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Policy paper

Introducing international qualified teacher status (iQTS)

Updated 10 June 2022

Applies to England

A new international teaching qualification

In February 2021, the government launched a public consultation which introduced proposals for a new international teaching qualification called international qualified teacher status (iQTS). iQTS was announced as part of the [International Education Strategy 2021 Update](#) to help export excellence in teacher training.

In August 2021, the [government response](#) was published. iQTS is now in its pilot phase (launched spring 2022), and is being taught by DfE-approved iQTS providers, working in partnership with excellent schools and in-school mentors around the world. Candidates are now being enrolled on iQTS courses starting in autumn 2022.

The Department for Education (DfE) is developing plans to roll the qualification out to a broader base of English initial teacher training providers.

This document sets out the policy framework and the government's plans for iQTS. It contains information for:

- candidates for iQTS
- training providers wishing to offer iQTS
- schools wishing to offer an iQTS placement

Aims of iQTS

iQTS is a new, UK government-backed international teaching qualification which will be recognised by DfE as equivalent to English qualified teacher status (QTS) (via an amendment to regulations). Accredited English initial teacher training (ITT) providers will offer iQTS to trainees all over the world. It will lead to the automatic award of English QTS on successful completion.

iQTS aims to:

- provide opportunities for accredited English ITT providers to expand into the growing international teacher training market
- make high quality training accessible around the world and allow trainees to benefit from evidence-based ITT
- support schools outside the UK to recruit, retain and develop local talent
- increase the global pool of quality teachers and support global mobility within the teaching profession

iQTS is built on evidence-based English methods and standards of teacher training, with contextualisation for the wide variety of settings trainees may be in.

Information for candidates for iQTS

Candidates will complete the iQTS training programme without needing to visit the UK. From the start of the academic year 2023 to 2024, iQTS will also be available as a part-time course.

Training will be given in English and consist of a year of study alongside teaching practice in schools, including:

- tuition from the iQTS English teacher training provider, taught largely using remote working technology
- face-to-face mentoring at the candidate's placement school

- regular feedback and rigorous assessment

Who iQTS is for

iQTS is suitable for candidates living outside the UK, for example:

- UK citizens currently working abroad who wish to start teacher training or develop their teaching career
- non-UK citizens who wish to begin teacher training or build on existing teaching experience
- teachers early in their career seeking continuing professional development
- UK and non-UK teachers without QTS who wish to improve their employability in England and internationally with a UK government-backed and approved professional qualification

To apply for iQTS you will need to have:

- a bachelor's degree, or equivalent, from a UK or non-UK university
- achieved a standard equivalent to grade 4 in GCSE mathematics
- a standard equivalent to grade 4 in a GCSE science subject (biology, chemistry or physics) for teaching children aged 3 to 11 (equivalent to English primary school)
- demonstrated proficiency in the English language (you'll need an [IELTS](#) score of 6.5 or higher, the equivalent score in another English language testing system, or to have completed some of your education in English, for example, a degree studied in English)

You can find guidance about meeting the eligibility requirements for iQTS on [Get into Teaching](#).

How to apply for iQTS

Candidates can apply for iQTS by visiting [Get into Teaching](#), where they will find further guidance and a list of approved iQTS teacher training providers.

Information for training providers wishing to offer iQTS

DfE's intention is to open up iQTS to interested accredited ITT providers for teaching in the academic year 2023 to 2024 this summer.

iQTS pilot phase

Applications to become an iQTS pilot provider closed in December 2021.

Following the approvals process, 6 pilot providers were appointed to deliver iQTS from September 2022:

- [Canterbury Christ Church University](#)
- [Sheffield Hallam University](#)

- [The University of Birmingham Dubai](#)
- [The University of Derby](#)
- [The University of Sunderland](#)
- [The University of Warwick](#)

These pilot providers are:

- approved by DfE to offer iQTS
- already accredited to provide ITT leading to QTS in England

Apply to join the wider rollout of iQTS

Use the [guidance on how to apply to become an iQTS provider](#) for courses starting in 2023. Applications will open on 11 July 2022.

Trainee numbers will not be capped for wider rollout, but providers must seek permission from DfE to recruit in excess of 200 trainees by emailing iqts.policy@education.gov.uk.

Funding and fees

No DfE funding is available for participation in the pilot or longer term provision of the iQTS qualification.

Trainee fees for iQTS will be decided by individual training providers.

Course content

The government has created a framework for iQTS built on the core elements of initial teacher training in England. iQTS providers are expected to design and develop their programmes around this framework.

This includes:

- ensuring programmes are designed to allow trainees to meet the [iQTS Teachers' Standards](#)
- ensuring curricula encompass the full entitlement as described in the [iQTS Core Content Framework](#), are appropriate for the subject, phase and age range, and are contextualised for the local environment in which trainees are teaching
- meeting all of the requirements in the [iQTS criteria](#) for providers

Providers who wish to offer iQTS will:

- run their own application process
- set course fees
- award the qualification at the end of the course provided all of the [iQTS Teachers' Standards](#) have been met

The pilot year will be used to test, learn from and iterate the framework to ensure the success of the wider roll-out of iQTS from 2023.

Information for schools outside the UK wishing to offer an iQTS placement

To maintain the same high standards as English QTS, it is a requirement for iQTS teacher training providers to partner with excellent schools outside the UK.

DfE has designed iQTS to be a high-quality professional teaching qualification with the flexibility to adapt to the trainees' local context.

iQTS placement schools provide candidates with practical hands-on experience in the classroom and support and feedback from an in-school mentor.

The benefits for your school of becoming an early adopter of the iQTS training programme include:

- improved retention and continuous professional development for your existing staff through iQTS training or mentoring
- additional resource when you take on iQTS trainees
- new teaching talent in your region and a network of professionals sharing resources, best practice and expertise
- local iQTS graduates who are then available for recruitment
- enhanced leadership for your school in your region

As a partner school working with an iQTS training provider, you would need to:

- give trainees the required classroom experience (a minimum of 120 days)
- train an experienced member of your staff to mentor trainees in school
- work closely with the iQTS training provider to maintain standards
- supply feedback to DfE to help improve iQTS for future candidates
- allow trainees to be observed in school as part of the provider assessment process

Become an iQTS placement school

Please contact iQTS training providers directly about partnerships – [a complete list of participating providers](#) can be found on Get into Teaching.

You can also email iqts.pilot@education.gov.uk to learn more about iQTS.

How iQTS leads to English QTS

DfE will recognise iQTS as equivalent to QTS, subject to the will of Parliament, via an amendment to regulations. This means those who have successfully completed the iQTS qualification with an approved provider will be automatically awarded QTS.

If the iQTS holder then wishes to teach in a maintained school or non-maintained special school in England, they will need to complete the [Early Career Framework induction period](#) in order to work in a relevant school^[footnote 1]. 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 2]. During their induction, they will be assessed against English Teachers' Standards.

Quality assurance

iQTS will be underpinned by [strong quality assurance mechanisms](#) to ensure all trainees receive a high quality experience and maintain standards.

These include:

- delivery of iQTS programmes by accredited English ITT providers only
- DfE monitoring and evaluation of iQTS providers in their first year of offering iQTS
- regular inspection of iQTS providers after their first year by DfE-approved iQTS inspectorates
- robust internal and external moderation by providers to assess whether trainees have met the iQTS standards

Contact us

To give feedback or get help, either as a provider, trainee or school, please contact us at iqts.pilot@education.gov.uk.

1. 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) [↵](#)
2. 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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