












INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who provides initial teacher training?

Essentially, there are two kinds of training: university based and school-led. School-led providers are referred to as SCITTs (School Centred Initial Teacher Training). All ITT courses involve placements in schools to gain teaching experience. The providers in the Cambridgeshire area are:

 http://www.fenlandtsa.co.uk/	 http://www.camteach.org.uk	 http://www.cassateaching.co.uk/
 http://www.angliangatewaytsa.org/	 http://www.thecambridgepartnership.co.uk/	 http://cambridgeearlyyears.org/
 http://sbtalliance.co.uk	 http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/courses/pgce/	 https://www.beds.ac.uk/

What is the difference between PGCE and QTS?

PGCE stands for **Postgraduate Certificate of Education**, and is a qualification. It automatically confers QTS.

QTS stands for **Qualified Teacher Status** and is NOT a qualification.

If you have QTS you can teach in any state school in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. Schools in Scotland and many other countries may accept QTS but often require you to have a PGCE.

You can obtain a PGCE after QTS if you would like to – there is no requirement to do both at the same time. If you do not plan to teach abroad, you do not need QTS.

Tips for applying for an ITT place:

For school-direct (salaried or non-salaried) routes, you will need to apply via the UCAS website:

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/teacher-training/ucas-teacher-training-apply-and-track>.

Make sure you tell your referees that you are using their names and that they will be able to reply promptly when asked for a reference – applications are often held up because referees are slow to provide references. All applicants to initial teacher training (ITT) must pass the **professional skills tests** for prospective teachers before starting their course. You can take your skills tests once you have evidence of having submitted your application. See this site for more details: <http://sta.education.gov.uk/professional-skills-tests/the-process-for-taking-the-professional-skills-tests>

ITT providers expect you to have gained some experience in a school – usually at least 10 days – before starting the course. You should approach a school directly and ask if you can shadow a teacher/subject/pupil.

What qualifications do I need?

Candidates for Initial Teacher Training Education are required to present evidence of their qualifications as listed below:

- **A degree in any** subject (the classification required varies from provider to provider – check with your preferred provider)
- **Maths and English grade C** or above at GCSE or the equivalent (see below for equivalencies)
- **Science grade C** or above at GCSE or the equivalent if applying for **primary** ITT.

What if I want to train to teach a subject at secondary level and I don't have a degree in that subject?

You could take a **Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course**, if

- your degree wasn't in your chosen subject, but is closely related
- you studied the subject at A level, but not at university
- you have relevant professional experience, and an SKE course would show you how to apply that to the curriculum and your teaching
- you would benefit from a short refresher course in your chosen subject

Details of SKE course providers can be found here: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/teacher-training-routes/subject-knowledge-enhancement-ske-courses>

NB: if you have a joint honours degree, you can train to teach in either of the subjects in your degree name.

What if I can't find my original certificates?

For those candidates who have lost their original UK certificates the ITT provider will accept confirmation direct from the school or college where the exams were taken. This would take the form of a signed letter direct to the provider confirming candidate name, Examination Board, year taken and grades achieved.

Alternatively confirmation of results may be obtained direct from the relevant Examination Board. Currently, in England there are three Examination Boards which include past Exam Boards no longer in existence. Contact details for these are set out below:

AQA	Edexcel	OCR
www.aqa.org.uk	www.edexcel.com	www.ocr.org.uk

For Scottish or Irish qualifications candidates are advised to contact the relevant Exam Boards.

Please note that Certificates in Adult Literacy or Adult Numeracy are NOT accepted as equivalent to GCSE passes at grade C.

What count as equivalents to GCSE grades?

If you do not have a GCSE at grade C or above in English, maths or science, ITT providers will accept certain approved equivalent examinations. Please check with them, which qualifications would be acceptable. Some suggestions:

Overseas Qualifications	In the first instance please check the equivalency of your qualifications with UK NARIC http://www.naric.co.uk/NARIC/Default.aspx .
English GCSE equivalent for candidates whose first language is not English	The IELTS test (with an average minimum score of 6) is usually acceptable. This needs to be in all four areas of the academic test and be a recent test (dated within 2 years). For details of exam dates and exam centres in your area please consult the website www.ielts.org , by clicking on the test takers page.

What if I don't have the appropriate GCSE grades?

Educate Teacher Training offer GCSE equivalency tests (no tuition involved):
<http://www.educateteachertraining.co.uk/gcse-equivalence/>

The Equivalency Testing Company www.equivalencytesting.com offers English, maths and science GCSE equivalence exams for candidates, and we will accept a pass in these exams **when taken at an approved centre**. Candidates can take a 12 unit GCSE syllabus home study course followed by an exam or can sit the exam only.

For further details contact 01277 203336 or info@equivalencytesting.com

The following organisations offer people the chance to study online for GCSEs in English, Maths and Science:

Institution	Contact	Website
ICS International Correspondence Schools (ICS Learn)	Breckenridge House, 274 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3EH Tel: 0808 252 5816	https://www.icslearn.co.uk/ https://www.icslearn.co.uk/qualifications/gcse/ https://www.icslearn.co.uk/contact-us/
Oxford Open Learning	4 Kings Meadow, Oxford, OX2 0DP Tel: 0800 975 7575	http://www.ool.co.uk/ http://www.ool.co.uk/course/gcse/ http://www.ool.co.uk/contact-us/