



Department
for Education

Guidance

International qualified teacher status: criteria and supporting information

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Overview

This document contains mandatory guidance and accompanying information for iQTS teacher training providers from the Department for Education (DfE). Approved iQTS providers must ensure they meet the criteria set out in this mandatory guidance when carrying out their duties relating to iQTS.

DfE reserves the right to amend iQTS requirements in line with any domestic changes in ITT provision.

Approvals process

In order to be approved to offer iQTS, a potential new provider must demonstrate in a proposal to DfE:

- how its provision at the outset is likely to be at least ‘good’^{[\[footnote 1\]](#)}
- how it will meet all of the iQTS criteria.

Only existing providers who are accredited by DfE to deliver ITT leading to QTS in England may [apply to offer iQTS](#).

All approved providers must continue to meet these criteria.

Withdrawal of approved status

iQTS providers must comply with the iQTS criteria and supporting advice. DfE may [withdraw approved status](#) if providers fail to comply with the requirements set out in the approval process.

Fee charging for iQTS

Both full-time and part-time courses must be provided in a range of international settings. Individual providers are responsible for setting their own fees.

Entry criteria

This section describes the entry criteria.

Information on international equivalents to GCSE and university degree qualifications:

- the [European Network of Information Centres](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas qualifications in the European region

C1.1 GCSE standard equivalent

All approved iQTS providers must ensure:

- that all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4^{[footnote 2](#)} in the GCSE examination in the subject of mathematics
- that all who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3 to 11 additionally have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examination in a science subject

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

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that iQTS candidates have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment. Primary trainees need also to demonstrate an acceptable level of subject knowledge in the core subjects of the curriculum in the context where iQTS is being delivered.

It is the standard, not the certificate, that matters. Applicants who are otherwise suitable but have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade 4, or local equivalent, may be given an opportunity to show that they can 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. Providers should consider making similar arrangements for candidates who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.

DfE does not provide an exhaustive list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in mathematics and science. When providers look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade 4, they should look at the content not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth.

C1.2 Degree criteria

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that all entrants hold a bachelor's degree from a UK or non-UK institution of higher education, or an equivalent qualification^{[footnote 3](#)}.

For non-UK degrees, examples of equivalents include: Bachelor's degree, Bachelor of Arts, Diplôme, Licenciatura.

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

iQTS is a postgraduate qualification. Any equivalent qualification must be one single qualification, not an aggregation of a number of separate qualifications. Those entering iQTS programmes need to have attained a degree before they commence the programme.

iQTS providers should view original certificates in order to validate an applicant's degree status. However, they should exercise discretion for recent graduates where there is a delay in 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. Providers should view the original certificate as soon as it is available.

In cases where an original certificate is no longer available, providers must gain assurance of graduate status and must keep an audit trail of the evidence obtained.

Degree subjects

iQTS trainees do not need to have a degree in a particular subject or discipline. It is the [iQTS Teachers' Standards](#) that specify the subject knowledge required for the award of iQTS. All trainee teachers must meet these standards 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, or for secondary trainee teachers to have a degree in a specified subject. However they must meet all of the iQTS Teachers' Standards, 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 that those responsible for decisions on entry understand, or have access to, advice on the range of qualifications generally regarded as equivalent to a bachelor's degree in the UK, including:

- overseas qualifications
- professional or vocational qualifications
- qualifications no longer available but held by mature applicants

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

It is for the provider to decide whether a candidate'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 [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) describes the higher education qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions (HEIs) at 5 levels.

C1.3 English language proficiency

To demonstrate proficiency in the English language, candidates will need to evidence an average [IELTS](#) score of 6.5 or higher (or equivalent score in another English language testing system), or to have completed some of their education in English, for example a degree studied in English.

Providers will have the discretion to choose which tests they accept as long as there is an equivalent minimum score of 6.5 or higher. Providers should share which tests they accept on their website so that this information is available to candidates.

Additional preparatory courses

Where the entry criteria cannot be met initially, there may be an opportunity for providers to offer preparatory courses to help some candidates meet these requirements. This is at the provider's discretion. iQTS providers must offer every opportunity for trainees to demonstrate the standard through, for example, additional support and training.

C1.4 Suitability

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that all entrants, as part of the provider's selection process, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to train to teach.

Providers and school partners must ensure that, before anyone is admitted to an iQTS programme, they have been deemed suitable to train to teach. 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 they are unsuitable for teaching. iQTS partnerships should conduct interviews, run background checks, and assess if an applicant has the potential to meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards by the end of their training programme.

Providers should consider a wide range of evidence to judge applicants' suitability to train to teach, for example:

- information from application forms
- referees' reports
- results of any entry tests or tasks
- applicants' portfolios
- interviews

Prior experience in a school is not required. However, where candidates have been able to gain experience in schools, providers might find reports from those schools helpful. Lack of school experience should not be a reason for rejecting an otherwise suitable applicant.

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 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 [Equality Act 2010](#) requires providers to ensure they are not discriminating against applicants with protected characteristics, for example disabilities or special educational needs (SEN). iQTS providers should comply with the requirements of this legislation notwithstanding the fact that they are delivering services overseas.

Applicants with disabilities are under no obligation to disclose their disabilities. Providers must ensure that their provision does not place applicants with declared 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

iQTS 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 iQTS Teachers' Standards in the time planned for their training.

Prior to the award of iQTS, providers must assure the trainees' English and mathematics. Providers must assure that trainees demonstrate competence in the following areas.

1. Speaking, listening and communicating are fundamental to a teacher's role. Teachers should use standard English grammar, clear pronunciation and vocabulary relevant to the situation to convey instructions, questions, information, concepts and ideas with clarity. Teachers should read fluently and with good understanding. Where iQTS trainees are in a bilingual or non-English

medium setting, the requirements in this paragraph apply to the relevant language, in addition to their English proficiency.

2. Writing by teachers will be seen by colleagues, pupils and parents and, as such, it is important that a teacher's writing reflects the high standards of accuracy their professional role demands. They should write clearly, accurately, legibly and coherently using correct spelling and punctuation.
3. Teachers should use data and graphs to interpret information, identify patterns and trends and draw appropriate conclusions. They need to interpret pupil data and understand statistics and graphs in the news, academic reports and relevant papers. Teachers should be able to complete mathematical calculations fluently with whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages. They should be able to solve mathematical problems using a variety of methods and approaches including: estimating and rounding, sense checking answers, breaking down problems into simpler steps, and explaining and justifying answers using appropriate language.

Any work to address shortfalls in English and mathematics must be undertaken by the trainee teacher in addition to other aspects of their training. It is the trainee's responsibility to secure Fundamental English and mathematics, whereas responsibility for assurance lies with the provider. Fundamental English and mathematics may be implemented, supported and assured in different ways by different providers.

Health and physical capacity to train to teach

Providers and school partners have a responsibility to ensure that trainees have the health and physical capacity to train to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm. When operating outside of England, providers should make themselves aware of local requirements when ensuring that trainees have the capacity to teach, working with school partners. In England, the activities that a teacher must be able to perform are set out in the [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). Providers are responsible for ensuring that only trainees who have the capacity to train to teach remain on the programme.

People with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have the capacity to train to teach, just as those without disabilities or medical conditions may be unsuitable to train to teach.

Successful applicants may be asked to complete a fitness questionnaire prior to commencing the programme. iQTS providers should not ask all-encompassing health questions but should ensure they only ask targeted and relevant health-related questions which are necessary to ensure that a person is able to train to teach.

Keeping children safe and background checks

It is vital that iQTS providers safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is important that they adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing training opportunities in schools.

Providers should have regard to the [Keeping children safe in education](#) statutory guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They should ensure all iQTS candidates have been subject to appropriate pre-selection checks and may wish to work with school partners to carry these out.

These include:

- A criminal background check from the local authority.
- At least 2 references, one of which should be from the trainee's most recent employment. References must be obtained directly from the referee, expected to be a senior person with appropriate authority, and 'to whom it may concern' references cannot be accepted unless the referee can verify the full content of the reference. References obtained via email must be sent from verifiable email addresses. Any issues of concern arising from references should be explored further with the referee and, where necessary, discussed with the overseas teacher.
- Scrutinising the trainee's employment history and investigating any inconsistencies or unexplained gaps. To help identify any non-disclosed employment, the provider should seek to verify from the most recent employment the trainee's reason for leaving the employment.
- Carrying out additional checks for teaching roles, which may include information about their past conduct, for example, by checking documents issued by overseas teaching authorities. Providers should also consider this evidence together with information obtained through other safer employment checks.

Providers should work with schools and/or other in-country partners to ensure that a candidate without a placement school has undergone a criminal record check, including a check of the Children's Barred List (providers are expected to check all trainees against the English barred list as well as any local equivalents where they exist), and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

When determining an individual's suitability to train to teach, providers and employers should use all available mechanisms to check that a trainee has not previously been removed from a programme because they have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, or if the previous provider would have removed the trainee had they not left.

Providers should establish clear safeguarding procedures and protocols that are agreed by all partners in the partnership. This should include a common understanding across the partnership of convictions, offences, cautions and warnings that would not pose a barrier to joining an iQTS programme.

Providers should ensure that all trainee teachers, at the start of their training in a school, are provided with:

- the child protection policy
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)
- information about the role of the designated safeguarding lead, where applicable
- a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education in addition to local and regional safeguarding policies

If a provider removes a trainee from a programme because the trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, or if the provider would have removed the trainee had they not left, the provider has a responsibility to report this through the existing reporting mechanisms in the trainee's local context (in England, this would be the Disclosure and Barring Service), working with the placement school. They must also inform the DfE.

Candidates 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 other relevant authorities in the trainee's host country.

For further information on conducting safeguarding checks on overseas applicants, the Home Office has published guidance on [criminal record checks for overseas applicants](#) and DfE has published [changes to checks for EU sanctions on EEA teachers](#).

iQTS providers and employers must check that candidates are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State of Education in England, as well as in their local context where an equivalent prohibition regime exists.

Childcare disqualification

iQTS providers should have regard to disqualification guidance within the local and regional context, in addition to the English requirements for [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance](#) and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006, when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where a trainee becomes disqualified from a childcare role, providers should inform all relevant parties in the partnership as well as the relevant local authority.

Further advice on the childcare disqualification arrangements in England can be obtained from the Department for Education at mailbox.disqualification@education.gov.uk or on 01325 340 409.

Further information

Providers should be aware of formal guidance within the local and regional context to ensure that they are carrying out their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Providers should also look to the statutory guidance within England, although this guidance is only applicable to England and is not applicable in other jurisdictions:

- [Regulated Activity \(children\) - supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)

Training criteria

C2.1 Programmes

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:

- enable iQTS trainees to meet all the standards for iQTS across the age range of training
- ensure that no iQTS trainee is awarded iQTS until they have met all of the standards for iQTS
- take into account the trainee's local context in line with the guidance for international use on the iQTS Teachers' Standards and the Core Content Framework

iQTS programmes must be delivered in English.

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

Programme design underpins all the training criteria and should be flexible enough to meet the needs of every trainee, taking into account their local requirements. Providers should look particularly at the extent to which their provision and assessment practices are designed to ensure that trainees meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards by the end of the course.

iQTS providers should offer trainees specialist subject training to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding of their subjects and related pedagogy, which will enable them to teach their subjects, across the full age and ability range of training. Trainees that are training to teach a subject that is always or predominantly taught in only one age range (for example post-16) may, where possible, be offered the opportunity to demonstrate subject knowledge in a related subject if they do not have the opportunity to teach their subject across the full age range of training.

Prior to the award of iQTS, providers must assure the trainees' English and mathematics. Providers must assure that trainees demonstrate competence in the areas set out in [C1.4 Suitability](#).

Trainee assessment procedures should be rigorous and robust, supporting consistent and accurate judgements. The approved provider remains accountable for all assessment judgements and recommendations and should ensure that this is understood across the partnership, through the partnership agreement. Providers should ensure that placement schools feed into assessment judgements.

Training may be delivered remotely, in schools or in 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 or professional research. Course content delivered by providers can be delivered flexibly at the discretion of each individual provider, with no limits on the use of distance learning.

Face-to-face mentor support must be provided at the trainee's placement school. Further detail is set out in [C2.2](#).

Providers must ensure their curricula encompass the full entitlement described in the iQTS version of the ITT Core Content Framework (2021).

Providers should:

- design curricula appropriate for the subject, phase and age range that the trainees will be teaching
- ensure the curricula reflect the trainee's local requirements
- ensure trainees have adequately covered the foundational knowledge and skills that are a prerequisite for the content defined in the ITT Core Content Framework
- integrate additional analysis and critique of theory, research and expert practice as they deem appropriate
- ensure trainees receive clear and consistent mentoring and support from mentors and other expert colleagues, by providing mentor training to school-based mentors

C2.2 Mentoring requirements

Given the largely remote nature of iQTS provision, the role of the mentor is essential for the trainee. An in-school mentor in the trainee's placement school is a mandatory requirement for iQTS.

iQTS providers are expected to deliver mentor training to all of their school-based mentors to allow them to effectively support iQTS trainees.

Providers should look to the guidance set out in the [national standards for school-based initial teacher training \(ITT\) mentors](#). This document outlines the standards expected of mentors and how mentors should use these standards to enable the effective discharge of their professional duties.

The mentor standards set out the minimum expectations for those working as a school-based ITT mentor. Providers are expected to provide robust and rigorous support to iQTS mentors to help them meet these standards.

Providers and school partners are expected to provide the following mandatory support for iQTS mentors:

- pre-training on the Teachers' Standards and the Core Content Framework led by the provider, and expectations of the trainee
- one-to-one meetings (frequency to be determined by the provider) between the mentor and the iQTS lead to share trainee progress and any concerns the mentor may have
- weekly interaction between the mentor and the trainee (these interactions could take the form of an observation or discussion of the trainee and mentor's choosing)
- access to learning and development opportunities (frequency to be determined by the provider) to enhance the skills and effectiveness of the iQTS mentor

Providers and school partners may also provide additional support for mentors as they see fit. This is at the discretion of the provider and the school partnership.

C2.3 Age ranges

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that they prepare all trainees to teach within one of the following age phases (to note that these are specific to England and age phases may differ internationally):

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

Training must enable trainees to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to teach within the phase for which they are training. Typically training will take place across the following age ranges in England, although there will be variation internationally:

- 3 to 7, 5 to 11, or 7 to 11 for primary training
- 7 to 14 for middle training
- 11 to 16, 11 to 18, or 14 to 19 for secondary training, depending on the subjects of training

Where providers are offering middle phase iQTS programmes, they should record trainees on these programmes as 'secondary' for DfE data purposes. Programmes should enable trainees on middle phase programmes to demonstrate they have met the iQTS Teachers' Standards across the relevant curriculum in the primary element of training, and in their specialist subject in the secondary element of training.

We recognise that for iQTS, phases of education will vary internationally in terms of specific age ranges and may not match exactly to the above ranges. Programmes should be designed to enable trainees to acquire the knowledge and skills they need for their specific age range. Where age ranges do not align with the phases above, providers should record the nearest equivalent range for DfE data purposes.

Providers should specify in their recruitment literature and programme design documentation the age range of training for each of their programmes. Trainees should be assessed as meeting the standards in the specified age range.

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

C2.4 Training in schools

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that training programmes are designed to provide trainee teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools^{[footnote 4](#)}, to enable them to demonstrate that they have met all the

standards for iQTS. This means that iQTS programmes would typically be structured to include at least 120 days training in schools^[footnote 5].

Time spent in schools should be part of a coherent training programme that is designed to enable trainees to meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards.

Time spent training in settings other than schools can form a valuable part of programmes but cannot be counted towards meeting this criterion.

Applicants to iQTS with teaching experience might not need to spend as much time in schools or other settings as long as programmes are designed to provide trainees with enough time to demonstrate that they have achieved all the iQTS Teachers' Standards.

Trainees in England are required to train in at least two schools prior to the award of QTS. To allow some flexibility in this requirement for iQTS, recognising the challenges that some providers and trainees will face in sourcing a second placement internationally, the two school requirement is encouraged wherever possible but not mandatory.

Experience of more than one setting is an essential part of trainees' development and there can be flexibility in how this experience is achieved. Where a physical second placement may not be possible, advances in technology provide other ways of getting experience of a different setting.

If every effort has been made to facilitate a second placement, but it has not been possible, providers must show evidence of trainees gaining experience of another setting in an alternative way. This could be via observations and remote teaching through providers' existing partnerships internationally or in England.

Any prior experience the trainee has of teaching in another school before beginning an iQTS programme should also be taken into account by the provider.

Training may take place in a special school or in a pupil referral unit (PRU), or overseas equivalents, particularly where a provider chooses to offer an additional specialism in special educational needs. In these cases, providers should ensure that the design of the overall training programme enables trainees to demonstrate all of the iQTS Teachers' Standards across the age and ability range of training.

iQTS providers should satisfy themselves that partner schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of providers to conduct risk assessments of placement schools to ensure that:

- relevant support structures are in place, the school can provide suitable mentor support, and the mentor is willing to undergo training delivered by the provider
- the environment is a suitable setting to allow trainees to meet the iQTS

Teachers' Standards and apply the Core Content Framework (CCF)

- there are appropriate safeguarding mechanisms in place

Where a school has serious weakness or is underperforming, 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 of the training. The partnership needs to be confident that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the school experience and the situation should be kept under close review.

C2.5 Awarding iQTS

In England, providers recommend trainees for the award of QTS to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and the TRA grants this status. As iQTS is a teaching qualification, not a status, iQTS providers are approved to award the qualification themselves.

If an iQTS candidate has met all of the iQTS Teachers' Standards they will be awarded iQTS by their provider.

Providers must submit annual candidate data to DfE on the number of:

- iQTS applications
- successful applicants starting the course
- successful iQTS awards

The route to QTS

DfE intends to bring forward regulations to allow holders of iQTS to be awarded QTS. Those who have successfully completed the iQTS qualification will then be eligible to apply for the professional status of QTS through DfE's system for recognising overseas school teachers for QTS. Once awarded iQTS by their provider, if a candidate wishes to gain QTS they will apply to the DfE alongside other teachers who are already eligible for QTS on the basis of having an overseas qualification.

The government will be reviewing our recognition arrangements for overseas teaching qualifications in line with the Professional Qualifications Bill and will introduce a route for recognition for iQTS as part of any changes. Further detailed information about how successful iQTS holders will be able to apply for QTS will be available in due course.

If the iQTS holder then wishes to teach in a maintained school or non-maintained special school in England, they will need to complete an induction period in order to work in a relevant school^{[[footnote 6](#)]}.

They will be able to complete their induction either in a DfE-accredited British School Overseas (BSO) or in a relevant school in England^{[[footnote 7](#)]}. During their induction they will be assessed against English Teachers' Standards.

Management and quality assurance criteria

C3.1 Management

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that their management structure ensures the effective operation of their training programme.

Providers must plan their training programme to ensure that they comply with the current iQTS criteria and provide the opportunity for trainees to demonstrate they meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards. Training should be of high quality and providers should seek continuing improvement.

Schools should play a significant role in the delivery of training provision, crucially through the school-based mentor. The management structure is encouraged to facilitate a central role for placement schools in all aspects of provision, from selection and recruitment through to delivery and training, and the assessment of trainees for the award of iQTS as appropriate.

Partnerships should ensure that the workload of trainee teachers is manageable. Guidance is available to support partnerships to address [trainee teacher workload](#) using the [teacher workload toolkits](#). Everyone across the partnership should be clear about their role in reducing trainee teacher workload.

Providers must contact DfE to seek approval for any proposed significant changes to their governance and/or operational structure. 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 DfE of any changes, they should do. If a provider makes significant changes to their governance and/or operational structures, DfE reserves the right to withdraw approved status and require the newly configured organisation to seek approval as a new provider.

C3.2 Partnerships

All approved iQTS providers must ensure that partners establish a partnership agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of the iQTS provider, the placement school and any other partners.

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 should be underpinned by other practices, such as well-understood procedures for communication between the partners and agreed arrangements for the coordination of the training.

In some cases, providers will source placement schools for trainees and in others the trainee may secure their own placement or already be working in a school. In all cases, there should be a partnership agreement between the provider and the placement school along with any other involved partners.

Providers must assure that schools are involved in training and assessing trainees as a minimum. For cases where the provider sources a placement school for the trainee, the school should be involved in recruitment and selection processes. The roles and responsibilities of all partners should be clearly defined in the partnership agreement.

The partnership agreement should also include details of the:

- partnership's quality assurance procedures
- content and delivery of the iQTS programme
- safeguarding checks
- policies for equality of opportunity
- organisation and management of the partnership
- the role of each partner in addressing and managing trainee teacher workload
- the role of all partners in protecting trainees' mental health and well-being
- mentoring training provision by the provider, and responsibilities and expectations of the school-based mentor

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 iQTS trainees 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 iQTS Teachers' Standards.

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 iQTS Teachers' Standards
- 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
- the safeguarding of children and young people

Providers should ensure that there is a feedback loop between trainees and providers to allow for direct communication.

C3.3 Legislation

In England, all accredited ITT providers must ensure that they comply with all current legislation relevant to ITT. Approved iQTS providers must also be aware of relevant local legislation for their trainees' context.

In order to be approved to offer iQTS, a provider must satisfy the criteria specified by the Secretary of State. iQTS partnerships must review and update their provision so that it continues to meet these criteria and associated legislation.

Where there is evidence of an iQTS provider's non-compliance with current iQTS criteria, DfE will consider withdrawal of approval.

In England, providers should make sure that partners are fully aware of their duties under all relevant legislation and have in place arrangements for ensuring these are met when selecting, recruiting, training and assessing trainees.

This includes:

- [Equality Act 2010](#) - legislation relating to equality, discrimination and employment
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#) (read the [Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation](#))
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)

While iQTS providers should be aware of the above, these duties cannot be imposed in other jurisdictions. Providers should work with local requirements where appropriate. Protocols for information sharing should be included in the partnership agreement.

Further information

The following is a sample list of legislation and guidance relevant to England. iQTS providers should be aware that this cannot be imposed on other jurisdictions and that they should take into account local requirements.

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 \(SI 3139\)](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(2001\)](#)

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 [Equality Act codes of practice](#) that relate to equal pay, race, disability, sex and gender discrimination.

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 advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)

iQTS providers should familiarise themselves with the Competition and Markets Authority's consumer law advice. Any ITT provider that does not meet its obligations to students may be in breach of consumer protection law. Find out more about [Higher education: consumer law advice for providers](#).

C3.4 Quality assurance

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

Trainees can only be awarded iQTS if they meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards. Therefore, the assessment of trainees must be accurate and reliable in establishing consistently over time whether or not trainees meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards.

In order to ensure accuracy and reliability 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 an important role in ensuring consistency of standards across and within iQTS partnerships. Providers should ensure that external moderators have relevant expertise and experience to enable them to carry out their roles competently. They should also ensure the views of external moderators are taken into account fully when reaching decisions about trainees' achievement of the iQTS Teachers' Standards.

Evaluation

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

iQTS providers may wish to collect and analyse a variety of data to inform their understanding of the effectiveness of their training.

For example, they may collect and analyse data or other evidence about:

- 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
- former trainees, induction tutors, mentors and employing schools
- internal and external moderation about the effectiveness and accuracy of the assessments of trainees against the iQTS Teachers' Standards

- external moderator feedback about the effectiveness of training provision in helping trainees to meet the iQTS Teachers' Standards
- the implementation of equality policies
- DfE and iQTS inspectorate feedback

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 they work effectively. The roles and responsibilities of those carrying out such arrangements are likely to be contained in the [partnership agreement](#).

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 trainees' previous experience and achievement
- 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

iQTS 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 iQTS, which should help to verify the accuracy of the provider assessments. 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 Teachers' Standards and at what level
- scrutiny of internal moderation arrangements, drawing on some of the evidence gained from activities above
- producing a report that includes an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision observed, clearly linked to the iQTS Teachers' Standards and iQTS criteria, and including an evaluation of the accuracy of the assessments of trainees' attainment against the iQTS Teachers' Standards

In addition, providers should have procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the management of their programmes. They should use 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 their procedures and practices for enhancing and improving the 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 iQTS Teachers' Standards. The evidence will need to be sufficiently robust to enable providers to draw conclusions and act upon them.

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

C3.5 Inspection

The inspection of iQTS provision will align closely with Ofsted ITE inspection in England. Further information on inspection will be provided in due course.

Approved iQTS providers will not be inspected in year one of their provision. Instead, there will be monitoring and evaluation of the provision by the DfE.

Relevant legislation

This advice refers to:

- [The Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

Notes

1. As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.[↵](#)
2. For the equivalent of grades awarded under the new GCSE grading structure, refer to [Your qualification, our regulation: GCSE, AS and A level reforms](#).[↵](#)
3. A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the QCF. Applicants with a foundation degree will need to supplement this qualification with at least 60 credits at level 6 (HE level 3) in order to attain an equivalent single qualification.[↵](#)
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.[↵](#)
6. A relevant school includes: a maintained school; a non-maintained special school; a maintained nursery school; a nursery school that forms part of a maintained school; a local authority maintained children’s centre; and a pupil referral unit (PRU).[↵](#)
7. For a full list of institutions in which induction can be served, see paragraph 2.1 of [Induction for early career teachers \(England\) 2021](#).[↵](#)

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