



Department  
for Education

# **Introducing International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS)**

**Government consultation**

**Launch date 6 February 2021**

**Respond by 3 May 2021**

# Contents

Foreword by the Secretary of State for Education	3
<b>Introduction</b>	4
Who this is for	4
Issue date	4
Enquiries	4
Additional copies	5
The response	5
<b>Part 1: About this consultation</b>	5
Respond online	6
Other ways to respond	6
Consultation events	6
Deadline	7
<b>Part 2: Background and context</b>	7
Proposed iQTS framework	9
Roles and responsibilities	10
iQTS standards	10
Entry criteria	11
Course content	12
School experience	13
Methods of delivery	14
Quality assurance	15
iQTS and professional recognition in England	16
<b>Part 3: Demand, capacity and delivery</b>	17
Overseas demand	18
Capacity	19
Partner with DfE to co-create iQTS	19

## Foreword by the Secretary of State for Education

Teaching is a global profession and the demand for high quality education worldwide has created an unprecedented need for qualified, highly-capable teachers. With our country's reputation for professional and excellent teacher training, there is an opportunity for the domestic initial teacher training sector to look at ways to meet this global demand. The Department for Education is committed to fulfilling the government's ambitions set out in the International Education Strategy 2021 Update by supporting opportunities to export excellence in initial teacher training.

The Government has developed proposals for a new international teaching qualification, International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS). We have engaged with the profession to develop proposals for what iQTS could look like and how it could be delivered. I want us to build on the strengths and reputation of our domestic teacher training and create a new qualification, based on English standards and methods, which could be achieved in countries across the world. Our ambition is that this would give teachers around the world the opportunity to train to high standards and demonstrate their readiness to work in a range of schools worldwide. By making this qualification adaptable, it can complement the international setting the trainee is working in.

When teacher training is evidence-based I am optimistic that it will be sought after around the world. We believe that a new international teaching qualification, with the quality assurance based on our teacher standards and core content framework, will enable English ITT providers to meet growing global demand. iQTS is a new and distinct opportunity for providers to sell a Government-backed qualification in the rapidly expanding global teacher training market. We want iQTS to be an opportunity for teachers around the world to experience and benefit from quality and evidence-based teacher training that leads to better quality education around the world, whilst providing exciting new export opportunities for English teacher training providers.

Government cannot create this alone. This consultation sets out a proposed blueprint for the qualification and asks for views on various parts of the framework and market potential. Responses will help guide the design of iQTS, ensuring that it is built on and delivers high quality teacher training, and is deliverable across a range of different markets. The sector has a key role to play in the development of iQTS, the structures required to deliver it and the partnerships needed to make it happen. We will ensure that we use the feedback and continued engagement to refine the proposals, and develop a clear plan for implementation.



Rt. Hon. Gavin Williamson CBE MP

## Introduction

The Department for Education is consulting on the creation of a new international teaching qualification: International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS). This consultation makes proposals for the framework underpinning this new qualification, based on English methods and standards, which could be delivered in a range of different settings globally. We would like to hear your views.

## Who this is for

This consultation is for anyone who has an interest in teaching as a global profession and teacher professional development, including but not limited to:

- Initial Teacher Training providers and their representative bodies
- Higher Education Institutions and their representative bodies
- Prospective teachers and trainee teachers
- Teachers and organisations representing teachers
- Schools, school leaders and organisations representing school leaders
- International schools, international school leaders and organisations representing international schools
- Any other interested individuals or organisations

## Issue date

The consultation was issued on 6 February 2021.

## Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team at:

- [iqts.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:iqts.consultation@education.gov.uk)

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: [Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk](mailto:Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

## Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

## The response

The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) by summer 2021.

## Part 1: About this consultation

This consultation document sets out a proposal for International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS), a new international teaching qualification.

- The first part of the document sets out the background and context for the consultation.
- The second part set out the proposed framework for iQTS, including the iQTS Standards, entry criteria, course content, school experience, methods of delivery, quality assurance and professional recognition in England.
- The final part seeks views on capacity, demand and delivery.

We would like to hear your views on our proposals.

### Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations) to submit your response.

### Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a Word document version of the form and email it or post it.

#### By post

Emma Shaw  
Department for Education  
Agora Building  
3 Cumberland Place  
Nottingham  
NG1 6HU

#### By email

- [iqts.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:iqts.consultation@education.gov.uk)

## Consultation events

We are running a series of consultation events in parallel with this written consultation and would like to invite anyone who has an interest to attend.

Please register your interest in attending these events [here](#). Any additional consultation events required will be added to our Eventbrite page when available.

Please email [igts.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:igts.consultation@education.gov.uk) for further information.

## Deadline

The consultation closes on 3 May 2021.

## Part 2: Background and context

Global demand for high-quality education has created unprecedented demand for qualified and capable teachers.<sup>1</sup> The UK's methods of teacher training and development are highly respected and sought after around the world. An increasingly crowded market means we need to ensure that English initial teacher training providers ("ITT providers") have a clear and distinct offer. We believe that a new international teaching qualification, with the quality assurance associated with being based on English standards, will enable English ITT providers to meet this growing demand. In line with the Government's International Education Strategy, we will seek to create further export opportunities as well as strengthening the UK's role in international education.

International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS) is intended to be a new qualification which would be awarded on successful completion of an international initial teacher training (IITT) course. It would be delivered by accredited English ITT providers, with the flexibility to adopt remote and innovative delivery methods. The qualification would be based on English teacher training methods and standards, but would be adaptable to reflect the international contexts trainees would be working in. Our ambition is for iQTS to be a globally renowned, high-quality qualification which prepares trainees to work in their domestic or wider international market and allows them to show competence in different countries.

There are a range of markets in which this qualification could be delivered, including the global state and private sectors and British or other international schools. Our goal is to create a qualification which is desirable and marketable around the world and appropriate to a wide range of potential training settings. We would therefore want to give teacher training providers the flexibility to include context-specific content alongside the core principles of English ITT.

The framework for iQTS should be built on the excellent foundational principles of English ITT, while appealing and being deliverable to a range of different markets. iQTS needs to continue to preserve this high-quality benchmark while ensuring an appropriate level of quality assurance which is not overly bureaucratic.

---

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en>.

## Your views on iQTS content and construction

iQTS would be a standalone qualification which demonstrates that a trainee has:

- completed an international teacher training course rooted in English methods
- met the required standard to teach in an international setting

We are seeking your views on how we could construct this qualification. We would like your views on our initial proposals relating to:

- standards and entry criteria
- course content and school experience
- methods of delivery and quality assurance

We are also very interested in your thoughts on:

- where the potential demand for iQTS might be
- whether, in order to appeal to a wide range of markets, some routes could have a more direct link to English QTS, while others would not
- the options for QTS recognition in certain specific circumstances, subject to additional criteria
- the level of demand for QTS in addition to iQTS, and the accompanying additional requirements

The initial proposals within this consultation have been designed with input from teacher training providers, international school organisations, school leaders, teachers and academics. The proposals here are not necessarily the final answers.

We are deliberately consulting early in the development of this policy. Your professional expertise and feedback is invaluable, and will allow us to co-create a qualification which meets user needs, is fit for purpose, and can be effectively implemented.

## Proposed iQTS framework

This consultation seeks views on the high-level framework for this new qualification and how the proposals could work in practice. This is not an exhaustive list of the various criteria but sets out some broad proposals for the integral elements.

Broadly, we believe that iQTS should align closely with the structure of postgraduate initial teacher training in England, with adaptations for international contexts where appropriate. This would allow trainees to benefit from the excellent quality and reputation of English based teacher training, while learning how to teach in their specific context. iQTS would maintain the flexibility to reflect any future changes to English ITT to ensure that it remains rooted in English standards.

## Roles and responsibilities

The Government would be responsible for:

- defining the overarching framework and criteria for iQTS
- quality assurance measures and retaining records of iQTS holders
- any QTS recognition arrangements

ITT providers would be responsible for:

- developing and delivering the course content
- ensuring the international context is reflected
- marketing the offer

## iQTS standards

The English [Teachers' Standards](#) set the minimum requirements for teachers' practice and conduct. They define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers seeking qualified teacher status (QTS) and are instrumental in maintaining the quality of teachers in England. The Teachers' Standards are used to assess all trainees working towards QTS, and all those completing their statutory induction period.

We propose that these English standards form the basis of the iQTS standards, with minimal changes to reflect iQTS' international basis where necessary. This will ensure iQTS mirrors the quality of English initial teacher training and iQTS candidates reach the same level of competence on completion of an iQTS programme.

We propose using the Teachers' Standards as a core, minimum requirement for iQTS, supported by a handling note which provides guidance on applying these standards to international contexts. This could include, for example, context-specific caveats where local law takes precedence over certain standards which may not be achievable in some contexts.

ITT providers could also add local or international school-based standards, reflective of the context the trainee is working in. These should be a core, meaningful part of the course which develops trainees' understanding of their international surroundings. There should be a cap on the addition of local standards, to avoid the course requirements becoming unduly burdensome for trainees in certain contexts.

**How should we balance English and international teaching standards? Please select your preferred option below:**

- a) The iQTS standards should remain as close as possible to the English Teachers' Standards, with the option to add local or international school-based standards

- b) The iQTS standards should remain as close as possible to the English Teachers' Standards, with caveats only allowed where local law takes precedence
- c) The iQTS standards should be adapted to be broader and more reflective of the range of international settings

**Please explain your answer and any adaptations or additions to the Teachers' Standards you feel would be necessary in an international context.**

## **Entry criteria**

To maintain high standards, we think that the entry criteria for iQTS courses should mirror the entry criteria for English ITT courses as far as possible, while remaining accessible across the world.

This would include:

### **GCSE standard equivalent**

Candidates would need to demonstrate GCSE grade 4 standard equivalent in English and mathematics (and a science subject for entrants who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3-11)

(For non-UK qualifications, examples of equivalents include: High school diploma, Higher Secondary School Certificate, Baccalauréat Général, Título de Bachiller.)

### **Degree criteria**

Candidates would need a first degree granted by a UK higher education institution, or an equivalent qualification from another country.

(Examples of equivalents include: Bachelor's degree, Bachelor of Arts, Diplôme, Licenciatura.)

We think there is an added opportunity for providers to offer preparatory courses to help some candidates meet these requirements.

### **Fundamental maths and English**

As with English teacher training courses, ITT providers must assure the trainees' level of English and mathematics prior to the award of iQTS. It would be the trainee's responsibility to secure fundamental English and mathematics, whereas responsibility for assurance would lie with the provider.

### **Experience**

No teaching experience would be required.

### **Language requirements**

Candidates must at the outset be able to demonstrate their proficiency in the English language, in line with UK university admissions requirements for international students. Proficiency can be demonstrated with:

- an English language test (for example, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), with a required score of 6.5 or higher)
- education in English (for example, a first degree studied in the medium of English)

## **Safeguarding**

ITT providers should ensure all candidates have been subject to appropriate pre-selection checks. These will vary from country to country, so candidates should meet the standard requirements under local law for a teacher or other professional working closely with children.

**Do you agree that the above entry criteria should remain as aligned as possible to English ITT entry requirements, as above?**

- a) Yes
- b) No – they should be more adaptable to different international contexts

**Please explain your answer.**

## **Course content**

We are proposing that iQTS would be a one year postgraduate qualification combining academic study, practical classroom experience and mentoring. Providers should have flexibility over the structure and delivery of courses (for example whether they include an academic qualification such as a PGCE), as long as the course allows trainees to meet the iQTS standards.

The English [ITT Core Content Framework](#) defines the **minimum training entitlement** all trainee teachers can expect, and draws on the best available evidence. We therefore think that the ITT Core Content Framework should be retained for iQTS, with explanatory notes for international users where necessary. For example, where statutory or technical elements do not exist in a certain country, trainees should work with the equivalent in that country. This would ensure iQTS candidates retain their entitlement to the same high-quality provision and provide flexibility where required by local law or custom. It would also protect the credibility and reputation of the qualification.

It would be the responsibility of individual ITT providers to design curricula appropriate to the international setting the trainee will be teaching in, as well as the subject, phase, and age range. While ITT providers would have to ensure that curricula cover the ITT Core Content Framework, they would have the flexibility to design additional elements relevant

to the local market. For example, this may include host country curricula, depending on the type of school and local assessment methods. These additions would need to ensure trainees are supported to meet any additional local standards.

**Do you agree that the English ITT Core Content Framework should be used in its entirety for iQTS, with explanatory notes for international users?**

- a) Yes
- b) No, it should be adapted

**Please explain your answer.**

## **School experience**

Initial teacher training criteria in England requires trainees to spend sufficient time being trained in schools to enable them to meet the Teachers' Standards.

Typically, graduate programmes will be designed to enable trainees to spend at least 120 days being trained in schools. In addition, trainees will need to have taught in at least **2 schools** before being recommended for QTS.

We know that trainee teachers need a variety of experience in schools to enable them to meet all the Teachers' Standards. We think mirroring this for iQTS trainees is essential for their development as teachers. Experience of teaching in 2 or more schools will allow trainees to teach children and young people from different backgrounds. It will also give them experience of different approaches to teaching and to school organisation and management.

Our strong preference is to retain this requirement for iQTS, although we acknowledge that finding a second school placement may be challenging in some settings. There should be flexibility in the type of school and length of time spent training in schools and placements could be in an international school, a local school (language permitting), or a school in England using providers' domestic partnerships.

**Do you agree that the requirement to train in at least 2 schools should be retained?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Please explain your answer.**

## Methods of delivery

Given the overseas delivery of this qualification, we propose that ITT providers should have the freedom to be innovative and flexible with delivery models. This could include a blended approach, for example combining distance learning, online platforms, collaborative learning groups and 1:1 support from a programme tutor or regional mentor. Some providers may be able to offer in-country training, some may deliver all training virtually.

Trainees should be regularly observed teaching in-situ as part of the assessment process, or via electronic means if local law allows, with regular feedback discussions on their teaching practice. ITT providers should ensure trainees receive clear and consistent mentoring and support from mentors and other expert colleagues. Given the remote delivery of the training, a high-quality mentor support system will be fundamental in providing mentors with the training they need to support trainees' development.

**Do you agree that ITT providers should have the freedom to be flexible in how they deliver iQTS, including no limitations on online/distance learning?**

- a) Yes
- b) No, there should be some face-to-face contact

**Please explain your answer.**

### Delivery language

As iQTS will be based on English standards and methods, we propose that delivery of the qualification should be in English, at least initially. Offering iQTS in multiple languages may present challenges with quality assurance of the training, as well as requiring greater development costs from providers.

While delivery of iQTS could be considered in other languages at a later date, it should initially be taught in English, to facilitate a prompt roll-out. Candidates would have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency in the English language as part of the entry requirements for the course (for example, an IELTS score of 6.5 or higher, or an English-medium undergraduate degree, in line with UK university admissions requirements.)

**Do you agree that the delivery language should be English?**

- a) Yes, delivery should be solely in English
- b) No, iQTS should be delivered in multiple languages

**Please explain your answer.**

## Quality assurance

We suggest a number of quality assurance mechanisms in order to ensure that the delivery of iQTS is high-quality and the reputation of English initial teacher training is maintained.

We also want to ensure that any assurance and regulation is set at the appropriate level, does not impose unnecessary burdens and ensures that any associated costs are reasonable and do not prevent ITT providers entering the market.

ITT providers' responsibility for quality assurance would include:

- clear and robust assessment and moderation arrangements to assess whether trainees have met the iQTS standards
- risk assessments to ensure that placement schools are of a sufficiently high standard
- training and quality assurance of school-based mentors

We propose that iQTS is limited to ITT providers accredited and inspected in England. This would provide assurance that the training is robust and delivered to a high-quality standard.

**Do you agree that provision of iQTS should be limited to accredited English ITT providers?**

- a) Yes
- b) No, more providers should be able to offer iQTS

**Please explain your answer.**

### Inspection of iQTS provision

In terms of inspection of the training provision, we propose quality assuring in-situ through the creation of a framework of licensed inspectorates. The costs for the inspection regime would be borne by providers, for example through providers applying for a license to offer iQTS. Inspectorates would need to demonstrate capacity, knowledge of ITT and experience of the international education sector.

**Do you agree that the inspection of iQTS provision should be as rigorous as the inspection of English ITT?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Please explain your answer, and give any other options for quality assurance.**

## iQTS and professional recognition in England

On completing an iQTS training programme and meeting the iQTS standards, all successful candidates will be awarded iQTS. Our ambition is for iQTS to be a globally renowned, high-quality teaching qualification which is recognised in reputable institutions around the world.

We know that, in the British international school market, having the professional status of QTS, is particularly important for schools and parents, compared to other global settings. A route to QTS via iQTS could be integral to creating a qualification that is exportable in these key markets.

For example, we could consider awarding English QTS to iQTS trainees who have met the following criteria:

- a rigorous training programme, delivered by an English teacher training provider in a directly English-medium setting
- a clear demonstration the trainee has met the Teachers' Standards

As we already recognise qualified teachers who have trained in a number of countries around the world for QTS, we think it is fair that those teachers who clearly demonstrate they meet the Teachers' Standards following a rigorous training programme should be able to gain QTS.

However, we recognise that if a route were to come with the award of QTS it would need quality assurance arrangements equivalent to those in England and additional criteria that replicates requirements for achieving QTS in England.

This would require monitoring and trainee assessment arrangements comparable to those in England and these would need to cover all aspects of the provision: from recruitment and selection, through to programme delivery, partnership arrangements, and the assessment and moderation of trainee performance and outcomes. This would include:

- arrangements for the internal moderation of trainees
- arrangements for the external moderation of trainees by suitably qualified and experienced individuals that are independent from the provider and its partnership
- processes that demonstrate how the provider, through its QA processes, is achieving continuous improvement across all aspects of its provision

These will add costs and complexity that may make the qualification difficult to achieve in some contexts.

With that in mind, we would like your views on creating two forms of iQTS:

- a) A more broadly achievable English-style teaching qualification that could be taken up in a range of settings, but with no direct link to professional recognition in England (for this option, if the teacher then wanted to gain QTS they would have to undertake the English Assessment Only route to QTS)
- b) A qualification for specific English-medium contexts, with delivery and inspection arrangements equivalent to those in England, that would lead to recognition for English QTS on completion

Any such arrangements would need to be consistent with the Department's approach to the recognition of overseas teaching qualifications more generally. We would also work with regulators in the Devolved Administrations to ensure that any recognition arrangements in England are compatible with policy in those parts of the UK.

**Do you think we should create two forms of iQTS? Please select your preferred option.**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Please explain your answer.**

**Do you think there should be any circumstances in which completing iQTS should lead to English QTS?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Please describe these, and your view of the level of demand for QTS on top of iQTS.**

**What arrangements should the Department put in place to ensure that iQTS trainees in these circumstances have had an equivalent experience to trainees undergoing ITT in England in order to be awarded QTS?**

**Would it be possible to deliver an environment that replicates the requirements for achieving QTS in England, as described above? If so, please describe how.**

- a) Yes
- b) No

### **Part 3: Demand, capacity and delivery**

Our intention is to deliver iQTS as soon as is feasible, bearing in mind ITT providers' capacity to develop and be ready to deliver courses. We are committed to developing a high-quality, marketable offering which ITT providers can deliver in a range of different contexts around the world. On the basis of the framework we have set out above, we

would like your views on the likely demand for iQTS and how deliverable and commercially viable it would be.

## Overseas demand

**What is your view of demand for a qualification like this in the international education market?**

- a) High demand
- b) Some demand
- c) No demand

**Please explain where you think demand will be highest, being as specific as you can e.g., by including which regions and/or countries.**

**Which of the following do you think are potential markets for iQTS? Select all that apply.**

- a) the global state sector
- b) the local private sector
- c) the British international school sector
- d) the wider international school sector
- e) other - please explain
- f) none

**Do you have any further comments on what would make this qualification marketable?**

## Capacity

**If you are an accredited English ITT provider, do you believe that you have the capacity to offer this new qualification?**

- a) Yes, in the short term
- b) Yes, in the medium term
- c) Possibly in the longer term
- d) No
- e) n/a

## Partner with DfE to co-create iQTS

We are proposing a phased approach to introducing iQTS, potentially starting with a roll-out with those organisations who would be able to offer iQTS at an early stage. This pilot

phase would allow us to help test that the framework created is appropriate and will help inform a successful long-term roll-out of the qualification.

**Would you be interested in working with the DfE as a delivery partner for early roll-out?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) n/a

**If yes, please give us your name, email address, organisation and role.**

**Would you be interested in taking part in ongoing user research for iQTS?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**If yes, please give us your name, email address, organisation and role.**

**Finally, do you have any other comments on the proposals set out in this consultation?**



Department  
for Education

© Crown copyright 2021

This document/publication (not including logos) is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

email [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

About this publication:

enquiries [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus)

download [www.gov.uk/government/consultations](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations)



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:  
[facebook.com/educationgovuk](https://facebook.com/educationgovuk)