



Teaching – Frequently Asked Questions

December 2009

with minor revisions March 2010

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Related Professions
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A. ENTRY TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION – GENERAL

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I want to teach English and my degree is unrelated to this – can I?

The relevance of your degree will depend on the age range you wish to teach. It is not a requirement to have a degree in a National Curriculum subject to teach at Primary level. Primary school teachers are expected to be able to demonstrate a sound, basic knowledge of all subjects in the National Curriculum. Further information on the National Curriculum can be found at <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk> .

Applicants for the Secondary PGCE will generally be expected to have a degree relevant to the subject they want to train to teach. They are expected to be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their subject that is sufficient to enable them to teach it at secondary level.

Some institutions will consider applicants with a degree in a subject other than English if they have studied some additional higher education modules in English Language and / or Literature, e.g. through the Open University. Pre-initial teacher training subject knowledge enhancement courses are available in certain priority subjects but this does not include English (for details see: <http://www.tda.gov.uk/>).

English is a very competitive subject - even applicants who have 50% of their degree in English have to work hard to convince admissions tutors that they have sufficient subject knowledge. As a result it is vital to be clear about individual institutions' requirements prior to application. Start your research by looking on the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) website <http://www.gttr.ac.uk> : use the *Course Search* facility to locate the course provider and look at their *Entry Profile* for details of admission requirements. It is recommended that you follow this up with a telephone call or email to the admissions tutor at the institutions you are considering.

You could consider training in a subject area that is more closely related to your degree and then express your interest in English once employed in a school.

Is it possible to enter primary or secondary teaching with a degree in Psychology?

Five institutions offer a PGCE for psychology teaching; Canterbury Christ Church, Edge Hill, Manchester Metropolitan, Wolverhampton, and Worcester; in addition, it is available as part of a PGCE programme at Exeter (Science with Psychology) and Keele (Social Sciences).

Since demand for places is high, potential applicants might also consider applying for a place on a PGCE to teach another subject at secondary level, for example social sciences or citizenship. For applications both to primary and secondary teaching you will need to “unpick” the components of your degree very carefully and match them explicitly against the required elements of the National Curriculum for your chosen phase or subject.

It might also be possible to apply for a maths or science PGCE, depending on the number of science or maths-based modules in your degree and your A Level subjects. Some institutions offer a subject knowledge enhancement course, a programme intended to provide graduates with increased subject knowledge before going onto teacher training. You can find details of these on the TDA website (<http://www.tda.gov.uk>).

Initial teacher training providers should be prepared to consider the full range of an applicant’s attainments, and evidence of their subject knowledge could come from other academic, professional or vocational qualifications or experience in addition to their degree. It is not a requirement to have a degree in a National Curriculum subject to teach at Primary level. Primary school teachers are expected to be able to demonstrate a sound, basic knowledge of all subjects in the National Curriculum. Further information on this can be found at <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk>. Therefore applicants are recommended to contact the admissions tutor at their chosen institution(s) early on in the application cycle to discuss the extent to which the experience and qualifications they offer match up to the institution’s requirements.

How do I go about getting work experience in a school?

If you have not been inside a school since your own school days you could arrange an observation visit through the Open Schools Programme, aimed at potential teacher trainees in England, or you could approach schools in your area aiming to organise a day or so observing classes or shadowing a teacher.

You might be able to get more structured experience through the Student Associates Scheme (SAS) which gives registered students the chance to work in school alongside experienced teachers. This scheme offers a tax-free bursary for the time you spend in school and the work you do may also count towards the professional standards needed to obtain Qualified Teacher Status.

In addition, you could find out if there are any student tutoring programmes or school-based volunteering projects organised by your careers service, student union or widening participation/access department. You could contact local schools direct to see if there are any opportunities for voluntary work as a classroom assistant. After-school clubs and summer play-schemes are also ways in which you could get paid or voluntary experience of working with children in a school-based setting.

For information about the Open Schools Programme or the Student Associates Scheme see the Training and Development Agency for Schools website (<http://www.tda.gov.uk>) or call the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991 (0845 6000 992 for Welsh speakers; Minicom 0117 915 8161). You can find details of all educational establishments in England and Wales by searching on <http://www.edubase.gov.uk/>

see also:

[How much and what kind of experience do I need to help me get on to a PGCE course?](#)

I am on a Foundation degree in Teaching and Learning – how can I become a secondary teacher?

The key question here is which subject you want to teach. Most organisations who offer secondary teacher training would require you to have substantial knowledge of a curriculum subject and usually require you to have studied it at least for part of your higher education study. You also need GCSE or equivalent in English and maths.

There are three main alternatives:

- You will need to top up the degree to a bachelor's degree with at least 60 credits at HE Level 3 and then train to teach via a postgraduate course (PGCE) or the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). As most PGCE courses require you to have studied the subject you want to teach for a minimum of 50% of your degree, you need to think carefully about which subjects would be best for you to top up your degree. If you consider topping up with social science subjects, you could consider applying for citizenship PGCE courses, although these are popular and you would need to check with the institution offering the PGCE course that this is acceptable.
- If you have a background in a priority subject such as design technology, maths or IT, you could apply for a two-year full-time bachelor's degree with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) offered at a few institutions. See <http://www.ucas.com> to search for degree courses.
- Gain qualified teacher status through the Registered Teacher Programme (RTP). You work in a school in England as an unqualified teacher for up to two years, gain a bachelor's degree and QTS at the same time. You have to find a school willing to employ you and again you will need to have substantial knowledge of a curriculum subject. RTP is no longer available in Wales.

For more information on the GTP and RTP see the TDA website: <http://www.tda.gov.uk>

I thought there was a shortage of teachers – is this still true?

The supply and demand for teachers fluctuates between shortage and surplus and depends on a number of factors: for example, variations in the birth rate affect the number of primary places needed four or five years later; as a 'baby boom' moves up through the school age-range, the demand for primary teachers drops and more secondary teachers are needed. Changes to the national economy also have an effect, with more graduates applying to enter teaching as jobs in other sectors decrease.

Supply and demand also varies from subject to subject, and between age ranges, and between different parts of the country. The government attempt to match supply and demand by making annual changes to the allocation of initial teacher training (ITT) places to institutions (adjusting the overall numbers of places for specific subjects and age ranges), and by paying incentives to trainee and newly qualified teachers in shortage subjects in order to attract more graduates.

In England, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) has increased the number of primary ITT places by 590 in 2009/10 and by 1,180 in 2010/11. At the same time the number of secondary places is set to fall from the 2008/09 level of 19,380 to 16,845 by 2010/11; the reductions affect all subject areas except maths and science. On the other hand, the tax-free bursary for primary PGCE students has been reduced from £6,000 to £4,000, suggesting that the government is having less difficulty attracting sufficient numbers into primary teaching than previously. PGCE students in most secondary subjects receive either £4,000 or £6,000, while the top rate of £9,000 applies not only to maths, physics and chemistry, but also to construction, design & technology, engineering, environment, ICT and manufacturing. The regions where there is greater evidence of unfilled demand from schools for newly qualified teachers are the East of England, London, South East and the West Midlands.

In Wales, the levels of training grant also reflect the relative difficulty in attracting graduates into different areas (2010-11 figures):

- mathematics, physics, chemistry, design & technology, ICT, Welsh £9,000
- music, religious education, modern foreign languages, biology, combined/general sciences, English, geography £6,000
- other secondary subjects £4,000
- primary £4,000

In Scotland, the priority subjects for session 2009-2010 are biology, business education, chemistry, English, Gaelic, geography, history, home economics, maths, modern languages (French, German, Italian, Spanish and Chinese), physical education, physics, religious education, technological education and primary (all courses including Gaelic medium).

In Northern Ireland, there are no shortage or priority subjects and there is strong competition for teaching posts.

How do you train to teach in Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges?

Though once open to people with technical or subject knowledge but no teaching qualification, teaching in further education and sixth form colleges is now more strictly regulated. In England and Wales, new regulations introduced in September 2007

require teachers starting in the sector after that date to gain one of two new qualifications within five years. The qualifications are: Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS), and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status, which are obtained through a process of Professional Formation. For more information see the website of the Institute for Learning, the professional body for teachers, trainers and assessors in further education: <http://www.ifl.ac.uk/qtls-atls>

There are a number of PGCE courses tailored for teaching in post-compulsory education, which confer QTLS. PGCE applicants need a degree in the subject they intend to teach, with many institutions preferring at least a 2:1. Some (but not all) of these are in the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR), and can be found by selecting the Further education age range on the course search (<http://www.gttr.ac.uk/students/coursesearch>). For a full list of all courses endorsed by Standards Verification UK (SVUK) for teaching in this sector, see: <http://www.standardsverificationuk.org/3196.htm> .

SVUK is part of Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), which is leading the reform of initial teacher/tutor/trainer education in England (ITTTE), as part of the further education workforce reforms. It provides a free advice service on careers and training in the lifelong learning sector: <http://www.lluk.org/ias.htm> ; telephone 020 7936 5798 or email advice@lluk.org

Entrants wishing to teach Skills for Life (Literacy, Numeracy, and English for Speakers of Other Languages) need additional qualifications; courses are listed on the Skills for Life Improvement Programme website: <http://sflip.excellencegateway.org.uk/workforcedevelopment/getqualified.aspx>

Anyone with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) for teaching in schools is recognised as qualified to teach in further education. They need to undertake a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) process to familiarise themselves with the lifelong learning sector. So another route into teaching in post-compulsory education, particularly for anyone wishing to keep their options open, is to undertake a PGCE (or other route into teaching in schools), work in a school to obtain QTS, and then consider applying for posts in colleges.

The situation in Scotland is different. In-service lecturers complete the Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE) through one of three approved universities (Aberdeen, Dundee and Stirling). Entrants must be in employment for a minimum of 120 hours during the course and must hold an HNC, HND or professional qualification (certificate version), or a degree (postgraduate certificate version). Further information can be found on the Scottish FE Professional Development Forum website (<http://www.fepdfscotland.co.uk/>).

B. PGCE COURSES

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See also:

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Can I be accepted on to a PGCE course without English / maths / science at GCSE?

You may be offered a PGCE, at the institution's discretion, if you do not have English, mathematics and science at GCSE grade C or above (or equivalent) but you will normally be expected to have reached this level by the start of your course. Grade C or above in mathematics and English at GCSE (or equivalent) are requirements to teach at secondary level, whilst to teach at primary level you must also have at least a GCSE grade C (or equivalent) in science.

If you don't have the necessary GCSEs you may be able to take a pre-entry or equivalency test set by the course provider. Some providers may also accept skills developed through other related work experience. If in doubt, you should contact your chosen course provider to find out what their requirements are.

Some institutions will advise candidates to study for the relevant qualifications at the local college whilst others may offer equivalent courses themselves.

In England, all trainee teachers also have to pass qualified teacher status (QTS) skills tests in numeracy, literacy and information and communications technology (ICT) before they can be awarded QTS.

Is it possible to get onto a PGCE with a Third Class Degree?

It is possible to get onto a PGCE with a Third Class Degree, but may not be easy. Some providers will not consider applicants without at least a 2:2, whilst others will look at what skills and school experience the applicant brings. Those applying for really competitive areas, such as Primary, history or PE, may well find that they are not accepted. For the right person with really good school experience, it can be

possible to get onto a PGCE at some institutions. Researching and contacting the institutions before applying is essential.

If I don't get on to a PGCE course through the GTTR process, i.e. after 2 or 4 rejections, what can I do?

There are three main alternatives:

- Continue to apply for more places through GTTR 'Extra' and 'Clearing' processes. Details are on <http://www.gttr.ac.uk>.
- Try to obtain feedback on why you were rejected and then withdraw from GTTR with a view to applying the following year, after you have addressed the reasons for your rejection.
- Apply directly to teacher training providers not in the GTTR system. There are few of these but they are listed on the TDA website (<http://www.tda.gov.uk>) – under 'Get into Teaching' and then 'Find a Training Provider'.

Some PGCE courses are at Masters level and some are not – will this make a difference to my job prospects?

As a result of Higher Education Quality Framework requirements, a joint statement was issued by the QAA for PGCE courses which outlines two levels of courses:

- a professional graduate certificate in education
- a postgraduate certificate in education which includes masters level modules.

See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/PGCEstatement.asp>

Some institutions (e.g. Northampton) run both courses, and others (e.g. Birmingham) only the Masters level courses.

This is a recent development and so as yet it is difficult to see the effect on job prospects from the two qualifications. It may be reasonable to assume that in competitive areas, such as primary and some secondary subjects, candidates may find it gives them an edge in a tight job market.

The government intends to make teaching a masters level profession, and are currently introducing a new masters in teaching and learning, which serving teachers can take as part of their continuing professional development. In recent years there has been more emphasis on continuing professional development, introduced as part of new performance management systems where salary increases will be dependent on teachers meeting previously agreed objectives. In the light of these developments, those who already possess 60 credits towards a Masters level qualification could have an advantage.

I am an EU student with residency status and wish to do a PGCE in Wales. What is the finance situation?

If you are an EU national and have lived for the last three years in a European Economic Area (EEA) country, you are generally eligible for financial help to cover the cost of tuition fees when studying in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. In Wales, you can take out a Tuition Fee Loan to the full value of the tuition fee charged by your institution, less any grant that you receive (see below), to a maximum of £3,290 (2010 entry).

If you have lived in the UK for the last three years, you are also generally able to apply for additional help towards living costs, in the form of student loans and/or bursaries.

In Wales, a tax-free bursary, known as a training grant, is payable to all eligible postgraduate trainee teachers. It is paid in monthly instalments throughout the course by the ITT (Initial Teacher Training) provider. The value of the bursary is dependent on your subject, the institution where you are training, and when you start the course. For PGCE courses starting in 2010, the grants are:

- mathematics, physics, chemistry, design & technology, ICT, Welsh £9,000
- music, religious education, modern foreign languages, biology, combined/general sciences, English, geography £6,000
- other secondary subjects £4,000
- primary £4,000

Secondary PGCE students training to teach their subject through the medium of Welsh may be entitled to the Welsh medium incentive supplement (£1,500, or £1,800 for chemistry, maths or physics teacher training courses). This supplement is intended for “trainees who need extra support to raise confidence in their ability to teach effectively in Welsh.” Individual ITT providers decide on eligibility.

Certain subjects also attract a teaching grant, payable after completion of the induction year, similar to Golden Hellos available in England for shortage subjects. In Wales the subjects are:

- chemistry, maths or physics: £5,000 teaching grant
- ICT, design and technology, Welsh: £2,500 teaching grant

Students may also be eligible for an Assembly Learning Grant or Special Support Grant (which does not have to be repaid).

Further information:

Student Finance Wales: <http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/>

DirectGov: <http://www.direct.gov.uk> > Education & Learning > University & Higher Education > Student Finance > Students from other EU countries

How much and what kind of experience do I need to help me get on to a PGCE course?

It is extremely important to have some recent experience in the sector and age group in which you wish to teach. You really should plan to complete this before you apply for your training course – i.e. by September the year before you intend to start your PGCE. If you wish to teach in the secondary or post compulsory sector this should be in the subject area in which you wish to train.

Institutions vary in their expectations regarding the amount of experience applicants should possess. As a rough guide, at least five days experience observing a classroom teacher and perhaps assisting with activities should give you a taste of the realities of the classroom and provide some experiences to talk about on your application form and at interview. Some institutions and some subject areas may require more, so it is recommended that you check with your chosen course provider.

If you've already graduated, paid work as a teaching assistant or technician is usually advertised on Local Authority web sites or local newspapers or can sometimes be gained through specialist education employment agencies.

For unpaid experience, you can contact schools direct to ask to observe classes or shadow teachers. Use your contacts through family and friends to identify schools, or search the database of schools on the OFSTED website at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>. Experience in schools is in heavy demand and it may take time to arrange a placement. You might also try some of the options listed below.

Open Schools Programme (OSP): spend a day observing your chosen subject or age range being taught at one of over 700 participating schools. Visit the TDA website <http://www.tda.gov.uk> for details, or 'phone the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991; owing to high demand for places, visits are subject to availability.

Student Associates Scheme (SAS) <http://www.tda.gov.uk/studentassociates> : allows current students to spend 15 days in a school working alongside experienced teachers and assisting in classroom teaching. It attracts a bursary of £40 per day.

Student tutoring programmes: some institutions (often the careers service or students' union) offer programmes where you help with classes in schools. This might be for half a day a week over a set number of weeks, or for a block placement.

Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme (UAS): if you are a maths, science, technology, engineering or modern languages undergraduate, your department may offer a classroom-based module. This would involve spending around 40 hours working in schools. See Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme at <http://uas.ac.uk/> .

Taster courses and open days: these are organised by PGCE course providers to give an insight into teaching and teacher training. Courses last three days and tend to be targeted at shortage subjects or candidates from under-represented groups. To find out more, visit the TDA web site <http://www.tda.gov.uk>.

Taster courses in Wales

Taster courses operate in Wales and offer the opportunity for participants to sample teaching whilst boosting subject knowledge. A taster course entitled *Prepare to teach* is operated by the Open University in Wales; for details, see <http://educationcymru.org/preiit>

Criminal Records Bureau Checks

It is important to note that schools are likely to require a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check for anyone gaining experience with them. This can take up to 8 weeks at busy times - take this into consideration when planning your experience.

Work experience tips

- Keep a diary of any work experience you do; this will be invaluable when it comes to writing your applications or preparing for interviews.
- Write notes about anything that you experience. For example, if a lesson did not work, think about how you would do it differently.
- Think about classroom control, different teaching styles and effective uses of presentation or technology

C. ALTERNATIVE ENTRY ROUTES

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see also:

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Where can you find information on the GTP?

In brief this route is normally open to graduates and training is carried out while working in schools. It is a particularly good choice for career changers who need to continue earning while they train, or for graduates who have been working in school in a related capacity (e.g. as a learning mentor) and wish to qualify as a teacher.
<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/employmentbased/gtp.aspx>

Can you explain the Registered Teacher Programme?

The Registered Teacher Programme (RTP) is a programme which enables someone to study for a degree and qualify as a teacher whilst they work as an unqualified teacher in a school. It is designed to enable non-graduates with some experience of higher education to complete their degree and qualify as a teacher at the same time.

Trainees must have completed two years in higher education. The GCSE requirements for ITT also apply to the RTP; see the TDA website
<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/basicrequirements.aspx>.

To take part, you first need to be working in a school as an unqualified teacher, so you will need to find a school that will employ you to be accepted on the programme. This makes the RTP a good option for mature people who want to change to a teaching career but need to continue earning while they train. It is a challenging route as it takes effort and commitment to work and study at the same time.

Once on the programme your training will be tailored to your own individual needs and lead to qualified teacher status (QTS). Your training provider will also work with a local higher education institution to ensure that you receive suitable training to extend your subject knowledge to degree level.

More detailed information on where you can do this programme, funding and when to apply is on the TDA website at
<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/employmentbased/rt.aspx>

I got a job teaching in an independent school immediately after completing my degree. Is it possible to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) while still keeping my existing job?

It might be possible to do this through a self-funded place on the Graduate Teacher Programme, a scheme where you are employed by the school and trained on the job. You would need full support from your school, and application must be made through your local employment based initial teacher training provider (EBITT). You can find further information about the Graduate Teacher Programme and EBITTs on the TDA website:

<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/employmentbased/gtp.aspx>

There is also the QTS Assessment Only option, open to those with substantial experience of working in a UK school. This option is available in England only. Individuals may be able to qualify for QTS without further training by compiling and submitting a portfolio of evidence that they meet the required standards. A one-day assessment visit to the school is also required and candidates will need the full support of the headteacher of the school in which they are employed. There is a limited range of subjects and age groups. This process is administered by the University of Gloucestershire and there is a high demand for places. Applicants need a degree and a minimum of two years' teaching experience, as well as meeting all the standard criteria for entry to teaching.. Further information is available from the TDA and from the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership website.

(<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/qts.aspx>)

(<http://www.gitep.co.uk/?id=349>)

If you also want a PGCE qualification as well as QTS you could consider a flexible PGCE, most of which include an assessment-only option. For course details, select the 'part-time' option on the course search on the TDA website:

<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/postgraduate/gttrcoursesearch.aspx>.

What is 'Teach First' as a route into teaching?

Teach First is run by an independent charity enabling top graduates to spend two years working in challenging secondary schools in specific areas of England. Students qualify as a teacher while completing leadership training and work experience with leading employers. It is not available at primary level.

Working with selected partner schools and businesses, Teach First aims to build the future leaders by providing high quality teacher and leadership training, internships, coaching and networking. Over the two years it leads to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) but also provides the potential to develop a commercially oriented career. For entry requirements and more details see: <http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/>
<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/employmentbased/teachfirst.aspx>

Teach First only accept applications through the online form available on its website <http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/>. There are two closing dates for applications, in December and June, but popular subjects may close before these dates.

D. TEACHING JOBS / EARLY CAREERS

[Can supply teaching count towards my induction?](#)

[Can I change from primary to secondary \(or secondary to primary\) teaching now I have completed my induction?](#)

[Can I teach in a Catholic school although I am not a practising Catholic?](#)

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Can supply teaching count towards my induction?

Every newly-qualified teacher (NQT) is required to complete an induction programme on taking up their first post in a maintained school in England and Wales.

In England, any period of employment must last for at least one term to count towards the induction period, and the head teacher must agree at the outset that it will be treated as part of the induction. An NQT working as a supply teacher can take shorter periods of employment (spread over a time period of 16 months from the start of the first such period), but these do not count towards induction. If you are placed in a school for a term or more, you should ensure from the beginning that the head teacher is committed to giving you the support and time necessary to work towards the induction standards – do not rely on assurances from the supply agency alone.

The previous five year time limit for completing induction has now been removed. Induction periods can include breaks, periods working on a full time or part time basis, and periods working in different institutions, including further education colleges. See <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk> for induction arrangements in England.

In Wales, new guidance came into force in 2008 introducing more flexibility in statutory induction, which may impact on supply teachers:

- Newly qualified teachers will be eligible to work as short-term supply teachers for a maximum of five years from the date of gaining Qualified Teacher Status in order to provide them with sufficient time to secure a suitable post in which to undertake their induction period
- Appropriate Bodies (usually LEAs) will be provided with discretionary powers to determine when a period of teaching that is not for a full term or two consecutive half terms can count as a term for the purposes of induction and to determine when an newly qualified teacher who has not completed three full terms of induction can be regarded as completing a full induction period.
- All Further Education Institutions in Wales will be allowed to offer statutory induction, if they choose to.

Can I change from primary to secondary (or secondary to primary) teaching now I have completed my induction?

There is no structured course provision to convert from primary to secondary teaching or vice versa for qualified teachers. Once you have obtained Qualified Teacher Status you are legally able to teach any age group between 5 and 16; in practice this means that you can teach what you and the head teacher think you are qualified to teach. Therefore, an individual wishing to change phase or subject will need to create a portfolio of evidence to prove they are capable and competent to teach the phase or subject in question.

Subject knowledge is an important issue to consider – it will be necessary to demonstrate relevant national curriculum knowledge for the age range or secondary subject they wish to teach. In this context it is worth noting that all the subject knowledge booster courses and subject enhancement / extension courses organised by the TDA are aimed at trainee teachers and are not open to qualified teachers.

Full and part-time Returners Courses sponsored by the TDA are available around the country. Generally these courses are not intended to cater for teachers wanting to convert from one phase to another, but there might be some flexibility and if you already have some experience of teaching in the phase you want to convert to you could explore this option. For more information about Returners Courses you should register with the TDA: <http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/returners.aspx>

For further information and advice contact your local education authority.

Can I teach in a Catholic school although I am not a practising Catholic?

About 70% of teachers in Catholic schools in England and Wales are Catholic but the proportion varies from school to school and anecdotal evidence suggests that school governing bodies do differ in their recruitment policies. However, all Catholic schools will expect their teachers, regardless of whether they have no religious faith or a different faith, to support the Catholic ethos of the school (as indeed any teacher would be expected to support their school's ethos). The picture is different when applying for leadership positions later on in your career – each appointment has to be approved by the diocese, who in the past, with a few exceptions, have expected heads, deputies and heads of RE to be practising Catholics.

In Northern Ireland teachers can only be appointed to a Catholic maintained nursery or primary school if they hold a recognised Certificate in Religious Education. A Certificate is not required for posts in Catholic maintained secondary schools. For more information see the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) website (<http://www.onlineccms.com>)

In Scotland, the relevant legislation states that:

"A teacher appointed to any post on the staff of any such school by the education authority. . . shall be required to be approved as regards religious belief and character by representatives of the church or denominational body in whose interest the school has been conducted". To teach RE in a Catholic school in Scotland, you are required to sit an extra module in Religious Education for Teaching in Catholic Schools. You can sit this externally through the Department of Religious Education at Glasgow University: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/religiouseducation/courses/>

How can Fast Track help you develop your career?

The Fast Track Teaching programme closed completely in August 2009.

This option was available to students wanting to train to be a teacher until the 2005-2006 academic year, and then changed its focus to providing leadership development for existing qualified teachers; but has now ended.

If you are interested in finding out more about programmes to help you develop leadership skills within the teaching profession once you have obtained your Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), see the website of the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services: <http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk> .

See also: [What is 'Teach First' as a route into teaching?](#)

E. CROSS-BORDER / INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

[Can I do a PGCE course as an International Student?](#)

[If I do a PGCE in England or Wales, am I qualified to teach in Scotland?](#)

[How do I get a teaching job in Ireland?](#)

[Is a PGCE valid abroad?](#)

[I am an NQT – can I teach in Europe?](#)

see also:

[I am an EU student with residency status and wish to do a PGCE in Wales. What is the finance situation?](#)

Can I do a PGCE course as an International Student?

Yes - if you are an international student with a degree from a UK higher education institution (or equivalent), you can apply to do a PGCE course. There are, however, several issues you should carefully consider prior to applying for a course.

- **ITT Course Entry Criteria**

You must have a very good standard of written and spoken English and you must have the qualifications (or equivalent qualifications) that an ITT provider asks of all its applicants.

- **Transferability of PGCE qualification**

You should be aware that a teaching qualification gained in the UK may not qualify you to teach in your home country. If you are thinking of training in the UK and then teaching in your home country, check first in your own country to see whether UK qualifications are acceptable.

- **Funding**

You will only be eligible for the government-funded bursaries to train as a teacher if you have been in the UK for three years or more and have a residency visa.

- **Obtaining a teaching job in the UK**

Once you have completed your teacher training, you may need a work permit if you wish to teach in the UK. This means that you would have to find an employer prepared to take you on. This could be challenging, especially if you have trained to teach at primary level. There are currently a number of 'shortage' subjects at secondary level, which means that you might find it a little easier if you have trained in one of these subjects.

- **Teachers Trained Overseas.**

If you are qualified as a teacher overseas and outside the European Economic Area, you may be eligible to work in England as a temporary teacher without Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) for up to four years. This programme is currently available in England only. Once you have found a teaching position in a school, the Overseas Trained Teacher Programme (OTTP) will provide you with your own individual training and assessment programme which will ultimately lead to your qualification to teach in England permanently. For more information see the TDA web site:

<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/typesofcourse/ottp.aspx> .

If I do a PGCE in England or Wales, am I qualified to teach in Scotland?

All teachers need to register with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) to teach in any public sector primary or secondary school in Scotland. If you trained to teach outside Scotland, you will normally be eligible for exceptional admission to the teaching register, though you will be required to undertake a year's probationary period unless you have sufficient teaching experience already.

It is possible to complete your probation in the public sector via temporary contracts and supply teaching, but it is likely to take longer (270 teaching days as opposed to 190). Information about the induction scheme and 'alternative route' is available on the GTCS Supporting and Guiding Probationer Teachers website:

<http://www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk/>.

See the Teaching in Scotland publication on the Prospects web site for more information and vacancy sources: <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/education>

How do I get a teaching job in Ireland?

All school teachers in the Republic of Ireland should be registered with the Teaching Council (<http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/>). If you qualified to teach outside of Ireland, you must first apply for recognition of your qualifications (UK teaching qualifications are recognised), then apply for registration.

At primary level, you would normally be granted conditional recognition to teach for up to five years, during which time you are required to learn to teach in the Irish language. After this there is a probationary period to gain full recognition.

At post-primary level, EU citizens with recognition in an EU country are granted provisional recognition pending a decision on their application for full recognition. In some cases, a shortfall in academic or professional qualifications is identified, which must be addressed through an aptitude test or adaptation period within a given timescale; most commonly, this shortfall is in the area of the History & Structure of the Irish Education System, usually addressed through an aptitude test. A year's teaching experience is also required for full registration, though it is possible to get a teaching job in Ireland with conditional registration and then go on to complete the required experience.

Teaching jobs are advertised in the Independent (Thursday/Sunday editions). Applying directly to schools is another important means of getting a teaching job. For a general picture of teaching opportunities look at the sector information for 'Teaching and education' at <http://www.gradireland.com>.

A list of all schools with their addresses can be found on the Department of Education and Science website <http://www.education.ie>. Vacancies can also be found at <http://www.educationposts.com>.

Is a PGCE valid abroad?

A PGCE and subsequent professional qualifications gained after successfully completing the induction year (QTS in England and Wales, SFR in Scotland) do not necessarily qualify you to teach in another country. This depends on where you wish to work as all countries have their own rules and regulations as to who can and who cannot be accepted as a qualified teacher. Most, but not all, overseas schools will

require applicants for teaching posts to have a recognised degree and in practice, most jobs would require you to be a fully qualified teacher with experience.

In Europe the teaching profession is covered by the general system for the recognition of professional qualifications across EEA member states. Although covered by the general system, teaching qualifications are not automatically recognised by EEA states, so you have to apply for recognition in the country where you want to teach. Look at the Factsheet on Recognition of Qualifications for each country at: http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/nav/en/citizens/working/qualification-recognition/teachers/index_en.html . This details addresses and procedures for applying for recognition. For some countries you do not need to apply for recognition to teach in the private sector e.g. France. For others e.g. Greece, you need to apply for recognition for both public and private sector work. Getting recognition does not mean you will find it easy to get a job, as competition may be high. Language fluency will be expected in most countries, except in English medium schools.

For non-European countries you will need to contact the teaching professional body for the countries you are interested in to find out specific requirements. Also, be aware that in some countries, e.g. Canada and the USA, different regions or states have different policies so you will need to contact local education departments for information. You will need a working visa or permit for certain countries.

I am an NQT – can I teach in Europe?

The answer to this will vary with the type of school and where you want to teach: private schools or in public education. Assuming you want to teach the subject/age range relevant to your training in a school in Europe, the following information may help:

The teaching profession is covered by the general system for the recognition of professional qualifications across European Economic Area (EEA) member states. You receive confirmation of your professional qualifications (QTS in England and Wales, SFR in Scotland) after you have successfully completed your induction year.

Although covered by the general system, teaching qualifications are not automatically recognised by EEA states, so you have to apply for recognition in the country where you want to teach. Look at the information on Recognition of Qualifications for each country at: http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/nav/en/citizens/working/qualification-recognition/teachers/index_en.html . This details addresses and procedures for applying for recognition. For some countries you do not need to apply for recognition to teach in the private sector e.g. France. For others e.g. Greece, you need to apply for recognition for both public and private sector work.

Getting recognition does not mean you will find it easy to get a job, as competition may be high. You will find most jobs require at least one year's experience. Language fluency will be expected in most countries, except in English medium schools. For further information on these schools see <http://www.cois.org> and <http://www.cobisec.org> . You can search for job vacancies in Europe at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures> and <http://jobs.tes.co.uk> .