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[Department
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Policy paper

A fairer approach to awarding QTS to overseas teachers

Published 10 June 2022

Applies to England

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The Department for Education (DfE) is changing the way we award [qualified teacher status \(QTS\)](#) to teachers from overseas.

A new professional recognition service, called apply for qualified teacher status in England, will set consistent standards so the qualifications and experience of overseas teachers can be fairly assessed. It will apply to qualified teachers from all countries outside the UK, and will be introduced in early 2023.

The body responsible for awarding QTS will continue to be the [Teaching Regulation Agency](#).

Why we are making these changes

Under retained EU and domestic legislation, teachers from some countries can easily apply for QTS, but others can not, even if they have equivalent skills and experience. The new legislation will make it consistent, fair and will support the movement of well-qualified teachers to the English workforce.

How we award QTS to overseas teachers now

Under the present legislation, teachers not trained in England can [apply for QTS if they are a qualified teacher in a limited number of territories, countries or regions](#).

Qualified teachers from other countries wishing to gain QTS and work in England either have to complete initial teacher training in England, or [work without QTS and then undergo the assessment only route](#).

How we plan to award QTS to overseas teachers in future

The new apply for qualified teacher status in England service will award teachers QTS based on an assessment of each individual's qualifications and experience against set criteria. Once fully rolled out, it will be open to qualified teachers from every country in the world.

Criteria for awarding QTS

To be awarded QTS, overseas teachers will need to show they:

- have an undergraduate degree of the same academic standard as a UK bachelor's degree
- have completed teacher training that is of at least the same academic standard as an initial teacher training course in England, and for at least the same duration
- have at least one year of professional experience working as a teacher after qualifying
- hold a qualification indicating that they have studied mathematics to a level equivalent to a grade 4 in GCSE; additionally, all who intend to teach at primary

level should hold a qualification indicating they have studied science to a level equivalent to a grade 4 in GCSE

- demonstrate at least a [CEFR](#) B2 level of English proficiency (or alternatively come from an English speaking country, or have studied at degree level in English)
- have the professional status needed to be a teacher in the country where they qualified, and not be subject to any conditions or restrictions on their practice

We'll publish guidance setting out how to provide evidence for these criteria in autumn 2022, as we approach the launch of the professional recognition service apply for qualified teacher status in England.

We know from research that applicants find it difficult to provide evidence of their mathematics and science qualifications to meet the necessary standard. For this reason, we'll introduce the requirement that applicants meet the mathematics and science criteria later, at the end of 2023. This will allow us to learn how best to support them in providing evidence.

Additional support for overseas teachers

Once awarded QTS, overseas teachers who come to England with less than 2 years' experience will complete statutory induction and undertake development support based on the [Early Career Framework](#).

In addition, DfE is piloting support for overseas teachers in priority subjects to acclimatise to teaching in England.

International qualified teacher status (iQTS)

The apply for qualified teacher status in England service will complement the new international training route launched by DfE in February 2022, [international qualified teacher status \(iQTS\)](#).

iQTS is suitable for aspiring or inexperienced teachers who are located outside of England and who wish to train abroad to English standards with a DfE-accredited teacher training provider. iQTS is recognised by the UK government as meeting the same standards as English qualified teacher status, and if successfully completed, leads to QTS.

Providers who wish to offer iQTS can apply to DfE to become an iQTS provider for delivery in academic year 2023 to 2024. Providers must already be accredited by DfE to offer initial teacher training courses leading to QTS to be eligible to apply.

Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

Exceptions apply to the devolved nations. Teachers who qualified in Scotland and Northern Ireland will not need to demonstrate the same criteria as teachers using the apply for qualified teacher status in England service. They will need only to supply evidence of their teaching qualification to the Teaching Regulation Agency. Teachers who qualified in Wales will continue to hold QTS automatically.

There are separate processes for teachers from overseas who are looking to work in

[Scotland](#), [Northern Ireland](#) or [Wales](#).

How we researched and developed the apply for qualified teacher status in England service

We conducted extensive user research and consulted with stakeholders to test our new approach. We:

- conducted research into teaching qualifications and entry criteria to the teaching profession in numerous countries around the world
- completed user research with overseas teachers to understand their experience of teaching in England
- completed user research with school leaders to understand their views on the attributes needed to succeed as an overseas teacher in England
- consulted with teaching unions, initial teacher training providers, local authorities and providers of statutory induction, including providers of training for early career teachers based on the [Early Career Framework](#)
- consulted with regulators in other countries to better understand their teaching qualifications

Our research showed there are teachers from outside the countries where QTS is currently awarded who may be just as highly qualified and experienced. It also indicated that the depth of training of some teachers who are now eligible can vary.

We identified a need for new criteria and support to ensure that those teachers we recognise are well placed to succeed in English schools.

In addition, the government's [Professional Qualifications Bill](#) will, when fully implemented, remove most of the EU-derived legislation used to recognise teachers with qualifications from the EEA and Switzerland. We are acting now to make sure that we have legislation in place to recognise teaching qualifications from overseas.

Timeline for the apply for qualified teacher status in England service

Introducing the new service will require changes to legislation and to the application and assessment process, including the development of a new digital service.

We want to make sure the right teachers are awarded QTS and have a positive experience applying for recognition. So we'll aim to introduce the service in a gradual way, opening up to a small number of the new countries that fall outside the current system for awarding QTS. This will include teachers from Ukraine.

We'll announce the countries in our early roll-out and provide detailed guidance for applicants by autumn 2022. The service will open to applications from these countries in early 2023, with full roll-out planned subsequently.

Teachers from Ukraine

Before the new service is rolled out, teachers from Ukraine can work in England as a teacher without qualified teacher status. They can do this for up to 4 years in a maintained school, or indefinitely in an academy or free school. Once our new system is introduced from early 2023, they will then be able to apply for recognition for QTS. Alternatively, they can go through the [assessment only route to gain QTS](#). Any schools who have queries about employing teachers in this way can [contact us](#) for more information.

Contact us

For more information, email teach.inengland@education.gov.uk.

For enquiries about applying for QTS, email qts.enquiries@education.gov.uk or telephone 020 7593 5394.

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