NOWTEACH

Why Change Career to Teaching?

The difference you will make and how we can help



To change or not to change?

Lucy Kellaway, Now Teach co-founder and economics teacher

Changing career is a daunting prospect – especially when it involves a year of training and having to convince teenagers that you have got something interesting to say.

But despite the upheaval, the exhaustion and the nerves, every year Now Teach sees a cohort of brilliant people through their transition and, almost without exception, they tell us that it's the best thing they've ever done.

While there were manifold reasons for my career change, they can be summed up in the catch all that I wanted to be useful.

I felt that I was no longer making any kind of difference through my work as a journalist. I wanted to come home at the end of the day and feel like I had really achieved something.

I never pretend my career change was easy – my role at the FT was the nicest job in the world. That was easy. But I didn't want easy, I wanted a challenge – and make no mistake, however impressive your current career is, retraining as a teacher will be a challenge and an achievement.

These days I come home after school exhausted but filled with purpose. I know that I've made a difference to the people I teach. Some days it might be a very small one, but it's a difference nonetheless.

So if this all resonates, get in touch. It might be one of the best decisions you've ever made.











Got a question about teaching as a second career? Ask Rachael, one of our Career Change Specialists, at rachael@nowteach.org.uk.

The difference you'll make



Teachers open doors to the next stage of life: university, training or that first job. They give young people choice and opportunity. What could be more useful than that?

Educate them all - and inspire a few

Let's say you pull the rip cord and do this. Before long, you are a trainee teacher and standing in front of a class full of teenagers; your captive (if not *always* willing) audience.

Student engagement always falls on a spectrum. Some love learning. Some just get on with it. Some think that your subject is boring and redundant and useless in the real world.

But then you arrive. Chances are, they've never been taught by someone like you. Someone with significant experience outside education.

Gradually, some of those students will twig that maths isn't just a GCSE; it's the step to getting a job that pays well. Science isn't the thing standing between lunch time and home time; it's how you uncover the secrets of the world around us.

You prove that there is a real point to doing your homework. And you're passionate about them learning your subject and the doors that it can open. That's inspiring.

Don't get us wrong – there will be people who doodle their way through every lesson or tell you you're boring. But there'll also be someone who might thank you when they win their Nobel Prize.

According the Sutton Trust, teachers are the most important factor in schools that can improve student achievement.

Know your subject, support the child

In every school – no matter how affluent the area – there are kids who need that little bit more help. Maybe they've been told they'll never amount to much or there isn't anyone at home to talk to about homework.

Being a teenager is a hefty burden at the best of times, but the cost of living crisis, the aftermath of a pandemic, and universally depressing world news means some teens are really struggling. MentalHealth.org found that 27% of British teenagers report feeling anxious or on edge.

You're not going to 'save' everyone but if you're explaining your subject with confidence, listening to their questions with patience, and giving authentic encouragement, you will inevitably make a difference to young people's lives.

A small nudge at school can mean a big change of direction over the course of a lifetime.



From a Year 10 maths student

Good morning, Sir, I hope you are doing well.

I firstly must thank you for your motivational and powerful words you have spoken to me ever since you have stepped into this school, and I must thank you for giving me opportunities through the school's careers and top talent programme.

You are one of the few people who have not limited what I can achieve in life, and I am very grateful as you have changed my perception and views of what I can now achieve.

Thank you



A guide for careers

You can only aspire to a career if you know that it exists: if you can see it, you can be it. That might explain the Social Mobility Commission's finding that only 4% of UK doctors and 16% of UK lawyers come from families where the main earners had lower-skilled jobs.

For many young people, work is about having a job, not a career. It's something obligatory you do to get by.

You can show them another option by modelling both your own and other careers, helping students to aim for jobs which align with their skills and offer ample opportunities for good pay, promotion and development.

As a teacher, you can be a role model and an advisor, pointing young people to opportunities that their families and friends may be unaware of.

If you're frustrated by a lack of social mobility, then becoming a teacher puts you on the front line of addressing that problem. As part of Now Teach and our Network, we'll help you use your previous career experience to make a difference to young people.

You'll have purpose



Career changing teachers come from a massive variety of backgrounds, both in terms of career and lifestyle. But the one thing they all have in common is that they genuinely want to improve the world around them.

There are lots of brilliant ways to give back, from giving money to volunteering. But becoming a teacher means placing that goal at the centre of your working life. It means that you're serving your community every single day.

While a trainee teacher starts on the bottom rung, you will be taking on a uniquely important position as a teacher. It's a place of power and influence: every one of us will still be able to remember a good teacher we had, who made us feel worthy. (And maybe those who didn't.)

You have the opportunity to become a teacher who is inspired and inspiring, playing your part in developing young people and our future.

It was time to change career when I realised I wasn't contributing to society anymore.

I felt very apprehensive about my suitability for teaching but Now Teach's encouragement and expert guidance is why I'm now in the classroom.

I wanted to do something meaningful - and now I am.

Jo Young, English teacher and former archaeologist

According to the ONS, 1 in 10 retired people in the UK is considering returning to work. A significant proportion cite a desire to remain connected to the world around them as their main motivation.

How to know if teaching is for you



You're probably reading this because your career isn't as fulfilling as it used to be. Something new and meaningful is calling. If you can tick at least three of these boxes, get in touch.

☑ Developing people already

It doesn't need to be official – you're just the kind of person who loves delivering training, who supports junior colleagues or who gets joy from sharing your expertise.

☑ Like spending time with young people

Maybe it's through an access scheme at work, charity work, your place of worship, a club or just chatting to the young people in your life. Whatever the context, you appreciate young people.

'Lots of Now Teachers aren't officially mentoring when we first speak to them, but they are the go-to person in their office for development and advice. If you enjoy helping your colleagues succeed, that's something good to discuss at an interview with a training provider.'

Jo, Now Teach Career Change Specialist

☑ Want to give something back

If you're giving up some of your time to help others, you probably have a drive to make a positive impact in the world. You want to be part of a community and feel connected to something larger than yourself.

☑ Still want a challenge

Perhaps you're bored of retirement or dreading the prospect. Or you're no longer challenged by your current role. You want to achieve something, not sleepwalk into retirement or run down the clock on a corporate job.

☑ Interested in the education system

You're someone who flicks to the education section of the news, so you already know that the world of learning might be for you. If you're less up-to-date, then TES and Schools Week are two key news sites that explore the big issues.



'I talk to people who wanted to teach when they left uni, but didn't feel able to. Perhaps it was a bigger salary or a glamorous-sounding job. Whatever the reason, they often lament that they 'left it too late'. But at Now Teach there's no such thing as 'too late'.

Rachael, Now Teach Career Change Specialist

☑ It's more than the subject

We want teachers who can't wait to share the beauty of biology or the magic of maths. But you know that there's more to life than learning a subject – and you want to help young people develop key life skills, as much as learn the syllabus and pass exams.

☑ A long-term itch to teach

Some career changers have never given teaching a second thought, but many have always quietly wished they had gone into education. And so we often hear people lamenting the fact that they 'left it too late'. Don't worry. They didn't.

☑ Ambition is there too

To make it through teacher training you've got to want it for yourself, as much as to help other people.

A complementary balance between altruism and self-interest is ideal. Without this combination, you might find your energy bottoms out at certain points.

So do it because you want a change as much as to give something back. To prove to yourself you can do something big while also changing lives.

Having two reasons to get up in the morning is a strategic win. So don't be ashamed to say that this career change is for you too.

So are we going to do this?



Let's take the first step together. Thinking about career change is all well and good, but our Career Change Specialists can help you take some steps. Here is how to start exploring.

Talk to us

We've helped over 1,110 people make the transition into teaching, so unsurprisingly we think getting in touch with us makes sense.

We're not here to convince you. We offer sensible, measured, thoughtful advice about becoming a teacher and can connect you to others who've already made the switch.

We'll always be honest – whether it's about what you needto improve your application, or about your chances of getting a placement.

Our goal is for you to make an informed choice – if you realise teaching is not for you, that's fine - because we're on your side.

Get experience in school

It's not just for teenagers – work experience is the most valuable thing you can do while considering career change. The Now Teach Career Change team say that it's pretty much an essential step.

Get in touch with Now Teach, and if we have a partner school in your area we can connect you, so you can organise a visit.

Of course, the job of a teacher is much too rich, varied and ever-changing to be captured in a few days in a school, but it's the best insight you can possibly have into that schools look, sound and feel like.

Talk to teachers

It might sound obvious, but if you're going to teach you should probably pick some other teachers' brains about the idea first. They'll tell you all the amazing things about their job, as well as all the non-amazing things.

Most people know at least one teacher, and if you don't know one directly you can bet that someone in your wider social network does.

Now Teach also runs webinars where you can hear from people like you, who've changed career into teaching, and get the answers you've always wanted.



Listen to young people

When you meet young people, listen to them rather than talk at them. Teenagers are funny, frustrating, lovely, grumpy, confusing, brilliant creatures. They're working out how to become adults.

Ask how their school works too, because they really have changed a lot since your day and possibly even since the young people in your life have left school. Ask what the challenges in their school are, what they love and what could be improved.

If you're going to work with them then you've got to love the fact they're unpredictable and sometimes infuriating, as well as sweet and hilarious.

Baby steps are fine

If you don't currently know any young people, you're not a mentor and you don't volunteer or belong to any external organisations, that doesn't mean that your teaching dream is a non-starter.

It just means you might need to amass some more experience before you take the plunge. We can help you get that experience. It could be as small as starting to do volunteer tutoring in your chosen subject, which will give you a little insight into the nature of teaching (though not managing a class of thirty-plus pupils!)

It could be that you're ready to start in September, or that you need to work with Now Teach's Career Change Specialists over the coming months to prepare for the following year.

Discuss with friends and family

You'd be surprised how many people approach us before speaking to their partner. It's your choice but we humbly suggest that, if you have a family, you talk to them about your career change plans first.
You'll need to consider the impact on your time and lifestyle, and you'll need a financial plan, as not all subjects come with a bursary.

It's also the details: you can't take time off during term time or weekdays. You'll be in school from 7:30am to 5pm most days.

But we'll also tell you what Now Teachers say: that no matter how hard it is, becoming a teacher is one of the best decisions they've ever made.

What does Now Teach offer?

Insight and advice as you change career

If you want to explore changing career, complete the short form on our website and we'll be in touch for a chat.

Our Specialists have years of professional experience in education, so they can bounce ideas around with you. From choosing a subject to where to teach, they'll share their insight.

Career change support as you train

Anyone who has done teacher training will tell you that it's a tough year. Which is why we're here to help you celebrate a big win, solve specific challenges or just talk something through.

We offer two years' 1-1 career change support to help you get established - from navigating school culture on Day One to finding your first job. We'll be there.

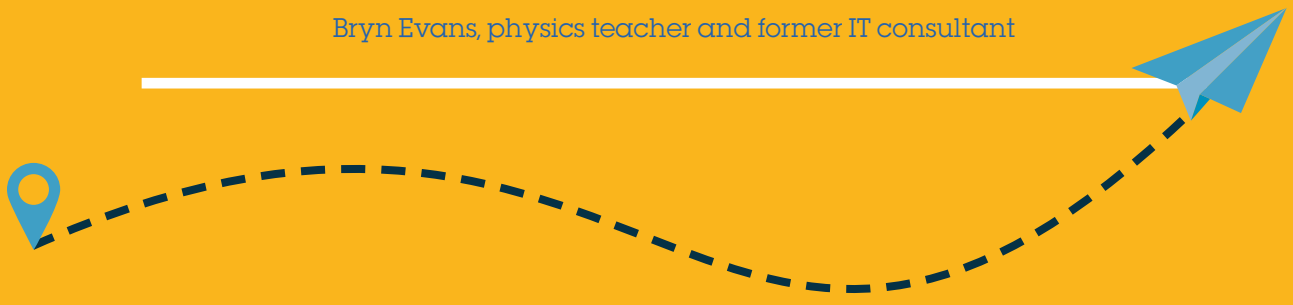
A professional Network as you progress

The Now Teach Network is our community of career changers. They're all at different stages but they've all chosen teaching as their second career.

Once you accept a teacher training offer, you'll join the Network, and it's a network for life. "The best gang in the world," as one Now Teacher called it.

"It's very beneficial to be with people who are in the same situation of changing career later in life. You won't get that with your school or trainer provider."

Bryn Evans, physics teacher and former IT consultant



Take the next step

Get the inside information about retraining as a teacher from our Career Change Specialists.

Contact Rachael@nowteach.org.uk or call 020 4585 4010

nowteach.org.uk

@NowTeach Now-Teach @NowTeachOrg

NOWTEACH