



Initial teacher training in England

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This note outlines the current arrangements for the initial training of school teachers in England. It covers degree- and school-based training routes, and provides background on recent policy developments. It also outlines the qualification requirements for teachers in different types of schools.

The Government has made it clear that it intends to increase the proportion of teacher training that is 'school-based'. This is proving controversial, and some in the university sector have claimed that their training expertise is being sidelined and that the changes risk creating imbalances in the supply of, and demand for, teacher training places.

The note also covers other initiatives, such as the Government's *Troops to Teachers* programme, and offers a brief overview of financial support for teachers in training.

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1 Coalition policy on teacher training

In November 2010, the Government published a White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, which proposed significant reforms to teacher training and development, as well as to the wider school system.¹ The key changes proposed in respect of initial teacher training (ITT) were summarised in Chapter Two of the White Paper:

[W]e will:

- Continue to raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession, by: ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for initial teacher training for those graduates who do not have at least a 2:2 degree, expanding Teach First: offering financial incentives to attract more of the very best graduates in shortage subjects into teaching; and enabling more talented career changers to become teachers.
- Reform initial teacher training so that more training is on the job, and it focuses on key teaching skills including teaching early reading and mathematics, managing behaviour and responding to pupils' Special Educational Needs.
- Create a new national network of Teaching Schools, on the model of teaching hospitals, giving outstanding schools the role of leading the training and professional development of teachers and head teachers.
- Give schools more freedom to reward good performance and make it easier for them to tackle poor performance by extending pay flexibilities and simplifying performance management and capability procedures.
- Increase the number of Local and National Leaders of Education: excellent head teachers who provide support to other schools.
- Dramatically reduce bureaucracy, cutting out unnecessary duties, requirements, guidance and red tape.²

In June 2011, the Department for Education (DfE) gave further detail on its plans in a consultation document, *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers*, and an *Implementation plan* followed in November 2011, which provided a timetable of the changes.³ Key announcements included:

- A significant expansion of the Teach First programme
- Launch of the School Direct programme and increased prioritisation of ITT funding on providers that are successful at involving schools in training programmes.
- The launch of the Troops to Teachers programme for ex- service personnel
- Ongoing reform of Ofsted's inspection framework for ITT providers
- Making successful completion of professional skills tests (literacy and numeracy qualifications) a prerequisite for beginning an ITT course.

¹ DfE, *The Importance of Teaching. The Schools White Paper*, November 2010, Cm 7980

² *Ibid.*, pp 20

³ DfE, *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers. An improvement strategy for discussion*, June 2011.

DfE, *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers. An implementation plan*. November 2011, p15-16.

- More targeting of student financial support on student teachers in particular subject areas, and on those with higher pass marks for their first degrees.
- Launching a small number of University Training Schools, which will deliver three core functions: teaching children; training teachers; and undertaking research.

1.1 Recruitment and effect on pattern of ITT provision

The changes, and subsequent expansion of the *School Direct* programme in particular, have been controversial. Concerns have been raised about the potential for local mismatches of supply and demand of training places – and the sustainability of some university-centred provision.⁴

On 22nd March 2013, the schools' inspectorate, Ofsted, published a [press release](#) and accompanying headline data reporting the outcome of recent ITT provider inspections.⁵ The inspections in question were undertaken after the introduction of a new inspection framework in September 2012. In the press release, Ofsted commented on the apparent success of school-centred training programmes:

Every one of the providers to have received the highest grade is a small employment-based partnership with schools centrally involved. Some of these have recently achieved school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) status from the Teaching Agency. Their training programmes are designed and delivered by groups of neighbouring schools.

None of the higher education institutions - which have traditionally provided the majority of teacher training - inspected so far has been awarded an outstanding judgement for overall effectiveness. However, one of the outstanding employment-based partnerships, the London East Consortium, is part of the University of Cumbria's initial teacher training provision.

No provider previously judged outstanding under the old framework has retained this top grade to date....

'Those providers which have earned the highest grade since last autumn really stand out from the rest. It is significant that all the outstanding training our inspectors have found so far is being led by consortia of neighbouring schools, with trainees taught by experienced, practising teachers.

'This suggests that the Government is right to put greater emphasis on new teachers being trained in schools where they can best develop the practical skills they will need as teachers – rather than in higher education institutions, which have traditionally trained the majority of trainees.⁶

On 25 March 2013, the umbrella body, the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), wrote a [letter](#) to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, criticising the press release as "misleading, inaccurate and inappropriately political".⁷ A [further letter](#) was sent by UCET to the then Secretary of State, Michael Gove, and the

⁴ For example, see Guardian, 2 July, 2013

⁵ Ofsted, '[School-led partnerships setting benchmark for high quality teacher training](#)', 22 March 2013.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ UCET, '[UCET objects to Ofsted press release](#)', 23 March 2013

Minister for Schools, David Willets, on 27 March 2013 asking for clarification on universities' role in teacher education.⁸

In October 2014, Universities UK published [a report on the impact of initial teacher training reforms on higher education institutions](#). An article on the TES website summarised the report's concerns:

In a new report, Universities UK raises concerns about the impact of the government's decision to give schools more say in the recruiting and training of staff. It says that if the pace of change continues, it could create problems in training enough teachers.

Since 2012/13, initial teacher training has undergone a radical shake-up, with an increasing number of training places going to the new School Direct programme, rather than universities.

Under School Direct, schools take the lead in taking on trainees. But this has led to "instability" for many universities, with the numbers of training places allocated directly to institutions falling by 23 per cent in three years, says Universities UK.

While School Direct has been more successful in recruiting trainee English and history teachers, it has been less successful for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects, the report says.

"This has contributed to a shortfall in the number of trainee teachers recruited into several subject areas, such as mathematics and physics," it says.

"There are concerns, therefore, that, as the government pursues its ambition for a school-led system, the pace of change could create teacher supply issues in the future if university-delivered training becomes unsustainable."⁹

In his annual report for 2013/14, published in December 2014, Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector of schools, also stated that he was concerned about teacher supply:

While it is encouraging that newly qualified teachers are of an increasingly high calibre, I am concerned about teacher supply. In short, the problem is not one of the quality of new entrants to the profession, but of quantity and distribution.

Overall, the number of entrants into teacher training has fallen by 17% since 2009/10 and was 7% below the number of places needed in 2014/15. Numbers of secondary trainees have seen the largest falls (8,000 fewer trainee teachers this year compared with 2009/10) and there are persistent problems in key secondary subjects such as mathematics and physics.¹⁰

Government's position

In response to a parliamentary question of 18 November 2014 the Schools Minister, David Laws, stated that higher education institutions continued to play a lead role in ITT:

Universities continue to play a lead role in initial teacher training. Higher education institutions (HEIs) are expected to be involved in 82% of all teacher training places for 2014-15.

⁸ UCET, '[UCET seeks urgent ministerial clarification on universities and teacher education](#)', 27 March 2013

⁹ Tes, "[School Direct causing shortage of maths and science teachers, report claims](#)", 30 October 2014.

¹⁰ Ofsted, [The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2013/14](#), December 2014, p19.

As well as 22,900 provider places provisionally allocated to HEIs for the academic year 2014-15, they are also in partnership with schools to deliver seven out of 10 School Direct places, for which they receive funding.

There are many strong partnerships in place between schools and HEIs, with HEIs providing in-depth subject knowledge and access to research, and schools providing rich placements and opportunities to partner trainees with outstanding teachers.

This provides opportunities for HEIs to maintain or even increase their market share of ITT if they deliver programmes schools want, and work with them to establish high-quality and sustainable courses.

Many HEI providers have already significantly increased their ITT places due to their engagement with School Direct.¹¹

In response to a further parliamentary question in November 2014, Mr Laws provided details on the number of ITT places allocated to Schools Direct providers compared to higher education based providers since 2011/12:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
HE Providers	28,669	28,841	26,790	23,095	22,224
Schools Direct	0	772	9,586	15,254	17,609

(Table from [PQ 212886 \[on teacher training\]](#), 3 November 2014)

Mr Laws also set out the Government's position on the supply of teachers in December 2014:

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies on teacher recruitment of the Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report 2014.

David Laws: Provisional data in the Initial Teacher Training Census shows that 94% of targeted initial teacher training (ITT) places were filled in 2014/15. The shortfall will not result in a teacher shortage, since not all newly qualified teacher progress into teaching immediately after training, and schools can recruit teachers from other avenues. The quality of entrants to ITT remains high with 73% of all new postgraduate entrants in 2014/15 holding a 2:1 degree or higher and 17%, a new record, having a first. This confirms that teaching remains an attractive career choice for the best graduates and is recruiting well in a competitive graduate employment market.¹²

A Department for Education press release in December 2014 announced plans to train more maths and physics teachers over the next five years:

17,500 maths and physics teachers will be trained over the next 5 years over and above current levels, with schemes to attract more postgraduates, researchers and career-changers, and extensive retraining for non-specialist teachers.

¹¹ [HC Deb 18 November 2013 c747-8W](#)

¹² [PQ 218427 \[on teacher recruitment\]](#), 11 December 2014.

The scheme will cost £67 million and will include a programme to offer school leavers a bursary to help pay for university, in return for a commitment to become a teacher when they graduate with a maths or physics degree.¹³

The press release stated that the new programmes will retrain 15,000 existing teachers and recruit up to 2,500 additional specialist teachers over the next Parliament, on top of existing plans.¹⁴

In an article in the Daily Telegraph in January 2015 the Chief Executive of the National College for Teaching and Leadership, Charlie Taylor, was reported as stating that children should be “talent-spotted” and identified as future teachers while at primary school. Mr Taylor said that those identified should then be given the chance to work as classroom assistants to get a sense of what being a teacher feels like.¹⁵

1.2 Carter review of initial teacher training

On 1 May 2014 the then Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, appointed Sir Andrew Carter to chair an independent review of ITT courses. The purpose of the review was to:

- define effective ITT practice
- assess the extent to which the current system delivers effective ITT
- recommend where and how improvements could be made
- recommend ways to improve choice in the system by improving the transparency of course content and methods.¹⁶

A [call for evidence was issued](#) on 20 August 2014 and the consultation closed on 22 September 2014.¹⁷ The review [published its report](#) on 19 January 2015.

The report concluded that the ITT system generally performs well and that it was difficult to draw conclusions about whether one training route is better than another. The report also made a number of conclusions and recommendations for improvement in particular areas. These included:

- There is considerable variability in ITT course content and potentially significant gaps in a range of courses. There may be a case for a better shared understanding of what the essential elements of good ITT content look like. The Department for Education should commission a sector body to develop a framework of core content for ITT.
- Of all areas of ITT content, the most significant improvements are needed for training in assessment. A central repository of resources and guidance on assessment should be developed.
- There is some reluctance towards practical approaches to training in behaviour management. Behaviour management should be prioritised within ITT programmes and it is vital that trainees receive practical advice and strategies.

¹³ Gov.uk, [“Maths and science must be the top priority in our schools, says Prime Minister”](#), 8 December 2014

¹⁴ Gov.uk, [“Maths and science must be the top priority in our schools, says Prime Minister”](#), 8 December 2014

¹⁵ Daily Telegraph, [“Primary pupils are teachers of future”](#), 1 January 2015.

¹⁶ DfE, [Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training \(England\): Call for Evidence](#), 20 August 2014, para 2.1.

¹⁷ DfE, [Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training \(England\): Call for Evidence](#), 20 August 2014.

- Mentoring across England is not as good as it should be. The Department for Education should commission a sector body to develop some national standards for mentors.
- Providers and trainees have expressed frustration about the skills tests (see section 3.7 below), arguing that they can lead to otherwise good candidates being lost from ITT. The Department for Education should review the effectiveness of the skills tests in selecting high quality trainees.
- The current information about routes into teaching is confusing. The NCTL's "Get into Teaching" website should be developed and expanded to signpost information that applicants should consider when making choices about ITT courses.¹⁸

Government response

The [Government's response to the Carter Review](#) was also published on 19 January 2015. The response stated that, amongst other things, the Government would:

- commission an independent working group made up of expert representatives from the sector to develop a core ITT framework;¹⁹
- commission the Teaching Schools Council to develop a set of national standards for mentors;²⁰
- develop a page on the Get into Teaching website which will signpost relevant information for applicants to consider.²¹

1.3 Cost effectiveness of different teacher training routes – IFS report

In November 2014 the Institute for Fiscal Studies published a report into the costs and benefits of different initial teacher training routes. The report found that:

- There are few differences in the characteristics of trainees across different routes, suggesting that the most effective trainees are not attracted to a particular route.
- The average cost to government of providing student finance is between £13,000 and £18,000 per trainee for postgraduate training and between £10,000 and £27,000 for undergraduate training.
- Not accounting for non-monetary benefits, the net costs to schools are largest for Teach First (around £11,000 per placement) and lowest for university-based routes (between £400 and £1,600 per placement).
- School-based routes are thought to have a higher net benefit to the host school than university-based routes.
- For most routes, the net benefit to schools is small in comparison with the costs for central government. Teach First, where the largest net benefit to schools is reported, is an exception.²²

¹⁸ Sir Andrew Carter OBE, [Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training \(ITT\)](#), January 2015, p5-15

¹⁹ Department for Education, [Government response to the Carter review of initial teacher training \(ITT\)](#), January 2015, p3.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p6

²¹ *Ibid*, p7.

2 Qualification requirements for teachers in schools in England

Teachers employed in local authority maintained schools in England are required to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), although certain exemptions and special arrangements apply in relation to overseas-trained teachers and some other staff – for example, those employed as ‘instructors’.²³ Relevant regulations include the *Education (School Teachers) Qualifications Regulations 2003*, as amended, and the *Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012*, as amended.²⁴

The same requirement to hold QTS is not in place for free schools or for academies, unless an academy’s funding agreement retains a clause to that effect. Funding agreements are agreements between the Secretary of State and the particular academy trust/body running the school and can vary between academies. On 27 July 2012, the DfE announced that new academies would be able to employ teachers without QTS, putting them in the same position as free schools. In addition, existing academies whose funding agreements retain a clause requiring the employment of qualified teachers could apply to have this condition removed.

The [DFE’s Handbook for School Governors](#) (published September 2014) explains the rules as follows:

5.4 Teacher qualifications

The governing body of a maintained school or non-maintained special school should be aware that teachers must hold qualified teacher status (QTS) (unless the teacher satisfies one of the requirements or conditions specified in the Schedule to the appropriate regulations). This also applies to academy trusts whose funding agreement states that any teachers that it employs must hold QTS.

Since 1 April 2012, further education teachers who have been awarded Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) by the Institute for Learning (IfL) and are members of the IfL are recognised as qualified teachers in schools. This will allow them to be appointed to permanent posts in maintained schools in England and they will be paid on the qualified teachers’ pay scale. They will continue to be recognised as qualified school teachers providing they remain a member of the IfL.

The same statutory requirement to hold QTS is not in place for teachers employed by academies unless the academy’s funding agreement retains a clause to that effect. An academy may be required through its funding agreement to employ teachers with QTS, but the department may agree to relax this requirement if requested by an academy. Even in academies, special educational needs coordinators and designated teachers for looked after children must have QTS. All teachers in special academies must hold QTS. There is no requirement for teaching staff in free schools to hold QTS.²⁵

Teachers in the independent sector are not required to hold QTS – it is up to the schools in question to assess the teaching and other skills of the staff they employ.

²² Institute for Fiscal Studies, [The Costs and Benefits of Different Initial Teacher Training Routes](#), November 2014, p1-3.

²³ Instructors are defined in regulation as those who “give instruction in any art or skill or in any subject or group of subjects (including any form of vocational training), where special qualifications or experience or both are required” (2[1] of Schedule to SI SI 2012/762)

²⁴ The *Education (School Teachers) Qualifications Regulations 2003*, SI 2003/1662; the *Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012* SI 2012/762

²⁵ Department for Education, [Governors’ handbook: For governors in maintained schools, academies and free schools](#), September 2014, para 5.4.

In March 2011, the Secretary of State for Education announced a review of teachers' standards – the standards that qualified teachers in maintained schools are required to meet in the course of their work. The new [Teachers' Standards](#) were published on 22 May 2012 and came into force in September 2012.²⁶

3 Teacher training pathways

There are currently several routes into teaching, and the terminology used to describe different training models can be confusing. ITT courses are often described as either being 'school-centred' (for example, the School Direct programme) or 'higher education-centred' (for example, a university-based B.Ed. course). The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) allocates and funds teacher training places.

A Statistical First Release from the DfE, dated 27 November 2014, gives details on the number of new entrants who have started, or expect to start, an initial teacher training programme in England in the academic year 2014/15.²⁷

General information about current teacher training routes is available on the [Get into Teaching](#) section of the DfE's website. A summary of the key features of each route is given below.

3.1 School Direct

The School Direct programme accepted its first cohort of students in September 2012, and it was the Government's intention that the number of places on this programme would be significantly expanded from the 2013/14 academic year.

School Direct offers two types of training places: the School Direct Training Programme; and the School Direct Training Programme (salaried). The latter of these replaces the earlier Graduate Teaching Programme, which the DfE closed to new applicants in October 2012.

The DfE [website](#) gives further details:

School Direct Training Programme (salaried)

School Direct (salaried) is a fantastic route to take if you are looking for school-based teacher training. There's nothing better than gaining quality first-hand experience from teachers in the classroom to help you become an outstanding teacher.

You'll be employed as an unqualified teacher, and you could be training in one of the country's best schools. Your training and salary is subsidised by us, the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

This programme is available to high-quality graduates with at least three years' work experience – your previous experience in the Armed Forces will count towards this requirement. Find out more about School Direct (salaried)

[...]

School Direct Training Programme

School Direct is a non-salaried route into teaching and is available to high-quality graduates. You'll spend all of your time in a school where you'll have the opportunity to

²⁶ DfE, [Teachers' Standards](#), 22 May 2012.

²⁷ DfE, [Statistical first release, Initial teacher training census for the academic year 2014 to 2015](#), 27 November 2014.

teach lessons and learn from experienced teachers. You could train in one of the top schools in England.²⁸

3.2 School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT)

SCITT programmes are designed and delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges. They provide practical, hands-on teacher training delivered by practising teachers based in their own school or at a school in their network.

Students are usually based in one school from the consortium – the lead school – while completing teaching practices at others within the group. Training programmes generally last for one academic year full-time, running from September to June, and result in QTS. Many also award a PGCE from a university.²⁹

3.3 Teach First

Teach First is an independent charity which states its vision as “working towards a day when no child’s educational success is limited by their socio-economic background”.³⁰ Its Learning and Development Programme is for those interested in an employment-based route into teaching. Since September 2012 it has placed trainee teachers in primary as well as secondary schools.

Trainees join Teach First and their university partners for six weeks of intensive training before teaching in a school in a low-income community for two years, where they achieve a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) and earn a full-time salary.³¹

The qualification and experience requirements for Teach First are as follows:

- 2.1 degree or above, 300 UCAS points (or equivalent, excluding General Studies)
- A degree or A-levels that satisfy our teaching requirements
- Grade C in GCSE Maths and English (or equivalent).
- Flexibility to work in any of the Teach First locations.

Candidates also need to demonstrate certain competencies linked to the values of Teach First, including resilience, humility, respect and empathy.³²

Teach First receives grant funding from the Government, and additional income from fees paid by schools, charitable donations, and other sources.³³ The Government has allocated 2,000 training places to Teach First for 2015/16, a 33% increase on its allocation for 2014/15.³⁴

²⁸ Department for Education, “[Graduate teacher training options](#)”, last accessed 8 January 2015.

²⁹ UCAS, “[School-led teacher training](#)” and Department for Education, “[School-led teacher training](#)”, last accessed 8 January 2015.

³⁰ Teach First, “[Our Vision](#)”, last accessed 8 January 2015.

³¹ Teach First, “[How Does it Work?](#)”, last accessed 8 January 2015.

³² Teach First, “[Requirements](#)”, last accessed 8 January 2015.

³³ For a breakdown of *Teach First* funding, see p47 of the organisation’s [Annual Review 2012-13](#).

³⁴ [PQ HL2805 \[on teacher recruitment\]](#), 10 November 2014.

3.4 Troops to Teachers

In its November 2010 White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, the Government announced plans to encourage more ex-servicemen and women to train as teachers as part of a scheme to be called Troops to Teachers:

We will [...] encourage Armed Forces leavers to become teachers, by developing a 'Troops to Teachers' programme which will sponsor service leavers to train as teachers. We will pay tuition fees for PGCEs [Post-Graduate Certificate in Education] for eligible graduates leaving the Armed Forces and work with universities to explore the possibility of establishing a bespoke compressed undergraduate route into teaching targeted at Armed Forces leavers who have the relevant experience and skills but may lack degree-level qualifications. We will encourage Teach First to work with the services as they develop Teach Next, so that service leavers are able to take advantage of new opportunities to move into education [...].³⁵

A similar initiative, also called Troops to Teachers, has been running in the USA since 1984. More information on the US scheme can be found on the [DANTES](#) website.

The Troops to Teachers training route is open to service leavers who do not hold a first degree and who are in the two years before discharge or in the two years after discharge. The programme lasts two years and is school-based. Trainees are paid on the unqualified teacher pay scale during both years of the programme.

There have been two cohorts for the Troops to Teachers programme. The first cohort of 41 trainees started training in January 2014 and the second cohort of 54 began training in September 2014. New placements are expected to begin in early 2015.³⁶

Further information on the programme is available on the [Troops to Teachers](#) website.

3.5 Researchers in schools

Researchers in schools is a route into teaching for researchers who have completed, or are finishing, a doctorate.

It is a two-year, salaried training programme based in London and has been designed with Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' teacher training schools, universities, and third sector organisations. It "seeks to help schools increase subject expertise, promote research, and champion university access while allowing researchers to return to academia after completing the programme should they choose to".³⁷

RIS offers trainees a minimum salary of £19,000 in the first year and then full-time employment in the second year, which typically begins at £25,000 per year. Candidates who have completed a doctorate in maths, physics, engineering and other shortage subjects are eligible for a salary uplift to £40,000 for both years.

Applications are open to researchers from all subject backgrounds who will have submitted a doctoral thesis. The next round of applications for 2015/16 will open on 12 January 2015.³⁸

³⁵ DfE, *The Importance of Teaching – The Schools White Paper 2010*, November 2010, Cm 7980, p22, para 2.15.

³⁶ [PQ 216826 \[teachers: veterans\], 2 December 2014.](#)

³⁷ Department for Education, "[Researchers in Schools](#)", last accessed 8 January 2015.

³⁸ Department for Education, "[Researchers in Schools](#)", last accessed 8 January 2015.

3.6 University and college-based routes – undergraduate and postgraduate degrees with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)

Undergraduate Initial Teacher Training (ITT) degrees usually last 3-4 years (full time), while Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses usually last for one year (full time). They are offered by many universities and some other higher education providers. The [Get into teaching](#) website explains:

If you already have a degree, one option is to complete a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) at a university or college. Universities work with school partnerships to offer at least two school experience placements as part of your training.³⁹

If you don't have a degree, you can study for your degree and complete your teacher training at the same time at various universities and colleges in England. Full-time courses usually take three to four years, while part-time courses take four to six years. But if you've got undergraduate credits from previous study, you might be able to complete a course in two years.⁴⁰

All applicants for Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses need to have already obtained an undergraduate degree or recognised equivalent qualification. Further information about the application procedure, and detailed information about eligibility and prior qualification requirements, can be found on the DfE [Get into teaching](#) website.

In July 2013, the DfE published additional separate [guidance](#) on 'assessment only' routes to achieving QTS for experienced teachers.⁴¹

3.7 General entry requirements for ITT and the professional studies tests

Since September 2013, students entering ITT in England have had to meet a number of minimum standards. All students, regardless of training pathway, are required to hold GCSEs in English and Maths at grade 'C' or higher, or be able to demonstrate they have reached an equivalent standard. Those enrolling on primary ITT courses are also required to hold GCSE science at C or above. Generally, those enrolling on postgraduate courses (as the name suggests) also need to have a first degree or equivalent.⁴²

Additionally, entrants to all courses from September 2013 have been required to sit and pass new professional skills tests (in literacy and numeracy) before beginning their course. This includes applicants to the Troops to Teachers programme. Previously, trainees were able to complete these tests during the course of their studies. Trainees are able to make three attempts at the tests; if they are unsuccessful, they are then required to wait two years at which point they may make another three attempts.⁴³

Individual ITT providers may also set their own requirements for entry onto courses which are more stringent than the national requirements.

In a written ministerial statement on 6 March 2014, the Schools Minister, David Laws, announced that there had been errors in the marking of some professional studies tests dating back at least as far back as April 2010. As a result, 721 candidates were awarded a pass in error in the 2012-13 academic year and between October 2012 and March 2014 27

³⁹ DfE, "[University-led teacher training](#)", last accessed 8 January 2015.

⁴⁰ DfE, "[Undergraduate ITT courses](#)", last accessed 8 January 2015.

⁴¹ DfE, [The assessment-only route to achieving QTS](#), July 2013.

⁴² DfE, "[Basic requirements to become a qualified teacher](#)", last accessed 8 January 2015.

⁴³ *ibid*

candidates were incorrectly awarded a fail. The Minister stated that the errors had been rectified by the Standards and Testing Agency and so the current tests were not affected.⁴⁴

4 Financial support for trainee teachers

The system of financial support for teacher trainees in England is complex; individuals considering applying for teacher training programmes should establish what support they are likely to qualify for by contacting the DfE's *Teaching Line* (0800 389 2500), their H.E. institution, or [Student Finance England](#).

4.1 Undergraduate trainees

For undergraduate ITT students, the financial arrangements are the same as for other students undertaking a first degree course – that is, eligible students can apply for student loans to cover fees and maintenance, and grants for living costs.⁴⁵ They may also be eligible for bursaries or other support offered by their institution.

4.2 Postgraduate trainees

For postgraduate trainees, the amount and type of support depends on personal eligibility and financial circumstances, prior qualifications, type of course (particularly, subject specialism) and mode of study. As the name suggests, those enrolled on the School Direct (Salaried) scheme earn a salary and may not qualify for a bursary or other student support. Similarly, those enrolled on Teach First programmes are paid a wage while training.

Bursaries

Eligible non-salaried trainee teachers on postgraduate programmes may qualify for a training bursary – an incentive payment designed to attract highly-qualified trainees in shortage subject areas. Trainees do not need to apply for a bursary – if they meet the eligibility criteria, payments will start when they begin their course.

The following table provides an overview of bursary levels for eligible students in the academic year 2015/16:

	Trainee with 1st/PhD	2:1/Master's	2:2	Other^(a)
Physics	£25,000	£25,000	£15,000	£9,000
Maths	£25,000	£20,000	£15,000	£9,000
Chemistry, computing	£25,000	£20,000	£15,000	£0
Languages^(b)	£25,000	£20,000	£15,000	£0
Biology	£15,000	£12,000	£10,000	£0
Primary maths^(c)	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£9,000
Geography, D&T	£12,000	£9,000	£4,000	£0

⁴⁴ [HC Deb 6 March 2014, c52-3WS](#)

⁴⁵ Some students may be eligible for additional support dependent on personal circumstances- e.g., student parents may qualify for help toward childcare costs.

Music	£9,000	£4,000	£4,000	£0
English, history, RE, primary	£9,000	£4,000	£0	£0

Notes

(a) Trainee teachers in maths and physics, and on primary maths courses, with a relevant degree and at least a B at A level in maths or physics (or equivalent) will be eligible for a bursary of £9,000. Trainees will not be entitled to this bursary if they are also entitled to a higher bursary based on degree class.

(b) Bursaries are available to train to teach modern foreign languages, community languages and ancient languages including Latin and Ancient Greek.

(c) Bursaries are available to trainees on either primary maths specialist courses or primary general (with mathematics) courses. Trainees on other primary courses will be eligible for the standard primary bursary.

(Table adapted from DfE web page article "[Funding for postgraduate teacher training](#)".)

Scholarships

There are also a number of specialist competitive scholarships of £25,000 for trainees in physics, chemistry, maths and computing. Scholarships are awarded by professional bodies for these subjects, and selection is through an additional application and assessment process. Each scholarship also comes with a package of non-financial benefits, such as early career support and membership of the appropriate professional body. Trainees awarded a scholarship cannot also claim a standard DfE bursary.⁴⁶

Other loans and grants

In addition, postgraduate trainees on non-salaried programmes may also be eligible to apply for mainstream student loans and grants. More information is available on the [Get into teaching](#) website, and on the [Gov.uk](#) website.

⁴⁶ DfE, "[Funding for postgraduate teacher training](#)", last accessed 9 January 2015.