

The overseas trained teacher programme 2007/08

Information for candidates

What is QTS?

Qualified teacher status (QTS) is the basic requirement for qualification as a teacher in England. In order to achieve QTS, you need to show through practice and theoretical knowledge that you have achieved all the QTS standards (www.tda.gov.uk/standards).

What is the overseas trained teacher programme?

Anyone wishing to work as a qualified teacher in England must have QTS. However, if you were trained and qualified as a teacher overseas you can work for up to four years as a temporary teacher without QTS. The overseas trained teacher programme (OTTP) offers you a way to achieve QTS while working as a teacher. Once you have found a teaching position in a school, you can follow an individualised training and assessment programme leading to QTS.

Can I go on the programme?

To go on the programme, you must:

- be qualified as a teacher overseas;
- be working as a teacher in a school;
- have been accepted by an employment-based initial teacher training provider (EBITT); and
- fulfil the Home Office's requirement for a work permit (applicable if you are not a national of the European Economic Area).

What qualifications do I need?

If you qualified outside the European Economic Area (EEA), you will need:

- an overseas teaching qualification;
- a qualification equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree;
- a qualification equivalent to general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grade C or above in mathematics and English; and
- a qualification equivalent to GCSE grade C or above in science if you are applying for primary or KS2/3 teaching.

If you qualified as a teacher in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, one of the other countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, you may be eligible for QTS without further assessment. In this case, you will need to contact the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) to get your qualifications assessed. The UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) can give advice on the equivalence of overseas degree qualifications. Contact the OTT advice line on 01245 454321 for assistance in accessing the NARIC database.

If you require registration documents to teach in the country you trained in, you will need to ensure that these documents are up to date at the time you left the country. In certain cases, the lack of registration documents means that the teacher cannot legally teach in England. NARIC will also be able to advise on this (www.naric.org.uk).

What if I have withdrawn from a previous initial teacher training (ITT) course?

Normally candidates who have failed or withdrawn from previous ITT programmes are ineligible for the OTTP, but EBITTs may consider applications from candidates where there are exceptional circumstances. You would have to provide evidence of the circumstances when applying.

How long is the programme?

The maximum training programme is one year full time. If you consider that you meet all the QTS standards, you may apply for QTS assessment only, with very little training provided. Your judgement will need to be confirmed by the school, in which you are working.

What is an employment-based initial teacher training provider (EBITT)?

An EBITT is a provider of the employment based teacher training schemes that has been inspected by Ofsted and accredited by the TDA. All providers of employment-based initial teacher training schemes have been through the accreditation cycle. Most EBITTs are partnerships of bodies such as schools, local authorities and accredited ITT providers. They are given an annual allocation of OTTP places by the TDA and take responsibility for designing and delivering your training programme. There are currently around 90 EBITTs in England. For contact details, see the TDA website at www.tda.gov.uk/ebr

How do I find a teaching post?

You could:

- check your local paper and The Times educational supplement for vacancies;
- check the vacancy pages on local authorities' websites – they often advertise teacher vacancies;
- register with a teacher supply agency (advertisements in the press and on the internet);
- contact an EBITT for advice on funding a post in a school (EBITT contact details can be found from the TDA website at www.tda.gov.uk/ebr).

I am teaching in an independent school. Can I go on the programme?

Unqualified teachers working in independent schools can go on the OTTP. The TDA cannot provide funding for such applications so you would be classed as a self-funded application through an EBITT. However, the TDA will pay assessment costs.

Will I be paid?

The school will pay your salary at the rate for either a qualified or unqualified teacher. The TDA will pay a grant of up to £1,750 a year to cover the cost of your training.

How do I apply for the OTTP?

EBITTs recruit candidates in their local area. They have a selection process, and you will be required to give detailed information about your past experience and education. The EBITT will talk with you about what you can already do and what further training you would need to meet the standards for QTS. It will complete an initial training needs assessment where experienced teachers monitor, assess and record all your achievements. The EBITT may be able to help you find a post in one of their partner schools, although some may insist that you should already have found a school to support you through your training programme.

What goes into a training plan?

Your EBITT will discuss with you the training you need in order to achieve the standards for QTS. Each training activity will meet one or more of the QTS requirements. For example, your training plan could include guidance on classroom techniques; ways of preparing lessons; observing role models; discussing books and papers you have read; attending short courses or conferences; and practising your IT skills. You must also have experience in at least two schools to be awarded QTS.

How can I be sure of quality training?

EBITTs and schools will provide the support and facilities you need. You will have the guidance of skilled and experienced colleagues and will be continuously assessed against the QTS standards throughout the programme. You will be expected to keep a portfolio of evidence of your achievements, which will include examples of pupils' work. In some cases, in the final stages of the programme an assessor will observe you at work, inspect your portfolio and talk to you and your supervisors.

What happens at the end of training?

If the assessor is satisfied, your EBITT can then recommend you to the General Teaching Council for England (GTC) for QTS. To qualify for QTS, you also have to pass computerised skills tests in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

If you have been assessed against the induction standards at the same time, you will be exempt from the induction year. If not, like any other newly qualified teacher, you will be given a career entry and development profile (CEDP), which will help your school to plan your induction training.

Exemption from induction year

This is available to overseas trained teachers who have extensive teaching experience. The EBITT and the school will make their decision about whether you can apply for exemption on an individual basis. The decision will be based on the current quality and level of your work in the school in which you are teaching in England.

Work permits and visas

Generally speaking, anyone who wishes to work in England, Scotland or Wales and who is not a national of the European Economic Area (EEA) needs a work permit. Work permits are issued by the Border and Immigration Agency for up to four years and all enquiries about them should be addressed to them on 0870 6067766 or at www.workingintheuk.gov.uk

You should consider the length of time you have left on your work permit. A work permit that allows you to teach for four years as an unqualified teacher in England cannot be extended and you therefore need to obtain QTS during this time. It is not advisable to leave this until the last few months.

If you find that your degree qualification is not equivalent, you can contact a local higher education (HE) provider to explore whether it can offer an individualised study programme to develop your qualifications to UK first degree equivalence.

The four year rule

The four years that you can teach as an unqualified teacher before requiring QTS starts from the first day you teach in a mainstream school in England. Any breaks in teaching will also count.

From September 2007, if the four years are up, you are no longer allowed to carry on teaching as an unqualified teacher. If you are already on a programme when your four years is up, you have until the end of August 2008 to complete all aspects of the course and be recommended for QTS. After this time, this will no longer be possible.

If you are able to gain employment as an instructor, you can still access the OTTP (if you are within your four years), but you only have until the end of August 2008 to complete all aspects of the training programme and be recommended for QTS.

Immigration enquiries

If you have a query about an immigration matter, you will need to contact the Immigration and Nationality Directorate at the Home Office. For general information, visit their website (www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Where can I find out more?

For more information contact:

Teaching Information Line

Training and Development Agency for Schools

tel: 0845 6000 991

e-mail: teaching@tdainfo.gov.uk

website: www.tda.gov.uk

What is the next step?

Contact an EBITT provider or find a school willing to employ you while you train on the OTTP. Visit the TDA website (www.tda.gov.uk/ebr) to find details of EBITTs that can give you advice or contact the teaching information line (0845 6000 991).

The TDA is committed to providing accessible information. To request this item in another language or format, contact TDA corporate communications at the address below or e-mail: corporatecomms@tda.gov.uk Please tell us what you require and we will consider with you how to meet your needs.

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