

2.2 Teacher and School Leader: The Jobs

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A Career in the Teaching Service

A teacher's maximum career-span is normally expected to start as a new primary school teacher, rising to the position of Principal in a secondary school. However, there are many opportunities for a teacher's career path to extend beyond the school system – such as to TSC, MBSSE or other public administration institutions. Teachers with an academic aptitude move on to positions as lecturers at Teacher Training Colleges. Alternatively, a teacher may advance within the wider education sector, seeking positions with international organisations or working as consultants in education. Teachers may also seek positions within parastatal and private academies, and training institutes. See figure below to view potential teacher career paths.



Rules: Teacher & School leader jobs

Includes: **Understanding of the context of the job of teacher and school leader** and **General rules regarding Jobs in the teaching profession**

Understanding of the context of the job of teacher and school leader

To understand the context and contents of their work, teacher students and candidates, and teachers and school leaders must acquaint themselves with:

- Mid-term Education Sector Plan, 2018-2021
- The Education Act of 2004 (Sierra Leone Gazette, 1st April 2004)
- The *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders (TSC, 2017)*
- The *Code of Conduct for Teachers (TSC, 2019)*
- The approaches to teaching of the school at which they work
- Their Job Description.

General rules regarding Jobs in the teaching profession

- The TSC is responsible for writing Job Descriptions.
- Teaching and school leader jobs must be designed, planned, performed and appraised in accordance with the *professional standards for teachers and school leaders*, the *Code of Conduct*, the norms applying to the teaching profession, prevailing health and safety standards, and the needs of the education sector and schools in Sierra Leone.
- Job descriptions should, as a minimum, describe basic data about the job, essential responsibilities and tasks, and required competencies to do the job.
- The TSC must review and update teacher and school leader job descriptions and other information about on-the-job requirements at a minimum of every three years.
- The TSC and school management must promote and ensure job enrichment and ensure

conducive physical and professional job environments for teachers and school leaders.

- A teacher's job performance is monitored on a regular basis by the school leader who must ensure work discipline, high standards of teaching, adherence to the Code of Conduct, and a good climate amongst teachers.
- Teacher and school leader job performance is appraised in connection with school supervision, school reports and annual performance appraisal.
- The job of a school leader or a teacher is not confined to the job description. The teacher shall also perform tasks in accordance with the profession, level and nature of the job as requested by their superior.

Positions, Salary Grades and Experience

Salary grades and required qualifications and experience for teaching positions.

POSITION	SALARY GRADE	EDUCATION	EXPERIENCE
Principal Secondary School	11	Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min. 8 years
Vice-Principal Secondary School	10	HTC-Secondary; Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min. 8 years
Head-Teacher Primary School	10	HTC- Primary/Secondary; Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min 8 years
Deputy Head Teacher Primary School	9	HTC- Primary/Secondary; Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min. 8 years
Senior Teacher Secondary School	9	HTC Secondary; Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min. 4-5 years
Senior Teacher Primary School	7	HTC-Secondary; Degree in Education; Degree + Diploma in Education	Min. 4-5 years

Teacher Secondary School	8	Degree in Education; Degree+ Diploma in Education	
Teacher Secondary School	7	HTC-Secondary	
Teacher Primary School	7	HTC-Primary	
Teacher	6	TC;	
Teacher	5	TCL (Lower); Arabic Certificate	

Teacher Job Description

Full job description for a position as a teacher including: purpose, tasks and competencies

Positions: Teacher, Senior Teacher, Head of Department

Grades: 5-9 (for details see the attached table)

Place of work: School assigned by the Teaching Service Commission

Reports to: School Leader

1. Purpose of the Job

- Ensure high quality of teaching in all subjects taught
- Pupils are motivated to learn
- Pupils do well at exams
- Older pupils begin to orientate themselves towards a career
- Conducive team-spirit, climate and learning environment at the school

2. Tasks

Teaching tasks

- Teaches the current national subject curriculum
 - Secondary schools: specializes in 2-3 subjects
- Prepares lesson notes
- Organises and prepares learning tools and materials
- Facilitates group work, assignments and projects
- Assesses and marks pupils' assignments
- Conducts, assesses and marks tests and exams
- Prepares register, diary and record card
- Acts as class teacher (primary schools)
- Engages in interclass activities, projects, quizzes, etc.

Managerial and administrative tasks

- Participates in school strategy development and planning
- Prepares term plans, calendar and duty roster
- Registers attendance and keeps time-books (?)
- Supervises school upkeep activities

Extra-curricular activities

- Engages in sports, excursions, etc.
- Participates in social activities in the community as appropriate
- Engages in debates, media events, community learning programs, etc.
- Contributes to the school newsletter and other media and communication tasks.

Tasks that may be assigned to a teacher

- Supervises new teacher and TTC students during their practice at the school
- Counsels pupils in a) education and career, b) personal issues
- Teaches and pays special attention to pupils with physical and learning disabilities
- Acts as Form Teacher (secondary schools), i.e. looks after the classrooms
- Acts as Head of Department (secondary schools)

3. Learning and Development

- Keeps up to date with the national curriculum and subjects
- Participates in relevant continuous professional development
- Is a member of relevant professional associations, receives relevant newsletters, etc.
- Engages in academic pursuits in subjects, writes articles, contributes to newsletters, etc.

4. Special demands of the job

- Noisy and crowded classrooms with bad ventilation
- Occasionally manages conflict in the classroom

5. Competencies

Knowledge, understanding and mastery of

- Educational issues, policies, statistics, and socioeconomics
- The current national school curriculum

- Speciality subjects and updates on the subjects
- *The Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders*
- Didactics and pedagogics
- *The Code of Conduct*
- Basic research methodology
- Health, safety and environment protection in schools
- IT as a medium for teaching and as a subject

Skills in:

- Semester and lesson planning
- Application of teaching methods, including learner-orientated and participatory methods
- How to conduct exams and tests
- Assessment of exams, tests and assignments
- Classroom management
- Conflict management
- Counselling of pupils
- Different types of sports

Aptitude

- Committed to education in Sierra Leone
- Likes teaching children and young people
- Team-player and constructive in outlook
- Punctual and well organized
- Integrity and adherence to Code of Conduct
- Able to manage stress

6. **Qualifications**

- Experience as required for the position and grade
- Teacher Certificate (TC)
- Higher Teacher Certificate – Primary (HTC-primary)
- Higher Teacher Certificate – Secondary (HTC-secondary)
- Degree in Education
- Degree + Post-graduate Diploma in Education

For details refer to the table below: Positions, Grades, and Requirements.

7. Professional Standards for Teachers

While all teachers to a large extent perform the same tasks, the *Professional Standards of Teachers* refer to the detailed standards and competencies of teaching and related work, i.e. the standards and competencies of professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement subdivided into 19 standards and 189 sub-standards for each of four stages on the career path based on the level of responsibility, the ability to work independently, the capacity to guide other teachers, the social engagement with the community, etc.

New Teacher

The *New Teacher* has the same fundamental responsibilities and tasks as more experienced teachers. But he/she lacks practical experience and requires mentoring and supervision. But new teachers also add value to the schools in which they teach. They help to introduce the latest knowledge and teaching methods which they have acquired at the TTCs. They can also be expected to bring IT, internet, digital and mobile know-how to the school and can support school leaders and older teachers in this area.

Proficient Teacher

The *Proficient Teacher* can be expected to master the curriculum and subjects and teach to a high standard, engage the learners, plan semesters and calendars of events effectively, prepare lessons well, manage the classroom, and interact and cooperate professionally with peer teachers. The proficient teacher has developed ownership to the school and therefore looks well after the school environment. He or she contributes to a good work and learning climate and takes responsibility for his or her own learning and development. The proficient teacher engages actively in extra-curricular activities and begins to interact with the parents.

- 5 years' experience as teacher.
- 50 credits of professional development

Highly Accomplished Teacher

The Highly Accomplished Teachers has all the same qualities as the proficient teachers. But the Highly Accomplished Teacher has acquired considerable seniority and therefore has a special role in guiding, mentoring, and supporting other more junior teachers. The Highly Accomplished Teachers additional competencies may be summarised as:

- 10 years teaching experience
- 100 credits of professional development
- Has a profound mastery of curriculum and subjects
- Applies best practices in teaching and is a role model for other teachers
- Improves the quality of teaching and learning in the school
- Supervises extra-curricular activities including sports and excursions
- Mentors new teachers and students during their practice
- Has a profound grasp of the *professional standards for teachers* and guides other teachers.
- Demonstrates excellent competencies in mentoring and in learner orientated and participatory teaching methods.

Distinguished teacher

The Distinguished Teacher has a special role in ensuring high academic standards in the school and ensuring the quality and relevance of teaching materials. He/she has the same qualities as a Highly Accomplished Teacher, but in addition the following:

- 15 years' experience as a teacher

- 150 credits of professional development
- Head of academic functions at the school
- Develops and compiles original teaching materials
- Oversees the school's academic engagements, writes articles, newsletters, etc.
- Participates in, and occasionally leads, professional forums, associations, communities of practice, etc.

For further details refer to the *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders*, TSC, 2017.

School Leader Job Description

Full job description for a position as a school leader including: tasks, competencies and qualifications.

Positions: *Primary:* Deputy Head Teacher and Head Teacher; *Secondary:* Vice-Principal and Principal

Grades: 8-11 (for details see the attached table)

Place of work: School assigned by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)

Reports to: SMC/BOD, TSC, MBSSE, TSC-DO, DEO (depending on the type of reporting)

1. Purpose of the Job

- Effective school strategic and detailed planning
- School budgets and financial administration meet the stipulated standards
- The school is overall well-managed
- Satisfactory pupil achievements
- Good teamwork, teachers express job satisfaction
- Teaching at the school is of a high standard

2. Tasks

Core Managerial tasks

- Head of administration
- Prepares, signs and submit school budgets, approves activities and financial spending
- Prepares semester plans and calendars and allocates teachers to classes
- Checks and registers teacher attendance
- Ensures that up to date curriculum is taught at the school
- Supervises tests and examinations
- Supervises CAR (Continuous Assessment Records) and pupil Progress Reports

- Manages learning materials, supplies, facilities, maintenance, procurements, etc.
- Oversees sports and other extra-curricular activities

People Management

- Carries out all teacher/human resource management at the school, liaison with TSC
- Organises work and delegates tasks at the school
- Promotes a good work climate, teamwork and job satisfaction amongst teachers
- Ensures the overall welfare, health and safety of teachers and pupils
- Ensures teachers' learning and development
- Monitors and appraises teacher performance
- Engages the school and its teachers in learning and development activities

Social tasks

- Liaison between school and MBSSE, TCS, local education institutions and other stakeholders
- Liaison between school and the community
- Represents the school at meetings, workshops, conferences, etc.
- Acts as secretary to the SMC/BOG
- Attends the conferences of school leaders

3. Learning & development

- Participates in relevant school leadership training
- Engages in self-directed learning
- Participates in relevant professional associations and forums

4. Special demands of the job

- Pressure from politicians, community and parents
- Manages a constrained school budget
- Work can be periodically stressful

5. Competencies

Knowledge

- *Same as for teachers, in addition:*

- Regulations, procedures and practices pertaining to school management, teacher HR management, administration, finance and budgeting,
- *Professional Standards for School Leaders*
- Performance management and -appraisal

Skills

- *Same as for teachers, in addition:*
- Leadership and organization
- Teambuilding, -leading and motivation
- Problem solving and conflict resolution
- Communication and media

Aptitude

- Well-organised
- Results-orientated
- Integrity and high standards of ethics
- Human attitude and empathy towards teachers, pupils and community

6. **Qualifications**

- 8-10 years' experience as a teacher
- Higher Teacher Certificate – Primary (HTC-primary)
- Higher Teacher Certificate – Secondary (HTC-secondary)
- Degree in Education
- Degree + Post-graduate Diploma in Education

7. **Professional Standards for School Leaders**

A school leader is expected to aim at excellence in leadership and school management and develop the associated competencies. These are described in detail in the *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders*, TSC, 2017.

Further Reading: The jobs of teacher and school leader

Teaching is a meaningful and valuable profession. In Sierra Leone, teachers and school leaders have a major impact on the future of school children and on the country. Economic growth, social improvement, meeting the demands of the labour market for qualified labour, as well as personal job satisfaction and wellbeing all start in the country's schools.

As a result, it is important that teacher and school leader jobs are designed and performed optimally to deliver high quality teaching that has a positive impact on learning and pupil achievement. High quality teaching is composed of several factors which determine the pupils' degree of learning and subsequent application of knowledge and skills in the real world. These are all reflected in the way the jobs of school leaders and teachers are designed and practiced.

The job of a teacher is varied and goes beyond the classroom. A teacher not only teaches, but counsels pupils, engages in extra-curricular activities, such as sports and excursions, interacts with parents, meets with peers and school leaders to plan and address school issues, helps to keep the school tidy, clean and safe, and participates in professional forums.

The standards to which all teachers and school leaders must aim are described in the *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders in Sierra Leone* (TSC, 2017). The *Code of Conduct for Teachers and other Education Personnel*, TSC, 2019. also guides job performance and teacher and school leader behaviour.

Further Reading: Job Description

Job descriptions guide the work of teachers and school leaders and are at the heart of many Personnel Management procedures and practices.

A job description is based on an in-depth analysis of a job. It is short, usually less than two pages, and factual. It includes essential information about the job, such as the overall responsibilities of the job holder, key tasks involved in the performance of the job, and basic information about the job for administrative purposes. It also specifies the education and competencies required to perform the job.

It is prudent in the Job Description to mention any special job demands, and factors of health, safety and the environment.

An analysis of a teacher's job requires professional expertise. Such job analysis may take place in connection with large educational and/or organisational reforms. But the TSC must update Job Descriptions or relevant parts of them regularly, particularly when there are major changes affecting the requirements and contents of a teacher or school leader job.

For Job Analysis refer to [Pay and Benefits](#).

Job descriptions may be used for teacher recruitment, induction, promotion, performance appraisal, personal development interviews, learning needs assessment, professional development and training, coaching, mentoring and supervision, as well as for other HR activities.

Further reading: Job Enrichment

The teaching profession has considerable potential for innovation, inventiveness, play, and artistic creativity in the way a teacher involves young learners and conveys subjects to them. This enhances learning, but is also a form of *Job Enrichment*, since creativity and innovation make the job more fulfilling and interesting. Promoting *Job Enrichment* in schools is an instrument for TSC and school management to keep teachers in their jobs and ensure that they develop professionally.

Job enrichment, where a school leader's or a teacher's job is more personally fulfilling and interesting, is an important means of attracting and retaining teachers in the teaching service. It is also a way of helping teachers expand their knowledge and skills and continuously learn throughout their career. Job enrichment involves basic leadership practices such as delegating responsibilities and establishing socially fulfilling teams. It also involves creating conducive working and learning environments.

Best Practice: Contents of a Job Description

A teacher Job Description may contain the following information. Compulsory entries are marked with an asterisk *

- Position title and salary grade range*
- Place of work*
- Travel
- Reports to
- Supervises
- Purpose of the job*
- Overall responsibilities
- Core tasks*
- Extra-curricular engagements
- Managerial and supervisory tasks
- Engagement with parents and community
- Specially assigned tasks
- Demands and difficulties of the job
- Knowledge required*
- Skills required*
- Aptitude required*
- Minimum education*

Best Practice: How to use a Job Description

The Job Description is an agreement between the teacher and the teacher's direct employer, i.e. the TSC, the school proprietor and the school leader, on the duties and tasks the teacher will be expected to perform. The Job Description provides factual information on the Job, the purpose of the job, the tasks involved in carrying it out, the competencies and qualifications required, and other matters. The teacher can be given tasks by his or her superior that are not in the Job Description, provided the tasks are in alignment with the position level of the teacher and the teaching profession.

During recruitment:

- Teachers are given an opportunity to read the Job Description carefully and ask questions if in doubt.
- Teachers will then be asked to sign their job descriptions indicating full understanding and commitment to the tasks required of them.

The Job Description:

- Is reflected in the curriculum taught at Teacher Training Colleges.
- Forms the basis for job advertisement in connection with recruitment.
- Is applied in recruitment interviews to determine a candidate's suitability for the job.
- Informs both school leader and teacher on what can be expected of the teacher in carrying out his/her job.
- Guides mentors and students during TTC student periods of practice in school.
- Is the main instrument to guide supervision and mentoring of a teacher during their probation period, to mentor the new teacher and to plan and deliver induction training.
- Is used for the promotion of teachers in determining indicators for the higher level position.
- Is used as a systematic tool for assessing the learning needs of teachers.
- Is applied in planning and preparing Continuous Professional Development.
- Is applied in formulating indicators for the performance appraisal of a teacher and

for completing the Personal Development Plan.

Best Practice: How school leaders may enrich a teacher's job

- Provide leadership that encourages and motivates teachers.
- Facilitate the teacher's job by ensuring that teaching materials, tools and equipment are user-friendly, updated and easily available.
- Provide well dimensioned classrooms and spaces for teachers to work and socialise in.
- Create a good social environment for teachers and a climate of trust and mutual respect.
- Encourage creativity and innovation in teaching (making the job more fun).
- Delegate responsibilities to teachers and create a sense of ownership to the school.
- Stimulate subject interests and academic pursuits amongst teachers.
- Provide counselling and mentoring.