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Policy paper

Introducing international qualified teacher status (iQTS)

Updated 17 October 2022

Applies to England

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A new international teaching qualification

International qualified teacher status (iQTS) is a new teaching qualification backed by the Department for Education (DfE) and the UK government. iQTS meets the same high standards as English [qualified teacher status \(QTS\)](#) and leads to the automatic award of QTS. Applicants for iQTS train where they live and work, with no need to visit the UK.

iQTS was announced as part of the [International Education Strategy 2021 update](#) to help export excellence in teacher training. In February 2021, the government launched a public consultation which introduced our proposals. The [government response](#) to this consultation was published in August 2021.

More information is available from the [iQTS](#) policy and guidance documents.

Who this guidance is for

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

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

DfE's role

The DfE is responsible for the regulatory framework for iQTS. DfE designed the qualification, and sets the:

- [iQTS Teachers' Standards](#)
- [iQTS: criteria for providers](#)
- [Initial teacher training core content framework for iQTS](#)
- [iQTS: inspection policy](#)

DfE accredits training providers to offer iQTS through our approvals process and can withdraw approval if providers don't meet the standards set by our inspection regime.

DfE does not fund iQTS, nor does the department take fees from providers, schools or trainees.

Applicants for iQTS

iQTS is suitable for non-UK and UK citizens living outside England. Visit [Get iQTS](#) for the academic qualifications you'll need to be eligible, and how to apply.

Aims of iQTS

The iQTS programme is intended 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.

[iQTS: criteria for providers](#) gives more detail about how English teaching standards are balanced with local culture, law and customs overseas.

You can also find out more from the [ITT core content framework for iQTS](#).

How iQTS leads to QTS

DfE will recognise iQTS as equivalent to QTS, subject to the will of Parliament, via an amendment to regulations early in 2023. This means those who have successfully completed the iQTS qualification with an approved provider will be automatically awarded QTS.

Holders of iQTS and QTS will be qualified to teach in all English schools (provided they have a [visa or immigration status giving them the right to work in the UK](#)). To teach in schools where QTS is a legal requirement^[footnote 1], the iQTS holder will need to complete the [statutory induction period](#) in the same way that early career teachers trained in England do. They can complete their induction either in a [DfE-accredited British School Overseas \(BSO\)](#) or in an eligible school in England^[footnote 2].

During their induction, they will be assessed against English [Teachers' standards](#). There is no requirement to complete the induction year immediately after the iQTS programme.

iQTS pilot phase

The iQTS pilot was launched in spring 2022, and the qualification is being delivered by 6 pilot providers:

- [Canterbury Christ Church University](#)
- [Sheffield Hallam University](#)
- [The University of Birmingham Dubai](#)
- [The University of Derby](#)
- [The University of Sunderland](#)
- [The University of Warwick](#)

Applicants are currently enrolled on iQTS courses starting in autumn 2022.

DfE is now developing plans to roll the qualification out more broadly. A larger number of training providers in England will be accredited to offer iQTS, and these providers will deliver the qualification in more regions around the world.

Information for training providers wishing to offer iQTS

iQTS is delivered by accredited English ITT providers, working in partnership with placement schools outside the UK, and mentors working in those placement schools. Applicants complete the iQTS training programme without needing to visit the UK.

Although all iQTS trainees must meet the same basic eligibility requirements, providers design their own application process.

From the start of the academic year 2023 to 2024, we anticipate iQTS will also be available both as a full and part-time course.

Course content and criteria

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

Training is given in English and consists of a year of study alongside teaching practice in schools, including:

- tuition from the iQTS English teacher training provider, taught largely online and using video conferencing services
- face-to-face mentoring at the candidate's placement school
- regular feedback
- assessment of trainee progress by the provider, broadly composed of continuous assessment and a portfolio of evidence

Funding

No DfE funding is available for participation in the provision of the iQTS qualification.

Trainee fees for iQTS are decided by individual training providers.

Partnerships with placement schools

iQTS training providers must ensure that placement schools overseas can provide the required classroom experience for candidates in a suitable environment (a minimum of 120 days).

[iQTS: criteria for providers](#) gives more detail about the role of placement schools ('C2.4 Training in schools').

iQTS pilot providers have taken a varied approach to placement schools. Some have existing relationships with schools outside the UK, and have been able to match applicants for iQTS to that school.

Others have asked applicants to find their own local placement school as a condition of entry to their course.

If an applicant is already working in a school, as a training provider you may decide to accept this as a suitable placement.

DfE has developed marketing materials to help iQTS providers engage with schools overseas. Contact us at iqts.pilot@education.gov.uk for more information.

[Learn more about the benefits of iQTS for schools.](#)

Mentors

Working together with placement schools, iQTS training providers must ensure each trainee has a suitably experienced mentor to provide face-to-face support and guidance to trainees as they gain experience in their placement school. Providers must provide training for mentors to ensure they can fulfil this role.

[iQTS: criteria for providers](#) gives more detail about the role of mentoring in section C2.2 Mentoring requirements.

Apply to deliver iQTS

Applications are now closed to deliver iQTS for the academic year 2023 to 2024.

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.

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

To maintain the same high standards as the qualified teacher status (QTS) awarded in England, it is a requirement for iQTS teacher training providers to partner with suitable placement schools.

iQTS placement schools provide candidates with practical hands-on experience in the classroom and support and feedback from an in-school mentor. We expect most of these schools to be outside the UK, but some may be in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

These partnerships are agreed between individual providers and schools – DfE is not involved and there is no formal accreditation process or fee involved. However, it is the responsibility of the provider to ensure the partnership delivers against [iQTS criteria](#) so as to meet the standards set by the [iQTS inspection policy](#).

What's involved for placement schools

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

- give trainees 120 days of classroom experience (this is the required minimum amount)
- release an experienced member of your staff for mentor training in order to offer mentor support to 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

Benefits for placement schools

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
- the contribution iQTS trainees make to your school while on placement
- 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

[iQTS: criteria for providers](#) gives more detail about the role of placement schools in section 'C2.4 Training in schools'.

Become an iQTS placement school

Contact iQTS training providers directly about entering into a partnership with them to deliver iQTS.

[Get iQTS](#) gives a complete list of participating providers.

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

Inspection and quality assurance

DfE's [iQTS: inspection policy](#) sets out our inspection regime, which has been designed to ensure iQTS meets the same standard as English QTS.

Quality assurance mechanisms 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
- internal and external moderation by providers to assess whether trainees have met the iQTS standards

If you are interested in becoming an iQTS inspectorate, find out more from our public information notice on contracts finder [PIN- iQTS inspection regime, appointment of inspectorates](#)

Contact us

Providers, trainees and schools can give feedback or get help by contacting us at

iqts.pilot@education.gov.uk.

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1. All qualified teachers who are employed in a relevant school in England must, by law, have completed an induction period satisfactorily, subject to specified exemptions (see [Induction for early career teachers \(England\) 2021](#), annex A). 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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