



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Assessment Only criteria

**Information for Assessment Only
providers**

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Contents

Summary	3
Overview	4
AO Criteria	5
1. Entry criteria	5
2. Assessment criteria	6
3. Management and quality assurance criteria	7

Summary

About this guidance

This is guidance from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) in relation to accredited initial teacher training (ITT) providers offering the Assessment Only (AO) route.

Expiry or review date

This guidance 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

Who is this advice for?

This advice is for:

- Accredited providers of ITT that are approved to offer the AO route and their partner schools.
- Candidates seeking a place on the AO route.

Overview

In order to offer the AO route to qualified teacher status (QTS), an accredited ITT provider's provision must not be judged 'requires improvement' or lower quality¹.

The NCTL will consider suspension of a provider's approval to offer the AO route where:

1. ITT provision is subsequently deemed to be of 'requires improvement' or lower quality¹,
2. the provider is subject to withdrawal of accreditation procedures, or
3. AO provision does not comply with the following AO criteria.

¹ As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.

AO Criteria

1. Entry criteria

All AO providers must ensure all of the following, prior to acceptance onto the route:

- A1.1 That all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C in the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and that all those 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.
- A1.2 That all candidates hold a first degree of a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification².
- A1.3 That all candidates, as part of the provider's selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their:
 - a) suitability to teach, and
 - b) ability to demonstrate meeting all the standards for QTS without the need for any further training.
- A1.4 That all candidates have passed the professional skills tests prior to entry.
- A1.5 That all candidates have taught in at least two schools³, early years and/or further education settings.

² A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the QCF.

³ 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".

2. Assessment criteria

All AO providers must ensure all of the following:

A2.1 The content, structure, delivery and assessment of AO provision are designed to:

- a) enable candidates to demonstrate meeting all the standards for QTS across the age range of assessment, and
- b) ensure that no candidate is recommended for the award of QTS unless they have demonstrated meeting all of the standards for QTS.

A2.2 All candidates recommended for the award have been assessed as meeting the standards for QTS within one of the following age phases:

Ages 3-11 (primary)

Ages 7-14 (middle)

Ages 11-19 (secondary)

A2.3 That the process of assessment:

- a) includes the assessment of practical teaching in a school⁴, and
- b) typically does not last longer than three months.

⁴ Or early years or further education setting.

3. Management and quality assurance criteria

All AO providers must ensure all of the following:

- A3.1 That their management structure ensures the effective operation of the AO provision.
- A3.2 That partners establish an agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner in working together to assess candidates against the standards for QTS.
- A3.3 That they comply with all current legislation relevant to AO.
- A3.4 That rigorous moderation procedures are in place to assure the reliability, accuracy and consistency of assessments of candidates against the standards for QTS.
- A3.5 That they monitor, evaluate and moderate all aspects of provision rigorously and demonstrate how these contribute to securing improvements in the quality of the assessment of candidates.



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