



Alliance for  
Learning SCITT

Train Teach Transform

**ADMISSIONS**

**POLICY**

2017- 18 Secondary, Primary and Early Years

#### OBJECTIVES

High quality teacher education and development designed to inspire high levels of personal and professional conduct and to contribute to pupil progress in partner schools

Alliance for Learning SCITT  
QTS and EYTS education

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## Introduction

This policy is designed to set out the procedures and practices of the SCITT to ensure recruitment of trainee secondary, primary and early years teachers in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

It is the goal of the SCITT to recruit people of outstanding potential, irrespective of their background and to ensure that the admission process is transparent, has minimal barriers to entry, is based on merit and potential, is fair with regard to diversity, professional in its nature and reliable.

The recruitment process must follow these key points:

- The recruitment process must be long enough to be fair and open to applicants of all backgrounds, and clearly communicated.
- The SCITT and all parties involved in recruitment and selection must ensure that candidates meet the entry requirements as described in the secretary of state's ITT criteria.
- Recruitment must be high quality open and transparent as well as being open to inspection by Ofsted. All documentation must be recorded and archived as well as being summarised for future use.

The SCITT is committed to the fair treatment of applicants and students, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

The SCITT actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates with the ability and motivation to benefit. Applicants are selected on the basis of their skills, qualifications and experience, having regard for the requirements of the programme.

All SCITT admissions procedures should meet the requirements as set out in the SCITT Equal Opportunities Policy.

## Notes for the application and selection process

1. All selection events must be designed to meet the 40 day UCAS window of application.
2. The SCITT must ensure that applicants meet the criteria for entry as stated on page 3 & 4.
3. The observation panel should consist of a minimum of two teachers.
4. The interview panel should consist of a minimum of two teachers. At least one member of this panel should have also been on the observation panel.
5. The formal offer through the UCAS portal must be made by a designated member of the SCITT. This may be the SCITT director, the SCITT administrator or a trained member of the lead team only.
6. Any formal offer must be supported by an offer letter which sets out the conditions as stated in the UCAS formal offer and including candidate strengths and areas of development prior to the course.
7. All candidates must be made aware of the government requirements that all applicants for ITT courses must have passed the QTS skills tests in numeracy and literacy before starting the course. No unconditional offers will be made until both tests have been passed. It is good practice to offer a 6-week window in which to successfully complete the tests.
8. We request that applicants have completed at least 2 days of school experience before starting the course, and at least 5 days for the primary course.
9. Course designations:

- a. The SCITT provider courses available are QTS<sup>1</sup> 5-11 (primary), QTS 11-16 (secondary) and EYTS<sup>2</sup> 0-5.
- b. The QTS courses include a PGCE awarded by the University of Manchester other than the course noted in part c.
- c. The QTS course run in conjunction with Researchers in School is a school direct salaried course. Any PGCE is optional and at the cost of candidates.

## Selection criteria

### Academic selection criteria

In order for the selection process to be both fair and transparent, candidates must be selected against clear selection criteria which are published on the Alliance for Learning website and presented below. All applications will be assessed against academic and non-academic selection criteria specific to the course of study. Acceptable standard equivalencies to GCSE grade C or above can be found in Appendix A on page 7.

- All candidates must have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and Mathematics.
- All candidates for the Primary or EYTS course must have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 or above in a GCSE Science subject.
- All candidates must have achieved a standard equivalent to at least 3 GCSE grades of 4 or above.
- All candidates must hold, on entry to the course, a first degree of a UK higher education institution or an equivalent qualification. The SCITT prefers candidates to hold a 2.2 honours degree or better but candidates with other honours degree classifications will be considered based upon their experience and quality of their application. Overseas equivalents will be acceptable. Where necessary, the SCITT will make use of NARIC or HEI providers in confirming the equivalence of prior qualifications
- All candidates must have successfully passed the QTS skills tests in numeracy and literacy before starting the course.
- There is no preferred list of degree subjects for primary or EYTS courses as long as candidates are judged likely to meet all of the standards for QTS, including those that relate to subject and curriculum knowledge by the end of the course.
- Secondary subject degree requirements are set out below
  - English
    - A degree containing 50% content in English Language, English Literature or Linguistics
  - Mathematics
    - A degree containing 50% content in mathematics or a highly mathematical subject such as physics or engineering.
  - Biology
    - A degree containing 50% content strongly related to biology.
  - Chemistry
    - A degree containing 50% content strongly related to chemistry.
  - Physics
    - A degree containing 50% content strongly related to physics.

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<sup>1</sup> Qualified teacher status

<sup>2</sup> Early years teacher status

- History
  - A degree containing 50% content strongly related to history
- Geography
  - A degree containing 50% content strongly related to geography
- The decision of what constitutes 'strongly related' will be taken by SCITT staff in conjunction with experienced school staff.
- For all subjects we will consider applicants who have less than 50% of their degree course related to their subject of choice but hold a strong A Level in their chosen subject area and have extensive relevant experience, for example at least a year working at a teaching assistant or a degree that is heavily focused on education, especially when supported by a strong reference from someone currently working in education.
- Applicants on Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Geography courses will undergo a subject knowledge enhancement course prior to the SCITT course. The lengths of the SKE will be depended on subject knowledge information gathered at recruitment.
- Applicants to the school direct salaried course Researchers in School must meet their stated criteria in addition to the criteria above.

### Non-academic selection criteria

- Candidates should have completed at least 2 days of school or early years setting experience in a UK setting, preferably prior to interview. If this is not possible this will form part of the conditions of any offer.
- Primary applicants must have completed at least 5 days of school experience in a UK setting prior to interview.
- Candidates must provide a well written, relevant and convincing personal statement.
- Candidates should provide two supportive references preferably including one academic reference from a University tutor or from someone working in education. The SCITT recognises that this is not always possible and in the case of mature applicants professional references are acceptable.

### Written and spoken communication

The selection process provides an opportunity to assess applicants' ability to communicate effectively in both written and verbal form.

### The assessment of applications

For all of the ITE courses the SCITT aims to offer places to those eligible applicants who best meet the selection criteria and are judged to have the most potential to become and good or outstanding teachers by the end of the course.

### Applicants with non-UK qualifications

The SCITT welcomes applicants whose previous education has not included UK qualifications. Applications from international applicants will be assessed against the same entry criteria as all other applicants. Where necessary, the SCITT will consult NARIC or HEI partners for guidance on equivalent overseas qualifications.

### Applicants with backgrounds that may not align with the standard entry criteria

The SCITT is aware that some applicants' educational background may not enable them to fully demonstrate how they meet the selection criteria for their chosen course. This may often be the case

in applicants returning to education after employment. Where possible, the SCITT will consider alternative evidence to ensure that all applicants are given equal consideration.

### Applicants who may require additional support

The SCITT welcome applications from people with additional support needs. Any candidates with additional support needs will be considered equally and appropriate support will be put into place for the application and selection process.

## The application process

All provider course applications for QTS must be made through the UCAS portal.

All school direct salaried applications must first be made to Researchers in Schools. Successful applicants will then be called to interview. Those applicants that are successful must then complete a final application through UCAS. This is the procedure as designated by the National College of Teaching and Leadership and may be referred to as ‘maths and physics chairs’.

All provider course applications for EYTS must be made directly to the SCITT via the application form that can be found on the Alliance for Learning website: [www.allianceforlearning.co.uk](http://www.allianceforlearning.co.uk)

All applications are subject to the criteria as stated above.

## Additional admission requirements

Beyond the academic and non-academic selection criteria listed above, there are other specific requirements that must be met before entry onto an Initial Teacher Training Course.

### Criminal records check

All successful applicants must pass a criminal record check carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or a similar police check in their home country, including a check of the children’s barred list. Applicants who have been out of the UK for more than six months within the last three years or more than 12 months in the last ten years will need to undergo an overseas police check. Applicants who have been travelling through a series of countries (eg during a gap year) will need to supply a police check for any countries where they have continuously spent more than three months

Applicants who have gained UK citizenship (verified through eg a passport) will have undergone the “test of good character” but will still undergo an overseas police check if they have been out of the UK for more than six months within the last three years or more than 12 months in the last ten years. All non-UK national applicants will undergo an overseas police check.

In addition, applicants will be subject to a check of the prohibited teachers lists.

### Health and physical capacity to teach assessment

All successful applicants are required to demonstrate that they have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm. Applicants are required to complete a questionnaire to assess this. Applicants may be required to undergo an occupational health interview either by telephone or face-to-face following this assessment.

### Tier 4 student visa

Applicants who are not British citizens or a citizen of one of the EEA (European Economic Area) countries will need a visa to study in the UK. More details can be found from <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

## Candidates guilty of falsification

Applicants must not omit any requested or relevant information, make any form of misrepresentation or give false information at any point in the application and selection process as well as during the course. Applicants found to have done this must recognise that the SCITT reserves the right to withdraw offer of a place or remove a trainee from a course. If necessary, the SCITT will notify the appropriate external organisations regarding this matter.

## Appeals against application decisions

### Introduction

Applicants will be able to appeal against application decisions. There are three stages to any appeal. It should be noted that the dispute of academic or professional judgements is not possible under the appeal system. However, applicants may appeal on the grounds that:

- (a) There has been a procedural irregularity. A situation where the applicant believes that the SCITT has not adhered to its own stated policy and procedures.
- (b) The emergence of new material which may have affected the decision. It must be made clear by the applicant as to why this information was not made available at the time of application. It should be noted that if this information was available at the time of application but not included, for any reason, it will not be considered as new information.
- (c) Evidence of bias or prejudice

Any formal appeal must be submitted, in writing, by the applicant or by someone to whom the applicant has given written consent to appeal on their behalf.

### The process

#### Informal appeals

**Stage 1:** Written feedback. All unsuccessful candidates will have received feedback on their application. For those candidates unsuccessful at the point of application, this information will be put onto the UCAS portal. Further feedback can be given to clarify the reasoning. This feedback may be given in person, by telephone or in writing (including by email). For applicants who are unsuccessful after interview, written feedback will be sent in the form of a letter detailing the candidate's strengths and areas for improvement for future applications.

**Stage 2:** Formal appeals. Any applicant who wishes to lodge an official complaint or appeal against a decision is asked to do so, in writing, within 15 working days of the application decision. The SCITT Director will respond and an independent appeals panel comprising experienced interviewers not involved in the original selection process. The SCITT Director and the independent appeals panel will normally respond within 20 working days from receipt of the appeal.

**Stage 3:** Should the applicant be able to clearly demonstrate that the independent appeals panel has not addressed the grounds of the appeal or has not fully understood the appeal, the applicant must contact the SCITT Director, in writing, within 15 working days of the stage 2 decision. The SCITT Director will pass the complaint on to an external assessor who will assess the argument and pass decision on the grounds for the appeal. At completion of this decision the applicant will be issued with a Complaints of Procedures letter making the decision final.

If the appeal is successful the applicant will be allowed entry on to the course.

## Appendix A GCSE equivalency qualifications

At present the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science. It is the standard and not the qualification that matters and so when the SCITT decides on equivalency we look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade C not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth. This is why we accept only certain qualifications.

### Unacceptable qualifications

- Level 2 Key skills/Functional Skills in application of number and communication
- Certificates in adult literacy and numeracy.
- Modules in Foundation Degrees (or any other degree course).
- City and Guilds.
- Any other equivalency tests with the exception of those provided by HEIs.
- International Diploma/Certificate “Higher or subsidiary level in English language at grade 4 or above”.
- A Level/AS-levels (although they are a higher level the qualifications do not cover the breadth of a GCSE)
- ONC/OND.
- BTEC: Any first, national or higher national certificate or diploma in *English*.
- Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE)
- Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET)

### Common GCSE Equivalent Qualifications

Below are the acceptable grades from GCSE CSE and O Level

GCSE Grade, 2017	GCSE Grade, pre 2017	CSE Grade	O Level		
			1975 onwards	Pre 1975 (numeric)	Pre 1975 (alphabetic)
9	A*				
8					
7	A		A	1 2	A B
6	B		B	3	C
5				4	
4	C	1	C	5 6	D E

- We also accept GCSE equivalent qualifications provided by UK HE institutions.
- We also accept international qualifications which are considered GCSE A-C comparable on NARIC.

### GCSE English – Suitable equivalent qualifications

- Common qualifications
  - GCSE English Language, grade A\*-C or grade 9-4
  - O Level English, grade A-C or 1-3.
    - CSE English, English language or English studies, grade 1.
- Scottish Qualifications Authority:



- National 5, Intermediate 2, Skills for Work National 5.
- Standard Grade – Credit Level.
- Irish Republic awards:
  - In or after 1975, leaving certificate in English language at grade C or above (ordinary) or at grade D or above (higher), Level 4 certificate.
- European baccalaureate:
  - A score of 6/10 or higher is acceptable in place of GCSE grade C
- International baccalaureate:
  - Standard or Higher Level English Language Syllabus A at grade 4 or above.
  - Standard or Higher Level English Language Syllabus B at grade 5 or above.
  - International Baccalaureate (IB) Standard or Higher Level English Language and Literature combined at grade 5 or above
  - International Baccalaureate (IB) Standard or Higher Level English Literature at grade 5 or above
- University of London Examinations and Assessment Council:
  - Certificate of attainment in English at level 4 or above.
- IGCSE:
  - IGCSE in English language C+/4+
- English language proficiency tests
  - IELTS: an overall mark of 6.5 and no section below 5.5
  - TOEFL: Score of 4.5 (scale 1-6) in written test, total score of 575 (paper based)
  - TOEFL: Score of 20 (scale 0-30) in written test, total score of 90 (Internet based)
  - Pearson PTE: Score of 62 (writing 61)
  - Cambridge ELA: Cambridge English: Advanced (Certificate in Advanced English)

### GCSE Maths – Suitable equivalent qualifications

- Common qualifications
  - GCSE Mathematics, grade A\*-C or grade 9-4
  - GCSE Additional Mathematics, grade A\*-C
  - GCE O-level Mathematics (only), grade A-C or 1-3.
  - CSE Mathematics, grade 1.
  - O-level or AO-level in additional mathematics, grade A-C.
- Scottish Qualifications Authority:
  - National 5, Intermediate 2, Skills for Work National 5.
  - Standard Grade – Credit Level.
- Irish Republic awards:
  - In or after 1975, leaving certificate in mathematics at grade C or above (ordinary) or at grade D or above (honours), Level 4 certificate.
- European baccalaureate:
  - A score of 6/10 or higher is acceptable in place of GCSE grade C
- International baccalaureate:
  - Higher or subsidiary level in mathematics at grade 4 or above.
- IGCSE:
  - IGCSE in mathematics.

### GCSE Science – Suitable equivalent qualifications

- Common qualifications

- GCSE in Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Additional Applied Science at grade A\*-C or grade 9-4
- GCE O-Level in Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology at grade A-C or 1-3.
- CSE in Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology at grade 1.
- Scottish Qualifications Authority:
  - National 5, Intermediate 2, Skills for Work National 5.
  - Standard Grade – Credit Level.
- Irish Republic awards:
  - In or after 1975, leaving certificate in mathematics at grade C or above (ordinary) or at grade D or above (honours), Level 4 certificate.
- European baccalaureate:
  - A score of 7/10 or higher is acceptable in place of GCSE grade C (according to equivalence sheet).
- International baccalaureate:
  - Higher or subsidiary level in science at grade 4 or above.
- BTEC
  - BTEC Diploma Level 2 in Science/ Applied Science
  - BTEC First (also known as BTEC Extended Certificate) in Science/Applied Science
  - BTEC National Level 3 in Science/Applied Science
- IGCSE:
  - IGCSE in science (double award).
  - IGCSE in biology, chemistry or physics.
  - IGCSE in physical science, coordinated sciences or combined science.

#### Advice for applicants who do not have a GCSE

Applicants who do not have a GCSE or other suitable qualification are advised to take a GCSE or HEI equivalency test as a private candidate. It is not the policy of the SCITT to make offers conditional on the successful completion of such qualification.