involvement in monitoring pupils' responses and supporting SEN pupils than HLTAs in primary schools.

### 3.4.5 Types of school support provided by HLTAs

To investigate whether or not HLTA support to schools has changed since HLTA status has been achieved, respondents were offered a list of school activities on which to comment. They were asked if they carried these activities out more, less or to the same extent as before HLTA status was

achieved. There was a significant difference in the distribution of responses given by HLTAs working in primary and secondary schools, so Table 3.11 provides a breakdown of responses for primary and secondary respondents. Those who did not respond to an individual item or indicated that it was not applicable were not included in this stage of the analysis, so the total number of respondents per item varies.

**Table 3.11** Difference of type of support provided by HLTAs between primary and secondary schools

Frequency of tasks since achieving HLTA status:	More frequent		About the same		Less frequent	
	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec
Liaising with parents/carers	29	40	68	56	3	4
Assisting with the development of policies/procedures	24	39	74	58	3	3
Developing school policies/initiatives	23	39	74	58	3	4
Administrative tasks	19	43	71	53	9	4
Liaising with agencies	19	42	76	54	6	4
Planning opportunities for learning out-of-school contexts	17	27	77	45	6	8
Delivering out-of-school learning activities	16	26	79	63	6	11
Invigilating exams/tests	11	18	85	72	4	10
Carrying out playground duties	16	29	77	60	7	11
Constructing displays	8	16	69	68	23	16
Accompanying school trips	3	10	88	76	9	14
Administering first aid/medicine	4	12	84	75	12	14

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*The total number of respondents per item from primary schools ranged from 400 to 669*

*The total number of respondents per item from secondary schools ranged from 191 to 610*

*A total of 1536 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown in Table 3.11, on the whole, the type of support HLTAs provided has undergone some change, with reference to increased involvement in liaison and policy development. Furthermore, there were some interesting differences between primary and secondary schools, suggesting that respondents in secondary schools had seen greater changes to their roles. For example, 19 per cent of HLTAs in primary schools said they undertook administrative tasks more frequently since achieving HLTA status, and 43 per cent of those in secondary schools said this was the case. Similarly, 19 per cent of HLTAs in primary schools reported that they undertook more liaison activities with external agencies, and 42 per cent of those in secondary schools said this was the case.

Regarding the activities carried out less frequently, primary and secondary respondents gave similar responses. Some HLTAs in both sectors said that they were less likely to spend time constructing displays (23 per cent of primary and 16 per cent of secondary HLTAs), to administer first aid/medicine or to accompany school trips. The change relating to constructing displays is particularly interesting since it is one of the 24 non-teaching tasks transferred from teachers to support staff as part of the remodelling programme in 2003. However, for the majority of HLTAs, the extent of involvement in these activities was generally the same. (See Table C3 in Appendix C for further information on changes to HLTA roles).

### 3.4.6 Management tasks carried out by HLTAs

Since HLTAs work at a higher level, it could be assumed that their level of responsibility within schools had increased since gaining HLTA status. To gain more insight into this issue, respondents were asked about their line management duties. Results are shown in Table 3.12 which provides an overall figure of the three phases.

**Table 3.12** Line management activities

<b>Line management tasks carried out since achieving HLTA status:</b>	<b>More frequent %</b>	<b>About the same %</b>	<b>Less frequent %</b>	<b>N/A %</b>	<b>No response %</b>
Liaising between managers/teaching/support staff	32	33	2	30	3
Mentoring/training staff	27	31	2	38	3
Representing staff at meetings	22	30	2	43	4
Managing staff within the school	21	16	2	58	4
Inducting staff into school	18	30	3	46	3
Holding team meetings	18	18	2	58	4
Appraising staff	15	10	2	70	4
Recruiting staff	8	9	2	79	4
<b>N = 1560</b>					

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*A total of 1524 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

The results shown in Table 3.12 revealed that between 30 and 79 per cent of respondents indicated that activities related to line management were not

applicable to them. The majority (79 per cent) said that the recruitment of staff was not applicable and a similar number (70 per cent) said appraising staff was not applicable. Somewhat smaller numbers, but still the majority, said managing staff and holding team meetings (58 per cent in each case) were not applicable. In contrast nearly one third said they liaised between managers, teachers and support staff more frequently than prior to gaining HLTA status (33% reported that there had been no change). A similar picture emerged in relation to some other management tasks, particularly mentoring/training staff (with nearly half of the 58 per cent who did this saying that responsibilities had increased), representing staff at meetings (two fifths of the 52 per cent who now represented staff at meetings said they did this more frequently than in the past) and inducting staff into school (over one third of the 48 per cent who now did this reported doing it more frequently since achieving HLTA status).

Further analysis revealed significant differences in the distribution of responses to a number of statements given by HLTAs working in primary and secondary schools. Table 3.13 provides a breakdown of responses to these items for primary and secondary respondents (those people who said that the task was not applicable to them have been excluded from this analysis).

**Table 3.13** Line management activities performed by HLTAs in primary and secondary schools

Frequency of tasks since achieving HLTA status:	More frequent %		About the same %		Less frequent %	
	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec
Liaising between managers/teaching/support staff	43	51	56	46	1	3
Recruiting staff	23	50	64	43	13	8
Mentoring/training staff	40	49	58	47	3	5
Inducting staff into school	28	40	69	52	4	8

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*The total number of respondents per item from primary schools ranged from 78 to 410*

*The total number of respondents per item from secondary schools ranged from 159 to 500*

*A total of 1076 respondents, across all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

Table 3.13 shows that since gaining the HLTA status, proportionally more HLTAs in secondary schools than primary schools reported increased involvement in a number of management activities. Half of the respondents in secondary schools reported being more frequently involved in liaising between managers, teaching and supporting staff, whereas only 43 per cent of primary HLTAs said this was the case. Furthermore, while half of the respondents in

secondary schools reported being more frequently involved in recruiting staff, this was true of just under one quarter of those working in primary schools.

### 3.5 Impact of the HLTA role

This section gives details of HLTA impact, as perceived by HLTAs themselves. The section also looks at the positive contributions made by HLTAs to pupil performance, the work of teachers and within schools generally, and school utilisation of the HLTA role. (Four of the questions reported in this section were open-ended and one was multiple choices).

#### 3.5.1 Positive contributions

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to identify one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a particularly positive effect on pupil performance (three comments per respondents were accepted at the analysis stage). As expected for a question of this type, a wide range of responses were given. The range of comments given by respondents suggests that HLTA are being deployed in variety of ways in order to impact positively on pupil performance. Table 3.14 provides a breakdown of responses.

**Table 3.14** Contributions made by HLTAs with positive effect on pupil performance

<b>Response:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
At least one positive contribution identified	66
At least one neutral/negative response given	18
No response	17

**N=1560**

*An open-ended question*

*Variables created from the range of responses given*

*1289 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown in Table 3.14, 66 per cent of the 1560 respondents identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected pupil performance.

Overall, when considering just those who responded to the question (i.e. 1289), 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected pupil performance. In addition, 18 per cent of respondents gave at least one neutral/negative response (such as ‘too early to say’ or ‘role has not really changed’), and a small proportion of these also identified a positive contribution.



Responses were coded for analysis in relation to the main point made. Forty-one different kinds of contributions were identified, with relatively small numbers of responses identified in relation to each specific code (as is typical for an open-ended question of this nature). Teaching groups and individuals was the major contribution HLTAs felt they made to pupil performance (17 per cent of all 1560 survey respondents). Eight per cent of survey respondents said they contributed towards raising pupils' performance in a specific area. Teaching specific subjects to pupils was mentioned by seven per cent of respondents.

In a similar question, respondents were asked to identify one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a particularly positive effect on the work of teachers. Table 3.15 provides details of the responses given.

**Table 3.15** Contributions made by HLTAs with positive effect on the work of teachers

Response:	All schools %
At least one positive contribution identified	68
At least one neutral/negative response given	14
No response	19
<b>N=1560</b>	

*An open-ended question*

*Variables created from the range of responses made*

*1269 respondents answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, 68 per cent of all the 1560 survey respondents identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected the work of teachers.

Overall, when considering just those who responded to the question (i.e. 1269), 83 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected the work of teachers. Fourteen per cent of survey respondents gave at least one neutral/negative response, and a small proportion of these also identified a positive contribution.

As with the previous question, a wide range of responses were provided, amounting to 43 different kinds of positive contribution. The most common responses were 'allowing teachers planning time' (13 per cent of all 1560 survey respondents) and 'helping with teaching when needed' (13 per cent of all respondents). HLTAs also felt that the work they were doing since gaining their new status allowed teachers to concentrate more on high achieving pupils (eight per cent of all respondents). (These percentages reflect the fact that a wide range of specific contributions were identified).

A further question asked respondents to identify one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a particularly positive effect within their school. Table 3.16 gives details of the responses provided.

**Table 3.16** Contributions made by HLTAs with positive effect within schools

<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
At least one positive contribution identified	56
At least one neutral/ negative response given	16
No response	30

**N=1560**

*An open-ended question*

*Variables created from the range of responses made*

*1091 respondents answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, 56 per cent of all the 1560 survey respondents identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect within their school.

Overall, when considering just those who responded to the question (i.e. 1091), 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had made a positive effect within their school. Sixteen per cent of survey respondents gave at least one neutral/negative response, and a small proportion of these also identified a positive contribution.

Again, a wide range of responses were given (62 different kinds of positive contributions to schools were identified, which is reflected in the total percentage for each contribution). ‘Providing cover at short notice’ was the most common response (ten per cent of all 1560 survey respondents). Other contributions included training and coordinating the management of TAs (six per cent of all respondents), providing continuity for pupils when a teacher is absent (five per cent) and enabling teachers to have planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time (four per cent).

### **3.5.2 Utilisation of the HLTA role**

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they thought their school made best use of them as an HLTA. A five-point rating scale was used whereby a rating of 1 indicated that schools did not make best use of HLTAs and 5 indicated that the school made great use of HLTAs. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences between primary and secondary HLTAs in relation to the extent to which they thought they were utilised by their school, so Table 3.17 presents the overall responses.

**Table 3.17** Extent to which HLTAs thought they were used effectively

<b>Extent:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
1 (Not at all)	23
2	11
3	15
4	17
5 (To a great extent)	29
No response	5

**N =1560**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1487 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

The results revealed that most HLTAs thought their school made effective use of them, with 29 per cent agreeing that their school used them effectively ‘to a great extent’. A minority (23 per cent) indicated that their school did not make effective use of them at all. In a follow up open-ended question, respondents were asked to explain their answers. A third of HLTAs who gave a rating of 1 or 2 noted that the absence of an HLTA post in their school meant their school did not make best use of them as an HLTA. Just under one third of the respondents who selected a score of 3 commented that they had more to offer. A quarter of HLTAs who gave a rating of 4 or 5 said that providing cover for classes ensured that pupils did not lose any learning time, and one fifth said that their school encouraged them and was making good use of their experience and knowledge.

As the issue of role utilisation is particularly important, further statistical analysis (ordinary least squared regression analysis) was carried out on this question in relation to a number of key variables. The variables against which effective role utilisation (i.e. a five point rating between ‘not at all’ and ‘to a great extent’) were compared were:

- positive about the changes to role;
- increased stress and workload;
- difficulties related to school factors;
- difficulties related to other teachers’ perceptions;
- greater levels of responsibility since achieving HLTA status;
- having an HLTA post rather than a TA post;
- working in a large school.

Most of the above variables contained a combination of items, for example, 'positive about the changes to role' contains six items (increased satisfaction, confidence, increased pay, recognition and career opportunities, as well as promotion – see Appendix D, Table D2 for more information).

Statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between the extent to which HLTAs thought their school made best use of them and the above variables. Significant positive relationships were found between respondents' perceptions of effective utilisation and feeling positive about the changes to their role, having a greater level of responsibility, and working in an HLTA post rather than a TA post. In contrast, significant negative relationships were found between effective utilisation and encountering difficulties at school (e.g. a lack of HLTA vacancies), with teachers (e.g. feeling that teachers were reluctant to delegate work) and working in a large school. Interestingly, those who reported increased stress and workload also felt well utilised. However, there was no significant relationship between effective role utilisation and increased specialism.

Explanatory variables that were not significantly related to effective role utilisation included school type, region, age of HLTA, BME group, gender, disability and time to plan effectively (see Appendix D, Table D1).

### **3.6 Perceptions and experiences of work since achieving HLTA status**

To examine the areas of HLTA work being least/most developed by schools, respondents were asked to indicate whether six areas of their work had developed since achieving HLTA status. There was a significant difference in the distribution of responses given by HLTAs in primary and secondary schools to this question. Table 3.18 provides a breakdown of responses for primary and secondary HLTAs, where these differed significantly from each other. For overall responses across all items from the three phases see Table C4 Appendix C. The table includes only those HLTAs who responded to the individual item.

**Table 3.18** Changes to role since achieving HLTA status

Since achieving HLTA status your work has developed by:	Agree %		Disagree %		Not sure %	
	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec	Pri	Sec
Greater responsibility for supporting teaching and learning	73	64	24	31	2	4
Greater responsibility for administrative tasks	32	49	57	43	9	7
Specialise in a particular subject	30	44	64	52	4	3
Specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs	28	47	68	46	4	6
Involved in training other staff	24	35	68	57	8	7
Specialise in administrative function	7	19	87	72	6	7

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*The total number of respondents per item from primary schools ranged from 638 to 655*

*The total number of respondents per item from secondary schools ranged from 629 to 647*

*A total of 1490 respondent, across all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, since gaining their new status, HLTAs in both primary and secondary schools reported gaining greater responsibility in one area in particular, namely supporting teaching and learning (this was one of the Government's main aims for the HLTA role). A higher proportion of HLTAs in primary schools agreed that they had taken on greater responsibility for teaching and learning than was true of HLTAs in secondary schools.

The table also shows that between 43 and 87 per cent of HLTAs disagreed with the five other suggested changes. This could either be because they were already carrying out these tasks prior to achieving HLTA status, or because they were not being asked to carry out the task at present. As might be expected, the areas where most HLTAs disagreed that their role had developed was in relation to greater specialisation in administrative functions. Similarly, most disagreed that their role had developed to include training other staff and supporting pupils with special needs.

Of respondents who reported changes to their role, HLTAs in secondary schools were more likely than those in primary schools to specialise in a particular subject and, perhaps because of this, were more frequently involved in training other staff compared with primary HLTAs. In addition, HLTAs in secondary schools reported that they were more likely to specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs.

### 3.6.1 Satisfaction with HLTA status

In addition to questions on how their role had developed since achieving HLTA status, the questionnaire included an open-ended question asking HLTAs how satisfied they felt with these changes. Further statistical analysis revealed no significant differences between HLTA responses in primary and secondary schools, hence Table 3.19 presents the overall results for the three phases.

**Table 3.19** Descriptions of changes to role

Comments:	All schools %
I am very pleased with the role that has been developed	31
I did not expect any changes because my role was already at HLTA-level	19
There have been some positive changes but not as many as I would have liked	16
I have been disappointed with the lack of change to my role	13
I did not expect any changes in my role given the circumstances of my school	12
My role has changed but not in the direction would have liked	4
No response	5
<b>N = 1560</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1483 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

Table 3.19 shows a diverse set of responses to this question. Nearly one third of respondents said they were very pleased with the changes to their role. Around one fifth of respondents said that they did not expect any changes to occur since they were already carrying out HLTA-level duties prior to achieving the status. Sixteen per cent noted that there had been some positive changes to their role but not as many as they would have liked and 13 per cent were disappointed with the lack of change. Furthermore, 12 per cent reported that they did not expect any changes to their role given the circumstances of their school, and four per cent said their role had changed, but not in the direction they would have liked.

The research team anticipated that HLTAs' satisfaction with their new status might vary according to their type of employment. Further analysis revealed that HLTAs who were employed in full-time HLTA posts were more likely to report a greater job satisfaction compared with HLTAs who were employed in part-time HLTA posts (47 per cent of full-time HLTAs said they were pleased with how their role had developed, compared with 32 per cent of part-time HLTAs).

### 3.6.2 Barriers to effective HLTA utilisation

To address the difficulties preventing HLTAs from utilising the skills associated with their status, the questionnaire offered respondents a list of nine obstacles they may have encountered and they were asked to tick all that applied, or provide their own response in an open-ended box. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences between HLTAs' responses in primary and secondary phases. Therefore, Table 3.20 presents the overall responses of the three phases.

**Table 3.20** Perceived difficulties preventing utilisation of HLTA skills

Perceived difficulties:	All Schools %
No HLTA vacancies at my school	29
Teachers don't have time to plan/prepare lessons with me	25
Don't have time to effectively plan work	23
Teachers don't understand the meaning of HLTA status	22
Other commitments within school that limit my time	17
Senior leaders are resistant towards deploying HLTAs	13
School is concerned about taking roles away from teachers	10
Teachers are reluctant to delegate work to me	5
Other personal commitments that limit my time	5
Other	10
No response	26

**N = 1560**

*A series of multiple response items*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*1152 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

HLTAs identified a range of barriers in utilising their skills, the most common of which, identified by over one quarter of respondents, was a shortage of HLTA vacancies within schools. One quarter reported that teachers' lack of time to prepare lessons with them created difficulties. A lack of time to plan work, either with teachers or on their own, was another common difficulty, and a similar proportion commented that teachers' lack of understanding of the HLTA role limited their effective utilisation. This might suggest that some teachers have not fully engaged with the Professional Standards (TDA, 2003) which are designed to provide assurance to teachers, and others, on the quality of contribution HLTAs can be expected to make within schools.

Respondents who reported ‘other’ difficulties preventing them from utilising the skills associated with their HLTA status were asked to provide further information. Insufficient pay for extra work was identified as a difficulty by 23 respondents (15 per cent of those reporting ‘other difficulties’), although they did not elaborate on how this prevented them from utilising their skills. Other difficulties included a lack of recognition of the HLTA status in schools (six per cent), resentment from other TAs (four per cent) and lack of school support (four per cent).

The research team anticipated that the difficulties preventing HLTAs from utilising the skills associated with their status might vary according to whether or not they were employed in a full-time or part-time HLTA post. (As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one quarter of respondents were employed part-time in HLTA posts). The differences are shown in Table 3.21.

**Table 3.21** Difficulties preventing utilisation of HLTA skills for full-time and part-time HLTAs and those not in HLTA roles

<b>Difficulties:</b>	<b>Full-time %</b>	<b>Part-time %</b>	<b>Senior TA %</b>	<b>Other Roles %</b>	<b>N</b>
Don't have time to plan work effectively	31	39	14	17	348
Teachers don't have time to plan/prepare lessons with me	33	36	14	17	369
Teachers are reluctant to delegate work to me	20	31	20	30	77
Teachers don't understand the meaning of HLTA status	26	24	17	33	332
School is concerned about taking roles away from teachers	11	26	19	44	144
Senior leaders are resistant towards deploying HLTAs	7	16	21	56	190
No HLTA vacancies at my school	2	8	28	63	424
Other commitments within school that limit my time	21	37	21	20	257
Other personal commitments that limit my time	23	44	9	24	70
Other	25	22	18	35	148
No response	37	26	22	19	392
<b>N=</b>					<b>1499</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*1107 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

*\* This analysis only includes respondents who replied to question A3a on the questionnaire, thus N does not equal 1560*



As indicated in Table 3.21, while HLTAs working full-time and part-time reported similar barriers, the latter seemed to face more barriers than those working full-time. The highest proportion reporting either personal commitments outside school or other commitments within school were those working part-time; 44 per cent of those reporting personal commitments and 37 per cent reporting other school commitments were on part-time contracts. While just under one third of the full-time HLTAs said that they had insufficient time to plan work effectively (31 per cent), a higher percentage of part-time HLTAs (39 per cent) said that this was a barrier. A greater proportion of part-time HLTAs also reported that teachers appeared reluctant to delegate work to them (31 per cent compared to only 20 per cent of full-time HLTAs). Those employed as TAs tended to report barriers that were more related to a lack of HLTA vacancies at school (28 per cent) and to senior leaders being resistant towards deploying HLTAs (21 per cent).

### 3.6.3 Experiences of the appraisal process

A further set of questions were concerned with appraisal systems. The first asked respondents to indicate if they had received an appraisal since achieving their new status. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in the responses given by HLTAs working in primary and secondary schools so Table 3.22 shows the overall responses of the three phases.

**Table 3.22** HLTAs reporting having had an appraisal

Had appraisal	All schools %
Yes	43
No	51
Not sure	3
No response	3

**N =1560**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1516 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, 43 per cent of respondents reported that they had received an appraisal, but the majority of respondents had not. However, it should be borne in mind that some respondents had held HLTA status for a shorter time than others, which might explain why they had not yet received an appraisal. Those who had received an appraisal (677 respondents) were asked to indicate the areas covered in their meeting. There were no statistically significant differences between primary and secondary HLTAs responses; hence Table 3.23 presents HLTAs responses in the three phases.

**Table 3.23** Issues raised at HLTA appraisals

Appraisal identified the following areas:	Agree %	Disagree %	Not sure %	No response %
Successes achieved	89	5	2	4
Targets to achieve before next appraisal	80	13	2	4
Further training/development needs	78	15	3	4
Concerns about role	70	19	5	6
Strategies for achieving targets	67	23	5	6
For development in relation to supporting pupils	64	24	6	6
Need for additional support	57	29	7	8
Development in relation to supporting the curriculum	57	27	9	8
Development in relation to supporting the school	52	32	8	8
Skills that could be better utilised	51	34	9	7
Development in relation to supporting teachers	45	40	8	8
Further career possibilities	40	46	8	7

**N = 677**

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*A total of 660 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, the vast majority of HLTAs reported that their appraisals identified success in their role, further training needs and where they had concerns about their role. Areas that were identified less frequently included further career possibilities, development in relation to supporting teachers and areas in which skills could be better utilised. This latter finding is particularly revealing considering the discussion above on role utilisation.

A separate question asked HLTAs to rate their level of satisfaction with the appraisal process. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in levels of satisfaction between primary and secondary HLTAs. Table 3.24 presents HLTAs' responses across the three phases.

**Table 3.24** Satisfaction with appraisal process

<b>With regard to appraisal, how satisfied with the process:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Very satisfied	35
Satisfied	42
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	15
Dissatisfied	6
Very dissatisfied	1
No response	2

**N = 677**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*663 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

Regarding satisfaction levels, the vast majority (78 per cent) of respondents who had received an appraisal said they were satisfied with their school's process while seven per cent were not and 15 per cent were neutral.

### **3.6.2 Personal and professional changes**

Towards the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate if, and how, achieving HLTA status had led to any personal and professional changes. A list of eight items was given and respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with these. Responses are shown in Table 3.25.

**Table 3.25** Personal and professional changes

<b>Achieving HLTA status has led to the following personal and professional changes:</b>	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>Disagree %</b>	<b>Not sure %</b>	<b>No response %</b>
Increased confidence or self-esteem	74	16	4	5
Increased workload	64	26	4	6
Greater job satisfaction	54	30	9	8
Increased pay	53	40	2	5
Increased recognition by other staff at my school	48	34	11	7
Increased stress	45	39	8	8
Promotion to an HLTA post/grade	45	42	4	9
More opportunity for career development	39	41	13	7

**N = 1560**

*A series of single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100*

*A total of 1527 respondents, from all school phases, answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, three-quarters of the surveyed HLTAs reported an increase in confidence, over half reported greater job satisfaction and a similar proportion reported an increase in pay.

Over two-thirds of respondents reported an increase in their workload. Over one third noted that they had not had any more opportunities for career development since achieving HLTA status and over two-fifths said they had not yet been promoted to an HLTA grade/post.

To investigate the responses to this question further, statistical analysis (using logistic regression<sup>13</sup>) was carried out in relation to a number of key variables. Each of the personal and professional changes listed in the question were compared against a number of key variables (these were the same as were used for the ordinary least squared regression, but with government region also considered, see Appendix D and Table D3).

<sup>13</sup> This technique is used to predict a dependent variable on the basis of continuous and/or categorical independents and to determine the per cent of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independents; to rank the relative importance of independents; to assess interaction effects; and to understand the impact of covariate control variables.

Statistical analysis revealed that respondents who had been promoted to an HLTA post within their school were more likely than their peers who had achieved HLTA status but did not yet have an HLTA post to report greater levels of responsibility. Those in HLTA posts were also nearly twice as likely as those without such posts to report greater job satisfaction and increased recognition amongst other colleagues in the school. For some respondents, the issue of increased pay (which was four times more likely to be mentioned by those in HLTA posts than those in non-HLTA posts) appeared to be associated with concerns about relationships with other teachers, particularly where HLTAs thought that they did not fully understand the HLTA role or were unwilling to delegate work to the HLTAs.

Increased stress and increased workload were both associated with HLTA posts, although arguably the latter, and possibly the former, might be expected as part of taking on a new post.

There were some differences between those in the primary and secondary sector. HLTAs working in secondary schools were less likely to state that they had encountered an increase in their workload or that they had experienced increased stress, but were more likely to state that they had greater opportunities for career development. For all respondents, however, increased stress appeared to be associated most strongly with a lack of time to prepare their work; those reporting a lack of time to prepare were more than twice as likely as other respondents to report feeling stressed.

Lack of time and other difficulties in school (such as poor or unwilling delegation of tasks and lack of HLTA posts) were also strongly associated with lower levels of reported job satisfaction.<sup>14</sup> A greater level of responsibility, while associated with increased stress and increased workload, was also associated with increased job satisfaction, greater confidence and self-esteem and more recognition by colleagues. This pattern of associations was also evident amongst those who indicated that their HLTA role had led to increased specialism.

### **3.6.3 Description of the HLTA experience**

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to use three separate words to describe their experience of working as an HLTA so far. Responses were grouped into categories for analysis and the most frequent responses are shown in Table 3.26.

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<sup>14</sup> HLTAs working in the North West were only half as likely as other respondents to report increased pay or greater job satisfaction.

**Table 3.26** Description of HLTA experience so far

<b>Comments:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Interesting/enjoyable/rewarding	47
Providing greater challenge/fulfilling ambition	20
Demanding/hectic/hard work	11
Disappointing/frustrating/thwarted	11
Stressful/pressured	11
Confident	8
Underpaid	7
Stimulating/enthusiastic/exhilarating	6
<b>N =1560</b>	

*An open-ended question*

*Respondents could give up to three responses*

*A total of 1352 respondents, from all school phases, made at least one response to this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

On the whole, the answers to this question indicate that HLTAs were pleased with their experience. Nearly half described their HLTA experience as interesting, enjoyable or rewarding. Furthermore, one fifth said it was providing them with greater challenge and that they were fulfilling an ambition. However, 11 per cent, in each case, characterised their experience as demanding, disappointing or stressful (section 3.6.2 above also contains information about stress and workload).

### **3.7 Future Plans**

Finally, HLTAs were asked to describe their career plans for the next few years from a list of eight options. Responses are shown in Table 3.27.

**Table 3.27** Career plans for the next few years

<b>Plans:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Remain in the same post as now	40
Secure an HLTA appointment in present school	15
Increase contractual hours as an HLTA	9
Become a subject specialist	8
Secure an HLTA appointment in another school	7
Specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs	6
Secure employment in a non-school setting	4
Reduce contractual hours as an HLTA	1
No response	12

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**N = 1560**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1379 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, the answers to this question indicated that most HLTAs were planning to stay in the same post, at least for the next few years. Nearly 40 per cent said they planned to remain in the same post, while 15 per cent wanted to secure an HLTA appointment in their present school. Nine per cent wanted to increase their contractual hours as an HLTA and eight per cent wanted to become a subject specialist. The research team anticipated that HLTAs' future plans might vary according to whether or not they worked full-time or part-time. The results are shown in Table 3.28.

**Table 3.28** Career plans for the next few years

<b>Plans:</b>	<b>Full-time %</b>	<b>Part-time %</b>	<b>Senior TA %</b>	<b>Other role %</b>
Remain in the same post as now	57	42	30	27
Secure an HLTA appointment in present school	3	5	24	26
Increase contractual hours as an HLTA	4	25	10	1
Become a subject specialist	13	7	5	6
Secure an HLTA appointment in another school	1	3	8	13
Specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs	7	5	7	6
Secure employment in a non-school setting	4	2	5	5
Reduce contractual hours as an HLTA	1	1	0	<1
No response	10	9	11	16
<b>N = 1499</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>442</b>

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1379 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

As shown above, HLTAs who were employed full-time were more likely than part-time HLTAs to indicate that they planned to stay in the same post (57 per cent and 42 per cent respectively). Moreover, a larger number of full-time HLTAs said they wanted to specialise in a particular subject compared to those who worked part-time (13 per cent and seven per cent respectively). On the other hand, one quarter of HLTAs who worked part-time said they wanted to increase their contractual hours as an HLTA while one quarter of those who were currently working as a TA wanted to secure an HLTA appointment in their present school.



## 4 Senior Leader Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of a survey of senior leaders who were asked about the employment, deployment and impact of those with HLTA status. The first section examines aspects of HLTA employment, focusing specifically on: the numbers of HLTAs in the sample schools; pay structures; prevalence of split roles amongst HLTAs; and location of line management responsibility for HLTAs. The second section examines HLTA deployment and impact with questions relating to: the roles taken on by HLTAs; areas in which HLTAs have made a significant impact; examples of good practice; barriers to more effective deployment; and intentions for future improvements in the use of HLTAs.

The data included in the chapter was gathered from 622 primary schools, 367 secondary schools and 119 special schools in England between November and December 2006. According to the database of people with HLTA status, this represents about 13 per cent of all primary schools with at least one HLTA, 36 per cent of secondary schools with an HLTA, and 39 per cent of special schools with an HLTA. Responding schools were broadly representative of all eligible schools in their geographical location, size and type, and level of disadvantage and achievement (see Appendix B). The composition of this sample, and the fact that schools were invited to take part in this study only if they were known to have at least one person with HLTA status, should be borne in mind when interpreting the findings.

The chapter draws on aggregated data i.e. responses from primary, secondary and special school respondents are considered together. However, the chapter does give details of statistically significant differences between primary and secondary schools where these occur ( $p < 0.05$ ). It should be noted that such analysis was only possible in relation to single item response questions. This comparison does not consider special schools because cell sizes were too small to allow for meaningful analysis. In addition, where appropriate, the chapter also considers significant differences between groups of respondents in different regions, different local authority types and in differently sized schools. Non-significant differences are reported using the abbreviation ns.

### 4.2 Key findings

#### **HLTA employment and management**

- Most schools in the sample (68 per cent) had one or two members of staff with HLTA status, but not all of these worked in an HLTA post since only 53 per cent of schools employed either one or two members of staff to carry out HLTA-level duties. Larger schools tended to have more HLTAs than smaller ones.

- Eighty per cent of respondents were aware of a LA-recommended pay structure for HLTAs, and where such recommendations were known about they were utilised in eight out of ten cases (84 per cent). Senior leaders in some regions, particularly Yorkshire and the Humber, along with West Midlands, were more likely to say they were aware of such recommendations than those in other regions, notably London.
- Over two fifths of schools had at least one HLTA with a split role (42 per cent) and 28 per cent of schools used hybrid pay arrangements. Both split roles and hybrid pay arrangements were more common in primary schools than in secondary schools.
- Line management responsibility for HLTAs was most likely to fall to the headteacher (37 per cent of cases) or a SENCO, a deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher (between 14 and 29 per cent). There were marked differences between primary and secondary schools in the pattern of line management responsibility. This was undertaken by headteachers in four per cent of secondary schools and 56 per cent of primary schools. In contrast, the SENCO was involved in line management of HLTAs in 57 per cent of secondary schools and 17 per cent of primary schools.

### **HLTA deployment and impact**

- The main activities carried out by HLTAs were reported to be taking groups of pupils (60 per cent) and taking whole classes in the absence of the teacher (57 per cent).
- HLTAs in primary schools were considerably more likely than those in secondary schools to work with whole classes without a class teacher being present (73 per cent and 31 per cent), but less likely to work with individuals or groups of pupils (24 per cent and 44 per cent). HLTAs in primary schools were also less likely to work in specified subject areas (19 and 33 per cent).
- Twenty-two per cent of respondents reported no difficulties in deploying HLTAs effectively. The most commonly cited difficulty was a lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan/prepare together (44 per cent). Another difficulty was conflict with HLTAs' other duties within their school (22 per cent).
- Regarding training for teachers working with HLTAs, 24 per cent of senior leaders in secondary schools thought this was a difficulty associated with HLTA deployment, but only nine per cent identified this difficulty in primary schools. Those in London and the South West were the most likely to refer to lack of training for teachers.
- Senior leaders overwhelmingly felt that HLTAs had had an impact through supporting pupil learning within their school (72 per cent). Support for PPA time was seen as a much greater impact in primary rather than secondary schools (73 per cent and eight per cent), as was supervising whole classes (51 and 30 per cent). In many secondary schools, one of the main areas of impact of HLTAs was in relation to pupil behaviour (42 per cent).
- Almost three-quarters of senior leaders (73 per cent) indicated that the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload, at least to some extent.
- Between 90 and 91 per cent of those responding to open-ended questions, identified at least one contribution made by an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect on pupil performance and also within their school more widely. The most commonly cited effect on pupil performance was through HLTAs' contributions to intervention strategies (19 per cent),

whilst the most significant effect on the school was through their role in covering whole classes for teachers (16 per cent).

- The main ways in which senior leaders felt that the work of HLTAs could be made more effective was through improved/ongoing training (23 per cent), increased funding (17 per cent), the availability of more planning and preparation time with teachers (ten per cent) and further development of the role (ten per cent).
- Schools planned to develop the role of HLTAs in their schools in a variety of ways, chiefly by supporting more candidates to undertake HLTA training (61 per cent), developing performance management for HLTAs (42 per cent) and reviewing the need for more HLTAs (32 per cent). Secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to be planning extra guidance and training for teachers working with HLTAs (11 per cent in primaries and 21 per cent in secondaries).

### 4.3 HLTA Employment

#### 4.3.1 Senior leader roles

To establish the range of individuals represented in the senior leaders' sample, respondents to the survey were asked to indicate their position in the school. Responses are shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1** Senior leaders' roles and responsibilities

Position within school:	All schools %	Significant differences between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Headteacher	62	80	31
SENCO	15	9	28
Deputy Headteacher	13	10	16
Assistant Headteacher	8	2	20
Subject Leader	5	7	1
Curriculum Coordinator	4	6	1
Bursar/School Business Manager	3	2	4
Key Stage Coordinator	2	4	0
Head of Department/Faculty	2	<1	5
Early Years Coordinator	1	3	n/a
Head of Year	<1	Ns	Ns
Other	3	2	7
No response	2	Ns	Ns
<b>*N =</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>367</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*1081 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

*\* Throughout this chapter, the final row is used to display N rather than %*

As shown above, over 60 per cent of the questionnaires were completed by headteachers, with the majority of the remainder completed by deputy or assistant headteachers. Fifteen per cent of those completing the surveys fulfilled the role of SENCO in the school and these four roles between them made up the vast majority of the sample. Respondents' other roles included subject leader, curriculum co-ordinator and bursar or school business manager. Only 42 senior leaders indicated another role (not listed as a response category) of which ten were inclusion coordinators and six were human resources managers.

There were some significant differences between primary and secondary schools in terms of the roles of respondents to the questionnaire. Most notably, respondents from primary schools were more likely to be headteachers or subject leaders, and less likely to be SENCOs, Assistant Headteachers or Heads of Department or Faculty, than those from secondary schools. Some of these differences reflect differences between primary and secondary schools in organisational practice, but the high proportion of SENCOs among secondary school respondents may be indicative of the way in which HLTAs are perceived and used in secondary schools. (Also, as indicated by respondents to the HLTA survey, 40 per cent of those employed in a specialist role cited 'SEN' as their specialism – see Chapter 3).

### **4.3.2 Number of HLTA staff**

This section examines the number of staff within each school who had achieved HLTA status, and also how many were carrying out HLTA duties. This enables a consideration of the match between formal status and the range of duties undertaken. Frequencies of responses to these questions can be seen in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. Overall, on the basis of a database of HLTAs provided by the TDA in August 2006, about one quarter of primary, secondary and special schools were known to have at least one HLTA at the time of the study (see sample representations in Appendix A and B). It is important to remember that only schools with at least one person with HLTA status were invited to take part in this study, therefore, the findings in relation to the numbers of HLTAs cannot be generalised to all schools in England.

**Table 4.2** Number of individuals with HLTA status in sample schools

Number of individuals with HLTA status:	All schools %
One individual with HLTA status	36
Two individuals with HLTA status	32
Three individuals with HLTA status	15
Four or more individuals with HLTA status	11
At least one individual with HLTA status	2
No response	4
<b>N =1108</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1070 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question from all schools*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As Table 4.2 shows, most schools in the sample (68 per cent) had either one or two members of staff with HLTA status. Primary and secondary schools were similar in this respect. More detailed analysis showed that the number of HLTAs employed by a school depended on its size. Within small primary schools (up to 207 pupils), the average number of HLTAs was 1.7. The corresponding values for medium-sized primary schools (between 208 to 317 pupils) and for large primary schools were 2.1 and 2.7 respectively. There was a similar relationship within secondary schools, with the smallest schools (up to 832 pupils) having 1.7 HLTAs, medium-sized secondary schools (between 833 to 1158 pupils) having 1.9 and the largest secondary schools having 2.2 HLTAs. However, it should be noted that pupil:TA ratios vary considerably between primary and secondary schools. The Annual School Census for 2006 shows, on average, there are 42 pupils per TA in primary schools and 99 pupils per TA in secondary schools<sup>15</sup>.

It is also evident from Table 4.2 that a small number of schools had ‘at least one individual with HLTA status’. The two per cent of senior leaders reporting this to be the case (26 people) initially indicated that their school did not employ any individuals with HLTA status. However, this was relabelled as ‘at least one individual’ because respondents completed other survey questions, thus indicating that at least one individual with HLTA status worked at their school. This apparent inconsistency may have arisen from some confusion between the distinction between ‘HLTA status’ and ‘HLTA post’.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070521/text/70521w0014.htm>

Senior leaders' responses to the question enquiring about the numbers of individuals undertaking HLTA-level duties ranged from 0 to 19, as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3** Number of individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties

<b>Total people carrying out HLTA-level duties within school:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
No individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties	15
One individual carrying out HLTA-level duties	29
Two individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties	24
Three individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties	14
Four or more individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties	16
No response	3

**N =1108**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1079 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As shown above, most commonly (in 53 per cent of cases) schools had one or two individuals carrying out HLTA-level duties, and the difference between primary and secondary schools was not significant. Interestingly, although 36 per cent of senior leaders said their school employed one member of staff with HLTA status (as shown in Table 4.2), only 29 per cent said their school employed a member of staff to carry out HLTA-level duties. Similarly, 32 per cent reported that their school employed two people with HLTA status, but only 24 per cent said their schools employed the same amount of people to carry out HLTA-level duties. This suggests a shortage of HLTA posts within schools, but it is not possible to speculate on the reasons for this on the basis of this study. There were no systematic regional differences in relation to lack of HLTA vacancies within schools.

Again, there was a relationship between school size and the number of those carrying out HLTA-level duties. The numbers varied from an average of 1.7 in smaller primary schools to 2.5 in the larger primary schools, and from 1.8 in small secondary schools to 2.7 in the largest secondary schools.

### **4.3.3 Local authority pay scales**

Senior leaders were asked about the existence and use of local authority recommendations regarding a pay structure for HLTAs. Senior leaders responding to the survey were first asked whether, to their knowledge, such recommendations were provided, and those who responded positively were

then asked whether or not the recommendations were used in their school. Responses can be seen in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

**Table 4.4** Awareness of local authority pay structure for HLTAs

<b>Does local authority recommend a pay structure for HLTAs:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Yes	80
No	7
Not sure	12
No response	1

**N =1108**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1066 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

**Table 4.5** Use of local authority pay structure (only for those aware of a local authority pay structure for HLTAs)

<b>Is the pay structure used:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Yes	84
No	11
Not sure	1
No response	4

**N =890**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*858 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

The provision of a recommended pay structure for HLTAs appeared to be the norm among the local authorities of the senior leaders responding to the survey. Eighty per cent of respondents were aware of a recommended pay structure, with just seven per cent of respondents saying that no such recommendation was provided. Where such recommendations were provided they were generally utilised, with 84 per cent of those who were aware of local authority recommendations saying that they were used, whilst 11 per cent said that they were not.

Senior leaders in primary schools were slightly more likely than those in secondary schools to say that their local authority recommended a pay structure (with 85 per cent and 76 per cent agreeing respectively). It is possible that this reflects the different roles of primary and secondary respondents

rather than any differences in LAs' recommendations to schools: it was noted in Section 4.1 that a relatively high proportion of secondary respondents were SENCOs who might be less aware of such recommendations than headteachers.

There was some regional variation (based on government offices) in the extent to which senior leaders were aware of a pay structure recommended by their local authority. The proportion varied from over 85 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber, and in the West Midlands, to less than 80 per cent in the South East and only 63 per cent in London. When the variation between local authorities was considered in relation to the type of authority, senior leaders in schools in London boroughs were significantly less likely than those in other metropolitan authorities, or in unitary or county authorities, to say that their authority recommended a pay structure for HLTAs. However, among those aware of such recommendations, senior leaders from all types of authority were equally likely to say that the recommendations were used by their school.

#### **4.3.4 Pay arrangements**

Some HLTAs may work in split roles and/or receive HLTA-level pay for only part of their employment. Responses to the senior leader survey showed that 55 per cent of schools did not employ HLTAs in split roles. However, 42 per cent reported employing HLTAs in split roles (18 per cent reported employing one HLTA in a split role, 12 per cent said their school employed two HLTAs in split roles and a further 12 per cent employed three or more HLTAs in this way). Senior leaders were also asked about the number of HLTAs receiving HLTA-level pay for only part of their employment. Sixty-seven per cent of senior leaders reported that their school did not operate this type of pay arrangement, i.e. HLTAs received the same rate of pay regardless of the task being performed. However, 13 per cent of senior leaders said one HLTA in their school received split pay, eight per cent reported that two HLTAs in their school received split pay and a further nine per cent said their school paid three or more HLTAs in this way.

The following table shows the number of HLTAs with split roles who are receiving split pay for their work. The figures presented are based on respondents who gave details of split roles and also split pay arrangements.



**Table 4.6** HLTAs with split roles and split pay

	<b>HLTA without split roles %</b>	<b>HLTA with split roles %</b>
<b>HLTA without split pay %</b>	97	33
<b>HLTA with split pay %</b>	3	67
<b>N=</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>447</b>

*Two single response items*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1054 respondents, from all school phases, answered questions A5 and A6*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As shown above, most senior leaders reported that HLTAs working exclusively in this role received one rate of pay for their work. However, over two thirds of those working in split roles were thought to receive split pay. Further statistical analysis showed that split roles were more common in primary than secondary schools: the average number of such roles was just over 1 in primary schools but only 0.6 in secondary schools. Similarly, hybrid pay arrangements were more likely to be found in primary schools, with an average of almost one HLTA with such an arrangement in primary schools, but just 0.2 in secondary schools.

It is interesting to note that three per cent of senior leaders indicated that an HLTA/HLTAs in their school without split roles received split pay. The reason for this is unknown, but it is possible that some HLTAs were paid more when teaching whole classes, although their overall role was not split.

### **4.3.5 Line management**

Senior leaders were asked about the location of responsibility for management of HLTAs within the school staffing and management structure. Senior leaders were able to select as many responses as were applicable from a list of possible roles for HLTA line managers, and their responses are summarised in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7** Members of staff with HLTA line management responsibility

Line management responsibility for HLTAs:	All schools %	Significant difference between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Headteacher	37	56	4
SENCO	29	17	57
Deputy Headteacher	23	27	12
Assistant Headteacher	14	9	19
Classroom Teacher	7	10	<1
Key Stage Coordinator	6	10	<1
Head of Department/Faculty	6	1	15
Subject Leader	3	2	7
Early Years Coordinator	3	5	n/a
Senior TA	3	ns	Ns
Bursar/School Business Manager	3	2	5
Head of Year	2	ns	Ns
Curriculum Coordinator	1	ns	Ns
Other	4	ns	Ns
No response	4	ns	Ns
<b>N =</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>367</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*1059 respondents, from all school phases,, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

Percentages in Table 4.7 sum to more than 100 indicating that, in many schools, the line management responsibility for HLTAs did not lie with a single role (and of course, even if only a single role was indicated, more than one individual could carry out this role). In just over one third of schools, headteachers were involved in the line management of HLTAs. Deputy heads in about one quarter of schools, and assistant heads in 14 per cent of schools, were taking at least some of this responsibility. SENCOs also played a significant role in managing HLTAs (29 per cent of schools). Smaller numbers of HLTAs were line managed by key stage co-ordinators (six per cent of schools) or heads of subject departments (six per cent of schools). In a very small proportion of cases, HLTAs were line managed by a senior TA or the school business manager/bursar (three per cent of schools in each case).

Line management arrangements differed very substantially between primary and secondary schools, no doubt reflecting their size and different organisational structures, but perhaps also indicating different ideas about how best to utilise the HLTA role. The SENCO was involved in the line management of HLTAs in over half of the secondary schools taking part in the study, but this was the case in less than one fifth of primary schools, where the line management of HLTAs was most frequently undertaken by headteachers. In about 30 per cent of both primary and secondary schools, deputy and/or assistant headteachers were undertaking the line management of HLTAs.

Interestingly, 15 per cent of HLTAs working in secondary schools were line managed by the head of a particular subject area. Line management of HLTAs by classroom teachers was very uncommon in secondary schools, but occurred in at least ten per cent of primary schools. It is worth noting that the receipt of a teaching and learning responsibility payment at the higher level includes line management responsibility for a significant number of people (including teachers and/or support staff). This might have some bearing on which members of staff are responsible for line managing HLTAs<sup>16</sup>.

#### **4.4 HLTA deployment and impact**

The second section of the questionnaire focused on the deployment and impact of HLTAs in schools. Respondents were asked for their views on a range of issues, including the ways in which HLTAs are deployed, any barriers to effective deployment, views of their effectiveness, and intentions regarding enhancing the effectiveness of HLTAs within their school.

##### **4.4.1 Main HLTA activities**

Respondents were asked to indicate the three main activities carried out by HLTAs in their school from a pre-determined list of eight items. As some respondents listed more than three activities, those listing up to four responses were included in the analysis.

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<sup>16</sup> See [http://www.teachers.org.uk/mas\\_to\\_tlr\\_qa/rules.php](http://www.teachers.org.uk/mas_to_tlr_qa/rules.php)

**Table 4.8** Main activities carried out by HLTAs

Working with:	All schools %	Significant differences between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Groups of pupils (in or out of class)	60	58	69
Whole classes (without the class teacher being present)	57	73	31
Individual pupils (in or out of class)	32	24	44
Variety of pupils/teachers according to need	31	ns	Ns
Whole classes (paired teaching with class teacher)	26	ns	Ns
Specified subject areas	25	19	33
Other support staff	17	ns	Ns
Specified teachers	8	ns	Ns
No response	10	ns	Ns
<b>N =</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>356</b>

*Respondents could provide up to four responses*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*966 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

The main activities carried out by HLTAs were taking groups of pupils and taking whole classes in the absence of the teacher. Both of these activities were reported by around two thirds of senior leaders. It is worth noting that while the former falls with the traditional role of teaching assistants the latter is an intended part of the HLTA role. In about three in ten schools, HLTAs' main activities included teaching whole classes in conjunction with the class teacher. They also commonly focused their attentions on individual pupils (32 per cent of schools) and on work within a specific subject area (25 per cent of schools). In many schools, HLTAs were used flexibly, working with a variety of groups and teachers according to need (31 per cent of schools).

HLTAs in primary schools were considerably more likely than those in secondary schools to work with whole classes without the class teacher being present, and perhaps as a result, were less likely to work with individuals or groups of pupils. They were also less likely to work in specified subject areas. (It is worth noting that a pilot for specialist maths and science HLTAs which took place across England from September 2005 only took place in secondary schools).

The research team anticipated that there might be a relationship between the number of those carrying out HLTA-level duties in a school and the ways in which they were deployed. This possibility was investigated by carrying out additional analysis<sup>17</sup>. The only significant relationship was that secondary schools with a larger proportion of HLTAs were more likely to deploy HLTAs to work with whole classes without the class teacher present.

#### 4.4.2 Barriers to effective use of HLTAs

In order to establish what barriers there are to making effective use of HLTAs, senior leaders were asked to indicate whether or not they had experienced any particular difficulties in deploying HLTAs. A list of nine possible responses was offered, together with an ‘other’ response category, which respondents could use to highlight any omissions in the list. Their responses are shown in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9** Difficulties associated with deploying HLTAs in school

Difficulties:	All schools %	Significance differences between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Lack of time for teachers /HLTAs to plan/prepare together	44	Ns	Ns
People in HLTA roles have other duties within the school	26	33	19
No difficulties	22	Ns	Ns
No HLTA vacancies within the school	16	14	22
Lack of training for teachers working with HLTAs	14	9	24
Variability in skills experience of HLTAs	14	18	12
Demotivating to TAs without HLTA status	11	Ns	Ns
Lack of guidance for teacher working with HLTAs	10	9	13
Teaching staff are resistant to change	7	5	10
Teachers’ reluctance to delegate tasks to HLTAs	6	Ns	Ns
Other	6	10	5
No response	11	Ns	Ns
<b>N =</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>367</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*987 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

<sup>17</sup> Only schools saying they had least one such person and who indicated at least one type of activity were included in this analysis.

The majority of respondents identified at least one area of difficulty, although over one fifth said there were no such difficulties. The most commonly cited problem was a lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan or prepare together. This was noted by almost half of all respondents and appears to represent a key barrier to optimum use of HLTAs. Senior leaders in primary and secondary schools were equally likely to regard this as a barrier.

Factors relating to HLTAs themselves were reported by smaller proportions of respondents. Overall, about one quarter of senior leaders felt that other responsibilities carried out by HLTAs around the school were a barrier, although this was significantly more likely to be reported as a barrier by primary school senior leaders (33 per cent of primary compared with 19 per cent of secondary respondents). One in seven reported that variability of HLTAs' skills added to deployment difficulties: again this was more of an issue in primary schools than in secondary schools. Around one in ten senior leaders felt that one effect of the existence of HLTAs was to demotivate TAs without the higher level status and that this presented a barrier to effective deployment. Fourteen per cent of primary schools and 22 per cent of secondary schools had no HLTA vacancies, making deployment difficult.

Overall, 'teacher factors', such as the need for more training and guidance for teachers on making use of HLTAs and teaching staff being resistant to change, were noted as sources of difficulties by fewer respondents. This overall finding does, however, mask some important differences between primary and secondary schools. Almost one quarter of secondary school senior leaders felt that the lack of training for teachers working with HLTAs made deployment difficult, and lack of guidance for teachers and teaching staff resistance were significantly more likely to be noted in secondary schools than in primary schools.

There were some differences between regions in the extent to which lack of guidance for teachers working with HLTAs was seen as a factor making deployment more difficult. Over 15 per cent of senior leaders in London and in the South West cited this, but less than five percent of those in the South East. However, the differences between regions in relation to the provision of training for teachers working with HLTAs were not significant. There were no systematic regional differences in relation to lack of HLTA vacancies in the school.

Where senior leaders had identified a difficulty not included in the given list, most of these highlighted problems with financing HLTA status (36 out of 61 respondents made this comment). The fact that respondents mentioned difficulties in financing HLTA 'status' rather than HLTA 'post' is interesting since the TDA funds the HLTA programme through local authorities and candidates working in maintained schools are eligible for this funding (TDA, 2006). It is possible that respondents were unaware of such funding or they

were referring to the provision of supply cover to allow candidates to be released from their normal duties to undergo HLTA training. It is also possible that respondents confused the terms 'status' and 'post'.

#### 4.4.3 HLTA impact

Senior leaders were asked to indicate which five areas of HLTA support had had the greatest impact on their school, from a given list of 16 activities. As some respondents had listed more than five areas, respondents listing up to six responses were included in the analysis. Responses can be seen in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10** Areas in which HLTAs have the most significant impact in school

Areas:	All schools %	Significant differences between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Supporting pupil learning	72	69	76
Supporting PPA time	47	73	8
Supervising whole classes	42	51	30
Supporting pupil behaviour	32	26	42
Preparing learning resources	28	ns	Ns
Managing intervention programmes	28	ns	Ns
Assessing pupil achievement	22	ns	Ns
Managing other support staff	16	13	20
Supporting pastoral programmes	15	12	18
Supporting lesson planning	14	ns	Ns
Managing SEN within the school	11	10	17
Liaising with parents/carers	10	5	18
Liaising with other agencies	7	3	12
Supporting key stage transition	6	3	12
Managing enrichment afternoons	5	6	3
Supporting healthy eating programmes	3	4	1
No response	11	ns	Ns
<b>N =</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>364</b>

*Respondents could provide up to six responses*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*970 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

Overall, the area in which HLTA support was most widely felt to have had a significant impact was pupil learning, which is one of the main Government aims for the HLTA role. Seventy two per cent of senior leaders endorsed this response, with those in secondary schools being more likely to do so than those in primary schools. In primary schools, HLTAs were seen to be having a significant impact by supporting PPA time (73 per cent of primary schools) and supervising whole classes (51 per cent) – two activities which might be interrelated. The difference in supporting PPA time between primary and secondary school is particularly large and could result from a greater use of cover supervisors in secondary schools.

Overall, HLTAs were considered to have a significant impact in supporting pupils' behaviour, particularly in secondary schools. Other important areas were in relation to pupil assessment, managing other support staff, planning pastoral programmes and managing SEN. In secondary schools, HLTAs were also considered to be having a significant impact by liaising with parents, carers and external agencies, and supporting key stage transition.

#### 4.4.4 Impact on teacher workload

Senior leaders were asked to rate the extent to which the presence of HLTAs in their school had reduced teacher workload, using a rating scale on which a score of one indicated no effect at all and five indicated a great effect. Responses to this question can be seen in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11** Effect of HLTA role on teacher workload:

<b>HLTA role has reduced teacher workload:</b>	<b>All schools</b>
	<b>%</b>
1 (Not at all)	14
2	18
3	28
4	19
5 (To a great extent)	8
No response	13
<b>N =</b>	<b>1108</b>

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different  
961 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

The majority of respondents felt that the HLTA role had positively affected teacher workload. Indeed, almost three-quarters of senior leaders (73 per cent)



indicated that the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload, at least to some extent. Forty-six per cent of senior leaders reported that the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload to a small or modest extent, and 27 per cent thought the effect on teacher workload was large or great. Senior leaders in primary schools rated the effect slightly higher than those in secondary schools.

Several factors may be contributing to these degrees of impact on teachers' workload. It may be that teachers' overall workload has not reduced because they are now using their time differently. Also, at the time of the survey, HLTAs had been in place in schools for only a relatively short period (the first HLTA status was awarded in April 2004). Indeed, over ten per cent of senior leaders did not respond to this question, perhaps indicating that they need more experience of working with HLTAs to form a view of their longer term impact.

There was no relationship between school size (using the same size bands stated earlier) and senior leaders' assessment of the extent to which the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload. There was also no difference between government regions. Among primary schools, those with higher levels of disadvantage<sup>18</sup> considered the HLTA role to have reduced teachers' workloads to a larger extent than those with lower levels of disadvantage. There was no such pattern for secondary schools, nor was there for either primary or secondary schools in relation to the overall achievement level of the school.

#### **4.4.5 Positive effects on pupil performance and schools**

Senior leaders were asked to identify one contribution made by an HLTA which had resulted in a particularly positive effect on pupil performance (although the question asked for just one response, up to two comments per respondents were accepted for analysis). As expected for a question of this type, a wide range of specific responses were given. Indeed, 52 different kinds of contributions with were identified. The range of comments given by respondents gives suggests that HLTAs were being deployed in variety of ways. Table 4.12 provides a breakdown of responses.

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<sup>18</sup> Disadvantage was measured by the percentage of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals

**Table 4.12** Contributions made by HLTAs with positive effect on pupil performance

<b>Response:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
At least one positive contribution identified	72
At least one neutral/ negative response given	8
No response	21

**N=1108**

*An open-ended question*

*Up to three answers could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*871 respondents answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As shown above, 72 per cent of all respondents (i.e. 1108) identified at least one contribution made by an HLTA that had positively affected pupil performance.

Overall, when considering just those who responded to the question (i.e. 871), 91 per cent identified at least one contribution made by an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect on pupil performance. Eight per cent of survey respondents gave at least one neutral/negative response, and a small proportion of these also identified a positive contribution.

An analysis of their comments showed that contributions to intervention strategies/programmes (19 per cent of all 1108 survey respondents), small group work to target pupil needs (18 per cent), SEN/EAL support (nine per cent) and teaching specific specialist subject (nine per cent) were the most frequently-cited responses. The size of these percentages reflects the fact that a wide range of specific contributions were identified. Fuller details of the responses, collated under themes, can be found in Appendix C, Table C5

Survey respondents were asked to identify one contribution made by an HLTA which had resulted in a particularly positive within their school (as before, two comments per respondents were accepted). Responses are given in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13** Contributions made by HLTAs with positive effect within the school

<b>Response:</b>	<b>%</b>
At least one positive contribution identified	73
At least one neutral/ negative response given	10
No response	20

**N=1108**

*An open-ended question*

*Up to three answers could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*890 respondents answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As shown above, almost three quarters of senior leaders identified at least one contribution made by an HLTA that achieved a particularly positive effect within their school.

Overall, when considering just those who responded to the question (i.e. 890), 90 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect within their school. Ten per cent of survey respondents gave at least one neutral/negative response, and a small proportion of these also identified a positive contribution.

A total of 57 different kinds of contributions were identified. The most frequently-cited contributions were: covering PPA time (16 per cent of all 1108 survey respondents), covering for staff absence at short notice (nine per cent), providing SEN support/supporting SENCO in his/her role (eight per cent) and support/management of other TAs (eight per cent). The size of these percentages reflects the fact that a wide range of specific contributions were identified. Fuller details of the responses, collated under themes, can be found in Appendix C, Table C6.

#### 4.4.6 Collection of data on the impact of HLTAs

Senior leaders were asked whether or not their school had collected any data to show the impact of the HLTA role. Responses can be seen in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14** Collection of data to show impact of HLTA role

<b>Has your school collected data to show the impact of HLTA roles:</b>	<b>All schools %</b>
Yes	14
No	77
Don't know	2
No response	7
<b>N =1108</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1029 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

As shown above, the collection of data pertaining to the HLTA role did not appear to be widespread, with just one in seven respondents responding positively. Senior leaders in secondary schools were slightly more likely to say their school collected such impact data.

#### 4.4.7 Suggestions to increase to HLTA effectiveness

Senior leaders were asked whether or not they believed that there were ways in which the work of HLTAs could be made more effective. As can be seen in Table 4.15, 40 per cent responded positively, although 45 per cent either said they did not know or did not answer the question. Senior leaders in primary and secondary schools responded similarly to this question. Those individuals responding positively were then asked, in an open-ended question, to give details of how this could be achieved.

**Table 4.15** Ways in which work of HLTAs could be made (even) more effective:

Ways of making the HLTA role (even) more effective	All schools %
Yes	40
No	15
Don't know	30
No response	15

**N =1108**

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*945 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

A total of 438 senior leaders made comments as to how the work of HLTAs could be made more effective. The most common responses, collated into themes, can be seen in Table 4.16 below.

**Table 4.16** Ways in which the work of HLTAs could be made more effective

Comments	All schools %
More/better/ongoing training/CPD	23
Financial issues, e.g. HLTAs need a fully funded pay scale/funded training	17
Time to plan with class teachers	10
Development of HLTA role	10
Pay issues, e.g. higher pay or clear pay structure	9
Training/guidance required for staff working with HLTAs	6
Need more HLTAs	6
More time for planning/preparation/making resources	5
Management of other TAs	5

**N= 442**

*An open-ended response item*

*More than one answer could be given*

*442 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

A number of themes recurred in these comments. Most comments referred to professional development as a priority area for HLTAs with many referring to the need for better training opportunities. There were also comments about improving the funding of HLTAs, and the need for more money to be available for training and salaries. Planning time was also a recurring theme, with many senior leaders remarking on the lack of time for HLTAs to plan their role, particularly to enable joint planning with teachers.

### **Future plans**

In order to examine the ways in which schools intend to develop the HLTA role and management of HLTAs in the future, respondents were given a list of 12 possible developments and asked to indicate whether they intended to make any of the stated changes (see Table 4.17).

**Table 4.17** Future plans

Does school have any of the following intentions to:	All schools %	Significant differences between:	
		Primary %	Secondary %
Support more candidates on the HLTA training programme	61	56	66
Develop performance management for HLTAs	42	46	37
Review the need for more HLTAs	32	27	38
Establish more HLTA positions	29	24	36
Widen the tasks currently carried out by HLTAs	28	ns	ns
Provide extra time for teachers and HLTAs to plan/prepare together	26	ns	ns
Develop more subject-focused roles for HLTAs	22	20	26
Provide joint teacher/HLTA training	21	ns	ns
Deploy current staff who have achieved HLTA status to HLTA roles	20	ns	ns
Increase frequency of HLTAs taking whole classes	16	ns	ns
Provide extra guidance to teachers working with HLTAs	15	11	21
Provide extra training to teachers working with HLTAs	7	5	10
No response	11	ns	ns
<b>N =</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>367</b>

*A multiple response item*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Primary and secondary responses are shown only where these are significantly different*

*989 respondents, from all school phases, answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from senior leader questionnaire)*

The intentions of the schools represented in the sample seem to provide strong endorsement for an increased use of HLTAs in schools. The most strongly endorsed intention was to support more candidates on the HLTA programme. Just under one third of respondents intended to review the need for more HLTAs, and the establishment of more HLTA positions and deployment of HLTA trained staff to HLTA positions were endorsed by 29 and 20 per cent of respondents respectively. Senior leaders in secondary schools were rather more likely than those in primary schools to state their intention to support more candidates on the HLTA programme, to review the need for HLTAs and to establish more HLTA positions.

The expansion and development of HLTA roles was an intention in many schools with 22 per cent of respondents intending to widen the tasks carried out by HLTAs and 22 per cent intending to develop more subject-focused

roles. There was a slightly lower level of endorsement for increasing the frequency of HLTAs taking whole classes. Around one quarter of schools aimed to provide more time for teachers and HLTAs to plan and prepare together, and one in five schools planned to implement some joint training for teachers and HLTAs. Increased guidance and training for teachers was endorsed by a smaller number of respondents. As noted earlier, secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to see some teacher-related issues as barriers to deployment. This is reflected in schools' plans for the future: secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to be planning extra guidance and training to teachers working with HLTAs.

Finally, over 40 per cent of schools aimed to develop performance management for HLTAs, suggesting that this is widely seen to be an area of need. Primary schools were more likely than secondary schools to say that they planned to develop performance management for HLTAs; it is possible that this is part of a more general pattern of improving and strengthening overall performance management in primary schools, where this aspect of management has tended to be less well-developed than in secondary schools.

It is interesting to compare the intentions of schools with regard to HLTAs with the difficulties they found in deploying these members of staff in their schools. This was investigated in some further analysis comparing respondents' answers to two questions (those shown in Tables 4.17 and 4.9). The results of this analysis indicated the following relationships:

- Just over one third of those identifying a lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan and prepare together said that they intended to address this in the future by providing additional time.
- A similar proportion of those concerned about a lack of guidance for teachers working with HLTAs were intending to provide additional guidance.
- About one quarter of those concerned about lack of training for teachers working with HLTAs were intending to provide extra training.

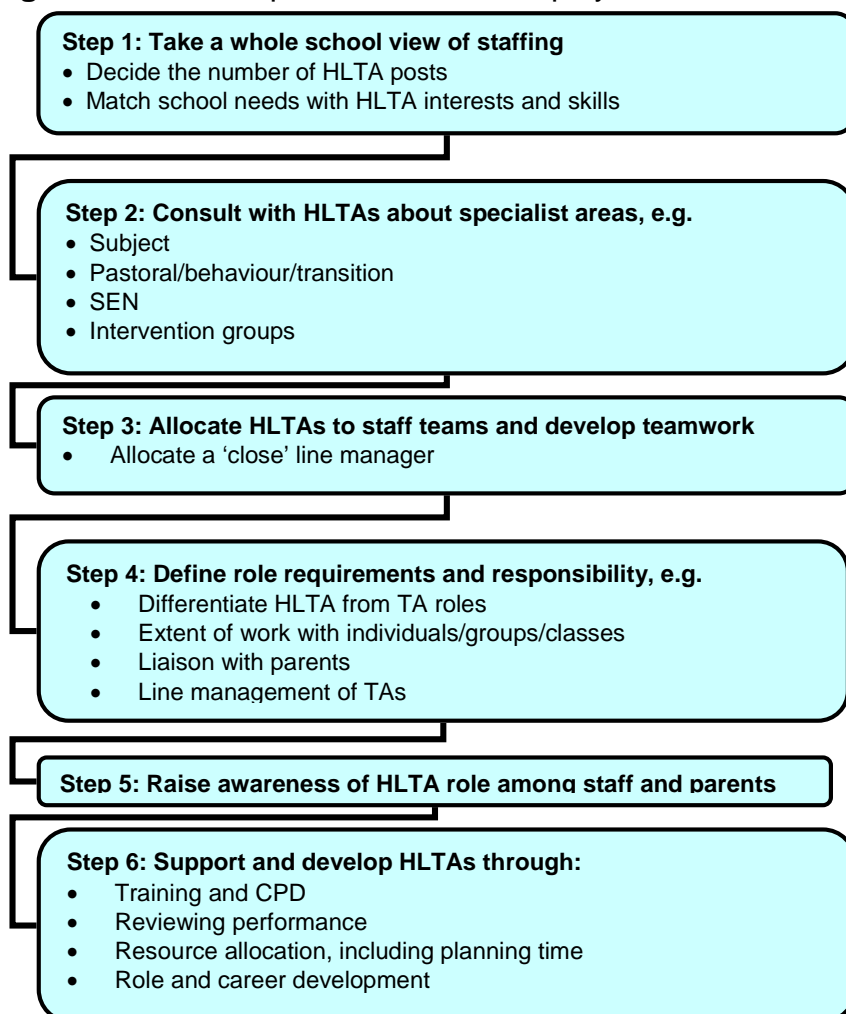
While schools clearly had some difficulties associated with the deployment of HLTAs, these figures do not suggest that more guidance or training, or more joint planning and preparation time, were being given high priority within schools themselves. However, it is important to note the difficulties involved in providing additional time for teachers and HLTAs to plan together. It could prove problematic to release both from their daily duties at the same time, since HLTAs often cover for teachers while they are absent from their class.

## 5 A Model of Good Practice

### Introduction

This chapter outlines a model of good practice derived from an analysis of interviews with 19 HLTAs, nine senior leaders and eight teachers in nine case-study schools (four primary schools, four secondary schools and one special school). The model has six core elements which can lead to the effective deployment of HLTAs, as indicated by their job satisfaction and their perceived impact on teachers, pupils and schools. The six elements of the model concern: the school's approach in matching its needs to the interests and skills of individuals; consulting with HLTAs about an area of specialism; building teams; defining the HLTA role; raising awareness among staff and parents; and supporting and developing HLTAs (see Figure 5.1). Each of the six elements is discussed in turn, using examples of practice from the nine case-study schools.

**Figure 5.1** Good practice in HLTA deployment





## Step 1: Take a whole school view of staffing

Schools with the most positive feedback about the role of HLTAs had adopted a strategic approach whereby the role was considered as part of whole staff deployment. It was seen as good practice – when deploying HLTAs – to take account of the management and deployment of a school’s whole staff to ensure the role’s effectiveness and impact. An assistant headteacher at a secondary school recommended the following approach to senior leaders in other schools: ‘Consider carefully what you want HLTAs to achieve...it’s important to see how the role fits in with the rest of the school structure.’

Many schools had taken on board this approach to considering the HLTA role as part of the process of remodelling the school workforce, although some reported they were already developing specialist TA roles prior to the introduction of the National Agreement (ATL *et al.*, 2003). Developing the HLTA role was viewed as complementary to engaging with the remodelling process as it provided schools with increased flexibility, capacity and capability.

Deciding on the role of HLTAs within the school could be achieved through consultation with other staff (for example, in the school change team). A headteacher at one primary school mentioned that her local headship group was discussing the HLTA role, which allowed her to share information about how other schools within the local authority were developing the role as part of workforce reform.

Some school leaders faced difficult decisions if the number of staff with HLTA status exceeded the number of posts available in the school. HLTAs appreciated it when such decisions were well-argued and clearly communicated.

Straightforward HLTA posts were considered preferable to ‘hybrid’ arrangements (i.e. paying HLTAs at a higher level for only some of their work in school). The former approach was preferred since it enabled the role to be more focused and avoided resentment from staff about receiving different rates of pay for different parts of their work. This was one of the reasons that senior leaders emphasised the need to think carefully about whole school staffing needs before assigning HLTAs to certain roles.

Most of the HLTAs we interviewed had worked at their schools for several years prior to achieving HLTA status. This meant that senior leaders had some understanding of their skills and interests, and these could be considered at the deployment stage. HLTAs appreciated the efforts of senior leaders to match what they had to offer with the needs of their school, in the context of a whole-school review. However, they also welcomed the opportunity to be consulted about their interests.

### **Example 1** An audit of need

A secondary school with about 100 teachers and 50 support assistants was planning to review its approach to staff deployment. The school wanted to focus on SEN support because it had recently changed its approach to the teaching of children experiencing difficulties, with TAs and HLTAs playing a much larger role in their learning. However, although HLTAs spent a lot of time supporting SEN pupils, the review was more far reaching. Staff wanted to place more emphasis on providing smaller teaching groups and needed to determine where best to target support. For example, was there need to focus on certain groups of children (such as those with lower ability) or within certain core subjects?

An assistant head explained that the audit would bring about a change to staff deployment, which had previously been based solely on the expertise and/or preference of the learning support team rather than on the needs of pupils and subject areas.

The impact of adopting a strategic approach to HLTA deployment was noted at case-study schools. Several senior leaders spoke about a change in culture and climate within their school. The deputy head of a secondary school remarked that the HLTA role had ‘bridged the gap’ between support and teachers. She felt that the relationship between teachers and HLTAs was developing well and HLTAs were more valued and respected as a result. Similarly, an assistant head of a primary school, referred to ‘a change of ethos’ as HLTA was now seen as an important role within the school. He commented that this change in thinking had allowed the school to develop in ways that would not have been possible otherwise. For example, HLTAs were involved in data analysis, which had given the school a really good grasp of their pupils’ progress and needs.

### **Step 2: Consult with HLTAs about specialist areas**

The case study visits underlined the value of HLTAs having a specialist role which provided a focus for their work. The importance of consulting with HLTAs about their deployment became clear during case-study interviews. This process aimed to create a delineated role for individuals with HLTA status on the basis of a school’s needs and resources, whilst also considering the skills and interests of HLTAs. Several HLTAs described how they met with senior leaders – usually the headteacher – when they took up their role to discuss their preferences and to agree their specific areas of responsibility.

At the consultation stage, a range of choices could be made about HLTA specialism and deployment. Case-study schools were using the following approaches depending on need, resources and interests: intervention roles (e.g. a responsibility for working with lower-attainers, pupils with EAL and/or pupils with SEN); specific subject/department roles; or pastoral roles. In

addition, some HLTAs had other areas of responsibility, for example for data management across the school. It was typical for the HLTAs deployed in these roles to be using a specialism already in place, but in some cases the member of staff had agreed to develop a specialist role in a new area.

There are several benefits to allocating HLTAs to specific roles, either curriculum-based or otherwise. HLTAs at case-study schools said they were more satisfied with their work when carrying out roles that involved specialist knowledge, skills and responsibility. The purpose of a specialist HLTA role was clearer, as were the expectations of others.

The following sub-sections illustrate how case-study schools were using HLTAs in relation to intervention programmes, as subject/department assistants and in pastoral roles.

### **A specialist intervention role**

The surveys of HLTAs and senior leaders showed that working with small groups and individual pupils was identified as making a significant contribution to pupil performance. The interviewees also made reference to the benefits of HLTAs working with small groups of pupils with specific needs. This type of support could be combined with a subject specialism (for example, HLTAs could give special attention to groups of pupils experiencing difficulties in particular subject areas).

An intervention role allowed HLTAs to give certain pupils more attention in order to develop their skills and help them make progress. For example, an HLTA working in a secondary school explained that she was able to concentrate her efforts on certain pupils and tailor work to their specific needs – something that was difficult for teachers to achieve in a whole class situation. It also meant that pupils could be supported within classes rather than being withdrawn from the class. An assistant head at a secondary school, said this type of support was welcomed by department heads as HLTAs could produce schemes of work for their intervention groups relating to work set by the teacher for the whole class.

### **Example 2** An intervention role for HLTAs

A large city secondary school used three HLTAs to run several literacy intervention programmes for Y7 and Y8 pupils. This work is particularly important since the school had a high percentage of pupils who speak a language other than English at home, including many who are at an early stage of speaking English.

An assistant head at the school explained that each HLTA was wholly responsible for a particular literacy programme. He described their role as being 'crucial' to intervention work and said it enabled the school to assess and monitor individual pupils. In his view, this had enabled the school to become much more effective in monitoring pupil progress.

### **A subject role**

Enabling HLTAs to take on a subject specialism was thought to have benefits for pupils, teachers and the HLTAs themselves. Pupils gained from having additional support available from someone with subject knowledge. For example, an assistant head drew attention to an HLTA who was particularly knowledgeable about food and textiles. These skills were valued by the school and enabled pupils to carry out practical work even when a teacher was not in the classroom.

HLTAs themselves valued an opportunity to develop subject-specific knowledge. This approach to deployment was also considered to help focus CPD; senior leaders in secondary schools expressed the view that attaching HLTAs to departments helped in the professional development of HLTAs. One assistant head described the advantages to an HLTA as follows: 'Her skills were very much in the area she works in, so higher level status has enabled her to develop those and make better use of them'.

A third benefit was the impact on teachers. For example, a teacher of Y2 pupils was working with HLTAs who had particular strength in dance and ICT. She said: 'HLTAs can give a lot more time to specific subjects – maybe more than teachers who have a greater teaching load. They can be a lot more creative with what they do'. The headteacher of this school also commented on the benefits of using HLTAs' specialist knowledge for teachers and pupils:

*The teachers can learn from this. A class teacher's job can be quite lonely at times, if they're the only adult in the class, so the HLTA role lets them bounce ideas, and they may be more likely to notice children who didn't shine before.*

As might be expected, the deployment of HLTAs with subject specialism worked differently in primary and special schools compared with secondary schools. Those in the former tended to be attached to particular year groups

(e.g. Foundation Stage or Year 3) or subject areas (such as RE or ICT). They undertook work in these subject areas with whole classes which they planned in advance. Those in secondary schools tended to be attached to subject departments, such as English or humanities, where they carried out curriculum support. They also had one-to-one sessions with pupils and held pastoral responsibilities.

### **Example 3** Subject specialism in a primary school

In a medium-sized community primary school, the headteacher spoke about the importance of HLTAs and the multifaceted benefits they provided. This included knowing children well to ensure they have a familiar learning environment, enabling teachers to have PPA and management time, running after school clubs and taking responsibility for reviewing the performance of support staff.

Two of the school's HLTAs worked in RE, planning lessons for children in the subject, under the supervision of teaching staff. The head explained how this worked in practice:

*We play to the strengths of the HLTAs, use their subject specialisms and tailor what we're asking them to do to their particular strengths. We're looking at individuals and what skills they've got and what they would feel comfortable in delivering.*

*The lesson observation we did, the HLTA dressed up as the Good Samaritan and added that extra oomph factor that we'd like to say is in every lesson, but can't always be because of time constraints. We've empowered them to take responsibility. We check and make sure that it fits in with the long term plan, but we do allow them to get on with it.*

In secondary schools there was the potential to attach HLTA posts to specific subject departments or faculties. One head of department argued that the departmental approach was the best option for HLTA deployment: 'The department route is the only way to go... they need to be attached to a department and have subject knowledge rather than being used generally'.

#### **Example 4** Departmental roles in a secondary school

A secondary school had three HLTAs in post, each of whom were allocated to different departments, related to their interests and training (two had undertaken specific training in mathematics and science).

The HLTA with specialist science training described how she now regularly took a Y7 class. As a result of this she was involved in writing reports and discussing pupils' progress with their parents. She also supported low-attaining science GCSE groups in Y10 and 11. The professional development gained from working in this way was a much-welcomed outcome, as she explained: 'I have more responsibility and recognition and feel more valued. It's the value in career progression that is most important'.

#### **A pastoral role**

Several of the HLTAs in case study schools had a specific responsibility for the emotional well being of children and young people. One area of pastoral work for several HLTAs was to support pupils during transition. For example, HLTAs held specific responsibility for children entering school (e.g. during the Foundation Stage) or, in secondary schools, they were responsible for the transition of pupils entering Year 7.

#### **Example 5** A pastoral role for HLTAs

A large secondary school in the South East of England had appointed HLTAs to posts as assistant heads of year. This role was greatly valued, according to their colleagues, and they themselves found it both challenging and satisfying.

The HLTA attached to Y7 felt ideally placed to carry out the role as she was familiar with the year group and had good relationship with pupils. She had been responsible for their transition from Y6 to Y7 and had contacted parents and external agencies. As she carried out the role full-time she was able to deal with issues when they arose, whereas a teacher in the role would either have to leave a class, or put the issue aside to be dealt with later. The HLTA said she greatly enjoyed her role and found the work challenging but extremely worthwhile. She felt she was able to make a difference by influencing the behaviour and attendance of students. She knew too, that her role 'has done a lot to ease the burden on the head of year, especially in relation to transition procedures'.

The head of Y7 commented: 'There's no doubt that she [the HLTA] contributes towards the personal achievement of many of the Y7s, especially through dealing with attendance issues. She's well aware of their family backgrounds and any learning difficulties and she knows how to encourage them'.

As noted above, HLTAs were thought to be having a particularly positive impact when working in a specialist role. This was identified as an area for further development by several senior leaders and teachers in schools which had not yet adopted this approach.

### **Step 3: Allocate HLTAs to staff teams and develop teamwork**

Even where their jobs required working with different groups of staff and pupils across the school, HLTAs valued being part of a specific team (for example a year group, subject or departmental team). This promoted a sense of belonging and teamwork, as well as enhancing their specific role.

#### **Allocating HLTAs to teams**

It was clear from the case-study interviews that team work, communication and relationships between teachers and HLTAs were key elements of successful deployment. Being part of a team was important in promoting high levels of satisfaction among HLTAs. As one HLTA said: 'It makes me feel proud to be part of a teaching team.'

Working closely with colleagues and being included in staff and department meetings contributed to HLTAs feeling valued and fully accepted. In one primary school, an HLTA described the extent to which she felt included: 'We work very closely together. We go to staff meetings and are members of curriculum teams.'

The department-based HLTA at one secondary school described her involvement in the following terms: 'I do joint planning with the head of department and I'm fully included in the way the department is run.' Similarly, an HLTA at another school commented: 'I attend all the meetings and take the SEN angle to those meetings. I go over schemes of work and advise on how to adapt them for SEN pupils.'

HLTAs working closely with teachers in the classroom brought benefits for teachers and pupils, as one secondary teacher explained: 'She [the HLTA] has made life much easier. We work together as a team...she is so good that I'm dependent on her.' The collaboration between teacher and HLTA could also help teachers in lesson planning, as one primary teacher said: 'If I'm planning, I tend to have an idea and say to her 'what do you think about this?' It's a much nicer working relationship.'

Another primary teacher described the teamwork with an HLTA in the following terms:

*She's very active in what she does. She researches everything. It's nice because I like looking at new initiatives and I have someone to talk to on that level about it. If we have met a hiccup, she has often already started to unpick it. That's from having good rapport.*

### **Allocating 'close' line managers**

All the case study schools had a system of line management for HLTAs and, in general, those interviewed were content with the way this operated. However, the most favourable responses came from those who were line-managed by someone in their respective team, such as the head of department, or head of year.

Clear team allocations for HLTAs enabled their line management to take place within the team, thereby ensuring that performance assessments, appraisal and development needs were dealt with by someone with a good understanding of their day-to-day work.

At a secondary school, an HLTA was enthusiastic about the support she received from her head of year: 'I'm well-supported by my line manager and there's a proper appraisal system, including observation. I get 100 per cent good guidance and direction.'

### **Step 4: Define role requirements and responsibility**

HLTAs welcomed clear job descriptions which explained their responsibilities and clarified their main areas of work. As HLTAs may previously have worked as a TA in the school, new job descriptions were important to distinguish the HLTA role from that of a TA. The assistant head of a primary school explained: 'We have introduced specific job descriptions which state the duties they're expected to perform. The HLTAs have more of a responsibility for student learning [than TAs].'

The HLTA job descriptions included references to the extra roles undertaken and the changed emphasis of the job. For example, the job description for an HLTA working in a primary school included a clear reference to her ICT responsibilities. Another HLTA said she appreciated the fact that her job description was 'good at defining the additional expectations, especially in terms of planning and assessment'.

### **Working with individuals and groups of pupils**

Not only were relationships with colleagues important but so were relationships between HLTAs and pupils. HLTAs in primary schools usually worked with particular classes or year groups. Although not all of the secondary HLTAs worked with pupils, several of the interviewees felt it was



also helpful for HLTAs in secondary schools to be allocated to work in greater depth with particular groups. For example, one secondary HLTA explained that because she was working mainly with one year group, she knew the students very well: ‘Teachers trust my judgement and rely on me, so there’s mutual support.’

The importance of having consistency of staffing for pupils was noted by several interviewees. One headteacher explained:

*It’s important that the HLTA knows the children well. They should be working in the class so they know what the rules are and they can keep the same standards of behaviour and have the same expectations.*

As a result of working with small groups and individual pupils, close relationships between HLTAs and children had been fostered. The HLTAs’ in-depth knowledge made it easier to recognise the most appropriate next steps for pupils. Many of those interviewed saw these relationships as very beneficial. For example, an assistant head in a special school pointed out how the HLTA had built close relationships with pupils and made them feel secure. Likewise, a primary school teacher said the HLTA she worked with knew the children ‘inside out’ and this helped to move their learning forward.

The interviews with HLTAs demonstrated their ability to contribute to personalised learning. For instance, an HLTA working in a secondary school said her knowledge of certain pupils provided her with a better understanding of their needs. Her HLTA colleague commented on the relationships she had built with the pupils who made use of an intervention unit. She said that these pupils tended to seek out one of the HLTAs if they needed help.

Senior leaders commented on the impact of the HLTAs on pupils. For example, an assistant head in a secondary school suggested that deploying HLTAs to support small groups of pupils had led to improved behaviour and attainment. The school’s Ofsted inspection had found behaviour at the school to be excellent and several pupils with statements of SEN pupils had gained seven or more GCSE grades A to G, as a result of the additional support they had received from HLTAs. Similarly, another secondary school Senior Management Team (SMT) member said the school’s three HLTAs had been ‘crucial’ in raising achievement among pupils who were struggling in literacy. The HLTAs had adapted a series of literacy units for the group of pupils. Some pupils had reached level 4 and had moved out of the group. The assistant head described the HLTAs as ‘an asset to the school without a shadow of a doubt’.

## **Enabling teachers to have time for PPA**

According to the survey results (see Chapter 4) senior leaders thought HLTAs were having a significant impact on supporting PPA time, particularly in primary schools.

This view was confirmed by case study interviews. As one primary head commented: 'Teachers really appreciate the PPA time... the planning freshens up the teachers.' She saw this arrangement as a collaborative effort – teachers and HLTAs supporting each other. Another primary head explained that, although initially teachers had had to think through how to hand work over to HLTAs, the resulting time for PPA was greatly welcomed by teachers. An assistant head at a secondary school also commented on the impact of HLTAs on providing additional time for teachers. He explained that teachers had run all 13 literacy progress units in previous years, but now HLTAs took responsibility for seven of these.

## **Management responsibilities**

HLTAs may have responsibility for steering the work of other support staff. Several of the case study schools had given HLTAs line management responsibilities for others, especially TAs. As well as providing a management role for HLTAs, this also enabled support staff to have a line manager with a specific interest in and understanding of their role.

The management role could include taking responsibility for timetabling, performance reviews and planning staff development activities. This aspect of the role was welcomed by both HLTAs and teaching staff, as one primary headteacher said: 'Giving HLTAs their own individual responsibilities such as being responsible for the performance management of the support staff – that raises the status of the role.'

In another primary school, one of the HLTAs had attended a course on performance managing support staff and had taken responsibility for line managing teaching assistants within the school.

One HLTA described the development of this aspect of her role:

*As part of my performance management, I put that I would like to go into a management role. They recognised that and followed it up, and this was the first time the team leadership role had been put in place. It's a growing role and I manage all the TAs.*

## **Liaising with parents**

The survey of HLTAs showed that some HLTAs were liaising more frequently with parents/carers than before achieving HLTA status. Some schools

deployed HLTAs in roles that involved close liaison with parents, including dealing with pupil absences and attending parents' evening.

An assistant headteacher at a secondary school explained how liaising with parents had come about as a result of HLTAs' specialist intervention role. 'In the intervention work, they (the HLTAs) have seen parents on their own or I have seen parents with them'. One of the HLTAs said: 'I have more contact with parents. I feel responsible for those groups of children – I will write or ring home if need be.'

The headteacher of a special school commented that parents had accepted the HLTA role and appreciated the work being carried out by HLTAs to support their children.

### **Step 5: Raise awareness of HLTA role among staff and parents**

As the HLTA is a relatively new development, it is not surprising that other staff and parents may not be fully aware of the nature of the role. Some of the case study schools had recognised the need to improve understanding of the HLTA role and its potential benefits for the school as a whole.

It was easier in smaller schools (especially primary schools) to inform all the staff about HLTA status and how HLTAs would be working in the school.

#### **Example 6 Raising awareness of the HLTA role**

In a small primary school, the HLTAs said their colleagues had a good understanding of their role. The headteacher explained: 'We had a meeting when the scheme started with the school staff as a whole. All the staff have been involved in discussions about workforce remodelling, so the new roles were discussed at the time when the new staffing structure was discussed.'

One of the HLTAs explained that she was a member of the school's remodelling team. She felt well supported by her colleagues: 'I've had a lot of encouragement from the staff and teachers value the role I play. I'm involved with planning, delivery and assessment in the classroom.' A second HLTA said: 'You need to make sure that all staff know what the role is. We are a small school and things get discussed. I have the full support of everyone in the school.'

For larger schools, raising awareness of the HLTA role could be more difficult to achieve. One HLTA in a secondary school reflected that although she was well supported and very satisfied with her role, she doubted that all the staff understood what the higher level status really meant:

*It was announced to staff when I and the others gained our HLTA status and we were congratulated, but I suspect a lot of the staff don't know what it means. Until posts are advertised specifically as HLTA posts, the role won't be recognised.*

The deputy headteacher of another large secondary school, which was firmly committed to the development of HLTAs, explained that certain members of the teaching staff had helped to improve the understanding and appreciation of HLTAs among other staff: 'They [the teachers working with HLTAs] make sure the rest of the staff know about it.'

Several senior leaders commented that it was also important for parents to know about the HLTA role. This could develop as a result of HLTAs liaising with parents. A primary headteacher noted that the biggest impact of the HLTA role was that it had improved that status of support staff among parents. She thought that, as a result of the HLTA training, parents were more confident that such employees had professional status. Another primary headteacher made similar comments, arguing that it had been very important for parents to see HLTAs as part of the school's team and for them to interact on a regular basis. A head of a secondary school said: 'parents know that the GCSE entry level pupils are taken by HLTAs and there is no problem with this.'

## **Step 6: Support and develop HLTAs**

As the role of HLTAs is new, there is a particular need for schools to provide support and development for HLTAs. Some HLTAs reported being particularly well supported by their schools in relation to their personal and professional development. They felt that they had been helped to take on HLTA responsibilities and that they were able to develop their skills in line with the requirements of the post. They also felt positive about the development of their role in the future.

### **Providing time and other resources**

One of the most common difficulties identified by HLTAs in the national survey was a lack of time to plan and prepare work (see Chapter 3). Staff in case-study schools acknowledged that HLTAs in their schools were using their free time, such as lunchtime or after school time, to plan and prepare. This was a particular problem when first taking up the role. One HLTA explained, when she first became an HLTA, she struggled with the workload so she took marking and planning home to ensure it was completed. However, as time went on, she felt more organised and took work home less frequently.

Nevertheless, there was a need for some non-contact time during the working week. For example, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at a secondary school explained:

*They [the HLTAs] have one lesson a week planning and preparation time and sometimes they can find ad hoc time too. I support them in using time in lessons when appropriate and by negotiation with other staff.*

Another secondary school ensured that their HLTAs had two hours of planning time per week. An HLTA at a primary school said: ‘We get our own PPA time, which is really useful.’

It was particularly challenging for teachers and HLTAs to get planning time together, although one school arranged for the HLTAs to attend staff meetings and curriculum meetings, which were held on a weekly basis.

The need for more time for HLTAs to plan and prepare lessons was noted by several interviewees. As one teacher said: ‘There’s not enough time to do things like that [jointly plan or prepare prior to lessons]. We often end up trying to fit things in at lunchtime but it’s difficult to coordinate it all.’ Joint planning time with teachers was particularly challenging, because teachers’ PPA time was usually achieved through deploying HLTAs to take whole classes in order to release teachers from the classroom. As one HLTA said: ‘Timetabling in time for teachers and HLTAs to plan and review work together would be highly beneficial.’ This was acknowledged to be an issue that case study schools needed to tackle in future.

Although time was the main issue, there were examples of other resources used to support HLTAs. In one case, the school had provided their three HLTAs with laptops and their own room in which to conduct group work, hold meetings and keep their materials. One of the HLTAs said: ‘We have [each] been given a laptop which is wonderful... it helps us present and deliver the lessons.’

### **Line management support**

It was essential to have a well-defined support system for HLTAs. Schools needed to give some thought to this as the role was new and involved specific areas of responsibility. A senior leader at a secondary school emphasised the line management support offered to HLTAs:

*We have a structured line management system and the appraisal system is the same as for teachers. Performance management is improving all the time, so all staff have their needs catered for and each department has a very thorough CPD programme.*

Similarly, two HLTAs working in a primary school described the strong support they received. The first said: 'My line manager is the assistant head. The school has done a lot of work this year in terms of performance management for support staff. We work closely together in this.' The second HLTA gave an example of the support she had received: 'I had a lesson observation last week, for the first time. It was a bit daunting, but she [my line manager] was very supportive and came back with some useful comments. I feed back to her if there are any issues.'

### **HLTA training and access to CPD**

HLTAs appreciated the need for training and on-going professional development. The training they had undertaken to gain HLTA status was generally valued by interviewees. One teacher commented on the way that the training had made the two HLTAs he worked with 'very aware and innovative'. Two HLTAs at one school who had taken up the specialist maths and science training appreciated having been involved and had found it useful in building their specialist knowledge. Several SMT and teacher interviewees, as well as HLTAs, expressed the view that this type of specialist training should be extended to other subject areas (English, Humanities and SEN were mentioned in particular).

HLTAs were also very satisfied with the subsequent training they had undertaken as part of their specialist role within the school. Some, for example, had attended First Aid and Risk Assessment courses, as required by their departments, and several had received training on assessment.

The case study schools usually included HLTAs in training days and courses at their schools. This was appreciated by HLTAs as confirming their inclusion as valued staff members. The assistant head of a secondary school said: 'I don't see any distinction between HLTAs and teaching staff regarding training. An HLTA and a teacher went to a national conference together. They have also been on other INSET so they get a complete picture of things.'

A primary HLTA said she was very happy with the way she and her colleague were included in school decision-making and training alongside teaching staff:

*We're very much part of the staff. We don't tend to have a hierarchy in this school. The head has always given me lots of opportunities to train up and that's given me confidence.*

### **Example 7** Developing the HLTA role

A rural secondary school had three HLTAs who were all department-based. The HLTAs were pleased with the opportunity to encourage their interests and provide career progression.

The assistant head said: 'It's been a very positive experience at this school. The HLTAs already had skills and interests in the areas they work in and others will be encouraged to develop skills in the same way. Their role had already evolved and the status has given them the credit for what they were doing.'

Not only were all teaching assistants included in whole-school training, but the HLTAs ran a section of the staff training day for their colleagues focussing on access to the curriculum for pupils performing below level 3 in English.

HLTAs in case-study schools said that their school would support them in addressing their specific training needs. One primary HLTA said: 'The head has always given me lots of opportunities to train up and that's given me confidence. If I have any development needs, I discuss it with the head. For example, I was interested in phonics this year and the head and I identified the right training.'

### **Supporting HLTAs' career plans and aspirations**

HLTAs said they were becoming more confident as they became used to the demands of their new roles, as one secondary HLTA explained:

*My confidence has improved. Whereas two years ago, when we started training for HLTA, it was a bit scary to be standing in front of a class – “what if I get this wrong or what if I get that wrong?” – but it has given us more confidence.*

Senior leaders had noticed HLTAs' increased confidence, with one mentioning that an HLTA from her school had spoken at a regional conference. HLTAs associated growing confidence with feeling valued by teachers, the development of managerial roles, positive feedback from parents, the recognition of their skills and abilities and the development of specialist knowledge. As their confidence increased, so did their potential to take greater responsibility, become more pro-active and to identify other ways in which their role could develop to the benefit of the school. As a primary HLTA said: 'I have developed as a person and the pupils have benefited from that because I know what the next step is for them. That gives the teacher the confidence to know that there's no need for them to look over their shoulder and think "Is she doing the right thing?" I get a chance to work on my own initiative. Very often the teachers come to me and ask for my views.'

When asked about their aspirations for career development, the HLTAs in the case-study schools were largely content with their current posts and saw little reason to move to a different school. However, those not yet in specialist posts were keen to develop an area of specialism.

With regards to future plans, several interviewees pointed out that not all HLTAs wished to become teachers and that being an HLTA was a fulfilling role in its own right. However, a few HLTAs were considering a teaching career. Gaining HLTA status was seen as a useful step since it gave them an insight into teaching and provided a route into gaining qualified teacher status (QTS). Several senior leaders and teacher interviewees said that they were happy to see the HLTA role used in this way and were encouraging some of the HLTAs they worked with to pursue a career in teaching. One primary headteacher commented: 'This year I have given one of the HLTAs experience in both key stages. She would like to go on to teach, so that experience will be useful'. Another said: 'Hopefully it [HLTA status] will be seen as a career path and a way into teaching for people coming in later in life'.

### **Key messages about good practice in developing the HLTA role**

This chapter has set out a model of good practice that schools may wish to draw upon when considering whether or not to establish HLTA posts or when developing an existing role. A six-step model was presented as a way in which schools might ensure the effective use of HLTAs, based on visits to nine case-study schools. However, it should be noted that not all of the schools visited during the research project had used all of the strategies or introduced them in the order presented above.

The evidence gathered from case-study schools shows that HLTAs greatly valued their higher level status. It provided recognition of their responsibilities and provided an opportunity for professional development. Some schools had utilised the role particularly well, and in all cases, staff valued the contribution HLTAs made to school life. The role was best introduced through a process of discussion, negotiation and communication. It was thought particularly important for senior leaders to ensure that the role was considered carefully, by consulting with HLTAs and other staff. Senior leaders also understood that there was a need to support HLTAs in their new roles and to keep the development of HLTA posts under review, so that they could continue to get the best from all their staff.



## 6 Summary of main findings

### 6.1 Overview

The research findings, summarised below, provide a strong endorsement of the benefits that HLTAs can provide to schools. They also highlight some areas for future development. A summary of the key findings from the survey and case-study data is provided below. The sub-sections correspond to the five objectives of the research, set out in the introduction to this report, together with an additional section drawing together some of the main areas identified as challenging and/or in need of further development. The chapter concludes by presenting a number of issues for future consideration.

### 6.2 How are HLTAs being employed and deployed?

The first objective of the research project was to identify the range of ways that support staff with HLTA status are being employed and deployed in schools. The main findings are presented below:

#### 6.2.1 Approaches to employment

- Over one third (36 per cent) of those with HLTA status worked exclusively as HLTAs on a full-time or part-time basis. Sixteen per cent had split roles whereby they worked part-time as an HLTA and part-time in another role (such as a TA) and a further 17 per cent worked as a senior TAs with some HLTA duties. Twenty-nine per cent were not working in an HLTA role.
- A third (33 per cent) of HLTAs reported working in split roles; 65 per cent of these reported being paid differently for HLTA and non-HLTA duties. Similarly, over two fifths (42 per cent) of senior leaders reported that one or more HLTAs were paid differently and 67 per cent of senior leaders with HLTAs in split roles reported that these people received different rates of pay for HLTA and non-HLTA duties.
- Most of the schools involved in the survey had one or two members of staff carrying out HLTA-level duties, with larger schools having more such posts (53 per cent).
- Most of the schools involved in the survey were using local authority pay structures for HLTA posts (84 per cent).
- Most HLTAs (59 per cent) were paid for during term-time with spreadover pay (i.e. they received payment during school closures).

#### 6.2.2 Approaches to deployment

- The research found that HLTAs were being deployed in a range of ways: working with pupils on a one-to-one basis (e.g. providing support to pupils with special needs), with small groups and with whole classes.
- HLTAs who completed the survey reported that their main role was to support individuals and small groups of pupils particularly in helping those

with SEN access the curriculum, but they also delivered learning activities to whole classes.

- Responses to the senior leader survey showed that HLTAs were most commonly deployed in working with groups of pupils and leading whole-class learning.
- Sixty per cent of HLTA respondents reported that they had a specialist role, most commonly in SEN.
- Case study interviews revealed that HLTAs welcomed having a specialist role.

### **6.3 How far have roles developed and changed since achieving HLTA status?**

The second objective of the research was to establish the extent to which support staff roles have developed and changed since achieving HLTA status. The evidence suggested that many felt their role had remained much the same, although certain aspects had changed.

- In relation to teacher support, over 40 per cent of HLTAs reported that their involvement in planning/preparing lessons and/or team-teaching had increased.
- In relation to school support, there was a general increase in liaison with parents/carers. Secondary respondents reported more changes in school support activities, especially an increase in liaison with other agencies and also administration.
- Not all survey respondents had line management responsibilities, but about half of those with such responsibilities said they took part in certain tasks more frequently (especially liaison between teaching and support staff and mentoring).
- Just under one third of respondents (31 per cent) were very pleased with the way in which their role had developed since achieving HLTA status. A further 19 per cent did not expect any changes because their role was already at HLTA-level. Additionally, 16 per cent noted some positive changes, but not as many as they would have liked.
- Only four per cent of respondents said their role had changed but not in the direction they would have liked. A further 13 per cent were disappointed with the lack of change to their role and 12 per cent did not expect any changes given the circumstances of their school.
- In the case-study schools, HLTAs tended to have worked in their respective schools as experienced TAs prior to achieving HLTA status. This suggests that, as TAs, they were supported and encouraged to adopt a new role. Interviewees talked about the ways in which individual strengths had been built upon to meet the needs of the school.

### **6.4 How do HLTAs view the new role?**

The third objective was to explore the perceptions and experiences of those with HLTA status in relation to their work; including job satisfaction and

morale, experience of performance reviews, aspirations for future training and development, and career progression.

#### **6.4.1 Job satisfaction and morale**

- Almost three quarters (74 per cent) of the surveyed HLTAs thought that achieving HLTA status was associated with increased confidence and self-esteem. Over half (54 and 53 per cent) thought it was related to greater job satisfaction and increased pay. However, 64 per cent said it had brought an increased workload and over two fifths (41 per cent) said that the status had not provided more opportunities for career development.
- Greater job satisfaction among HLTAs was associated with greater levels of responsibility, having a recognised HLTA post and having a specialist role. Lower job satisfaction was associated with a lack of time for planning, and experiencing a range of difficulties in their school.
- Increased stress among HLTAs was associated most strongly with a lack of time to plan and prepare their work
- HLTAs who were employed in full-time HLTA posts were more likely to report greater job satisfaction compared with HLTAs who were employed in part-time HLTA posts
- The most common words used by the surveyed HLTAs to describe their experience of the role so far were: ‘interesting’, ‘enjoyable’ and ‘rewarding’.

#### **6.4.2 Performance reviews**

- Forty-three per cent of those with HLTA status had received an appraisal since achieving their new status, the majority of whom (77 per cent) said they were satisfied with the appraisal process.
- It was common in primary schools for HLTAs to be line managed by a headteacher and by a SENCO in secondary schools.
- The case-study interviews indicated that HLTAs tended to feel better supported when line-managers were located in their teams, and where they had time to plan/prepare their work.

#### **6.4.3 Aspirations for future training and development**

- Over one third of HLTA questionnaire respondents said they planned to stay in their current post in the next few years.
- Respondents to the senior leader questionnaire felt that HLTAs could be made more effective by providing further opportunities for professional development (23 per cent). A majority of school respondents (61 per cent) said they intended to support more candidates on the HLTA training programme in future.
- Case-study interviews showed that most HLTAs were highly satisfied with the training they had received. Most of those interviewed had access to in-school training opportunities alongside teaching staff and their individual CPD needs were identified during appraisal.
- Most of the case-study interviewees with HLTA status said they wanted to stay as HLTAs in their current schools, although some wanted to develop

an area of responsibility/specialism. A few were considering teaching as a longer-term career option.

## **6.5 Good practice in HLTA deployment**

The third objective of the research was to identify good practice in the deployment of support staff with HLTA status and how this is facilitated. Most of the information in this section is taken from the case-study interviews, but the questionnaire responses provided the following insights into the links between HLTAs' satisfaction and deployment.

- Most of the surveyed HLTAs thought their school made effective use of them, with 29 per cent saying their school used them effectively 'to a great extent'. A minority (23 per cent) said their school did not make effective use of them at all.
- HLTAs who felt their school made the best use of their role were more likely to have a greater level of responsibility since achieving the status. They were also more likely to work in an HLTA post (compared with those who had achieved HLTA status but were working as TAs).
- Respondents who were employed in full-time HLTA posts reported the greatest satisfaction with their role (compared with those employed in part-time HLTA posts).

### **6.5.1 Good practice approaches**

The research team developed a model of good practice in HLTA deployment based on the case-study visits. The model identified six steps for schools, as follows

1. Take a whole school review of staffing, including deciding on the number of HLTA posts and matching the needs of the school with HLTA interests and skills.
2. Consult with HLTAs about a specialist role, for example a subject, pastoral, SEN or intervention role.
3. Allocate HLTAs to staff teams and develop teamwork, including identifying a 'close' line manager (i.e. someone who has day-to-day contact with the member of staff).
4. Define role requirements and responsibility, including differentiating HLTAs from TA roles, agreeing the extent of work with individuals and groups of pupils, liaison with parents and line management responsibilities.
5. Raise awareness of the HLTA role among staff and parents.
6. Support and develop HLTAs, including training and CPD, performance reviews, resource allocation (especially planning time) and role/career development.

## 6.6 What has been the impact of the HLTA role?

The fourth objective was to explore and assess the impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status in schools – in particular how their work supports the learning, engagement, motivation and involvement of pupils. The research also considered how they support the teachers they work with and the whole school.

### 6.6.1 Impact on pupils

- Both HLTAs and senior leaders felt the HLTA role was having an impact on supporting pupil learning.
- Of the HLTAs who responded to an open-ended question, 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected pupil performance.
- HLTA survey responses suggested that they had the greatest impact on pupils by supporting learning with individuals and small groups. In case-study schools, this type of work tended to focus on underachieving pupils, EAL pupils and/or those with special education needs.
- Of the senior leaders who responded to an open-ended question, 91 per cent identified at least one contribution made by an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect on pupil performance.
- Almost three quarters (72 per cent) of senior leaders identified ‘supporting pupil learning’ as the most significant impact of HLTAs in schools.
- Case-study interviews suggested that HLTAs were making an important contribution to supporting pupil learning, especially when knowledgeable in a particular area. Their familiarity with pupils, their ability to relate to them and provide continuity of support was valued.

### 6.6.2 Impact on teachers

- Of the HLTAs who responded to an open-ended question, 83 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had positively affected the work of teachers.
- HLTAs reported that ‘allowing teachers planning time’ and ‘helping with teaching when needed’ were the most frequent positive contributions they made to the work of teachers.
- Senior leaders in primary schools in particular identified HLTAs as having a significant impact on supporting PPA time.
- Almost three-quarters of senior leaders (73 per cent) indicated that the HLTA role had reduced teacher workload, to at least some extent.
- Case-study teachers spoke about the support they received from HLTAs. They appreciated working in a collaborative way, especially when developing new ideas.

### 6.6.3 Impact on whole schools

- Of the HLTAs who responded to an open-ended question, 80 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had

made a positive effect within their school. The most common examples of positive contributions included providing cover at short notice, training and managing TAs and providing continuity for pupils when teachers were absent.

- Of the senior leaders who responded to an open-ended question, 90 per cent identified at least one contribution they had made as an HLTA that had resulted in a positive effect within their school
- The HLTA survey found that, in some cases, HLTAs were liaising more frequently with parents than prior to achieving the status. One in ten senior leaders also identified this as an area where HLTAs were having a significant impact in schools.
- In a few case-study schools, senior leaders spoke about a positive change in culture and climate within their school as a result of the HLTA role.

## **6.7 Difficulties and barriers experienced in developing the HLTA role**

The research identified a number of barriers to the effective use of HLTAs in schools. These are reported below:

- A lack of HLTA posts was identified as a barrier to the effective utilisation of the role by 29 per cent of HLTA survey respondents. Other barriers included a lack of time to plan and prepare lessons with teachers (25 per cent) and a lack of time to plan work themselves (23 per cent). Some (22 per cent) felt that teachers and/or senior leaders did not fully understand the HLTA role.
- HLTAs working part-time reported more barriers than those working full-time.
- Responses to the senior leader survey suggested that the main barrier to effective deployment was a lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan and prepare together.

## **6.8 Conclusion**

The NFER's research into the deployment and impact of support staff who have achieved HLTA status reveals a largely positive picture. The HLTA role has clearly grown and developed since it was introduced in 2003. In line with its original purpose, HLTA status is offering recognition and valuable development opportunities to support staff as well as providing assistance to pupils, teachers and schools. It is clear that the HLTA role has the potential to change the way in which education is delivered and to make a positive difference to school life. It offers greater flexibility to school leaders as well as greater job satisfaction for staff. However, as with any new educational development of this magnitude, some initial difficulties and challenges are to be expected. The NFER's research draws attention to a range of issues that those involved in the HLTA programme nationally and locally should find useful in moving the programme forwards.

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## Appendix A HLTA Sample

### HLTAs in Primary Schools

		Respondents		HLTA Population	
		Number	%	Number	%
Gender	Male	4	1	82	1
	Female	681	99	7144	98
	Unknown	6	1	31	0
Disability	Yes	12	2	88	1
	No	653	95	6927	95
	Declined	26	4	242	3
Age of HLTA	20-35	55	8	893	13
	36-40	124	18	1338	19
	41-45	210	31	2123	30
	46-50	171	25	1693	24
	51+	118	17	1036	15
Primary school size	Small	199	29	2088	29
	Medium	369	53	3803	52
	Large	123	18	1358	19
	Not Available	-	-	8	0
School type	Infants	65	9	656	9
	First School	59	9	487	7
	Infant & Junior (Primary)	485	70	5392	74
	First & Middle	1	0	31	0
	Junior	73	11	629	9
	Middle deemed Primary	8	1	62	1
Achievement Band (KS2 Overall performance 2006)	Lowest band	79	11	1197	16
	2nd lowest band	100	14	1078	15
	Middle band	126	18	1203	17
	2nd highest band	131	19	1264	17
	Highest band	119	17	1211	17
	Not Available	136	20	1304	18
Region	North	254	37	2814	39
	Midlands	199	29	2050	28
	South	238	34	2393	33
LEA type	London Borough	53	8	538	7
	Metropolitan Authorities	173	25	2115	29
	English Unitary Authorities	115	17	1150	16
	Counties	350	51	3454	48
% eligible FSM 2005 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	164	24	1537	21
	2nd lowest 20%	164	24	1471	20
	Middle 20%	144	21	1489	21
	2nd highest 20%	116	17	1435	20
	Highest 20%	103	15	1316	18
	Not Available			9	0
<b>Total HLTAs</b>		<b>691*</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7257</b>	<b>100</b>

Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.

\* One case could not be matched to these criteria.

**HLTAs in Secondary Schools**

		Respondents		HLTA Population	
		Number	%	Number	%
Gender	Male	33	5	94	5
	Female	655	95	1608	94
	Unknown	5	1	16	1
Disability	Yes	11	2	26	2
	No	647	93	1619	94
	Declined	35	5	73	4
Age of HLTA	20-35	61	9	234	14
	36-40	81	12	251	15
	41-45	174	26	438	26
	46-50	197	29	422	25
	51+	165	24	335	20
Number of pupils in secondary school	Smallest 160 - 700	127	18	323	19
	small 701 - 1000	200	29	485	28
	Medium 1001 - 1300	186	27	467	27
	Large 1301 - 2200	180	26	443	26
	Middle deemed				
School type	Secondary	46	7	117	7
	Secondary Modern	26	4	61	4
	Comprehensive to 16	279	40	691	40
	Comprehensive to 18	331	48	819	48
	Grammar	6	1	13	1
	Other Secondary schools	5	1	17	1
Region	North	212	31	612	36
	Midlands	225	32	523	30
	South	256	37	583	34
LEA type	London Borough	50	7	133	8
	Metropolitan Authorities	172	25	507	30
	English Unitary Authorities	95	14	233	14
	Counties	376	54	845	49
Achievement Band (KS3 Overall performance 2006)	Lowest band	121	18	374	23
	2nd lowest band	132	20	355	22
	Middle band	132	20	344	21
	2nd highest band	147	22	292	18
	Highest band	105	16	215	13
	Not Available	20	3	44	3
% eligible FSM 2005 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	114	16	206	12
	2nd lowest 20%	197	28	460	27
	Middle 20%	169	24	444	26
	2nd highest 20%	138	20	378	22
	Highest 20%	75	11	230	13
<b>Total HLTAs</b>		<b>693*</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1718</b>	<b>100</b>

*Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.*

*\*Two cases could not be matched to these criteria.*

**HLTAs in Special Schools**

		Respondents		HLTA Population	
		Number	%	Number	%
Gender	Male	7	4	22	4
	Female	163	95	546	95
	Unknown	2	1	4	1
Disability	Yes	2	1	9	2
	No	166	97	535	94
	Declined	4	2	28	5
Age of HLTA	20-35	36	21	150	27
	36-40	26	15	99	18
	41-45	37	22	113	20
	46-50	32	19	108	19
	51+	39	23	93	17
School type	Special schools	172	100	572	100
Region	North	67	39	240	42
	Midlands	55	32	171	30
	South	50	29	161	28
LEA type	London Borough	17	10	35	6
	Metropolitan Authorities	60	35	241	42
	English Unitary Authorities	20	12	67	12
	Counties	75	44	229	40
% eligible FSM 2005 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	2	1	3	1
	2nd lowest 20%	3	2	9	2
	Middle 20%	12	7	29	5
	2nd highest 20%	51	30	173	30
	Highest 20%	100	58	345	60
	Not Available	4	2	13	2
Total HLTAs		172*	100	572	100

*Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.*

*\*One case could not be matched to these criteria*

## Appendix B Senior Leader Sample

### Primary School Senior Leaders

		Respondents		Schools with HLTAs		All schools	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Primary school size	Small	179	29	1553	33	6969	40
	Medium	320	53	2418	51	8070	46
	Large	106	17	748	16	2159	12
	Not Available	3	0	7	0	167	1
School type	Infants	54	9	416	9	1648	9
	First School	51	8	345	7	1259	7
	Infant & Junior (Primary)	434	71	3505	74	12700	73
	First & Middle			26	1	106	1
	Junior	64	11	395	8	1538	9
	Middle deemed Primary	5	1	39	1	114	1
Achievement Band (KS2 Overall performance 2006)	Lowest band	83	14	759	16	2710	16
	2nd lowest band	85	14	703	15	2625	15
	Middle band	106	17	765	16	2656	15
	2nd highest band	116	19	803	17	2609	15
	Highest band	95	16	793	17	2821	16
	Not Available	123	20	903	19	3944	23
Region	North	231	38	1783	38	5221	30
	Midlands	174	29	1367	29	5718	33
	South	203	33	1576	33	6426	37
LEA type	London Borough Metropolitan Authorities	39	6	375	8	1819	10
	English Unitary Authorities	159	26	1337	28	3600	21
	Counties	94	15	713	15	2681	15
		316	52	2301	49	9265	53
% eligible FSM 2005 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	133	22	1017	22	3697	21
	2nd lowest 20%	129	21	978	21	3468	20
	Middle 20%	131	22	949	20	3413	20
	2nd highest 20%	109	18	925	20	3347	19
	Highest 20%	103	17	849	18	3259	19
	Not Available	3	0	8	0	181	1
Total schools		608*	100	4726	100	17365	100

Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.

\*14 cases could not be matched to these criteria.

## Secondary School Senior Leaders

		Respondents		Schools with HLTAs		All schools	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
secondary school size	Smallest 160 - 700	75	21	204	21	732	22
	Small 701 - 1000	110	31	286	29	1041	31
	Medium 1001 - 1300	82	23	256	26	890	27
	Large 1301 - 2200	83	24	231	24	665	20
	Not Available	2	1	2	0	22	1
School type	Middle deemed						
	Secondary	29	8	74	8	248	7
	Secondary Modern	16	5	34	3	127	4
	Comprehensive to 16	145	41	402	41	1223	37
	Comprehensive to 18	157	45	450	46	1515	45
	Grammar	4	1	9	1	163	5
Achievement Band (KS3 Overall performance 2006)	Other Secondary schools	1	0	10	1	74	2
	Lowest band	74	21	203	21	669	20
	2nd lowest band	62	18	199	20	619	18
	Middle band	63	18	186	19	591	18
	2nd highest band	66	19	175	18	564	17
	Highest band	54	15	131	13	605	18
Region	Not Available	33	9	85	9	302	9
	North	133	38	351	36	961	29
	Midlands	100	28	296	30	1159	35
LEA type	South	119	34	332	34	1230	37
	London Borough	25	7	85	9	413	12
	Metropolitan Authorities	97	28	286	29	718	21
% eligible FSM 2005 (5 pt scale)	English Unitary Authorities	48	14	140	14	534	16
	Counties	182	52	468	48	1685	50
	Lowest 20%	51	14	119	12	484	14
	2nd lowest 20%	94	27	254	26	853	25
	Middle 20%	79	22	258	26	862	26
Achievement Band (total GCSE point score 2005)	2nd highest 20%	84	24	214	22	682	20
	Highest 20%	42	12	132	13	439	13
	Not Available	2	1	2	0	30	1
	Lowest band	72	20	210	21	660	20
	2nd lowest band	71	20	207	21	652	19
Total Schools	Middle band	64	18	197	20	622	19
	2nd highest band	66	19	179	18	590	18
	Highest band	40	11	92	9	503	15
	Not Available	39	11	94	10	323	10
Total Schools		352*	100	979	100	3350	100

Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.

\*15 cases could not be matched to these criteria.

## Special School Senior Leaders

		Respondents		Schools with HLTAs		All schools	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
School type	Special schools	113	100	291	100	1017	100
Region	North	42	37	117	40	323	32
	Midlands	34	30	86	30	304	30
	South	37	33	88	30	390	38
LEA type	London Borough	10	9	23	8	140	14
	Metropolitan						
	Authorities	40	35	112	38	271	27
	English Unitary						
	Authorities	14	12	38	13	169	17
	Counties	49	43	118	41	437	43
% eligible							
FSM 2005 (5							
pt scale)	Lowest 20%	1	1	3	1	20	2
	2nd lowest 20%	3	3	6	2	10	1
	Middle 20%	4	4	15	5	51	5
	2nd highest 20%	37	33	85	29	279	27
	Highest 20%	65	58	173	59	604	59
	Not Available	3	3	9	3	53	5
<b>Total Schools</b>		<b>113*</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1017</b>	<b>100</b>

*Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100.*

*\*Six cases could not be matched to these criteria.*

## Appendix C HLTA and Senior Leader Responses – All Schools

**Table C1** Frequency of overseeing a whole class

Frequency:	All schools %
Every day	34
Once per week	31
Once per year/rarely	12
Once per half-term	8
Never	8
Once per term	3
No response	5
<b>N = 1560</b>	

*A single response item*

*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100*

*1490 respondents answered this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

**Table C2** Type of pupil support

Roles carried out as a result of achieving HLTA status:	All schools			
	Individual pupils %	Small groups of pupils %	Whole classes %	No response %
Helping pupils access the curriculum (e.g. SEN pupils)	45	45	27	40
Delivering learning activities	40	49	58	24
Providing feedback to pupils on their learning	40	39	33	42
Maintaining records of pupils progress	40	40	37	37
Develop/implement individual education plans	36	22	12	55
Providing literacy support	33	41	23	47
Analysing records of pupil progress	32	31	30	49
Delivering work set by the teacher	28	37	51	36
Providing numeracy support	28	36	22	53
Delivering catch-up activities	24	30	10	61
<b>N = 1560</b>				

*A series of multiple response items*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*

**Table C3** School support activities

Since achieving HLTA status, HLTAs support the school by carrying out:	All schools				
	More frequent %	About the same %	Less frequent %	N/A %	No response %
Organising/managing learning environments/resources	39	52	2	5	4
Liaising with parents/carers	31	57	3	6	3
Administrative tasks	28	55	6	8	4
Liaising with agencies/professionals	25	54	4	12	4
Supporting teaching/learning through ICT	25	62	5	4	4
Assisting with the development of policies/procedures	22	46	2	25	5
Delivering local/national learning strategies	21	49	2	23	6
Developing school policies/initiatives	17	38	2	28	15
Planning opportunities for learning out-of-school contexts	14	44	4	34	5
Playground duties	12	47	6	31	4
Delivering out-of-school learning activities	12	41	4	38	5
Invigilating exams/tests	9	51	5	21	15
Constructing displays	9	54	16	17	4
Accompanying school trips	6	74	10	7	3
Administering first aid/medicines	4	47	7	37	5
Representing staff as a governor	3	13	1	78	6
<b>N = 1562</b>					

*A series of single response items*

*More than one answer could be given, so percentages may not sum to 100*

*A total of 1536 respondents answered at least one item in this question*

*Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)*



**Table C4** Changes to role since achieving HLTA status

Before achieving HLTA status your work has developed by:	All schools			
	Agree %	Disagree %	Not sure %	No response %
Making greater use of higher level skills	66	21	5	8
Greater responsibility supporting/teaching/learning	64	26	3	7
Greater responsibility for administrative tasks	40	46	8	8
Specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs	36	51	4	9
Greater responsibility managing other support staff	35	51	6	9
Greater responsibility in pastoral support	34	48	10	8
Work with a wider range of pupils	34	57	2	8
Specialise in particular subject	33	53	4	10
Greater contribution to management/development of the school	32	48	11	9
Greater involvement training other staff	28	57	7	8
Specialise in administrative function	12	72	6	10

**N = 1560***A series of single response items**Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100**A total of 1491 respondents answered at least one item in this question**Source: NFER survey of HLTAs, 2006 (data from HLTA questionnaire)***Table C5** Positive effects on pupil performance of HLTA role

Comments	%
Contributions to intervention strategies/programmes	19
Small group work to target pupil needs	18
SEN/EAL support	9
Teaches specific specialist subject	9
Improve SATs/GCSE results of borderline pupils	5
Raised pupil expectation/performance in specific subject due to HLTA talents	4
Improved pupil support	4
Continuity from known member of staff	4
Behaviour/discipline related	3

**N= 871***An open-ended response item**Respondents could give one example, but this comprised two parts, in some cases**Source: NFER survey of Senior Leaders 2006 (data from Senior Leader questionnaire)*

**Table C6** Examples of positive effects on the school of HLTA role

Comments	%
Covering Planning, Preparation and Assessment time	16
Covering for staff absence at short notice	9
Providing SEN support/Supporting SENCO in his/her role	8
Support/management of other TAs	8
Introducing/Managing a specific programme/project	6
Responsibility for delivery of specific subject	6
Pupils taught by familiar/respected member of staff	5
Supporting delivery of specific subject across the school	3
Improving behaviour	3

---

**N= 880**

*An open-ended response item*

*Respondents could give one example, but this comprised two parts, in some cases*

*Source: NFER survey of Senior Leaders, 2006 (data from Senior Leader questionnaire)*

## Appendix D Regression Analysis

**Table D1** Variables Used for Regression Analysis

Variable	Items
Female	Female over male
Diss1	Disability over no disability
Dissdecl	Declined disability
Sec	Secondary school over primary school
BME	Black and minority ethnic
Medium	Medium sized school over small sized school
Large	Large sized school over small sized school
Age	Age of HLTA (categorised)
Greater levels of responsibility	I have greater responsibility for supporting teaching and learning I have greater responsibility for administrative tasks I have greater responsibility in the area of pastoral support I have greater responsibility for managing other staff I make a greater contribution to the management and development of the school
Working at a specialist level	I make greater use of higher level skills I work with a wider range of pupils I specialise in a particular subject I specialise in administrative functions I specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs
No time	I don't have time to effectively plan my work Teachers don't have time to plan/prepare lessons with me
Teacher-related difficulties	Teachers are reluctant to delegate work to me Teachers don't understand the meaning of HLTA status
School-related difficulties	My school is concerned about taking away roles from teachers Senior leaders are resistant towards deploying HLTAs There are no HLTA vacancies at my school
Commitments	I have other commitments within school that limit my time I have other personal commitments that limit my time
Positive change to role	Greater job satisfaction Increased confidence or self-esteem Increased pay Increased recognition by other staff at my school More opportunity for career development Promotion to an HLTA post/grade
Increased stress/workload	Increased stress Increased workload
HLTA	HLTA post over senior TA post
Neast.	North East
Nwest.	North West
York.	Yorkshire
Eastmid.	East Midlands
Westmid.	West Midlands
Seast.	South East
Swest.	South West

**Table D2** Extent to which schools make best use of HLTAs

<b>Explanatory variables</b>	<b>Standardised coefficient</b>
Positive changes in role	0.22
Increased workload/stress	0.16
School-related difficulties	-0.18
Teacher-related difficulties	-0.09
Greater levels of responsibility	0.29
HLTA post (rather than a TA post)	0.10
Large school	-0.04

**Table D3** Variables relating to personal and professional changes

<b>Achieving HLTA status has led to the following personal and professional changes</b>	<b>Greater level of responsibilities</b>	<b>HLTA role has increased specialism</b>	<b>Lack of time</b>	<b>School difficulties</b>	<b>HLTA post</b>	<b>Teacher difficulties</b>
Greater job satisfaction	1.46	1.59	0.62	0.74	1.96	
Increased confidence/self-esteem	1.36	1.46		1.36		
Increased pay	1.25	1.20		0.42	4.39	1.44
Increased recognition by other staff at my school	1.37	1.33		0.81	1.66	0.44
More opportunity for career development	1.28	1.25		0.74		0.60
Increased stress	1.41	1.12	2.10	0.76	1.60	
Promotion to an HLTA post/grade	1.36	1.18		0.32	6.52	
Increased workload	1.78	1.25	1.91		1.98	

## Appendix E HLTA Survey



### Deployment and Impact of Higher Level Teaching Assistants

### A questionnaire for higher level teaching assistants

The NFER wishes to find out about the work being carried out by HLTAs and assess how HLTA status is impacting on people working at this level. The research is being carried out on behalf of the Training and Development Agency for Schools – an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Education and Skills. Its principal aim is to secure an effective school workforce that improves children's life chances.

#### The questionnaire focuses on the following areas:

- How you are currently being employed and deployed
- How your role has developed since achieving HLTA status
- How good practice is facilitated or hindered
- How you support pupils, teachers and your school

All responses will be treated CONFIDENTIALLY and no individual, school or local authority will be named in any report written as a result of this research unless we specifically negotiate this with those concerned.

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire by  
**1 December 2006** in the pre-paid envelope provided to:  
NFER, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, SL1 2DQ

If you have any queries, please contact Ceril Morris on 01753 637355

8814

SEC/HLTA

## A YOUR EMPLOYMENT

A1. Please indicate the key stage(s) you work with:

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

Foundation stage  1

Key stage 1  2

Key stage 2  3

Key stage 3  4

Key stage 4  5

Key stage 5  6

A2. If you are employed in a specialist role, please indicate your specialist subject/area:

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

Art and design  1

Modern languages  10

Business studies  2

Music  11

Design and technology  3

PE (incl. dance)  12

Maths/numeracy  4

PSHE  13

Citizenship  5

RE  14

English/literacy (incl. drama)  6

Science  15

Geography  7

SEN  16

History  8 I don't have a specialist role  17

ICT  9

A3a. Please indicate how you are employed:

*Please ✓ ONE box*

As a full-time HLTA only  1

As a part-time HLTA only  2

As a part-time HLTA, with other part-time roles within the school  3

As a senior TA, with some HLTA duties  4

Other (please specify below)  5

**A3b. If you work part-time, how many hours a week are you contracted to work in a HLTA role?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

- Between 1 and 7 hours  1
- Between 8 and 14 hours  2
- Between 15 and 21 hours  3
- Between 22 and 28 hours  4
- Between 29 and 35 hours  5
- More than 35 hours  6
- I don't work part-time  7

**A4a. How many weeks are you paid for each year (if you are unpaid, please insert '0')?**

*Please give number*

--	--

**A4b. Which of the following payments do you receive?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

- Term time only (i.e. you are paid for 38 or 39 weeks per year)  1
- Term time with spreadover pay (i.e. you are paid during school holidays)  2
- Throughout the year (i.e. you are paid for working 52 weeks per year)  3
- Not sure  4
- Other (please specify below)  5

--

**A4c. If you have split roles within your school, do you receive different rates of pay for carrying out HLTA and non-HLTA duties?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

- Yes  1
- No  2
- Not sure  3
- I don't have split roles  4

## B YOUR DEPLOYMENT

**B1a. How often are you responsible for overseeing a whole class in a teacher's absence?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Every day  1

About once per week  2

About once per half-term  3

About once per term  4

About once per year  5

Rarely  6

*Please go to B2* — Never  7

**B1b. If you DO take responsibility for overseeing a whole class, please indicate the circumstances in which this takes place:**

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

When I teach a specialist lesson  1

When a teacher has PPA time  2

When a teacher goes on a school trip  3

When a teacher is on sick/medical leave  4

When a teacher deals with an incident elsewhere  5

When a teacher attends a meeting  6

When a teacher conducts pupil assessment/observation  7

When a teacher attends a training course  8

When there is a vacant teaching position  9



**B2. With regards to *supporting pupils*, please indicate which of the following roles you carry out as a result of achieving HLTA status:**

Please ✓ ALL that apply

	Individual pupils	Small groups of pupils	Whole classes
Delivering learning activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering work set by the teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping pupils to access the curriculum (e.g. SEN pupils)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering catch-up activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing literacy support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing numeracy support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing and implementing Individual Education Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing feedback to pupils on their learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining records of pupil progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analysing records of pupil progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B3. With regards to *supporting teachers*, please indicate if you carry out the following tasks less frequently, more frequently or to the same extent since achieving HLTA status:**

Please ✓ ONE box on each row

	Less frequently 1	About the same 2	More frequently 3	N/A 4
Selecting teaching resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing teaching resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and preparing lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team-teaching of a whole class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing feedback on pupils' learning and behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring pupils' responses and suggesting alternative learning approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing feedback/evidence on pupils' achievement and progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluating pupils' progress through assessment activities (not including invigilation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing pupils' behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying and/or supporting children with SEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying and/or reporting issues relating to the welfare of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B4. With regards to *supporting your school*, please indicate if you carry out the following tasks less frequently, more frequently or to the same extent since achieving HLTA status:**

*Please ✓ ONE box on each row*

	Less frequently 1	About the same 2	More frequently 3	N/A 4
Constructing displays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrying out playground duty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrying out administrative tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administering first aid/medicines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invigilating exams/tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liaising with parents and carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liaising with agencies/professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accompanying school trips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering out-of-school learning activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organising and managing appropriate learning environments and resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting teaching and learning through ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning opportunities for learning in out-of-school contexts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assisting with the development of policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing school policies/initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering local and national learning strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representing staff as a governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B5a. With regards to *line management*, please indicate if you carry out the following tasks less frequently, more frequently or to the same extent since achieving HLTA status:**

*Please ✓ ONE box on each row*

	Less frequently 1	About the same 2	More frequently 3	N/A 4
Recruiting staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inducting staff into the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appraising staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representing staff at meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liaising between managers/teaching staff and support staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentoring/training staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing staff within the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holding team meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B5b.** If you carry out any of the roles in B5a, please state which member(s) of staff you are referring to (e.g. Level 1 TAs or midday supervisors):

**B6.** Please use the box below to tell us about any other roles you carry out as a result of achieving HLTA status:

### **C IMPACT OF THE HLTA ROLE**

**C1a.** Please tell us about ONE contribution you have made as a HLTA that has had a particularly positive effect on *pupil performance*:

**C1b.** Please tell us about ONE contribution you have made as a HLTA that has had a particularly positive effect on *the work of teachers*:

**C1c. Please tell us about ONE contribution you have made as a HLTA that has had a particularly positive effect *within the school*:**

**C2a. Please indicate the extent to which you think your school makes best use of you as a HLTA:**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Not at All

To a Great Extent

1

2

3

4

5






**C2b. Please explain your answer to C2a:**

## **D PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES**

**D1. In comparison with your role before achieving HLTA status, please indicate how, if at all, your work has developed:**

*Please ✓ ONE box on each row*

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
I make greater use of higher level skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have greater responsibility for supporting teaching and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have greater responsibility for administrative tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have greater responsibility in the area of pastoral support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have greater responsibility for managing other support staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have greater involvement in the training of other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I make a greater contribution to the management and development of the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I work with a wider age range of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I specialise in a particular subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I specialise in an administrative function	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**D2. Please identify *ONE* statement that best describes your thoughts about the changes to your role since achieving HLTA status:**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

- I am very pleased with the role that has been developed for me  1
- My role has changed, but not in the direction I would have liked  2
- There have been some positive changes but not as many as I would have liked  3
- I have been disappointed with the lack of change to my role  4
- I did not expect any changes because my role was already at HLTA-level  5
- I did not expect any changes in my role given the circumstances of my school  6

**D3. What, if any, difficulties prevent you from utilising the skills associated with your HLTA status in your school:**

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

- I don't have time to effectively plan my work  1
- Teachers don't have time to plan/prepare lessons with me  2
- Teachers are reluctant to delegate work to me  3
- Teachers don't understand the meaning of HLTA status  4
- My school is concerned about taking away roles from teachers  5
- Senior leaders are resistant towards deploying HLTAs  6
- There are no HLTA vacancies at my school  7
- I have other commitments within school that limit my time  8
- I have other personal commitments that limit my time  9
- Other *(please specify below)*  10

**D4a. Since achieving HLTA status, have you received an appraisal?**

Yes

No

Not sure

Please go to D5

**D4b. With regards to your appraisal, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.**

Please ✓ ONE box on each row

**My appraisal identified:**

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Areas in which I had achieved success in my role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas in which I had concerns about my role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas in which I needed additional support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas in which my skills could be better utilised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for development in relation to supporting pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for development in relation to supporting teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for development in relation to supporting the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Areas for development in relation to supporting the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Targets to achieve before my next appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategies for my achieving targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further training and development needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further career possibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**D4c. With regards to your appraisal, how satisfied were you with the process?**

Please ✓ ONE box

Very satisfied  1

Satisfied  2

Neither satisfied or dissatisfied  3

Dissatisfied  4

Very dissatisfied  5

**D5. Please tell us if achieving HLTA status has led to any of the following personal or professional changes:**

Please ✓ ONE box on each row

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Greater job satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased confidence or self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased recognition by other staff at my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More opportunity for career development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promotion to an HLTA post/grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**D6. Which three words would you use to describe your experience of working as a HLTA so far?**

## E FUTURE PLANS

E1. Which of the following best describes your career plans for the next few years?

Please ✓ ONE box

- Remain in the same post as now  1
- Secure an HLTA appointment in my present school  2
- Secure an HLTA appointment in another school  3
- Become a subject specialist  4
- Specialise in supporting pupils with particular needs  5
- Increase my contractual hours as a HLTA  6
- Reduce my contractual hours as a HLTA  7
- Secure employment in a non-school setting  8

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

We would like to follow up this questionnaire survey with some school visits in 2007. If you would be willing to participate, please provide your contact details below. This information will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Name:

School:

Telephone:

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire**



## Appendix F Senior Leader Survey

### Deployment and Impact of Higher Level Teaching Assistants

A questionnaire for senior leaders



The NFER wishes to find out about the work being carried out by HLTAs and assess how HLTA status is impacting on people working at this level. The research is being carried out on behalf of the Training and Development Agency for Schools – an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Education and Skills. Its principal aim is to secure an effective school workforce that improves children's life chances.

**The questionnaire focuses on the following areas:**  
 How HLTAs are currently being employed and deployed  
 How their role has developed since achieving the status  
 How good practice is facilitated or hindered  
 How HLTAs support pupils, teachers and schools

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 NFER, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, SL1 2DQ

If you have any queries, please contact Ceril Morris on 01753 637355

#### A HLTA EMPLOYMENT

A1. What is your position within the school?

Please ✓ ALL that apply

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Headteacher <input type="checkbox"/> 1                    | Early Years Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> 7     |
| Deputy Headteacher <input type="checkbox"/> 2             | Key Stage Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> 8       |
| Assistant Headteacher <input type="checkbox"/> 3          | Subject Leader <input type="checkbox"/> 9              |
| Head of Department/Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> 4     | Curriculum Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> 10     |
| Head of Year <input type="checkbox"/> 5                   | SENCO <input type="checkbox"/> 11                      |
| Bursar/School Business Manager <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | Other (please state below) <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |

A2. How many people in your school have achieved HLTA status?

Please give number

**A3. How many people in your school carry out HLTA-level duties?**

*Please give number*

**A4a. Does your local authority recommend a pay structure for HLTAs?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Yes

No

Not sure

**A4b. If YES to A4a, is this used by your school?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Yes

No

Not sure

**A5. How many HLTAs in your school work in split roles (if none, please insert '0')?**

*Please give number*

**A6. How many HLTAs receive HLTA-level pay for only part of their employment (if none, please insert '0')?**

*Please give number*

**A7. Who has line management responsibility for HLTAs?**

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

- |                            |                            |                                |                             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Headteacher                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Subject Leader                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8  |
| Deputy Headteacher         | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Curriculum Coordinator         | <input type="checkbox"/> 9  |
| Assistant Headteacher      | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | SENCO                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 |
| Head of Department/Faculty | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | Senior TA                      | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 |
| Head of Year               | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | Classroom Teacher              | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
| Early Years Coordinator    | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | Bursar/School Business Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 |
| Key Stage Coordinator      | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | Other                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 |

## **B HLTA DEPLOYMENT AND IMPACT**

**B1. Please indicate up to THREE *main activities* carried out by HLTAs in your school:**

*Please ✓ up to THREE boxes*

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Work with individual pupils (in or out of class)                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| Work with groups of pupils (in or out of class)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| Work with whole classes (paired teaching with class teacher)      | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| Work with whole classes (without the class teacher being present) | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Work with specified teachers                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Work with specified subject areas                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
| Work with other support staff                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 |
| Work with a variety of pupils and teachers, according to need     | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |

**B2. Please indicate any difficulties associated with deploying HLTAs in your school:**

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

- |  |                          |    |
|--|--------------------------|----|
| Lack of time for teachers and HLTAs to plan/prepare together | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1  |
| Variability in skills and experience of HLTAs                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2  |
| Teachers' reluctance to delegate tasks to HLTAs              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3  |
| Lack of guidance for teachers working with HLTAs             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4  |
| Lack of training for teachers working with HLTAs             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5  |
| People in HLTA roles have other duties within the school     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6  |
| Demotivating to TAs without HLTA status                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7  |
| Teaching staff are resistant to change                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8  |
| There are no HLTA vacancies within the school                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9  |
| No difficulties  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 |
| Other (please give details)                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |

**B3. Please indicate up to FIVE areas in which HLTAs have the most significant impact in your school?**

*Please ✓ up to FIVE boxes*

- |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|----|
| Supporting PPA time <input type="checkbox"/>                  | 1 | Preparing learning resources <input type="checkbox"/>     | 9  |
| Supporting pupil learning <input type="checkbox"/>            | 2 | Supervising whole classes <input type="checkbox"/>        | 10 |
| Supporting pupil behaviour <input type="checkbox"/>           | 3 | Managing other support staff <input type="checkbox"/>     | 11 |
| Supporting lesson planning <input type="checkbox"/>           | 4 | Managing SEN within the school <input type="checkbox"/>   | 12 |
| Supporting key stage transition <input type="checkbox"/>      | 5 | Managing enrichment afternoons <input type="checkbox"/>   | 13 |
| Supporting healthy eating programmes <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | Managing intervention programmes <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 |
| Supporting pastoral programmes <input type="checkbox"/>       | 7 | Liaising with parents and carers <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 |
| Assessing pupil achievement <input type="checkbox"/>          | 8 | Liaising with other agencies <input type="checkbox"/>     | 16 |

**B4. To what extent do you think the HLTA role has reduced teacher workload?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Not at All

To a Great Extent

1

2

3

4

5






**B5. Please give ONE example of a contribution made by a HLTA which has had a particularly positive effect:**

a) on pupil performance

b) within the school

a) on pupil performance	b) within the school
-------------------------	----------------------

**B6. Has your school collected any data to show the impact of the HLTA role?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Yes  1

No  2

Don't know  3

**B7a. Do you think there are any ways in which the work of HLTAs could be made (even) more effective?**

*Please ✓ ONE box*

Yes  1

No  2

Don't know  3

**B7b. If you answered YES to B7a, please give details below:**

**B8. Please indicate if your school has any of the following intentions:**

*Please ✓ ALL that apply*

- To review the need for more HLTAs  1
- To establish more HLTA positions  2
- To support more candidates on the HLTA training programme  3
- To deploy current staff who have achieved HLTA status to HLTA roles  4
- To develop more subject-focused roles for HLTAs  5
- To widen the tasks currently carried out by HLTAs  6
- To increase the frequency of HLTAs taking whole classes  7
- To provide extra time for teachers and HLTAs to plan/prepare together  8
- To provide extra guidance to teachers working with HLTAs  9
- To provide extra training to teachers working with HLTAs  10
- To provide joint teacher/HLTA training  11
- To develop performance management for HLTAs  12

### **FOLLOW-UP STUDY**

We would like to follow up this questionnaire survey with some school visits in 2007. If you would be willing to participate, please provide your contact details. This information will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Name:

School:

Telephone:

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire**

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