Department for Education

Teacher degree apprenticeship: recommendations for degree specialism

This document is accompanying guidance to the level 6 teacher degree apprenticeship (TDA) standard published by Skills England.

Purpose of this document

In collaboration with the TDA secondary subject specialism Expert Working Group (EWG) and the TDA trailblazer group, the Department for Education has prepared the following recommendations to support initial teacher training (ITT) providers and degree-awarding institutions in developing qualified teacher status (QTS) awarding TDA courses for both primary and secondary phases to ensure candidates qualify with a high degree of expertise in their chosen secondary subject.

These recommendations should be considered alongside the TDA standard and the ITT criteria, and in line with the independent benchmarks to develop degree courses.

Mandatory requirements:

The information below must be adhered to by all providers:

- The TDA course must be a level 6 apprenticeship that awards an undergraduate degree and QTS.
- All official degree titles must contain 'Teacher Degree Apprenticeship'. Further requirements by phase are as follows:
    - Official degree titles for primary phase courses must include 'education' or 'primary education';
    - Official degree titles for secondary phase courses must include the 'specialist subject'; they may include both the 'specialist subject' and 'education' or 'secondary education'.
- The course must adhere to the ITT criteria, encompass all aspects of the Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework (ITTECF) and enable trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards – which are reflected in the TDA Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours – at the appropriate level so they can be recommended for QTS.
- Organisations delivering TDA courses must:
    - Be accredited to award QTS, or work in partnership with an accredited ITT provider;
    - Be a degree-awarding institution, or work in partnership with a degree-awarding institution;

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- Subject knowledge elements of the course should be delivered or validated by a degree-awarding institution.

Recommendations

The below recommendations are not directive but are intended to provide guidance on degree specialism.

Primary subject specialism

Courses designed for those training to teach ages 3 to 11 (primary) should enable trainees to attain an undergraduate degree with honours in Primary Education. Providers can, but would not be expected to, include an additional subject specialism.

By the end of their course, trainees should be equipped with the underpinning breadth and depth of knowledge and skills required to attain the subject expertise required to teach at the primary phase.

Secondary subject specialism

Courses designed for those training to teach ages 11 to 19 (secondary) should enable trainees to attain an undergraduate degree with honours.

In line with degree name requirements, degrees for secondary phases can be in the specialist subject or both the specialist subject and education. In considering the weighting of secondary subject specialism in the degree:

- Course content should enable trainees to both build their knowledge and skills in their chosen subject discipline and to develop as a teacher in that subject, with both facets designed in a complementary and coherent manner.
- By the end of their course, trainees should be equipped with the underpinning breadth and depth of knowledge and skills required to attain the subject expertise required to teach in their subject at the secondary phase.

For each subject, providers may refer to independent subject benchmarks for guidance on core content to include in course design.

Providers may contact DfE on becomingateacher@digital.education.gov.uk with subject-specific degree specialism queries.

Subject study should enable trainees to develop their knowledge and understanding of their specialist subject alongside their subject pedagogical knowledge (e.g. common student misconceptions). This should provide a firm foundation on which to develop their subject expertise throughout their career.

If a course is delivered across different organisations in a partnership or across different faculties within one organisation, the teams involved should consult on or co-design TDA course content to maximise join up between subject knowledge and subject-specific

pedagogy. If a course is delivered solely by an education faculty, this faculty should work with the relevant subject department to design the course as appropriate.

Initial teaching training content

Organisations delivering TDA courses should work in partnership with employing schools, and ensure there are well trained school based mentors, to maximise cohesion between ITT and education content taught at university and teaching practise in the schools.

Additional support

Provide additional support for trainees throughout their course to help manage the competing demands of academic study and school-based learning.

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