

Working as a part-time teacher after a career change

Tell us about your background

Before teaching I worked in investment banking. I trained to be a teacher with [Now Teach](#), who support experienced professionals to train as teachers. The opportunity to follow Now Teach's compressed programme was a major draw to become a teacher. In my former profession, I was able to work flexibly from home, but the culture was that you were in the office. My initial teacher training was at Oasis Shirley Park. During my training year I worked 4 days a week and the school were always very supportive of my part time arrangement.

I then stayed with Oasis Shirley Park for my newly qualified teacher year following the award of my qualified teacher status. I was keen to continue working 4 days a week. The school worked compassionately with me and my department to make sure that it worked for everyone.

What are the personal benefits and challenges for you in working flexibly?

My experience of working flexibly has been fantastic and I love it. I currently work 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE). Having a day off means I can see my children more, and I can attend more personal and professional events. Ultimately, the biggest benefit so far is that I can be a calmer, better teacher which I think is of great benefit to the students and for my own teaching experience.

The biggest challenge for me is that I do not always have the same day off. It can change year to year.

What are the impacts and challenges of working flexibly on your school?

The biggest issue was timetabling. I worked together with the timetabler and the head of department to think about how my part-time arrangement could work for the school as well as me. We had to plan carefully to make sure that the timetable worked for pupils and other staff members.

We do split classes at Shirley Park, where two or more teachers share a class between them. I can see positives and weaknesses either way of split classes, but so far, I have found they have worked well when managed properly. The pupils do not consider them different from having one designated teacher but regard it as normal.

I share a Year 7 and a Year 8 class with another teacher. I have both classes

for one lesson a week. The lead teacher has overall responsibility for the class and is accountable for pupil's progress. We communicate regularly via email, sharing information about the pupils and their progress in lessons. For more delicate issues, we have face to face meetings.

As well as my teaching role I have been able to take on leadership opportunities. I am now Head of Year 12 and I can do this on a part-time basis. Half the maths department are also part-time, all working on reduced hours.

We have seen that part-time work has become more popular as a result. Our former headteacher who is returning to work following her maternity leave has taken up a 0.8 FTE week. She has told me she was inspired to do it because of the example we have set. Part-time work is now starting to be normalised, rather than it being different.

What advice would you have for others considering flexible working?

Without the opportunity for compressed training, I would not have considered entering the profession. The opportunity to remain part-time has kept me in the profession. I do believe that any school can do it, but it requires a willingness from both sides to make it work. Most people do not know they can ask for it and I would encourage anyone who feels it could improve their professional and personal life to discuss it with their school leadership.

[Dr David Halpern reappointed as the What Works National Adviser](#)



Dr Halpern's new 3-year appointment will take effect from November 2019. He has been What Works National Adviser [since 2013](#) and is Chief Executive of the [Behavioural Insights Team](#).

He was the founding Director of the Institute for Government, and between 2001 and 2007 was the Chief Analyst at the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.

Before entering government, Dr Halpern held academic posts at the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Harvard.

The role of the What Works National Adviser is to provide advice to ministers, the Cabinet Secretary and other leaders in government on what evidence shows to be cost-effective in delivering policy outcomes.

Cabinet Office and Treasury launched the What Works initiative in 2013 to ensure that public service professionals and commissioners have access to high quality evidence when making decisions. A five-year progress [report](#) was published in 2018.

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[Half the fuel gone from iconic Dounreay reactor](#)

DFR with its famous dome once led the world in fast breeder technology.

The reactor was built in the 1950s at a time when there was a worldwide shortage of uranium for electricity generation. Its core was surrounded by a blanket of natural uranium elements that, when exposed to the effects of the radiation, would “breed” to create a new fuel, plutonium. After the reactor closed in 1977 most of the core fuel was removed. But work to remove elements from the breeder zone came to a halt when some were found to be swollen and jammed. Almost 1,000 – around two-thirds of the total – were left in place.

Decommissioning the 60-year-old reactor is one of the most technically challenging projects in the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority estate and removing the breeder elements has been a top priority.

After designing and testing remotely-operated equipment, a decommissioning team began recovering the elements in 2017, using purpose-built tools that reached down into the reactor to cut the breeder elements free and lift them into a flask for removal to the next stage of the process.

The success of the locally manufactured tooling has played a big part in the successful removal of half the remaining radioactive fuel inventory inside the reactor vessel. Local companies who manufactured mechanical equipment to demanding timescales included JGC Engineering and Technical, Precision Machining Services, and Calder Engineering. Contec Design Services carried out electrical, control and instrumentation works.

Senior Project Manager Raymond Hill commented:

This is a challenging project and I am pleased that we are making good progress on the removal of the elements, which is contributing towards the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's mission to clean up the UK's nuclear legacy.

View the breeder elements being removed from the reactor here: [Material being removed from the Dounreay Fast Reactor](#)

[New Charity Inquiry: CWM Harry Land Trust Limited](#)

The Charity Commission has opened a new statutory inquiry into CWM Harry Land Trust Limited ([1100899](#)), an environmental charity whose objects also include the education and rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-offenders.

The charity was previously included in a class inquiry in November 2018, which was opened to examine charities which had repeatedly failed on their reporting requirements. As part of the class inquiry the Commission issued an order directing the trustees of the charity to provide information by specified dates, including the charity's annual accounts for the financial years ending 31 March 2016 and 2017. However the trustees failed to comply. The charity has failed to file financial information in line with statutory requirements for 3 consecutive years, raising serious concerns over the charity's administration, accountability and transparency.

The Commission also has concerns over a number of related party transactions, including payments to a trustee and two loans to the charity from a company where one trustee was a director.

The inquiry will examine the extent to which:

- the trustees are complying with their legal duties in respect of their administration, governance and management of the charity.
- any failings or weaknesses identified in the administration of the charity during the inquiry were a result of misconduct and/or mismanagement by the trustees.
- the trustees responsibly managed the charity's resources and financial affairs, in particular with respect to how they have managed conflicts of interest and/or loyalty.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales; our role is to regulate charity trustees' compliance with the charity law framework.
2. Double defaulters are charities that have defaulted on their statutory obligations to meet reporting requirements by failing to file their annual documents for two or more times in the last five years.
3. Shortly after the opening of the inquiry, the charity filed its accounts for FYE 31 March 2016. The charity continues to be in default of its filing obligations for FYE 31 March 2017 and 2018.

[Equipment explosion on an empty passenger train](#)



Damage to the vestibule end and debris in the saloon (left image courtesy of CrossCountry, right image courtesy of Bombardier Transportation UK).

At around 06:11 hrs on 26 September 2019, an explosion occurred in an electrical equipment cupboard located in a coach vestibule as an empty train departed from Central Rivers depot. The explosion resulted in considerable damage to the vehicle interior, which was not discovered until the driver moved through the train to change ends at Birmingham New Street station.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this accident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

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