



Department  
for Education

# **Initial teacher training criteria**

**Statutory guidance for accredited initial  
teacher training providers in England**

**June 2015**

## Contents

Summary	3
About this guidance	3
Expiry or review date	3
What legislation does this guidance refer to?	3
Who is this guidance for?	3
Key points	3
Overview	4
Initial teacher training criteria	5
Entry criteria	5
Training criteria	6
Management and quality assurance criteria	7
Employment-based criteria	8
Further sources of information	9
Associated resources	9
Other departmental advice and guidance you may be interested in	9

# Summary

## About this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) on behalf of the Department for Education. This means that accredited initial teacher training (ITT) providers must have regard to it when carrying out their duties relating to ITT.

## Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed when necessary.

## What legislation does this guidance refer to?

- *The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/1662) as amended.*

## Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for:

- Accredited ITT providers and their partner schools.
- Organisations seeking ITT accreditation.

## Key points

- Accredited ITT providers must ensure that they meet these criteria to remain compliant. ITT providers who do not comply with these criteria may be subject to withdrawal of accreditation.
- This is an update to the previous ITT criteria document, which takes into account amendments to criteria 2.2, 2.3, and 4.1.

## Overview

In order to receive accreditation to deliver ITT, a potential new provider must demonstrate how its provision at the outset is likely to be at least good<sup>1</sup>, and will meet all the following ITT criteria, in a proposal to the NCTL.

All accredited providers must continue to meet these criteria.

The NCTL will consider withdrawal of the accreditation of a provider where:

1. provision is not financially viable,
2. the provider demonstrates impropriety or inadequate controls in its financial management, or does not comply with relevant financial reporting or governance requirements,
3. the provider fails to comply with NCTL data requirements,
4. the provider acts unreasonably in regulating their volume of trainees, and not in accordance with their NCTL allocation of trainee numbers,
5. provision is repeatedly of 'requires improvement' or lower quality<sup>1</sup>,
6. provision is non-compliant with one or more of the specified ITT criteria, or
7. the provider ceases to offer provision.

---

<sup>1</sup> As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.

# ITT criteria

## 1. Entry criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C1.1 That all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C in the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and that all who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3-11 additionally have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C in the GCSE examination in a science subject.
- C1.2 That, in the case of graduate programmes of ITT, all entrants hold a first degree of a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification<sup>2</sup>.
- C1.3 That all entrants, as part of the provider's selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to teach.
- C1.4 That all entrants beginning ITT on or after 1 August 2013 have passed the professional skills tests prior to entry<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at a 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 qualification.

<sup>3</sup> All trainee teachers beginning ITT before 1 August 2013 must pass the professional skills tests before they can be recommended for the award of QTS.

## 2. Training criteria

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C2.1 That the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:
- enable trainee teachers to meet all the standards for QTS across the age range of training, and
  - ensure that no trainee teacher is recommended for the award of QTS until they have met all of the standards for QTS.

- C2.2 That they prepare all trainee teachers to teach within one of the following age phases:

Ages 3-11 (primary)

Ages 7-14 (middle)

Ages 11-19 (secondary)

- C2.3 That training programmes are designed to provide trainee teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools<sup>4</sup>, early years and/or further education settings to enable them to demonstrate that they have met all the standards for QTS. This means they would typically be structured to include at least the following periods of time to be spent in training in schools, early years or further education settings<sup>5</sup>:

A four year undergraduate programme 160 days (32 weeks)

A one, two or three year undergraduate programme 120 days (24 weeks)

A secondary graduate (non-salaried) programme 120 days (24 weeks)

A primary graduate (non-salaried) programme 120 days (24 weeks)

A salaried programme As determined by the training programme

- C2.4 That each trainee teacher has taught in at least two schools<sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>4</sup> 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".

<sup>5</sup> Time in schools may be completed on a part-time basis to make up the full-time equivalent amounts detailed in C2.3.

<sup>6</sup> Or early years or further education settings.

### **3. Management and quality assurance criteria**

All accredited ITT providers must ensure all of the following:

- C3.1 That their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme.
- C3.2 That partners establish a partnership agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Provision that is not school-led must assure the significant role of schools in recruiting, selecting, training and assessing trainee teachers.
- C3.3 That they comply with all current legislation relevant to ITT.
- C3.4 That they monitor, evaluate and moderate all aspects of provision rigorously and demonstrate how these contribute to securing improvements in the quality of training and the assessment of trainees.

## 4. Employment-based criteria

All accredited providers of employment-based ITT must, additionally, ensure all of the following:

- C4.1 For the period of training all candidates must be employed as unqualified teachers<sup>7</sup> at a school<sup>8</sup>, and (except candidates employed in academies or independent schools) must be paid in accordance with at least point one on the unqualified teachers' pay scale for the period of their training.
- C4.2 Candidates are only admitted to employment-based programmes by either the NCTL or by an accredited provider<sup>9</sup>.
- C4.3 No candidate will be required to perform more than 90 per cent of the teaching duties normally required of a full-time qualified teacher.
- C4.4 All entrants to the Overseas-Trained Teacher Programme must have successfully completed a programme of professional training for teachers outside the United Kingdom, which is recognised as such a programme of training by the competent authority in that country, in a country:
  - a) outside the European Economic Area (EEA)<sup>10</sup>, or
  - b) within the EEA, for non-EEA nationals without an EEA spouse or dependent.

---

<sup>7</sup> As defined by the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

<sup>8</sup> Or 'other institution' as defined by the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1662) as amended.

<sup>9</sup> Teach First ITT programme candidates must be admitted only with the agreement of the Teach First organisation.

<sup>10</sup> Except teachers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America covered by paragraph 13A of 2003 Statutory Instrument 1662 as amended.

## Further sources of information

### Associated resources

- [Ofsted initial teacher education handbook](#)

### Other departmental advice and guidance you may be interested in

- [ITT criteria supporting advice](#)
- [Withdrawal of accreditation process](#)
- [Teachers' Standards](#)
- [Arrangements for ITT accreditation submissions](#)



Department  
for Education

© Crown copyright 2015

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence) or email [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus).

This document is available for download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>.