



Department
for Education

Assessment only route to QTS

Criteria and supporting advice

September 2023

Contents

Expiry or review date	4
Who is this publication for?	4
Overview	5
Approval	5
Entry Criteria	6
A1.1 GCSE standard equivalent	6
Intellectual and academic capabilities	7
A1.2 Degree criteria	8
Degree subjects	8
Information on degree-level qualifications	9
A1.3 Suitability	10
Interviews	11
Equality	11
Health and physical capacity to teach	11
Disclosure and Barring Service checks	12
Other background checks	13
Childcare disqualification	13
Further information	14
A1.4 School teaching experience	14
Assessment criteria	15
A2.1 Provision	15
A2.2 Age ranges	16
A2.3 Applicant assessment	16
Management and quality assurance criteria	18
A3.1 Management	18
A3.2 Partnerships and structures	18
Overarching requirements	18
Roles and responsibilities	19
Changes to partnership structures	19
A3.3 Legislation	20
Further information	21

A3.4 Quality assurance	22
Evaluation	22
Internal moderation	22
External moderation	23
Legislation	24
Notes	24

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed before September 2024.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- accredited initial teacher training (ITT) providers, lead partners and their placement schools
- Ofsted

Overview

This document contains mandatory guidance and accompanying advice from the Department for Education (DfE).

This means that accredited initial teacher training (ITT) providers offering the assessment only route must have regard to the mandatory guidance when carrying out their duties relating to ITT.

DfE reserves the right to update criteria and guidance to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

Approval

Only accredited ITT providers may offer the assessment only route. Once DfE has granted an accredited ITT provider permission to offer the assessment only route, they must ensure that they meet these criteria to remain compliant. Accredited ITT providers who do not comply with these criteria may have permission to offer the assessment only route withdrawn. Failure to comply with these criteria may also lead to the withdrawal of accreditation.

To offer the assessment only route to qualified teacher status (QTS), an accredited ITT provider's provision must not be judged requires improvement or lower quality (as determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria) at the time of approval request.

Additionally, if an accredited provider is found to be less than good, as determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria, then the removal of permission to offer the assessment only route may be considered as part of DfE's improvement intervention process.

Further advice can be found here - [Initial teacher training \(ITT\): provider closure and withdrawal of ITT accreditation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/initial-teacher-training-itt-provider-closure-and-withdrawal-of-itt-accreditation)

Entry Criteria

A1.1 GCSE standard equivalent

All accredited ITT providers must:

- ensure that all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examinations in English² and mathematics; and
- ensure that those who intend 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.

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that all entrants to the assessment only route have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment, and for primary applicants that they demonstrate an acceptable level of subject knowledge in the core subjects of the National Curriculum.

Applicants who are otherwise suitable but have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade 4, or recognised 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. Accredited ITT providers should consider making similar arrangements for applicants who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.

DfE does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science. When accredited ITT 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.

Accredited ITT providers should look for additional evidence of breadth of knowledge and understanding in applicants who have key and functional skills certificates but do not have GCSEs at grade 4 or above in English and mathematics.

Qualifications in key and functional skills tests at level 2 are not equivalent to GCSEs in terms of content.

¹ For the equivalent of grades awarded under the new GCSE grading structure, refer to [Your qualification, our regulation: GCSE, AS and A level reforms](#). An equivalent to grade 4 in English language or English literature fulfils this criterion.

Intellectual and academic capabilities

Accredited ITT providers should consider the full range of applicants' knowledge, skills, academic background and prior experience to judge their suitability for the assessment only route.

Prior to the award of QTS, accredited ITT providers must assure that applicants 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.
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.

It is the applicant's responsibility to secure fundamental English and mathematics, whereas responsibility for assurance lies with the provider. Fundamental English and mathematics may be assured in different ways by different ITT providers.

Further information

The European Network of Information Centres in the European Region (ENIC) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas qualification.

A1.2 Degree criteria

All accredited ITT providers must:

- Ensure that, before acceptance onto the assessment only route, all applicants hold a first degree from a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification³

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.

[The Education \(School Teachers' Qualifications\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) requires all entrants to teaching in England to have a UK first degree or equivalent qualification. Any equivalent qualification must be one single qualification, not an aggregation of a number of separate qualifications. The exception to this is where applicants undertake study to extend an existing degree (for example, a foundation level degree) or qualification to secure the required level of academic award to meet degree criteria requirements.

Accredited ITT 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, accredited ITT providers should obtain written confirmation from the relevant degree-awarding institution that the applicant has achieved graduate status. Accredited ITT providers should view the original certificate as soon as it is available.

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

Degree subjects

Legislation does not specify that teachers must have a degree in a particular subject or discipline.

There is no statutory requirement for primary applicants to have a degree in a National Curriculum subject, or for secondary applicants to have a degree in a specified subject, as long as they meet all of the Teachers' Standards, including those that relate to subject and curriculum knowledge.

Note 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

Information on degree-level qualifications

Accredited ITT providers will need to make sure that those responsible for decisions on entry are familiar with, or have access to, advice on the range of qualifications generally regarded as equivalent to a first (bachelor's) degree in the UK, including:

- Overseas qualifications
- Professional or vocational qualifications
- Qualifications no longer available but held by mature applicants

Some master's degrees may provide the necessary breadth and have a similar type of academic engagement as would be expected from a first degree (for example, significant taught content, equivalent breadth).

It is for the accredited ITT provider to decide whether an applicant's qualification meets this criterion. Accredited ITT providers whose ITT partnerships do not include degree-awarding bodies may wish to seek advice from those that do.

Further information

The [European Network of Information Centres in the European Region \(ENIC\)](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas degrees.

The [Frameworks for HE qualifications of degree-awarding bodies](#) describes the higher education qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions (HEIs) at 5 levels.

A1.3 Suitability

All accredited ITT providers must:

- ensure, before acceptance onto the route, that all applicants, as part of the provider's selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their:
 - suitability to teach;
 - ability to demonstrate meeting all of the Teachers' Standards without the need for any further training.

Accredited ITT providers must ensure that, before anyone is admitted to the assessment only route, they have deemed them suitable to be awarded QTS. This will help to protect children and young people from applicants who might put them at risk of harm because the applicant's previous conduct shows they are unsuitable for teaching. Accredited ITT providers will conduct interviews, run appropriate pre-selection checks, and assess if an applicant has the appropriate intellectual and academic capabilities and personal qualities, attitudes, ethics and values to meet the Teachers' Standards.

Accredited ITT providers should consider a wide range of evidence to judge applicants' suitability to teach. For example:

- Information from application forms;
- Results of any entry tests or tasks;
- Interviews.

Accredited ITT providers or partner organisations should ensure that applicant selection processes give due regard to relevant aspects of part three of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Accredited ITT providers should ensure that at least one member of the recruitment panel has undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training.

Interviews

Accredited ITT providers should consider how information from interviews can help to identify and take account of applicants' prior experience. The interview process might include, classroom observation, discussions of professional portfolios of evidence and discussions with managers.

There is no requirement for a face-to-face interview. Interviews may take place virtually, providing suitable applicant identity checks have been conducted.

Accredited ITT providers must ensure that applicants are given every opportunity, before and during the interview, to inform the accredited ITT provider of any special requirements that require reasonable adjustment.

Equality

To comply with equality legislation, accredited ITT providers must ensure that interview procedures promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) and [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#) requires accredited ITT providers to ensure they are not discriminating against applicants on the basis of any protected characteristic, or applicants with special educational needs (SEN).

Applicants with disabilities are under no obligation to disclose their disabilities. Accredited ITT providers must ensure that their provision does not place applicants with disabilities at a disadvantage. Accredited ITT providers must also consider making anticipatory adjustments to promote positive 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.

Health and physical capacity to teach

Accredited ITT providers should have regard to the relevant aspects of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) requirements when assessing trainees' health and physical capacity to teach, so that children and young people are not at risk of harm. The activities that a teacher must be able to perform are set out in the [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). Accredited ITT providers are responsible for ensuring that only applicants who have the capacity to teach remain on the route.

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

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

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

Accredited ITT 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 applicants have been subject to appropriate pre-selection checks. This will include obtaining and considering Disclosure and Barring Service ([DBS](#)) criminal records checks and children's barred list information.

Applicants are not required to be employed by a school. Accredited ITT providers should confirm to schools hosting a non-employed applicant for their period of assessment that the applicant's criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list, has been completed and that the provider has judged the individual to be suitable to work with children. Schools may wish to record this confirmation in their single central record, but they are not required to do so.

Where a school or college allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.

In the case of employed applicants, the responsibility lies with the employer to ensure the checks have been carried out. A provider should not do a further DBS check if they have received notification from the employing school that a satisfactory check has been obtained.

Accredited ITT 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 the assessment only route.

Schools should ensure that all applicants are provided with the following:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- information about the role of the designated safeguarding lead;
- a copy of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Accredited ITT providers may wish to recommend to applicants that they register with the DBS update service.

If an accredited ITT provider removes an applicant from the assessment only route, or if they would have removed the applicant had they not left, because that applicant has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, the accredited ITT provider should seek guidance from DBS and inform DfE by contacting itt.safeguarding@education.gov.uk.

Any queries about DBS checks should be referred to the DBS at customerservices@dbs.gov.uk or on 03000 200 190.

Other background checks

Applicants who are unsuited to working with children may not have any previous convictions, and accredited ITT providers should ensure that all those involved in the selection process are vigilant. Accredited ITT providers and 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 the DBS.

Applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools and colleges. In addition, further checks should be carried out so that events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. 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](#) and [Recruit teachers from overseas](#).

Accredited ITT providers and employers must check that applicant are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

Childcare disqualification

Accredited ITT providers should have regard to the [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#) statutory guidance and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006.

Further advice on the childcare disqualification arrangements can be obtained from DfE at mailbox.disqualification@education.gov.uk or on 01325 340 409.

Further information

Statutory guidance:

[Regulated Activity \(children\) - supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

A1.4 School teaching experience

All accredited ITT providers must ensure, before acceptance onto the route, that:

- all applicants have taught in at least 2 schools

Applicants need to demonstrate sufficient breadth and variety of experience in schools or other settings to enable them to meet all of the Teachers' Standards. They need to have:

- taught children and young people from different backgrounds, across the ability range in their chosen age ranges;
- gained experience in different approaches to children, how children learn and to school organisation and management.

Applicants must have taught in 2 schools, early years or further education settings before entry to the assessment only route. Accredited ITT providers should consider whether an applicant's prior experience of teaching in schools provides enough evidence to allow the provider to confidently count those previous teaching experiences towards the 2 schools required.

Accredited ITT providers will need to be clear about the nature and extent of the prior experience, whether it offered the applicant the opportunity to teach children and young people, and whether, taken together with other experiences, it prepared the applicant sufficiently to meet the Teachers' Standards.

Typically, an applicant with fewer than 2 years of teaching experience in schools as an unqualified teacher would be unsuitable for the assessment only route. Practical teaching experience for the purposes of assessment only is not restricted to taking place wholly or mainly in England.

Assessment criteria

A2.1 Provision

All ITT providers must ensure that the content, structure, delivery, and assessment of assessment only provision are designed to:

- enable applicant to demonstrate meeting all of the Teachers' Standards across the age range of assessment;
- ensure that no applicant is recommended for the award of QTS unless they have demonstrated meeting all of the Teachers' Standards.

At the outset, accredited ITT providers should make clear to applicant, and to all of those involved in assessment only, the scope and coverage of the route, including subject and curriculum knowledge and understanding, and the anticipated assessment outcomes.

Assessment only route design should be flexible enough to meet the needs of every applicant. Accredited ITT providers must ensure their assessment practices are designed to ensure that applicant have met the Teachers' Standards.

For those being assessed in non-specialist primary settings, the assessment process must cover the relevant curriculum subjects. For secondary applicants, accredited ITT providers will need to assess the necessary knowledge and understanding of their subjects and related pedagogy.

Prior to the award of QTS, accredited ITT providers must assure applicant English and mathematics. Accredited ITT providers must assure that teachers demonstrate competence in the areas set out in detail in criterion A1.3.

Accredited ITT providers should ensure they have the expertise to assess applicant in the age ranges and subjects they teach - this expertise will usually have been developed through delivery of high-quality ITT in these age ranges and subjects.

Deciding whether an applicant meets the Teachers' Standards is a matter of professional judgement, taking into account the assessed performance, and all other relevant evidence, produced by the applicant. It is important to devise assessment processes that pay due regard to equality and fairness, that are robust and that make consistent and accurate judgements.

Assessment processes must be designed so that applicant are only recommended for the award of QTS when they have demonstrated that they meet all of the Teachers' Standards. Accredited ITT providers will need to devise procedures to do this that are fit

for purpose and provide accurate assessments based on secure evidence, while not placing an unnecessary burden on applicants.

A2.2 Age ranges

All accredited ITT providers must:

- ensure that all applicant recommended for the award of QTS have been assessed as meeting the Teachers' Standards within one of the following age phases: ages 3 to 11 (primary), ages 7 to 14 (middle), ages 11 to 19 (secondary).

Assessment must ensure that applicants have the knowledge and skills they need to be able to teach within their chosen phase. Typically, assessment will take place across the following age ranges:

- 3 to 7, 5 to 11, or 7 to 11 for primary assessment;
- 7 to 14 for middle assessment;
- 11 to 16, 11 to 18, or 14 to 19 for secondary assessment.

Assessment should enable applicants on middle phase programmes to demonstrate they have met the Teachers' Standards across the relevant curriculum in the primary element of training, and in their specialist subject in the secondary element of training.

Accredited ITT providers should consider how the assessment design and applicant time teaching in at least 2 schools prior to entry will ensure they can teach across the full ability range of their chosen age phase.

A2.3 Applicant assessment

All accredited ITT providers must ensure that the process of assessment:

- includes the assessment of practical teaching in a school (or early years or further education setting);
- typically does not last longer than 3 months.

This is to ensure that assessors have the opportunity to verify an applicant achievement against the Teachers' Standards in a practical teaching context, within a suitably short period of time.

Assessments of applicant against the Teachers' Standards, and subsequent recommendations for the award of QTS, should not be based solely upon evidence of prior experience and achievement. This evidence, whilst being valuable in its own right, must be verified by accredited ITT providers so they can be sure that applicant are continuing to meet the Teachers' Standards, and that a subsequent recommendation for the award is secure.

Assessment may take place in an independent school, a special school, alternative provision, pupil referral units, and mainstream schools with SEN resource units, particularly where an accredited ITT provider chooses to offer an additional specialism in special educational needs.. ITT providers should satisfy themselves that employing schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities. Where a school has serious weakness or is in special measures, it may still be possible for accredited ITT providers to use the school, especially if the improvements to be made do not affect the subject or age range in which the applicant is being assessed. The provider will need to be confident that the applicant will not be disadvantaged by being assessed in the school.

Applicants are accepted onto the assessment only route after an initial assessment to assess whether they are likely to be able to demonstrate that they are meeting all of the Teachers' Standards. The assessment only route is intended for very experienced graduate teachers without QTS who can demonstrate meeting all of the Teachers' Standards without the need for further training. Therefore, the whole process for an applicant should typically be completed in no longer than 3 calendar months from their registered start date.

Where an applicant fails to meet a provider's reasonable expectation of providing evidence for assessment within the 3-month period, or where assessment determines that the applicant does not fully meet the Teachers' Standards, the applicant should be deemed to have failed the route.

Management and quality assurance criteria

A3.1 Management

All accredited ITT providers must:

- ensure that their management structure facilitates the effective operation of the assessment only provision.

Accredited ITT providers must plan their provision to ensure they comply with the current ITT criteria and provide the opportunity for applicants to demonstrate that they meet all of the Teachers' Standards. Assessment should be of high quality and accredited ITT providers should seek continuing improvement.

A3.2 Partnerships and structures

All accredited ITT providers must:

- robust governance arrangements are put in place and exercised effectively, with clearly established structures and partnerships.

Detailed guidance can be found in [Initial Teacher Training \(ITT\): Forming Partnerships](#)

Overarching requirements

The roles and responsibilities of all partners should be clearly defined in partnership agreements. Partnership agreements should be clear, working documents 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. Each partnership agreement should be underpinned by other practices, such as well-understood procedures for communication between the partners and agreed arrangements for the co-ordination of the route.

The partnership agreement should also include details of the:

- clear quality assurance procedures for every role that a partner undertakes;
- content, delivery and impact of each of the ITT programmes;
- policies for equality of opportunity;
- organisation and management of the partnership;
- role of each partner in addressing and managing trainee teacher workload;
- role of all partners in protecting trainees' mental health and well-being.

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 assessors and applicants need to be clear about who is responsible for elements of assessment, how provision is managed and how the elements fit together to ensure that assessment observes all of the Teachers' Standards.

Partnership agreements should specify the different roles within the partnership including, for example, provision leaders, internal and external moderators. They should also set out how partners contribute towards:

- selecting and interviewing applicants;
- moderating assessment judgements of applicants against the Teachers' Standards;
- providing professional development opportunities for colleagues within the partnership;
- access to resources;
- any programme committees;
- quality assurance including improvement planning and self-evaluation;
- the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- the safeguarding of children and young people.

Changes to partnership structures

Accredited ITT providers must seek DfE approval for any proposed significant changes to their:

- accredited legal entity
- operating name
- partnership arrangements including addition and removal of lead partners
- accounting officer for the delivery of ITT

The accredited ITT provider must inform DfE of:

- changes to the accredited ITT provider's UKPRN
- details of all lead partners undertaking any of the following functions:
- recruitment and delivery of ITT on behalf of an accredited ITT provider
- receiving and managing student fees from the Office for Students (OfS)

If an accredited ITT provider is in any doubt as to whether they should advise DfE of any changes, they should do so.

Details of any proposed variations should be sent to itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk

Further information on the above definitions can be found here - [Initial teacher training \(ITT\): forming partnerships - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

A3.3 Legislation

All accredited ITT providers must ensure that:

- they comply with all current legislation relevant to the assessment only route

Accredited ITT providers must review and update their provision so that it continues to meet the criteria and associated legislation:

- [Education \(School Teachers' Qualifications\) \(England\) Regulations 2003 \(SI 1662\)](#) - statutory requirements for QTS in England
- [Education \(Specified Work\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(SI 762\)](#) - includes requirements that must be satisfied by individuals who are not qualified teachers in order to carry out specified work in schools
- [Equality Act 2010](#) - legislation relating to equality, discrimination and employment
- Data protection legislation:
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)

Accredited ITT providers must also ensure they carry out relevant background checks for all applicants.

Accredited ITT providers should make sure that all members of the partnership are fully aware of their duties under all relevant legislation and have in place arrangements for ensuring that these are met when selecting and assessing applicants.

From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \(the CTSA 2015\)](#), to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015 (the [Prevent duty guidance](#)).

The Prevent duty guidance states that schools and other institutions to which the duty applies should make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and

confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.

Further information

The following is a list of relevant legislation and guidance. This is not intended to be exhaustive and ITT providers will need to ensure they have identified and comply with all legislation relevant to assessment only.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) is the governing legislation for all matters relating to discrimination. Also relevant are:

- [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003 \(SI 3139\)](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(2001\)](#)
- [Disabled Students' Allowances \(DSAs\)](#)

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 [Codes of Practice](#) that relate to equal pay, race, disability and sex and gender discrimination.

The work that is reserved to qualified teachers in maintained schools in accordance with section 133 of the Education Act 2002, subject to limited exceptions, is prescribed by the [Education \(Specified Work\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).

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

A3.4 Quality assurance

All accredited ITT 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 assessment of trainees.

Evaluation

Accredited ITT providers should clearly define the arrangements and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of their assessment only provision across all the contexts in which it takes place, and identify ways in which it could be improved.

Accredited ITT providers may wish to collect and analyse a variety of data to inform their understanding of the effectiveness of their assessment only provision. For example, they may collect and analyse data or other evidence about:

- assessment sessions, in order to establish their fitness for purpose and to identify strengths and weaknesses across the different contributions to the programme;
- candidates' evaluations of how their assessment needs have been met;
- internal and external moderation about the effectiveness and accuracy of the assessment of candidates against the Teachers' Standards;
- the implementation of equality policies;
- DfE and Ofsted 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. Accredited 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, but is not limited to:

- the involvement of staff with relevant expertise from 2 or more partners when assessing applicants;
- discussions by relevant staff of all the evidence available, including applicants' previous experience and achievement;

External moderation

External moderators have an important role in ensuring consistency of standards across, as well as within, ITT partnerships. Accredited ITT providers should ensure that external moderators have relevant expertise and experience to enable them to carry out their roles competently. They should also ensure that the views of external moderators are taken into account fully when reaching decisions about applicants' meeting of the Teachers' Standards.

Accredited ITT 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 the accredited ITT providers' applicant being assessed for the award of QTS, which should help to verify the accuracy of the accredited ITT provider assessments. Accredited ITT providers should consider how to use external moderators to corroborate and standardise their assessments of applicants.

Accredited ITT 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.

Accredited ITT providers should have systematic procedures in place in order to demonstrate that monitoring and evaluation have secured improvements in quality and outcomes for applicants. This may mean keeping comparative data and other evidence over a period of time.

Similarly, accredited ITT providers may wish to examine their procedures and practices for enhancing and improving the pedagogical knowledge of all applicants and the knowledge of relevant curriculum areas for primary applicants, and evaluate these against the success of applicants in demonstrating meeting the Teachers' Standards. The evidence will need to be sufficiently robust to enable accredited ITT 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 applicants. Reporting and documenting of these activities should be evaluative rather than descriptive. These activities and processes might feed into improvement plans.

Legislation

This advice refers to:

- [The Education \(School Teachers' Qualifications\) \(England\) Regulations 2003 \(S.I. 2003/1662\)](#)
- [The Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Specified Work and Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [Higher Education \(Fee Limits and Fee Limit Condition\) \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)
- [Higher Education and Research Act 2017](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

Notes

- This section will be updated as part of the Gov.uk publishing process, to contain explanatory notes on the criteria above and links from and to the appropriate paragraphs.



Department
for Education

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