Guidance
Initial teacher training (ITT): criteria and supporting advice

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Candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools and colleges. In addition, further checks should be carried out in accordance with the guidance on safer working practice for adults who work with children. Additional guidance on criminal records checks for overseas applicants is also available at GOV.UK. Additional Charities to check for DfE providers on DfE Sign-in and Secondary Schools and Colleges.

ITT providers and employers must ensure that candidates are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

Childcare disqualification

ITT providers should have regard to the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance and Childcare disqualification: GOV.UK FAQs. They should also be aware that due to statutory regulations, not all ITT staff are in scope of this.

Where trainees are salaried, it is the responsibility of the schools to ensure they comply with the legislation. If a trainee is found to be a childcare disqualified person in their role, schools should inform the training provider of this. Where trainees are fee-funded, the training provider should inform the school of this. Schools should then take appropriate action to ensure the trainee is not allowed to undertake a childcare disqualified position (see Childcare disqualification arrangements can be obtained from the Department for Education at childcare.disqualification@education.gov.uk or on 01325 340 409.

Further information

Statutory guidance:

- Keeping children in education – supervision of activity with children which is requalified activity when unsupervised
- Keeping children safe in education
- Reporting children who are absent

C1.4 Professional skills tests

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that all entrants beginning ITT on or after 1 January 2021 and 28 March 2022 have passed the professional skills tests prior to entering a course; and

The professional skills tests are set in the context of the wider professional role of a teacher. Trainees who entered ITT on or after 28 March 2022 must have passed the tests before starting an ITT programme.

Candidates who entered ITT on or after 1 April 2020 will not be required to pass the skills tests prior to entry.

Trainees who passed the skills tests and a course leading to QTS do not need to re-take the skills tests if they later book a course leading to QTS.

Trainees who have passed the skills tests and are applying to QTS do not need to re-take the skills tests if they later take a course leading to QTS.

Training criteria

C2.1 Programmes

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:

ensure trainees teachers to meet all the standards for QTS across the age range of training; and

ensure that no trainee teacher is recommended for the award of QTS until they have met the standards for QTS.

At the outset, ITT providers should make clear to trainees, and to all those involved in the partnership, the scope and coverage of the programme, including subject and curriculum knowledge and subject pedagogy outcomes.

Programme design underpins all the training criteria and should be flexible enough to meet the needs of individual trainees and to ensure that trainees teachers can build upon their personal and professional strengths and experiences to meet the standards for QTS.

ITT providers should ensure trainees specialist subject training to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding of their subject and related pedagogy, which will enable them to teach their specialism to pupils aged 11 to 16 and, where relevant, to pupils aged 5 to 11. Training should be based on clear plans, which should include a sequence of subject-specific training and school based activities, including opportunity to demonstrate subject knowledge in a related subject if they do not have the opportunity to teach their subject across the full age range of training.

Schools, early years and further education settings have a crucial role to play in training future teachers. Trainees should be exposed to the wider aspects of the profession. ITT providers should work across a range of schools and settings to give trainees a breadth of experience.

Prior to the award of QTS, providers must assure the trainees' English and mathematics. Providers must ensure that trainees demonstrate competence in the areas set out in the Teachers' Standards.

Trainee assessment should be based on clear, transparent, consistently applied and accurate judgements. Where schools have significant responsibility for judgements about trainees' performance against the Teachers' Standards, ITT providers, in the School Direct programme, ITT partnerships and other providers, should ensure that assessment moderation procedures are robust and all recommendations for the award of QTS are based on robust evidence. Providers should ensure that all judgements and recommendations are consistently and fairly moderated across the partnership through the partnership agreement.

Providers of the postgraduate teaching apprenticeship route should ensure that all-year assessments comply with the arrangements specified in the Assessment Only route to QTS: assessment guidance for providers and the Assessment Only route to QTS: assessment of apprenticeships and the assessment of professional development in apprenticeships.

Training may be delivered in schools or other settings (subject to C2.2) and is likely to include a combination of classroom and school based teaching, taught sessions, seminars, workshops, tasks and assignments, and engagement with academic or professional research.

Providers must ensure their curricula encompass the full entitlement described in the ITT Core Content Framework.

Trainees teachers are expected to:

- master core knowledge for the subject, phase and age range that the trainees will be teaching
- ensure trainees have adequately covered the foundational knowledge and skills that are expectations for the subject defined in the ITT Core Content Framework and integrate additional analysis and critique of theory, research and expert practice as they develop expertise
- ensure trainees receive clear and consistent mentoring and support from mentors and other expert colleagues

C2.2 Age ranges

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that they prepare all trainee teachers to teach within one of the following age phases:

- ages 3 to 7 (primary)
- ages 7 to 14 (primary)
- ages 11 to 19 (secondary)

Training must enable trainees to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to teach successfully across the age range they are training. Teaching training and takes place across the following age ranges:

- 3 to 7, 5 to 11, 7 to 11 for primary training
- 7 to 14 for middle school
- 11 to 16, 11 to 18, or 14 to 19 for secondary training, depending on the subject to be taught

Where providers offer more than one phase of ITT programmes, they should record which phase their programme is "aimed at" for DfE data purposes. Integrated provision should contain a number of initial phase specialisms, which should be clearly identified in the provider's application to DfE. Providers should also make clear in their application if they are offering a primary specialism in the secondary element of training.

Providers should ensure that their initial teacher training programmes design documentation the age range of training for each of their programmes.

Providers should ensure, where possible, that trainees have the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of progression across, and before and after, the age range they are training to teach. This might include enhanced experiences in other age ranges.

C2.3 Training in schools

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that training programmes are designed to provide trainees teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools (Core 2.6); early years and/or further education settings (Core 2.7); and in other settings (Core 2.8) to enable them to meet the standards for QTS. This means they would typically be structured to the level of the leading partner of a hub (or to spend in training in schools), early years or further education settings (Core 2.9):

- a four-year undergraduate programme - 160 days (32 weeks)
- a three-year undergraduate programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
- a postgraduate primary or secondary programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
- a postgraduate (non-employment based) programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
- employment-based programme, as determined by the training programme

Time spent in schools, early years or further education settings should be part of a coherent training programme that enables trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards.

Time spent training in settings other than schools, early years or further education settings can form a valuable part of training but cannot be counted towards the training days in schools.

Providers of ITT and teaching experiences must partner schools have the capacity to provide a high quality training experience. Providers should ensure, where it is practical and necessary, it may still be possible for providers to use the school, especially if the school is in a challenging context, to gain the benefits of a school placement. Providers and partnership schools should ensure that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the school experience and the situation would be kept under close review.

Legislation requires that the Secretary of State approves the provision of ITT should take place wholly or mainly in England, or in schools administered by Service Children's Education (SCE) schools in other countries. Providers should ensure that trainees teachers place outside England, or in Wales, Northern Ireland, establishing in modern foreign languages may benefit from time in schools abroad. ITT partnerships should ensure that any placements in schools abroad are in schools that are similar to those in the United Kingdom. If there is any doubt about the schools and need to spend time in schools in England to enable them to meet the relevant Teachers' Standards.

Management and quality assurance criteria

C3.1 Management

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme.

Providers must ensure their training programme to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and have due regard to the Public Sector Equality duty and the Teachers' Standards. Training should be high quality and sustainable to ensure continuing improvement.

Schools, education, childcare providers, and other leading, role in the design and delivery of training provision. The management structure should demonstrate the various roles that schools and other providers have in the management of the training programme and achieve partnership in the development of trainees to the award of QTS.

Partnerships should ensure that the workload of trainee teachers is manageable. Partnerships should have regard to the Workload Challenge and the workload monitoring using the teacher workload framework. Everyone across the partnership should be clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Providers must ensure that the work agreement between the partnership and their governance and operational structure. This includes, for example, the size or composition of the governing body, the frequency of meetings, the roles and responsibilities, and should be a transparent, fair and clear set of arrangements. They should be, in particular, particularly where equality issues are. The agreement and any associated documents should be reviewed and revised by members of the partnership at appropriate intervals.

Roles and responsibilities

All trainers and trainee teachers need to be clear about who is responsible for elements of training and assessment, how provision is managed and how the elements fit together to ensure trainees meet the Teachers' Standards.

Partnership agreements should specify the different roles within the partnership and the responsibilities of the various members of the partnership, such as the lead, managers, and educational and mentors/tutors. They should also set out how partners contribute towards:

- selecting and interviewing applicants
- monitoring assessment judgements of trainees against the Teachers' Standards
- ensure professional development opportunities for colleagues within the partnership
- trainee access to resources
- ensure quality assurance committees
- quality assurance and continuous improvement planning and self-evaluation
- the promotion of equality of opportunity
- the safeguarding of children and young people

Providers of salaried routes must ensure that all schools or settings, where trainees teachers are employed, are aware of their role as the employer and clear about the partnership roles and responsibilities and have the capacity to provide the necessary training and support.

Non-school lead training partners

Where provision is not school led, the partnership agreement should set out clearly the roles and responsibilities and ensure a significant role in the recruitment, selection, training and assessment of trainees.

C3.1 Legislation

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that they comply with all current legislation relevant to ITT.

In order for an accredited a provider must satisfy the criteria specified by the Secretary of State, ITT providers must demonstrate that they have regard to the Public Sector Equality duty and that criteria and guidance relevant to them. Where a school is an ITT provider it is non-compliance with current ITT criteria, DfE will consider withdrawal of accreditation.

Providers should make sure that partners are fully aware of their duties under all relevant legislation, including, for example, the Equality Act 2010, the duty to promote safeguarding, including, for example, the Prevent duty.

- Education (Teacher Training) (Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1942) – Regulations 2 and 3 and Schedule 1
- Education (Teacher Training) (England) Regulations 2013 (SI 1624) – requirement that must be satisfied by individuals who are not qualified teachers in order to be able to teach in a maintained school or academy
- Equality Act 2010 – Public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

Providers should make sure that trainees, including all schools, are subject to a fully enhanced DBS and Barred List check (see Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2021). Also required to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Providers should also make sure that trainees, including all schools, are subject to a fully enhanced DBS and Barred List check (see KCSIE 2021).

The Prevent duty guidance states that schools and other institutions to which the duty applies should make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas, which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.

Further information

The following is a selection of relevant legislation and guidance. This is not intended to be exhaustive and ITT partnerships will need to ensure they have identified and complied with all relevant legislation. GOV.UK and DfE Sign-in provide a legislation for all providers relating to all aspects of discrimination, Also relevant to ITT:

- Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 3139)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) in higher education
- Equality Act 2010: guidance on matters to be considered in relation with disabilities

This Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Technical guidance on the Equality for schools sector and further and higher educational institutions. The EHRC also publishes several other guidance documents, which may be of use to ITT providers and their partners.

The work that is essential to qualified teachers is maintained schools in accordance with section 133 of the Education Act 2002, subject to limited exceptions, is specified by the Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012.

Other relevant legislation include:

- the Health and Safety Executive's Five Steps to Risk Assessment
- guidance for practitioners and managers from NHS Government on information sharingadvice for safeguarding practitioners

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced a set of prudent checklists for ensure they provide for access to high quality training.

ITT providers should familiarise themselves with the Competition and Markets Authority's consumer protection law for businesses guidance that sets out their obligations to undergraduate students may be in breach of consumer protection law. Find out more at Online education: consumer law advice for providers.

C3.4 Quality assurance

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

that they monitor, evaluate and moderate all aspects of provision rigorously and demonstrate how these contribute to securing improvements in the quality of training and the assessment of trainees.

Trainees can only be recommended for the award of QTS if they meet all the Teachers' Standards. Therefore, the assessment process must be accurate and reliable, establishing, consistently over time, whether or not trainees meet the Teachers' Standards.

In order to ensure accuracy and reliability providers should have clear and robust moderation arrangements in place. Moderation is the process by which agreement is reached for the various aspects and judgments.

External moderators have an important role in ensuring consistency of standards across schools. They should be independent of the partnership and have the necessary experience and relevant expertise to enable them to carry out their role competently. They should also ensure the views of external moderators are taken into account in reaching decisions about trainees' achievement of the Teachers' Standards.

Evaluation

ITT providers should regularly evaluate their training programmes and monitoring and evaluating the quality of training across all the contexts in which it takes place, and identify ways in which improvements can be made.

ITT providers may wish to collect and analyse a variety of data to inform their evaluation. This may include, for example, the views of trainees, mentors, school and college staff, and other stakeholders, or data by trainees.

Training sessions, in order to establish their fitness for purpose and to identify ways in which improvements can be made. Providers should also ensure that trainees evaluate their training programmes and their experiences of the partnership.

- trainees' evaluations of their training programmes and how it is administered
- trainees' perceptions of their training
- former trainees, induction tutors and employing schools
- the quality of mentoring and other support, the relevance and accuracy of the assessments of trainees against the Teachers' Standards
- external moderator feedback about the effectiveness of training provision in helping trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards
- the implementation of equality policies
- DfE and Ofsted feedback

Internal moderation

Internal moderation provides a system of checks and balances within a partnership to ensure consistency of judgements against the Teachers' Standards. Providers of ITT provides should ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that trainees are fairly and effectively. The roles and responsibilities of those carrying out such arrangements are clearly set out in the partnership agreement (see C3.1).

Internal moderation procedures could include, for example:

- the involvement of other staff in the school or college, or more partners when moderating trainees' work
- initiated by a moderating panel of a sample of trainees, including any judged by an assessor as on the possible borderline, or likely to fail
- joint observations of trainees teaching
- the sharing of evidence, such as evidence available, including trainees' previous experience and achievement
- arrangements for feeding back information to the partnership about the accuracy and consistency of assessments and judgements and about elements of good practice to support improvements

External moderation

ITT providers should appoint suitable external moderators. External moderators should have direct involvement with the work of the partnership. They should be able to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to carry out their responsibilities for QTS, which should be set out in the partnership agreement and assessments. Providers should consider how to use external moderators to consolidate and develop their own internal moderation arrangements.

Providers should make sure that the partnership agreement includes, whether they have appropriate subject, curriculum or age phase expertise to enable them to provide secure feedback.

The responsibilities of external moderators might include:

- detailed scrutiny of a number of trainees, including representative cross-section of trainees together with all trainees that internal moderators request a being on the moderation panel (see above)
- observation of the teaching, learning and assessment samples, such as lesson observed or being borderline satisfactory to good, or borderline good to outstanding
- ensure that trainees have met the Teachers' Standards, and that the evidence base is sufficient and robust to support the Teachers' Standards and will not lead
- scrutiny of internal moderation arrangements, drawing on some of the evidence gathered by the panel
- producing a report for the partnership, including a summary of the evidence, the provision observed, clearly linked to the Teachers' Standards and ITT criteria, and identifying strengths and areas for improvement and any recommendations for action against the Teachers' Standards

In addition, providers should have procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the management of their provision including, for example, arrangements for the selection and de-selection of partner schools. They should use evidence exemplified in the Ofsted inspection of ITT and other relevant evidence.

Providers should make sure that the partnership agreement includes, whether the monitoring and evaluation have secured improvements in quality and outcomes for trainees. This may be measured by completion data and other evidence such as trainee feedback.

Similarly, providers may wish to examine their procedures and practices for enhancing trainees' knowledge and understanding of the Teachers' Standards and ITT criteria and

curriculum areas for primary trainees, and evaluate these against the success of trainees in meeting the Teachers' Standards. The evidence will need to be sufficiently robust to enable providers to draw conclusions and act upon them.

All monitoring and evaluation processes and activities should focus on impact and outcomes - particularly in the context of the standards achieved by trainees. Reporting and documenting of these activities should be evaluative rather than descriptive. These activities and processes might feed into improvement plans. When monitoring and evaluating programmes, providers should compare their own provision with that of providers of similar and different size and type.

Employment-based criteria

C4.1 Employment

All accredited providers of employment-based ITT must additionally ensure that:

for the period of training all applicants must be employed as unqualified teachers (see note 7) at a school (see note 8), and (except applicants employed in academies or independent schools) must be paid in accordance with at least the minimum of the unqualified teacher pay range for the period of their training.

C4.2 Admissions

All accredited providers of employment-based ITT must additionally ensure that:

applicants are only admitted to employment-based programmes by either DfE or by an accredited provider (see note 9).

C4.3 Teaching

All accredited providers of employment-based ITT must additionally ensure that:

no applicant will be required to perform more than 90 per cent of the teaching duties normally required of a full-time qualified teacher.

Relevant legislation

This advice refers to:

- The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/1662)
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2012
- Higher Education (Fee Limits and Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2018
- Higher Education and Research Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Notes

Note 1: As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria (return to accreditation)

Note 2: For the equivalent of grades awarded under the new GCSE grading structure, refer to Your qualification, our regulation: GCSE, AS and A level reforms (return to GCSE standard equivalent)

Note 3: A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the QCF. Applicants with a foundation degree will need to supplement this qualification with at least 60 credits at level 6 (HE level 3) in order to attain an equivalent single qualification (return to degree criteria)

Note 4: All trainee teachers that began ITT before 1 August 2013 must have passed the professional skills tests before they can be recommended for the award of QTS (return to professional skills tests)

Note 5: Section 4 of the Education Act 1996 defines a school as 'an educational institution which is outside the further education sector and the higher education sector and is an institution for providing (a) primary education, (b) secondary education or (c) both primary and secondary education' (return to training in schools)

Note 6: Time in schools may be completed on a part-time basis to make up the full-time equivalent amounts (return to training in schools)

Note 7: As defined by the latest school teachers' pay and conditions document (return to employment-based criteria)

Note 8: Or 'other institution' as defined by the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1662) as amended (return to employment-based criteria)

Note 9: Teach First (ITT) programme applicants must be admitted only with the agreement of the Teach First organisation (return to admissions)

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