



Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland
Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland

Consultation Process and Responses

The Public Services Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011 changed the status of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and from April 2012 the newly independent GTC Scotland became responsible for determining what constitutes a recognised teaching qualification for individuals seeking registration as a school teacher. As part of that determination the GTC Scotland may make such provision about the education and training required to attain such a qualification as it thinks fit. This includes setting the requirements for the admission of individuals to such courses and also specifying the content, nature and duration of such courses.

The legislation goes on to require GTC Scotland to consult:

- institutions providing courses of education and training for teachers or their representatives;
- the Scottish Ministers;
- such other persons appearing to it to have an interest.

GTC Scotland must have regard to any views expressed by those consulted and must publish determinations.

Having gained responsibility for the Memorandum and the Guideline (and having recently completed a review the Professional Standards for Teachers), GTC Scotland set about reviewing these two documents. The GTC Scotland set up a small working group comprising of members of its Education Committee and discussions were held with the Initial Teacher Education Universities, the Scottish Government and Education Scotland.

Before Christmas 2012 an informal consultation exercise was completed, sounding out interested parties on what were viewed to be key issues in need of review and possible amendment. This led into a formal consultation which officially concluded on Friday 17 May 2013 - however, as is often the way in such matters, further comments continued to arrive after that date, and were taken into consideration.

As well as written submissions GTC Scotland officers met with various interested parties, including the National Implementation Board, to gain face-to-face feedback. The views expressed in the face-to-face meetings were valued and taken into account.

In total 42 written submissions were received. These covered a variety of interested parties including:

- Local Authorities,
- Universities,
- Teacher Unions,
- Scottish Government,
- Scottish Qualifications Authority,
- Parent Organisations,
- Charities,
- Learned Societies,
- Subject Interest Groups,
- Individuals.

As/...

As well as submitting their responses, two respondent groups also released them to the media and the consultation was thence covered in the Herald and featured as an item on a BBC Radio Scotland programme.

A number of individual responses then followed, making the same point about the importance of Maths and Science for Primary teachers, vis-a-vis Modern Languages.

A number of recently published national reports on educational matters were also considered. These are referenced in the revised documents.

The issues highlighted in the consultation were as noted below with respondents asked to comment on any matters that they wished.

1 Consultation Issues

(i) Suggested Key Changes in the Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland

- Section 1.1

Updated to reflect the legislation setting up the independent GTCS and aspects of its new role.

- Section 1.2

Update in the light of revisions to the Standards.

- Section 1.3

Updated in the light of Teaching Scotland's Future and subsequent national developments.

- Section 1.4

Update in the light of revisions to the Standards.

- Section 2

Updated to reflect the legislation setting up the independent GTCS and aspects of its new role.

- Section 3.1

Substantially updated and supplemented to reflect Teaching Scotland's Future and the revised Standards.

Reiterates the need for admission to a programme of ITE to include an interview process.

Reference added to Equalities legislation.

- Section 3.2

Clarification between 'combined' and 'concurrent' degrees given.

- Section 3.3/...

- Section 3.3

Reference to health and wellbeing added. Reference to 'interdisciplinary studies' revised to 'interdisciplinary learning'.

Reference to teaching General Science adjusted to reflect Curriculum for Excellence terminology.

Industrial placement for BEd (Technology) programmes made optional.

(ii) Suggested Key Changes in the Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland

- Section 1

Updated to reflect the legislation setting up the independent GTCS and aspects of its new role.

Reference added to Equalities legislation.

- Section 2

Substantially updated and supplemented to reflect Teaching Scotland's Future and the revised Standards.

Adds the requirement for applicants to have a Maths qualification at SCQF level 5 for all ITE programmes.

Reiterates that topup credit remains at a maximum of 20 credit points.

- Section 3

Adds a note stressing that a candidate's Fitness to Teach (ie regarding conduct matters) will be considered upon application for Provisional Registration with the GTCS.

- Section 4(i)

Clarification between 'combined' and 'concurrent' degrees given.

- Section 4(ii)

In relation to the Scottish Government's Language Working Group report Language Learning in Scotland A 1+2 Approach, sets the requirement that applicants for undergraduate programmes for Primary must have a languages qualification at SCQF level 6 either on entry to the programme or have achieved one by the completion of the programme.

Sets the same requirement for PGDE programmes.

Signals the intention of the GTCS to consider making this a mandatory pre-entry requirement from a future date.

- Section 5(i)/...

- Section 5(i)

Clarification between 'combined' and 'concurrent' degrees given.
- Section 5(ii)

Indicates that specific requirements for Art and Design, Drama and Religious Education are to be set. (See section 6)

Adds a note indicating that, where appropriate, teachers will contribute to interdisciplinary learning.

Signals the intention of the GTCS to explore with partners the introduction of teaching qualifications in Dance and Psychology from session 2015/16.

Adds the requirement for applicants to have a Maths qualification at SCQF level 5 for all Secondary ITE programmes.
- Section 6

Information added regarding Art and Design, Drama and Religious Education.

For Modern Foreign Languages stresses the requirement that universities check that residency periods have been met before admission to ITE programmes.
- Appendix A

Updated information on university contact details.

University of the Highlands and Island added.

Table showing ITE programmes by university updated.
- Appendix B

Updated.
- Appendix C

Updated to reflect new National Qualifications,
- Appendix D

Clarifies that National 5 Lifeskills Maths is an acceptable qualification to meet Maths requirements.

2 Outcomes

As might be expected the issues raised garnered a variety of different comments but in only a few areas were there a range of disparate views. The GTC Scotland Working Group, the GTC Scotland Education Committee and ultimately Council considered the views expressed in the consultation and on balance concluded that the following key changes were appropriate. (In the outline of the changes provided below, brief explanations are given of the consultation comments leading to the decisions made on these matters.)

(i)/...

(i) Key Changes

- Guidelines

Greater emphasis put on partnership between universities and schools/local authorities.

Model of the teacher revised to reflect the revised Standards.

Greater emphasis put on additional support needs.

Comment: All of these changes reflected recent developments in Scottish education and were widely supported in the consultation.

Clarification of the Professional/Post Graduate Diploma in Education title.

Clarification between Combined and Concurrent Degrees.

Comment: While slightly esoteric, these changes arose from university points in the consultation.

BEd Technology industrial placement made optional.

Comment: One respondent argued against this change but others (including past comment from students) agreed that making the placement optional was positive.

- Entry Memorandum

- Primary - Undergraduate

Continuation of previous statement of minimum requirements for entry to Primary: at least three SCQF level 6 qualifications (Highers) one of which must be English, plus two other SCQF level 5 (Standard Grade Credit/National 5) qualifications one of which must be Maths. (NB these are minimum requirements with competitive entry meaning that one university is requiring 4 A grades at Higher.)

Comment: Some respondents argued for making the requirements more demanding and more specific but others, including university responses, strongly supported the status quo, pointing out that these were minimum requirements and that entrance to ITE was already a competitive process.

In addressing the Scottish Government Languages Working Group report *Language Learning in Scotland A 1+2 Approach* (2012) and the Science and Engineering Education Advisory Group - Second Report *Supporting Scotland's STEM Education and Culture* (2012) the Entry Memorandum has adopted as an interim position at this time not to require that holding a qualification at SCQF level 6 in a Modern Language and/or a Science becomes a mandatory requirement for entry to an ITE programme leading to a teaching qualification for Primary.

GTC Scotland would however encourage universities to expect at least an SCQF level 5 qualification in one or other of these subject areas.

Meantime/...

Meantime GTC Scotland will work with the Scottish Government's Strategic Implementation Group on 1+2 Languages, the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education Committee (STEMEC), the educational community and the universities towards developing these areas so that sufficient numbers of applicants suitably qualified in these fields are in the future produced for Primary ITE programmes.

Consideration will also be given in the future to raising the required level of Maths qualification to SCQF level 6 at a later date but at the moment the SCQF level 5 requirement, as a minimum, is maintained.

Comment: This was the one area of controversy in the consultation with the Maths/Science community arguing for parity of expectation with Modern Languages. Other respondents however recognised the danger of being overly specific in the range of Highers which must be achieved and the potentially limiting effect of this on the size and make-up of the group who could apply for ITE. Concerns were also expressed about the lead in time for such changes to be introduced and on their possible effect on the wider access agenda. There was also considerable debate on moving the Maths requirement to Higher but university research and comment questioned the utility of such a move and hence GTC Scotland reached the above position. Council members were keen to work with the various subject communities to address these issues for the future.

– Primary - Professional/Post Graduate

The requirements to have a degree plus Higher English and SCQF level 5 Maths are maintained but the above picture regarding Modern Languages and Maths/Science is also relevant.

– Secondary

Requirements maintained as previously. However, as well as Higher English Secondary applicants will now be required, for the first time, to have a Maths qualification at SCQF level 5.

Comment: This was widely welcomed in the consultation responses with comments particularly focusing on the need, within Curriculum for Excellence, for all teachers to contribute to the development of numeracy.

Possible top-up credit increased to 30 points (from 20) ie if someone has 50 relevant points in a subject from a degree they can top it up with another 30 points from further study.

Comment: Few respondents commented on this matter but amongst those who did there was a general agreement that increasing the proportion of top-up credit would be positive.

Masters/...

Masters degree credit to be taken into consideration for the first time.

Comment: Few respondents commented on this matter but amongst those who did there was general agreement that having this as a possibility was positive. Universities also acknowledged that there would have to be careful consideration by them of any Masters credit to ensure that it was relevant for the subject to be taught.

Greater stress put on the necessity of meeting residence requirements for Modern Languages applicants.

Comment: Respondents generally welcomed this although some concerns were expressed on possible Equal Opportunities implications. These will be kept under review.

Commitment given to developing Teaching Qualifications in Psychology and Dance.

Comment: Respondents welcomed this commitment.

3 Conclusion

As agreed at a meeting of the GTC Scotland Education Committee on 22 May, in the light of submissions, further revisions were made to the draft documents which were then considered by the GTC Scotland working group at a meeting on 31 May and thereafter a final draft was presented to and approved at the GTC Scotland Council meeting on 12 June.

The final versions of the Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland and the Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland are now on the GTC Scotland website.

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