



Teaching  
Agency

# **A guide to School Direct**

**2013/2014**

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## Introduction

School Direct is a new programme proposed in the 2011 Department for Education (DfE) Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Strategy paper '[Training Our Next Generation of Outstanding Teachers](#)' and introduced in academic year (AY) 2012/13. School Direct is intended to help schools take a leading role in ITT where they can offer ITT places and work with accredited ITT providers to deliver training. Priority will be given to subjects with the greatest need.

School Direct has been expanded for AY- 2013/14 and now offers two types of training places:

- 1) **The School Direct Training Programme**, which is open to all graduates and funded by tuition fees paid by the trainee, who may receive a bursary from the Teaching Agency (TA).
- 2) **The School Direct Training Programme (salaried)**, which is an employment-based route into teaching for high quality graduates with three or more years' career experience. The trainee is employed as an unqualified teacher by a school. The Teaching Agency (TA) provides funding, which the school can use to subsidise the trainee's salary and/or training. The School Direct Training Programme (salaried) replaces the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) which will close. There will no longer be a "supernumerary" requirement, as there is with the current GTP.

For ease of reference the term 'school' in this guide also refers to school partnerships that are requesting places together.

School Direct is part of a wider set of reforms designed to help schools take greater responsibility for leading and shaping ITT, including new approaches to university-school partnerships, Teaching Schools' ITT role, and the accreditation of new school-led providers.

This guide sets out the School Direct model, which is designed to meet the following main aims:

- To give schools the ability to influence the way in which ITT is delivered, improving the system by creating more school-led training programmes that better meet the needs of schools and trainees.
- To enable schools to recruit and select the trainees that best meet their and their partnership's needs, with the expectation that those teachers will go on to work in the group of schools where they trained.
- To introduce choice into the ITT system by enabling schools to negotiate with their chosen provider how they wish to use their School Direct place (or places). The School Direct Training Programme also enables a school to negotiate their choice of accredited ITT provider, the funding they receive from the provider and the way in which the training is delivered.

The TA will issue further, more detailed information to schools that register an interest and to ITT providers in due course, and this will be posted on the DfE website.

The model for delivering School Direct ITT is a six step cycle, using evidence from each year to inform practice in the following year.



# 1. Requesting and receiving places

Schools should register their interest in applying for School Direct places at [www.education.gov.uk/teachschoolsdirectprovider](http://www.education.gov.uk/teachschoolsdirectprovider) before 7 September 2012. Schools can request places in specific phases and subjects from 7 September 2012 until 28 September 2012 inclusive. This year, the TA will ask schools to identify the accredited ITT provider with which they wish to work. Schools can use different providers for different subjects.

The accredited ITT provider remains accountable for the quality of the training, assessed through the Ofsted initial teacher education inspection framework, and for ensuring that the training meets, and continues to meet, the ITT criteria. These can be found on the [DfE website](#).

All requests should be submitted by a lead school, preferably on behalf of a group of schools. The lead school is the school to which the TA will allocate places and it is responsible for ensuring that the criteria for School Direct places (see below) are met.

The lead school is responsible for securing agreement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the provider and schools, including the schools in which training will take place, and this should be set out in a formal partnership agreement (see section on training for further details).

The TA will correspond with the lead school on all School Direct matters.

The timescale for requesting and receiving places for training that takes place during AY-2013/14 is:

- 14 June to 7 September 2012 – Schools register interest in School Direct
- 7 to 28 September 2012 – Lead schools request places by phase and subject
- Mid October (date tbc) – Allocations agreed and announced
- End of October (date tbc) – Recruitment opens for schools

## Criteria for allocations

Whilst ministers are keen to involve as many schools as possible in School Direct for AY-2013/14, requests for places might not be accepted for various reasons. Although unlikely, the scale of requests may exceed the number available for distribution. In these situations, we will prioritise places using the criteria listed below.

The main criteria will be:

### *School quality*

The Ofsted rating of the lead school will be a key determinant of both whether the requests for places are successful and to what degree it is met in full. We encourage

schools that are not outstanding to team up with outstanding schools. In particular we would like School Direct to stimulate alliance building for Teaching Schools.

A school in special measures will not be able to request School Direct places as a lead school. Partnerships should satisfy themselves that schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities. Where a school is deemed to require improvement or is in special measures, it may still be possible for the school to be involved in the delivery of ITT, especially if the improvements to be made do not affect the subject or age range for which the trainee is training. The lead school and the accredited provider will need to be confident that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the school experience, and the situation will need to be kept under close review.

If a school goes into special measures while a School Direct Training Programme (salaried) trainee is employed at the school, another lead school should be designated, and the partnership agreement should be amended to reflect increased support, monitoring, and revisions to the individual's training plan. Partner ITT providers can contact Jeff Williams ([ta.inspection@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ta.inspection@education.gsi.gov.uk)) to discuss specific cases.

### ***Trainee quality***

The Government strategy for ITT emphasises the need for new teachers to be highly qualified. The TA will promote entry to teaching, including through School Direct, to attract graduates with degree classes at 2.1 or above. Schools are encouraged to select participants on this basis.

### ***Subject/phase***

The TA will prioritise requests according to subject and phase to reflect national priorities and will be tied to 2013 /2014 bursary priorities, which will be announced by the end of September.

The high-priority subjects for 2012 / 2013 are: physics, mathematics, chemistry and modern languages.

Other priorities are: primary and other Ebacc subjects (English, history, geography, biology and classics).

These priorities are reflected in the bursary and funding levels for School Direct places.

### ***School Direct recruitment in 2012 / 13***

For schools allocated School Direct places for AY-2012/13, we will look at their level of recruitment in that year. We will discuss capacity with lead schools to ensure an appropriate allocation, but no automatic penalties for under-recruitment will be applied this year.

### ***Cohort size***

The TA encourages requests for several places in a subject. Groups of schools requesting a regular supply of places are likely to promote the development of high-quality practice and sustainable relationships between ITT providers and schools.

If a school request can demonstrate that smaller cohorts are more appropriate and effective for the provision they require, we will look to meet this request.

The degree to which each criterion is applied will depend upon the number of requests for places and how School Direct numbers need to be managed. The TA may need to adjust the application of these criteria after requests have been received.

Self-funded places for School Direct Training Programme (salaried) do not need to be agreed with the TA but we do ask that schools inform us of these places (see Registering trainees section).

Changes to School Direct place requests may be possible in-year e.g. where a school had intended to recruit a physicist, but found a more pressing need for a mathematician instead. If schools wish to request changes to their allocations, they must contact the TA via [ta.allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ta.allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk). Any such allocation changes would be subject to approval by the TA, and would be considered on a case-by-case basis. The TA will allow permitted changes to allocated School Direct places until 31 May 2013.

It is important that all requests and acceptances of places are a realistic statement of schools' capacity to participate in School Direct. If schools retain allocated places which remain unfilled this may affect future allocation decisions.

## **Finding an ITT provider to work with**

School Direct schools choose which accredited provider to work with, negotiate how the training is structured and agree how the funding will be divided between the school and the provider.

Schools can choose any type of accredited provider, HEI-led or school-led, to work with on School Direct.

The provider is accountable and responsible for the recommendation of the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). The provision must therefore be compliant with the Secretary of State's criteria for ITT and align with the 2012 Ofsted Framework for the inspection of ITT.

Schools need to be aware that increased inspection monitoring is being proposed by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) for Ofsted Grade 3 'satisfactory' providers. According to the latest Ofsted proposals, the current 'satisfactory' rating will be replaced with 'requires improvement' in the next inspection round. The latest [inspection reports for providers](#) are available on the Ofsted website; this may not include the newer providers that have yet to be inspected by Ofsted.

The respective roles and responsibilities for training should be set out in a partnership agreement between schools and the ITT provider (see section four on Training for further information). Schools with experience of ITT, especially Teaching Schools, may have existing partnership agreements in place. These may provide a useful basis for negotiating the new School Direct agreement.

Trainees can only be given confirmation of an offer of a place after the formal partnership agreement with an accredited ITT provider is signed. Schools will be asked to state which accredited ITT provider they are working with for each allocated subject when they submit their request for places.

## **Secondary subject training and assessment for qualified teacher status (QTS)**

Any ITT providers approached by schools to train and assess trainees in secondary subjects, outside their allocated ITT portfolio, are advised to adopt similar risk mitigations as when requesting an expansion into new subjects for mainstream provision. ITT providers should also:

- (i) remind the school that the subject is not one where the provider has experience or expertise so the school can determine if they wish to work with another experienced provider
- (ii) determine if there is a subject expert familiar in the training and assessment of ITT in the subject who can be employed by the provider; this may be someone from a LA, a school, or another ITT provider
- (iii) ensure that any sub-contracted subject tutor is well versed in the provider's quality assurance, assessment and training expectations and the associated assessment and monitoring documentation.
- (iv) ensure that the associated Individual Training Plan expectations, subject training sessions and associated programme documentation and support are available before the start of the training
- (v) ensure that the trainee is included in any sample for quality assurance and moderation, as determined by the provider's routine procedures for assessment boards
- (vi) note that the trainee, the programme and any related judgments on quality by external examiners, external moderators and Ofsted remains the provider's responsibility and accountability as part of its overall portfolio.

Any questions and specific issues on any of the above can be directed to [ta.allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ta.allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk).

## **Training and assessment for QTS in non-allocated phases**

ITT providers approached by schools to train and assess trainees in a phase or age range outside their allocated ITT portfolio are reminded that this should be declined. Providers are aware that if they wish to expand into a new phase, there is a series of required quality checks and other checks by the TA's Assessment Team, in conjunction with the Funding & Allocation Teams. All trainees in any phase are subject to inspection arrangements and will form part of the provider's portfolio.



## 2. Recruiting School Direct trainees

Schools can recruit locally through their own recruitment processes, work with their ITT provider to use its marketing and recruitment processes, or use a combination of the two. Recruitment activities should be high quality, open and transparent and will be subject to inspection by Ofsted.

The TA is working closely with UCAS on proposals to introduce a single application system for all applications to post-graduate ITT courses starting in September 2014. For recruitment to courses starting in September 2013, the TA will manage an interim central application system providing a single point of application for all candidates and on which all School Direct places will be listed. The TA will issue further details on the system in due course.

The recruitment period must be long enough to allow open and fair access to places and well-communicated to potential trainees, but schools should be aware that much recruitment, especially primary, tends to be completed before January.

Schools should take the lead in interviewing and selecting candidates, but all School Direct candidates must also meet the standard entry requirements of the school's chosen provider, and be approved by the provider. All School Direct candidates must meet ITT eligibility and entry criteria as set out in the [ITT criteria](#) and [funding manuals](#).

From September 2013, trainees will be required to pass the skills tests before starting their course. The first pre-entry test appointments will be available from 1 September 2012. The registration and booking system will be available from 1 August 2012. Further information can be found on the [DfE](#) website.

School Direct Training Programme (salaried) is only for high quality graduates with at least three years' work experience. Career changers can bring valuable skills and experience to the profession, which they have developed since leaving university. Schools should decide which skills and experience are important to them. This experience will normally have been gained since leaving university and does not have to be from an educational setting.

If a school selects a candidate that, after discussion, the partner ITT provider does not wish to take, then the provider can decline to take them.

Schools should ensure candidates for the School Direct Training Programme are fully aware of the fees they are likely to be charged when recruiting.

The TA has also put in place the following steps to help direct good-quality candidates to schools:

- Information on School Direct has been signposted to potential applicants in the TA Graduate Recruitment Brochure.
- The [DfE](#) website hosts information on School Direct for applicants.

## School Experience Programme

An opportunity for secondary schools to identify and build relationships with future teachers in shortage subjects is the School Experience Programme. The programme gives prospective ITT applicants the opportunity to spend up to 10 days in school to gain an insight into the role and responsibilities of a teacher. It targets high quality graduates and undergraduates who are interested in teaching maths, physics, chemistry and modern foreign languages, and schools are paid to host visits. Schools interested in this programme can register on the [DfE](#) website.

The Primary Experience Programme offers men interested in entering the profession at the primary phase the opportunity to gain 10 days' experience in a primary setting. From June 2012, schools interested in becoming part of the journey for future male primary teachers will be able to sign up to the programme. Further details will be made available on the [DfE](#) website.

## Data requirements

It is expected that existing data collection processes will be used. The TA is currently finalising these processes and will communicate them to ITT providers and relevant schools in due course. Training on the submission and verification of School Direct data will be provided by the TA.

## 3. Receiving funding

This section sets out the different funding arrangements for:

- (i) the School Direct Training Programme
- (ii) the School Direct Training Programme (salaried).

### Registering trainees

Once the trainee has accepted a School Direct place, the partner ITT provider will need to register the trainee as they would for any other trainee. Trainees can be registered as either part-time or full-time, but must be registered on an eligible graduate route to QTS. The TA will provide guidance directly to providers on how to register School Direct trainees and which TA data management systems should be used.

School Direct places are additional to an ITT provider's normal allocation of places from the TA and cannot be offset against any under-recruitment in their normal allocation of places.

### Funding for the School Direct Training Programme

The School Direct Training Programme is funded by tuition fees paid by the trainee who will be eligible for the standard student support package, including training bursaries, tuition fee loans and scholarships where eligible.

Once trainees have accepted places on the School Direct Training Programme, they should then make applications for tuition fee loans through Student Finance England, to cover the cost of their training. This money can only be paid directly to the accredited ITT provider with whom schools are working to deliver School Direct, and trainees have to be registered on the programme before the provider can receive the money. The Student Loans Company will pay the ITT provider in instalments, but trainee attendance must be registered by the accredited ITT provider at the start of each term before payment is made. The tuition fee itself will vary depending on what the school and partner ITT provider agree to charge.

Lead schools can choose how their ITT programme will be delivered, including how much training is delivered across the school partnership and how much is purchased from the accredited provider.

### Training bursaries and scholarships

Trainees on the School Direct Training Programme, who are eligible for bursary funding and scholarships, will be able to receive bursaries in the same way as trainees on other post-graduate ITT routes. Scholarships may be available for candidates who wish to teach priority subjects, and are awarded by the relevant Subject Associations, through a competitive application process. Please see the [bursary and scholarship eligibility guidance](#) for more information on how to assess whether trainees are eligible for a

bursary or scholarship. The partner ITT provider will receive an allocation of bursary funding from the TA for all eligible ITT places, including those bursaries allocated for School Direct places. The provider will then pay the trainee the bursary directly.

School Direct Training Programme trainees who spend the majority of their training in schools where more than 25 per cent of their pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) will be eligible for 25 per cent uplift to their existing bursary award. Trainees recruited and training to become a primary teacher who specialises in teaching mathematics will receive a £2,000 uplift to their bursary.

The TA will issue details of bursary funding for AY-2013/14 in due course.

## Funding for the School Direct Training Programme (salaried)

These places will be funded through the TA to subsidise salary and training costs. The funding rates reflect the priorities of the subjects and schemes. In particular it should be noted that there are different rates depending on the location of the employing school to reflect the different salary scales in place across the country. Schools recruiting and training primary teachers who specialise in teaching mathematics will receive a £2,000 supplement to the standard rate for the primary programme. Schools with 35 per cent or more of their pupils on Free School Meals (FSM) will receive a 10 per cent funding premium.

The funding rates for AY-2013/14 are as follows:

		National	Inner London	Outer London	Fringe
Non-FSM	High priority subject	19,000	23,900	22,600	20,200
	Other priority subject	14,000	17,600	16,600	14,900
	Primary non-specialist	14,000	17,600	16,600	14,900
	Primary mathematics specialist	16,000	20,100	19,000	17,100
FSM	High priority subject	20,900	26,300	24,800	22,300
	Other priority subject	15,400	19,400	18,300	16,400
	Primary non-specialist	15,400	19,400	18,300	16,400
	Primary mathematics specialist	17,600	22,100	20,900	18,800

The secondary subjects in the different priority groups are:

High Priority	Physics, mathematics, chemistry and modern languages.
Other Priority	Art and design, design and technology, economics, engineering, English, dance, drama, geography, history, information and communications technology, computer science, classics, music, biology, physical education and religious education

Secondary subjects not listed above are ineligible for funded School Direct Training Programme (salaried) places. These priorities are subject to review and will be finalised in September 2012 but are not expected to significantly change from those set out above.

Schools are free to determine the proportions of funding to be used for salary subsidy and training. However, trainees employed in a maintained school should be paid as an unqualified teacher on point one or above of the unqualified teacher scale. Other conditions relating to employment-based provision, including limits on teaching time, can be found in the ITT criteria.

For AY-2013/14 the funding for School Direct Training Programme (salaried) will be paid through the accredited ITT provider. This ensures that there will be simple and clear governance controls around this funding in the initial year. However, in addition to this, the TA will pilot a system of passing the funding for salaried places directly to schools for AY-2013/14. The pilot will need to test the practicalities of managing a system that balances the need for clear accountability for Government funds against burdens and administrative costs. If it is successful, we anticipate rolling this out to all schools taking these places in future years.

## 4. Training

The school and the provider should train the trainee in accordance with their partnership agreement. School Direct is a school-driven model of ITT and the TA would expect that the models of training developed should reflect the leading role of the school. The TA is keen that schools are able to design their own programmes with accredited ITT providers. The TA is also not dictating any particular model of delivery for any School Direct place and is therefore not offering any model partnership agreements. Schools need to consider what they want from ITT and how it should evolve to meet their needs. However, where schools find it helpful, the TA will be able to give schools examples of effective practice during the first year of School Direct.

The quality of the partnership agreement between the school and provider will be crucial to the success of the programme received by trainees. It must set out as a minimum:

1. which elements of the programme are to be delivered by the provider and which by the school;
2. arrangements for the distribution of fees between the partners, including the total cost of the programme;
3. partnership agreements with the schools that are providing trainee school experience; and
4. the roles and responsibilities of the school and the ITT provider particularly with regard to:
  1. assessment
  2. quality assurance
  3. subject knowledge training
  4. selection procedures (including arrangements for passing applications from providers to schools).

When negotiating with providers, schools should consider closely which parts of the training they would like to deliver themselves and which they would like the provider to deliver, and how a coherent experience can be provided for the trainees. Providing a high-quality training option (for instance a PGCE from an outstanding ITT provider and/or prestigious university) is also potentially a good way of attracting the best recruits.

Some questions to consider include:

- Who will be responsible for advertising, recruiting and selecting trainees?
- Which schools will provide the school-based elements of training?
- Will an academic award (e.g. PGCE or Masters Credits) be offered?
- What arrangements are in place for mentor training?
- Who will provide mentoring?
- How will outstanding teachers be involved in mentoring, mentor training and quality assurance?
- Who will provide subject knowledge training?
- What is the role of the lead school and also the other schools in the partnership?
- What tuition fees will be set by the provider for the course?
- How should each element of the training programme be funded and how will funding be divided between the school and the provider?

## **The School Direct Training Programme (salaried)**

Trainees employed as unqualified teachers on the School Direct Training Programme (salaried) are not required to be supernumerary (i.e. in addition to your regular teaching staff numbers). It is for schools to decide what teaching duties the trainee is able to take on. However, the ITT criteria require that they receive at least 60 days' training activity per year and that no trainee will be required to perform more than 90 per cent of the teaching duties normally required of a full-time qualified teacher. Before making decisions on timetabling for trainees, schools should check with the provider that the planned arrangement meets the ITT criteria. The arrangements should be set out in the partnership agreement.

Employment-based trainees are working and training at the same time. As employees, they have the same rights and responsibilities as any other teacher. As trainees, they need support, guidance and a well-structured training plan to assist them to achieve the standards for QTS. Schools and providers should ensure that the content, structure, delivery and assessment of the training are sufficient to enable them to do this.

## 5. Employment after training

The Government's [Training Our Next Generation of Outstanding Teachers: Implementation Plan](#) published in November 2011 stated "Once the trainee has completed training and gained qualified teacher status, the school will be expected to employ the trainee."

### What does the TA mean by an expectation of employment?

In determining how many School Direct places to request, schools should review their previous employment patterns and use any current knowledge on staffing/budgetary issues to make an *assessment of future need*. This assessment should enable schools to request a number of places that broadly matches the future employment requirements within the school or partnership of schools where the trainee will be based. The TA expects the school or partnership of schools to have a clear capacity to employ the trainees when they successfully complete their training programme.

Trainees can be employed within the individual school or group of schools in which they have trained. In recruiting and selecting trainees, schools will want to have in mind the suitability of candidates to train and teach in the particular environment of the school partnership. Throughout the process, schools should be aiming to employ trainees at the end of their training.

Naturally there will be occasional circumstances that prevent a trainee taking up employment in one of those schools (such as not completing the course, changes to the school structure, outside factors, personal preference) but it should be the school's intention to retain the teachers, based on a reasonable expectation of there being a vacancy.

When assessing future requests from schools for School Direct places, the TA may consider how successful the school's previous School Direct trainees have been in securing employment and prioritise schools that have high employment rates.



## 6. Audit and evaluation

School Direct places will be subject to the same data management and audit requirements as any other ITT places. Providers will need to include them in their census returns, Association of Graduate Recruiters, and Audited Accounts. Relevant training will be provided by the TA.

The TA will look to evaluate School Direct across the first two years of the programme, taking into account the perspectives of stakeholders.

### Further information

Further information is available on the DfE website at: [www.education.gov.uk/teachschoolirectprovider](http://www.education.gov.uk/teachschoolirectprovider), including frequently asked questions (FAQs) and contact details for regional TA leads who will be able to signpost you to examples of schools involved in the first year of School Direct and offer support.



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