



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Initial teacher training criteria

**Statutory guidance for accredited initial
teacher training providers in England**

February 2014

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Summary

About this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). This means that accredited initial teacher training (ITT) providers must have regard to it when carrying out its duties relating to ITT.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed when necessary.

What legislation does this guidance refer to?

- *The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/1662) as amended.*

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for:

- Accredited ITT providers and their partner schools
- Organisations seeking ITT accreditation

Key points

- Accredited ITT providers must ensure that they meet these criteria to remain compliant. ITT providers who do not meet these criteria may be subject to withdrawal of accreditation.
- This is an update to the previous ITT criteria document, which takes into account the removal of the previous criterion C2.4. The previous criterion C2.5 has become criterion C2.4 in this document.

Overview

In order to receive accreditation to deliver ITT, a potential new provider must demonstrate how its provision at the outset is likely to be at least good¹, and will meet all the following ITT criteria, in a proposal to the NCTL.

All accredited providers must continue to meet these criteria.

The NCTL will consider withdrawal of the accreditation of a provider where:

1. provision is not financially viable,
2. the provider demonstrates impropriety or inadequate controls in its financial management, or does not comply with relevant financial reporting or governance requirements,
3. the provider fails to comply with NCTL data requirements,
4. the provider acts unreasonably in regulating their volume of trainees, and not in accordance with their NCTL allocation of trainee numbers,
5. provision is repeatedly of 'requires improvement' or lower quality¹
6. provision is non-compliant with one or more of the specified ITT criteria, or
7. the provider ceases to offer provision.

¹ As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.

Initial teacher training (ITT) criteria

1. Entry criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C1.1 That all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C in the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and that all who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3-11 additionally have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C in the GCSE examination in a science subject.
- C1.2 That, in the case of graduate programmes of ITT, all entrants hold a first degree of a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification².
- C1.3 That all entrants, as part of the provider's selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to teach.
- C1.4 That all entrants beginning ITT on or after 1 August 2013 have passed the professional skills tests prior to entry³.

² A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at a 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 qualification.

³ All trainee teachers beginning ITT before 1 August 2013 must pass the professional skills tests before they can be recommended for the award of QTS.

2. Training criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C2.1 That the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:
- enable trainee 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 all of the standards for QTS.

- C2.2 That they prepare all trainee teachers to teach across two or more consecutive age ranges selected from the following:

Ages 3-5 (Foundation stage)
Ages 5-7 (School years 1-2)
Ages 7-9 (School years 3-4)
Ages 9-11 (School years 5-6)
Ages 11-14 (School years 7-9)
Ages 14-16 (School years 10-11)
Ages 16-19 (School years 12-13)

and engage them with the expectations, curricula, strategies and teaching arrangements in the age ranges immediately before and after the ones they are trained to teach.

- C2.3 That training programmes are designed to provide trainee teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools⁴, early years and/or further education settings to enable them to demonstrate that they have met all the standards for QTS. This means they would typically be structured to include at least the following periods of time to be spent in training in schools, early years or further education settings⁵:

A four year undergraduate programme	160 days (32 weeks)
A two or three year undergraduate programme	120 days (24 weeks)
A secondary graduate (non-employment based) programme	120 days (24 weeks)
A primary graduate (non-employment based) programme	120 days (24 weeks) ⁶
Employment-based programme	As determined by the training programme

- C2.4 That each trainee teacher has taught in at least two schools⁷.

⁴ 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”.

⁵ Time in schools may be completed on a part-time basis to make up the full-time equivalent amounts detailed in C2.3.

⁶ This applies to all primary graduate (non-employment based) programmes beginning on or after 1 August 2013. Programmes beginning before 1 August 2013 will typically be structured to include at least 90 days (18 weeks).

⁷ Or early years or further education settings.

3. Management and quality assurance criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C3.1 That their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme.
- C3.2 That partners establish a partnership agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Provision that is not school-led must assure the significant role of schools in recruiting, selecting, training and assessing trainee teachers.
- C3.3 That they comply with all current legislation relevant to ITT.
- C3.4 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.

4. Employment-based criteria

All accredited providers of employment-based ITT must, additionally, ensure all of the following:

- C4.1 For the period of training all candidates must be employed as unqualified teachers⁸ at a school, and (except candidates employed in academies or independent schools) must be paid in accordance with at least point one on the unqualified teachers' pay scale for the period of their training.
- C4.2 Candidates are only admitted to employment-based programmes by either the NCTL or by an accredited provider⁹.
- C4.3 No candidate will be required to perform more than 90 per cent of the teaching duties normally required of a full-time qualified teacher.
- C4.4 All entrants to the Overseas-Trained Teacher Programme must have successfully completed a programme of professional training for teachers outside the United Kingdom, which is recognised as such a programme of training by the competent authority in that country, in a country:
 - a) outside the European Economic Area (EEA)¹⁰, or
 - b) within the EEA, for non-EEA nationals without an EEA spouse or dependent.

⁸ As defined by the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

⁹ Teach First (ITT) programme candidates must be admitted only with the agreement of the Teach First organisation.

¹⁰ Except teachers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America covered by paragraph 13A of 2003 Statutory Instrument 1662 as amended.

Further sources of information

Associated resources

- [Ofsted initial teacher education handbook](#)

Other departmental advice and guidance you may be interested in

- [ITT criteria supporting advice](#)
- [Withdrawal of accreditation process](#)
- [Teachers' Standards](#)
- [Arrangements for ITT accreditation submissions](#)



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