



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Initial teacher training criteria supporting advice

**Information for accredited initial teacher
training providers**

March 2014

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Summary

About this advice

This is supporting advice from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL).

Expiry or review date

This supporting advice will be reviewed when necessary.

What legislation does this advice refer to?

- The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/1662) as amended
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Higher Education Act 2004 (as amended by the Education Act 2011)
- The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011
- The 2010 Equality Act
- The 2001 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
- The Data Protection Act
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The 1997 Police Act

Who is this advice for?

This advice is for:

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

Key points

- This is an update to the previous ITT criteria supporting advice, 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.

Accreditation

In order to receive accreditation to deliver initial teacher training (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.

Withdrawal of accreditation criteria

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

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

Scope

The aim of these criteria is to ensure that providers comply with all NCTL requirements. Where providers do not meet all these requirements, the NCTL will consider withdrawing their ITT accreditation.

Fee charging

The amount that a Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funded provider (including FE settings that receive HEFCE funding) can charge fee-funded trainees is determined by the [Higher Education Act 2004](#) (as amended by the [Education Act 2011](#)). This Act also sets out the requirements for establishing [Office for Fair Access \(OFFA\)](#) agreements.

HEFCE-funded providers may charge up to £6,000 without an access agreement, but if they charge above this amount, up to a fee cap of £9,000, they must have an access agreement in place, approved by OFFA.

Non-HEFCE funded providers are not subject to the Higher Education Act 2004, and are able to set their own charges without reference to OFFA. The NCTL requires that these providers do not charge trainees over £9,000 for programmes of ITT.

¹ As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.

Student support

The level of student support that trainees can draw down is determined by whether their provider is deemed publicly funded or private.

For the purposes of student support, the [Education \(Student Support\) Regulations 2011](#) define 'publicly funded' as "maintained or assisted by recurrent grants out of public funds" where 'public funds' means "moneys provided by Parliament or by a government authority outside the United Kingdom". A private institution is defined as an institution that is not publicly funded.

Trainees undertaking ITT at private providers will only be able to access loans of up to £6,000, whereas trainees at public providers will be able to access loans of up to £9,000.

Further information

The withdrawal of accreditation process is available from the [DfE website](#).

1. Entry criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that entrants to ITT have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment and, in the case of primary trainees, have an acceptable level of subject knowledge in the core subjects of the National Curriculum.

The criterion makes it clear that it is the standard, not the certificate that matters. Applicants who are otherwise suitable but, for whatever reason, have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade C may be given an opportunity to show that they can nevertheless meet the required standard, either by taking an equivalence test or by offering other evidence of attainment, which should demonstrate a similar level and breadth.

The NCTL does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science. When ITT partnerships look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade C, they should look at the content not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth.

Specific qualifications

Qualifications in key and functional skills at level 2 are not equivalent to GCSEs in terms of content, and ITT partnerships should look for additional evidence of breadth of knowledge and understanding in applicants with key and functional skills certificates but without GCSEs at grade C or above in English and mathematics.

While applicants with a GCSE grade C or above in English and/or English language may be deemed to have met the requirement, ITT partnerships should look for further evidence of a breadth of achievement in English where applicants have achieved a GCSE grade C or above in English literature.

Further information

The [National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom \(UK NARIC\)](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas qualifications. UK NARIC can be contacted at: UK NARIC, Oriel House, Oriel Road, Cheltenham, GL50 1XP. Tel: 0871 330 7033; fax: 0871 330 7005

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

The aim of this criterion is to ensure the graduate status of teaching. All entrants should have attained a qualification that demonstrates the level of knowledge, understanding and transferable intellectual skills associated with graduate status.

[Legislation](#) requires all entrants to teaching in England to have a UK first degree or equivalent qualification. Any equivalent qualification must be one single qualification, not an aggregation of a number of separate qualifications. Those on undergraduate ITT programmes will, if successful, graduate and meet the standards for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) at the same time. Those entering graduate ITT programmes need to have attained a degree before they commence the programme.

ITT partnerships should view original certificates in order to validate an applicant's degree status. However, they should exercise discretion in the case of recent graduates where there is a delay in the applicant receiving the original certificate. In these cases, providers should obtain written confirmation from the relevant degree-awarding institution that the applicant has achieved graduate status, and should ensure that they view the original certificate as soon as it is available.

Degree subjects

Legislation does not specify that teachers must have a degree in a particular subject or discipline. It is the standards for QTS that specify the subject knowledge required for the award of QTS. All trainee teachers must meet these by the time they complete their training. There is no statutory requirement for primary trainee teachers to have a degree in a national curriculum subject, nor is there a requirement for secondary trainee teachers to have a degree in a specified subject, as long as they are judged likely to meet all of the standards for QTS, including those that relate to subject and curriculum knowledge, by the end of their training.

Information on degree-level qualifications

Providers will need to make sure those responsible for decisions on entry are familiar with, or have access to, advice on the range of qualifications generally regarded as equivalent to a first (bachelor's) degree in the UK, including overseas qualifications,

² 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.

professional or vocational qualifications, and qualifications no longer available but held by mature applicants.

For example, the MEng is a four-year first degree, the BPhil is usually a research degree, and some taught master's degrees may be open to people without a first degree.

It is for the provider to decide whether an individual's qualification meets this criterion, and whether a particular master's degree demonstrates the breadth and type of academic engagement that would be expected from first degree study. Partnerships that do not include degree-awarding bodies may wish to seek advice from those that are.

Further information

The [National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom \(UK NARIC\)](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas degrees. NARIC can be contacted at: UK NARIC, Oriel House, Oriel Road, Cheltenham, GL50 1XP. Tel: 0871 330 7033; fax: 0871 330 7005

The [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#) describes the higher education qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions (HEIs) at five levels, formerly identified as certificate, intermediate, honours, masters and doctoral.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that, before anyone is admitted to an ITT programme, they have been deemed suitable to become a teacher. This will help to protect children and young people from trainee teachers who might put them at risk of harm because their previous conduct shows that they are unsuitable for teaching. ITT partnerships will conduct interviews, run background checks, and assess if an applicant has the appropriate intellectual and academic capabilities and personal qualities, attitudes, ethics and values to meet the standards for QTS.

Providers should consider a wide range of evidence to judge applicants' suitability to teach, for example: information from application forms, referees' reports, advice from schools, results of any entry tests or tasks, applicants' portfolios, and interviews.

Interviews

Providers should consider how information from interviews can help to identify and take account of trainees' specific needs during training, including any exemptions from programme requirements on the basis of prior achievement. The interview process might include, for example, classroom observation, discussions of professional portfolios and discussions of prior achievement.

Equality

To comply with equality legislation, providers must ensure that interview procedures promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination.

The [2010 Equality Act](#) and [2001 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(SENDA\)](#) require providers to ensure they are not discriminating against applicants with disabilities or special educational needs (SEN).

Applicants/trainees with disabilities are under no obligation to disclose their disabilities. Providers must ensure that their provision does not place applicants/trainees with disabilities at a disadvantage. Providers must also consider making anticipatory adjustments to promote positively equality of access for disabled applicants, including access to benefits, facilities and services. They should provide as many opportunities as possible for applicants to identify any special arrangements they may require, for example when inviting them for interview or making arrangements for any entrance tests.

Intellectual and academic capabilities

ITT providers should consider the full range of applicants' knowledge, skills, academic background and prior experience to judge whether they have the capability to meet the standards for QTS in the time planned for their training. The selection process provides an opportunity to assess applicants' ability to communicate effectively.

Appropriate qualities, attitudes, ethics and values

Providers should consider the full range of experience and achievement to assess applicants' potential to meet all the standards for QTS. Providers may wish to consider applicants' non-cognitive attributes, as well as their academic qualifications. Providers can access information about a range of [non-cognitive assessment \(NCA\) resources](#) from the NCTL website. The use of these tools can complement existing recruitment and selection processes. Providers may choose to use the available NCA resources to inform the selection process and provide additional information about those applicants being considered for teacher training.

Health and physical capacity to teach

Providers have a responsibility to ensure that trainees have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm. Many people with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have the capacity to teach, just as those without disabilities or medical conditions may be unsuitable to teach. Providers are responsible for ensuring that only trainees who have the capacity to teach remain on the programme.

Successful applicants offered a place on an ITT programme may have completed a fitness questionnaire prior to commencing the programme. ITT providers should not ask all-encompassing health questions but should ensure that they only ask targeted and relevant health-related questions which are necessary to ensure that a person can carry out an intrinsic function of the work of a teacher.

DBS checks

Statutory guidance, *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, requires providers to ensure that entrants on all routes, including salaried schemes, have been subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal records check including a check of the children's barred list, and they should keep records showing that trainees have obtained these.

The DBS will now only issue DBS certificates to applicants and will no longer send a copy to the Registered Body. Providers will need to ask applicants for sight of their original DBS Certificate. When applying for a check, the person who countersigns the form should indicate the workforce that the check is required for is 'child workforce'.

If providers wish to keep a copy of the certificate with the trainee's permission, or print a copy of any status checks, they must act in accordance with the [Data Protection Act](#).

The DBS now offers an optional update service which applicants can subscribe to, for a small annual fee; the service allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date. Applicants will be able to use their certificate with more than one employer, as a prospective new employer will be able to check whether the certificate presented to them is still current and valid by checking online, free of charge.

Providers should confirm to schools that a non-salaried trainee's criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list, has been completed and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. Schools will wish to record this evidence in their single central record.

In the case of salaried routes, the responsibility lies with the employer to ensure the checks have been carried out. A further DBS check should not be undertaken by the provider if they have received notification from the employing school that a satisfactory enhanced check has been obtained.

Providers should view criminal record checks, including checks of the children's barred list for all non-salaried trainees prior to them commencing school-based elements of their training. They should make decisions on suitability based on the applicant's certificate, which is the only copy the DBS will now issue.

Additional information is no longer available for criminal records checks. However, in a very small number of circumstances, the police will still be able to use their common law powers to share such information directly with the Registered Body in serious cases. This would only take place if it was necessary to protect the integrity of current police investigations and a pressing social need was identified.

The registered body must ensure that its partners do not have access to copies of DBS checks or to any information contained in a trainee's disclosure. It is an offence under the [1997 Police Act](#), and a breach of the DBS Code of Practice, to share any disclosure information with any person who is not a member, officer or employee of the Registered Body; this includes revealing the existence of any information.

Partners within an ITT partnership should not demand access to information to which they have no legal right or entitlement, nor should partners breach the DBS Code of Practice in order to comply with such a demand: either directly, by providing the information, or indirectly, by implicating trainees. Equally, where an employing school has received the check information, they must not share this information with others, including, for example, a commissioned accredited provider.

Persons guilty of breaching the DBS Code of Practice are liable to deregistration, a fine and imprisonment, and ITT providers might face withdrawal of accreditation.

Providers will wish to establish a common understanding across the partnership of convictions, offences, cautions and warnings that would not pose a barrier to joining a programme of ITT or undertaking practical training in school.

Teach First applicants should be subject to criminal records checks, including a check of the children's barred list for the school-based elements of the summer institute, and a further check when they enter employment and training. If a trainee is registered with the DBS update service when they would need to apply for their second check, the ITT provider may be able to use the existing certificate and the update service instead of seeking a new DBS check, where the certificate is shown to be current. The provider may still want to undertake any other checks it deems suitable.

When an employee such as a teaching assistant, higher level teaching assistant or cover supervisor, who has been in service with schools or settings in England without a break of three months or more since a previous criminal records check, starts a salaried scheme at the school or setting where they are employed, the school or setting should not require a new check. If the individual is registered with the DBS update service, the school may be able to use the existing certificate and the update service instead of seeking a new check, where the certificate is shown to be current and of the same type (Enhanced DBS Check with Children's Barred List check, for child workforce).

Providers have no statutory duty to subject a trainee teacher to more than one criminal records check during the course of their programmes, even when these extend beyond three years, and providers should refuse requests for repeat disclosures unless a trainee gives cause for concern. Providers should not make additional checks in respect of time spent in separate schools. However, providers may choose to make periodic checks of their trainees on the update service where possible, though specific trainee permission is required for each check. However, ongoing consent may be sought if the individual agrees to frequent checks.

Where the accredited ITT provider has obtained a DBS check, the trainee should not be subject to any further DBS checks, such as by a partner school, a School Direct lead school or any other school involved in the delivery of training.

ITT tutors who have only occasional contact with pupils and are not left unsupervised with children do not require a criminal record check provided they are at all times in the company of individuals that have been checked. Such individuals can include ITT trainees. However, should ITT tutors carry out any regulated activity with children and young people, the schools will expect them to have obtained a criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list. Providers may wish to reflect a common understanding of whether tutors will carry out regulated activity with children and young people in their partnership agreement.

Providers will wish to ensure that trainees treat sensitive data and information with due confidentiality and be careful about who has access to it. Providers may wish to ensure

that partnership agreements address the sharing of sensitive data about children and young people.

Students from overseas who undertake school-based experiences in schools in England should be subject to criminal record checks, including a check of the children's barred list. Additionally, providers should obtain references and certificates of good conduct from the relevant authority overseas in respect of trainees who have spent time living overseas.

Before an application is submitted the applicant's true identity should be established, and the appropriate identity documents validated at the earliest opportunity. This might take place at the interview stage. These details should then be recorded and entered on the check application and forwarded to the countersignatory when a firm offer of a place is accepted. If a trainee has a suitable existing certificate then the details should be obtained with permission to use them on the update system to check if the certificate is current. Applicants become eligible to apply for a disclosure check when they have a firm offer of a place.

To prevent unnecessary delay in processing checks, providers should make it clear to trainees that they are not volunteers. The "Position applied for" field of the check application has changed to include two lines of 30 characters on the application form. On line one, providers must write "child workforce", and on line two "student teacher"; any other entry in these fields, or the inclusion of further details, such as specific course information, may lead to delays in the processing of the application.

In the event of a delay in the applicant receiving certificates from the DBS, headteachers have discretion to allow trainees to start working in a school subject to a satisfactory check of the DBS Children's Barred List and completion of other normal recruitment procedures. The Registered Body can initiate a barred list check of trainees by e-mail request to [TP Online](#). Providers should keep headteachers fully informed of the progress of applications for checks, since schools will need to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, such as maintaining closer supervision, for trainees who have not yet received a criminal record check.

Checks at the recruitment stage must not be the end of the matter. It is crucial that all staff are fully aware of child safety issues, that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be unsafe practice, and that any expressed concerns are taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

Other background checks

Providers are responsible for checking that they do not admit applicants to ITT who are unsuited to work with children. Barred list and criminal record checks are an essential safeguard, but they will only identify those who have been cautioned or convicted, including those that may be serving prison sentences during the application and

recruitment process, those that have come to the attention of the police, or those that have been barred from working with children. Many individuals who are unsuited to working with children may not have any previous convictions, and providers should be vigilant during the selection process. Providers or employing schools have a duty to ensure that trainees are properly managed and supervised and that, if they have concerns, information is referred to the police and the DBS.

Further information is available below on the filtering process the DBS now uses, with which providers should be familiar. If a trainee withholds such information, the provider may consider termination of the training.

In the case of a trainee who is arrested, under investigation, charged with an offence or who receives a conviction, the provider should exercise its professional judgement on a case-by-case basis in considering whether to allow the trainee to continue the programme, to suspend them from the programme, or to terminate their training.

Under safeguarding laws, if a provider removes a trainee from a programme, or if they would have removed the trainee had they not left, because that trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, the provider must refer this case to the DBS.

Enhancement courses

ITT partnerships should not carry out any further criminal records checks on applicants who have been criminal record checked at the start of an enhancement course when they commence an ITT programme if (a) they continue training with the same provider, and (b) any gap between the end of the enhancement course and the commencement of the ITT programme is shorter than three months. In all other cases ITT providers must obtain a new criminal record check for trainees upon entry to a programme of ITT, or use the update service to determine the currency of an existing suitable check.

Further information

For further information about the [Equality Act 2010](#) and other relevant legislation regarding disability see criterion C3.3.

Health and physical capacity to teach

The activities that a teacher must be able to perform are set out in the [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). These activities include:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for children and young people
- delivering lessons
- assessing development, progress and attainment
- reporting on development, progress and attainment

There is no legal requirement for a teacher to be able to lift heavy objects, drive, swim, deal with a child's everyday physical needs or participate in physically demanding activities. Further information on training to teach with a disability is available from the [DfE website](#).

DBS

The DBS provides [checking service guidance](#), including on the [handling of DBS certificate information](#). Any queries about DBS checks should be referred to the DBS at customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk or on 0870 909 0811.

Filtering

- The DBS removes certain specified old and minor offences from criminal record certificates issued after 29 May 2013. Information will not be disclosed *only* if: a substantial period of time has elapsed (e.g. 11 years for adult convictions)
- it is not one of the specified offences which must always be disclosed, and
- it did not result in a custodial sentence.

If someone has more than one conviction, all their convictions will always be disclosed.

The [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 \(Exceptions\) Order 1975 \(Amendment\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2013](#) identifies a range of offences which are serious, or relate to sexual offending, violent offending or safeguarding and will, therefore, never be filtered.

Question e55 on the DBS application form guidance for a criminal record check has now been amended to reflect these changes. Question e55 asks the applicant 'have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or received a caution, reprimand or warning?' Applicants should now ignore this question and treat this question as if they were being asked 'do you have any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings?' Providers must bring this change to applicants' attention when completing the DBS application form.

The DBS provides additional [guidance on filtering](#), with which providers should be familiar.

Update Service

Providers wishing to use the update service for applicants with existing criminal record checks on the system will need to secure an applicant's permission to use their certificate number, name and date of birth to access the applicant's online record. The update service will show whether the certificate:

- did not reveal any information and remains current

- remains current, or

is no longer current, and a new check is required for up-to-date information.

Providers will need to check that the type of certificate the trainee already has is for the relevant workforce and of the right level and type; all trainee checks should be Enhanced Disclosure with Children's Barred List check, for the child workforce.

Registration with the update service is voluntary and only individuals obtaining new checks after 17 June 2013 will be able to opt into the service, so not all applicants will be on the system. Providers still need to view an applicant's original certificate to check any information that may be contained on it, and make any necessary determinations of suitability as a result.

The update service and detailed guidance for applicants and providers, including on new form-filling requirements, is available from www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service.

General

- Other relevant information includes: Statutory guidance [Regulated Activity \(children\) - supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised](#)
- Statutory guidance [Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education](#)
- The [Code of practice for registered persons and other recipients of DBS check Information](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#) guidance.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

C1.4 That all entrants beginning ITT on or after 1 August 2013 have passed the professional skills tests prior to entry³.

Scope

The [professional skills tests](#) are set in the context of the wider professional role of a teacher, and for trainees entering ITT in 2013/14 onwards they must be passed prior to starting a programme of ITT.

When [registering for skills tests](#), applicants can register for [special arrangements](#).

³ All trainee teachers that began 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:

C2.1 That the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:

- a) enable trainee teachers to meet all the standards for QTS across the age range of training, and**
- b) ensure that no trainee teacher is recommended for the award of QTS until they have met all of the standards for QTS.**

Scope

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

Programme design underpins all the training criteria and should be flexible enough to meet the needs of every trainee. Providers should look particularly at the extent to which their provision and assessment practices are designed to ensure that trainees meet the standards for QTS.

ITT providers should offer trainees specialist subject training to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding of their subject(s) and related pedagogy, which will enable them to teach their subject(s) across the full age and ability range of training.

Schools, early years and further education settings have a crucial role to play in designing training that provides the range of experiences that trainees need. Therefore, ITT providers will need to work across a range of schools and settings to give trainees a breadth of experience and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate all the standards for QTS.

Trainee assessment procedures should be rigorous and robust, supporting consistent and accurate judgements.

Training may be delivered in schools or other settings (subject to C2.3) and is likely to include a combination of unobserved and observed teaching, taught sessions, seminars, workshops, tasks and assignments, and engagement with academic/professional research. The content of professional programmes might include, for example:

- the role of the teacher
- planning and assessment to ensure pupil progress
- national assessments and examinations
- child development and learning

- priorities, such as managing pupils' behaviour, early reading, and special educational needs and disability
- assessing and evaluating teaching
- the use of evidence and research to inform teaching.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

Training must enable trainees to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be able to teach across two or more consecutive age ranges. To meet this criterion, providers should consider how the programme design and trainees' time in at least two schools, early years or FE settings will ensure that trainees are fully prepared to teach across the full ability range of at least two consecutive age ranges. Providers can take account of time spent working with pupils before training starts.

Covering two or more consecutive age ranges

Teaching across two consecutive age ranges is a minimum requirement. If the wish, ITT providers may offer programmes covering three age ranges, such as 3–9 or 11–19, however trainees must meet the standards in all age ranges. Alternatively, partnerships may decide to offer two age ranges with some enhancement. In these cases, the trainee will need to be assessed only in the two age ranges of training. However, Partnerships should make clear to applicants early in their programme which age ranges their training will cover.

In the case of 5–11 training, trainees will be expected to demonstrate achievement of the standards for QTS across key stages 1 and 2, but not necessarily in both of the 7–9 and 9–11 age ranges discretely. However, those on 7–11 training programmes will be expected to demonstrate achievement of the standards for QTS in both the 7–9 and 9–11 age ranges, and those on 3-9 programmes will be expected to demonstrate achievement of the standards for QTS in the foundation stage, in key stage 1, and in lower key stage 2.

Prior and post age phases

ITT providers must engage trainees with the age ranges immediately before and after the ones they are training to teach. These include the 0-3 and post-19 age ranges. Trainees might engage with the expectations, typical curricula, teaching arrangements and strategies in a variety of ways such as by visits to different schools and settings, observations of lessons, or working with curriculum documents and plans. This criterion does not necessarily mean that trainees must teach lessons in these prior and post age ranges.

Trainees following programmes that include training in the 3-5 age range should be engaged with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum relevant to children aged from birth to three and might, for example, benefit from spending some time in a setting catering for this age group. Trainees following programmes that include training in the 16-19 age range should be engaged with the range of options open to post-19 learners in, for example, vocational, further and higher education settings.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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)
Employment-based programme	As determined by the training programme

Scope

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

Time spent training in settings other than schools, early years or FE settings can form a valuable part of programmes, but cannot be counted for the purposes of meeting this criterion.

Applicants to ITT with teaching experience might not need to spend as much time in schools or other settings as those with little or no prior experience, as long as they are given enough time during the training programme to demonstrate that they have achieved all the standards for QTS. However, providers should be careful not to assume that time spent working in a school is in itself sufficient to exempt trainees from the requirement to teach in at least two schools. In these cases, trainees will need to be able to demonstrate that they have had an assessed experience of teaching children or young people, rather than working in a support role. It is unlikely that any trainee, however experienced, would be able to demonstrate achievement of all the standards for QTS

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.

over a period of less than six consecutive weeks of training in a school in which their teaching is regularly observed and assessed.

Training may take place in a special school or in a pupil referral unit (PRU), particularly where a provider chooses to offer an additional specialism in special educational needs. In these cases, providers should ensure that the overall training programme is designed to enable trainees to demonstrate all of the standards for QTS across the full age and ability range of training.

ITT providers should satisfy themselves that partner schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities. Where a school has serious weakness or is in special measures, it may still be possible for providers to use the school, especially if the improvements to be made do not affect the subject or age range in which the trainee is training. The partnership will need to be confident that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the school experience and that the situation is kept under close review.

[Legislation](#) requires that practical teaching experience for the purposes of ITT should take place wholly or mainly in England, or in schools administered by Service Children's Education. However, there may be circumstances where part of the training could take place outside England. For example, trainees specialising in modern foreign languages may benefit from time in schools abroad. ITT partnerships should ensure that any training outside England contributes to trainees' ability to meet the standards for QTS. If there is any doubt about this, trainees will need to spend enough time in schools in England to enable them to meet all the relevant standards for QTS.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

C2.4 That each trainee teacher has taught in at least two schools⁶.

Scope

Trainee teachers need breadth and variety of experience in schools to enable them to meet all the standards for QTS. They need to teach children and young people from different backgrounds, and in their chosen age ranges, as well as gaining experience of different approaches to teaching and to school organisation and management.

The criterion specifies that trainees must have **taught** in two schools prior to the award of QTS. It is not sufficient for trainees only to have had **experience** of two schools. Providers may wish to consider whether a trainee with prior assessed experience of teaching in school has gained enough relevant experience to allow the provider confidently to count that previous teaching experience as one of the two schools stipulated in this criterion.

Salaried trainees will often need to be released from their employing schools to spend time teaching in another school. Providers will want to ensure that the other schools are carefully selected to extend the knowledge, skills and understanding of the trainees and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate, through their teaching, how they meet the standards for QTS.

⁶ Or early years or further education settings.

3 Management and quality assurance criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

C3.1 That their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme.

Scope

Providers must plan their provision to ensure that they comply with the current ITT criteria and provide the opportunity for trainees to demonstrate that they meet all of the standards for QTS. Providers are expected to provide training of high quality and seek continuing improvement.

Schools should play a significant, and often leading, role in the design and delivery of training provision. The management structure should demonstrate the central role that schools should play in all aspects of provision, from selection and recruitment, through delivery and training, to the assessment of trainees for the award of QTS.

Providers must contact the NCTL to seek approval for any proposed significant variations to the governance and/or operational structure of the provider. This includes, for example, the loss or removal of a partner organisation, or a change in the accounting officer. If a provider is in any doubt as to whether they should advise the NCTL of such a variation, they should do. If a provider makes significant changes to its governance and/or operational structures, the NCTL reserves the right to withdraw accreditation, and require the newly configured organisation to seek accreditation as a new provider.

Details of any proposed variations should be sent to ITT.accreditation@education.gsi.gov.uk.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

The partnership agreement should be a clear, working document that can be used to guide and inform the contributions of each partner, and help to support coherent arrangements across the various contexts in which the training takes place. The partnership agreement will be underpinned by other practices, such as well-understood procedures for communication between the partners and agreed arrangements for the coordination of the training.

School-led provision should draw upon the expertise of practitioners from the best schools across the partnership, including where possible from schools with Teaching School designation. Where provision is not school-led, providers must assure the significant role of good and outstanding schools in the recruitment, selection, training and assessment of trainee teachers. The roles and responsibilities of all partners should be clearly defined in the partnership agreement.

Other arrangements, such as the partnership's quality assurance procedures, the content and delivery of each of the ITT programmes, policies for equality of opportunity and the formal organisation and management of the partnership should be addressed in the partnership agreement. The partnership agreement may make reference, for example, to the functions of groups and committees in managing the partnership and the ways in which resources are allocated among partners. It will set out the criteria for removing schools from the partnership, particularly where quality issues arise. The agreement and any associated supplementary documentation 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 training addresses all the standards for QTS.

Partnership agreements should specify the different roles within the partnership including, for example, programme and course leaders, mentors, tutors, training managers, and internal and external moderators. They should also set out how partners contribute towards:

- selecting and interviewing applicants

- moderating assessment judgements of trainees against the standards for QTS
- providing professional development opportunities for colleagues within the partnership
- trainee access to resources
- any course and/or programme committees
- quality assurance including improvement planning and self-evaluation
- the promotion of equality of opportunity, and
- the safeguarding of children and young people.

Providers of salaried routes must ensure that all schools or settings where trainees undertake any additional teaching experience are of high quality, understand and agree to the partnership roles and responsibilities and have the capacity to provide the necessary training and support.

Non-school-led training programmes

Where provision is not school-led, the partnership agreement should set out clearly the ways in which schools will play a significant role in the recruitment, selection, training and assessment of trainees.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

C3.3 That they comply with all current legislation relevant to ITT.

Scope

In order to be accredited a provider must satisfy the criteria specified by the Secretary of State. This criterion expects ITT partnerships to review and update their provision so that it continues to meet these criteria and associated legislation. Where there is evidence of an ITT provider's non-compliance with current ITT criteria the NCTL will consider withdrawal of accreditation.

The [Education \(School Teachers' Qualifications\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) (SI 1662) as amended, set out the statutory requirements for QTS in England.

The [Education \(Specified Work and Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (SI 762) as amended, specify what requirements must be satisfied by individuals who are not qualified teachers in order to carry out specified work in schools.

Legislation relating to equality, discrimination and employment applies to ITT providers (see also criterion C1.3), who have a duty to promote equality of opportunity. Providers must ensure their provision complies with the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Providers must comply with the requirements of the [Data Protection Act 1998](#), in relation to holding and processing personal data, and to the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#).

Providers should make sure that all members of the partnership are fully aware of their duties under all relevant legislation and have in place arrangements for ensuring that these are met when selecting, recruiting, training and assessing trainees.

Further information

The following is a list of some relevant legislation. This is not intended to be exhaustive and ITT partnerships will need to ensure they have identified and comply with all legislation relevant to ITT.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) is the governing legislation for all matters relating to all acts of discrimination. Also relevant are:

- [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) (SI 3139)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(2001\)](#)
- [Bridging the gap – a guide to the Disabled Students' Allowances \(DSAs\) in higher education](#)
- [Into higher education 2012](#), a higher education guide for people with disabilities.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides further guidance on the Equality Act for [schools](#) and [further and higher education institutions](#). The EHRC also has

information on the [Codes of Practice](#) that relate to equal pay, race, disability and gender discrimination.

The intrinsic functions of the work of a teacher are prescribed by The [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) for the purposes of section 141 of the [2002 Education Act](#).

Other relevant documents include:

- The Health and Safety Executive's [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#).
- [Guidance for practitioners and managers from HM Government on Information sharing](#).

Guidance from the [Office for Fair Access](#) sets out what providers should do to ensure they promote fair access to higher education.

All accredited ITT providers must ensure:

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.

Scope

Trainees can only be recommended for the award of QTS if they meet all the standards for QTS. Therefore, the assessment of trainees must be accurate and reliable in establishing, consistently over time, whether or not trainees meet the standards for QTS. In order to ensure accuracy and reliability the providers should have clear and robust assessment and moderation arrangements in place, informed by appropriate criteria for the various aspects and stages of the training.

External moderators have a key role to play in ensuring consistency of standards across as well as within ITT partnerships. Partnerships will need to ensure that external moderators have relevant expertise and experience to enable them to carry out their roles competently. They will also wish to ensure that the views of external moderators are taken into account fully when reaching decisions about trainees' achievement of the standards for QTS.

Evaluation

ITT providers should define clearly the arrangements and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of training provision across all the contexts in which it takes place, and identify ways in which it could be improved.

ITT providers may wish to collect and analyse a variety of data to inform their understanding of the effectiveness of their provision. For example, they may collect and analyse data or other evidence about the following:

- training sessions, in order to establish their fitness for purpose and to identify strengths and weaknesses across the different contributions to the programme
- trainees' evaluations of how their training needs have been met
- tutors' evaluations of the training programme and how it is administered
- trainees' perceptions of their training
- feedback from past trainees
- feedback from internal and external moderation about the effectiveness and accuracy of the assessments of trainees against the standards for QTS
- feedback from external moderators about the effectiveness of training provision in helping trainees to meet the standards for QTS
- feedback from all involved in the training about the implementation of equality policies, and
- feedback from the NCTL and Ofsted.

Internal moderation

Internal moderation provides a system of checks and balances within a partnership to ensure that trainees in different settings are assessed accurately and reliably. ITT providers should ensure that arrangements for internal moderation are in place and that they work effectively. The roles and responsibilities of those carrying out such arrangements are likely to be contained in the partnership agreement (see criterion C3.2).

Internal moderation procedures could include, for example:

- the involvement of staff with relevant expertise from two or more partners when assessing trainees
- detailed scrutiny by a moderating panel of a sample of trainees, including any judged by an assessor as on the pass/fail borderline, or likely to fail
- joint observations of trainees' teaching
- discussions by relevant staff of all the evidence available, including that derived from trainees' previous experience and achievement, and
- arrangements for feeding back information to the partnership about the accuracy and consistency of assessment arrangements and about elements of good practice to support improvements.

External moderation

ITT providers should appoint suitable external moderators. External moderators should have no direct involvement with the work of the partnership. They should be able to offer an external perspective on the attainment of other providers' trainees being assessed for the award of QTS, which should help to verify the accuracy of the assessments made by the provider. Providers should consider how to use external moderators to corroborate and standardise their assessments of trainees.

Providers may wish to consider, when appointing external moderators, whether they have appropriate subject, curriculum or age-phase expertise to enable them to provide specialist feedback.

The responsibilities of external moderators might include:

- detailed scrutiny of a sample of trainees, including a representative cross-section of trainees together with all trainees that internal moderators regard as being on the pass/fail borderline, or possible failures
- observation of the teaching of all trainees in a designated sample, such as those assessed as being borderline satisfactory to good, or borderline good to outstanding
- discussion with internal assessors and/or moderators of all the evidence available on whether individual trainees have achieved the standards for QTS, and at what level

- scrutiny of internal moderation arrangements, drawing on the some of the evidence gained from activities above, and
- producing a report that includes an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision observed, clearly linked to the standards for QTS and ITT criteria, and including an evaluation of the accuracy of the assessments of trainees' attainment against the standards for QTS.

In addition, providers should have procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the management of their programmes including, for example, arrangements for the selection and de-selection of partner schools. They will draw on the kinds of evidence exemplified above to inform the work of any committees that serve the partnership.

Providers should have systematic procedures in place in order to demonstrate that monitoring and evaluation have secured improvements in quality and outcomes for trainees. This may mean keeping comparative data and other evidence over a period of time.

Similarly, providers may wish to examine the procedures and practices they have in place for enhancing and improving the subject and pedagogical knowledge of all trainees and the knowledge of relevant curriculum areas for primary trainees, and evaluate these against the success of trainees in meeting the standards for QTS. The evidence will need to be sufficiently robust to enable the provider 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 such activities should be evaluative rather than descriptive. These activities and processes might feed into improvement plans. When monitoring and evaluating programmes, providers are encouraged to compare their own provision with that of providers of similar and different size and type.

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 applicants must be employed as unqualified teachers⁷ at a school, and (except applicants 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 Applicants are only admitted to employment-based programmes by either the National College for Teaching and Leadership or by an accredited provider⁸.

C4.3 No applicant 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)⁹, or**
- b) within the EEA, for non-EEA nationals without an EEA spouse or dependent.**

⁷ As defined by the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

⁸ Teach First (ITT) programme applicants must be admitted only with the agreement of the Teach First organisation.

⁹ Except teachers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America covered by paragraph 13A of 2003 Statutory Instrument 1662 as amended.



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

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