

DRIVING FORWARD PROFESSIONAL  
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS



## Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Programmes in Scotland

June 2013

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and status

Under the Public Services Reform (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Order 2011 all programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Scotland require the accreditation of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). It is for the GTCS to determine what constitutes a recognised teaching qualification for individuals seeking registration as a school teacher. A determination may make such provision about the education and training required to attain such a qualification as the GTCS thinks fit.

These guidelines set out the GTC Scotland policy on the content, nature and duration of programmes leading to teaching qualifications (TQs) for the primary and secondary sectors. They supersede those which were issued in 2006 by the Scottish Government and come into effect from the start of academic session 2013/2014.

## 1.2 The aims of teacher education

The overall aim of programmes of initial teacher education is to prepare student teachers to become competent, thoughtful, reflective and innovative practitioners, who are committed to providing high quality teaching and learning for all pupils. Programmes must ensure that student teachers meet the requirements of the Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR), which is part of the Standards for Registration, mandatory requirements for Registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

The means by which such professionals will be developed is through programmes whose design match in with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's requirements and the Standard for Provisional Registration in Scotland.

## 1.3 Partnership in initial teacher education

Initial teacher education in Scotland is provided by the universities in partnership with schools and education authorities. Each of the partners has particular priorities, roles and responsibilities as have been highlighted in documents such as Teaching Scotland's Future (2011), Teaching Scotland's Future – National Partnership Group: Report to Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning (2012) and Teaching Scotland's Future National Framework Agreement for Partnership in the Early Phase of Teacher Learning (2013). Good partnership arrangements take full account of the partners' mutual aims and their respective priorities and responsibilities. All partners including the GTCS and the Scottish Government will continue to keep the quality of arrangements for partnership under consideration.

## 1.4 Initial teacher education in the context of continuing professional development

Initial teacher education, as the first stage in the process of professional education, is the foundation on which all further professional development is built. Newly qualified teachers are Provisionally Registered with the General Teaching Council and only attain Full Registration on successful completion of a probationary period (normally one year) which allows them to achieve the Standard for Full Registration. Fully Registered teachers are thereafter expected to be committed to career-long learning and to identify their own professional development needs through a process of self-

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evaluation and review which allows them to meet the requirements of Professional Update by maintaining and enhancing the Standard for Full Registration, or perhaps move onto the Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning or the Standards for Leadership and Management.

While some universities may continue to offer Additional Teaching Qualifications, which will remain subject to accreditation, other opportunities for teachers to gain professional recognition or additional registration are provided through the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Framework for Professional Recognition and Framework for Professional Registration.

## 2 Conditions for the Accreditation of All Programmes of Initial Teacher Education

As a general rule, the General Teaching Council for Scotland will only accredit those programmes of initial teacher education which meet the following conditions:

- ❖ Programmes must be subject to validation and review processes under the auspices of a university or degree awarding institution. These processes must involve external members from outside the university teaching the programme.
- ❖ Programmes must provide pathways leading to registration as a primary or secondary teacher.
- ❖ The minimum requirements for entry to programmes in any year will be those laid down in the relevant ***'Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland'***.
- ❖ Programmes must meet the requirements set out in Section 3, below.

## 3 Requirements for Programmes

The requirements in this section apply to the pattern of programme provision at the time of publication. This does not preclude the development of other types of provision and universities are free to discuss alternative proposals with the GTCS.

### 3.1 Requirements applying to ALL programmes

The system of selection of student teachers must take into account available reports on individual applicants, their experience and interests and the extent to which they match the personal characteristics desirable in a teacher.

Applicants must have appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy and suitable level of competence in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). They must have appropriate interpersonal skills and have the kind of personal qualities which will allow them to relate well to young people. They must show the characteristics of the attributes which will allow them to develop as teachers and ultimately as extended professionals.

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They must have the capacity to develop professional values and to be reflective and innovative. They should show they have the capability to become experts in pedagogy and agents of change rather than recipients of it and to be autonomous while recognising their place within systems. They should have commitment, resilience and high levels of self-efficacy. They should have the capacity to develop appropriate subject content and pedagogic content knowledge. They should show they are capable of being accountable and being able to consider the impact of their teaching on pupils and learners.

They should have the capacity to know about research and scholarship and, where appropriate in the future, be actively able to practise research through, for example, professional enquiry.

They should be committed to their own ongoing professional development and have some awareness of education's links to other fields. They should show that they will be committed to working with other professionals within and beyond education.

In short, they should show that they have the capacity to meet the Standard for Provisional Registration which specifies what is expected of a student teacher at the end of Initial Teacher Education who is seeking provisional registration with GTC Scotland.

Student teachers should only be admitted to a programme after an interview process which should normally involve personnel from both the university and education authorities/schools. Programmes must contain clear arrangements and criteria for recognising prior learning and experience, and offer opportunities for part-time and distance learning wherever this is appropriate. Satisfactory completion of an enhanced Disclosure Scotland check, leading to membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme, will be required as part of the application process as a condition of admission.

Student teachers completing the programme and gaining the award of a teaching qualification (TQ) must have demonstrated that they have met the Standard for Provisional Registration.

Programmes must:

- ❖ have effective partnership arrangements which address the key principles of partnership as identified in the STEC/ADES National Framework Agreement for Partnership in the Early Phase of Teacher Learning;
- ❖ have an appropriate balance of professional studies, subject studies and relevant school educational placement experience;
- ❖ contain clear arrangements for updating in line with national developments and new perspectives arising from educational research;
- ❖ meet the QAA Benchmarks which are within the Standard for Provisional Registration;
- ❖ allow student teachers to meet the Standard for Provisional Registration; and
- ❖ meet all Equalities Legislation requirements and allow the opportunity for such reasonable adjustments as may be required to be offered.

Programmes must prepare teachers to be responsive to the range and diversity of the needs of all pupils.

School experience placements (or other relevant educational placement experience such as within Children's Services provision) must provide the practical context to illustrate and develop the skills, understanding and content being developed in the programme. They will normally be undertaken in blocks of time, but may also include a series of days. Each placement block must be assessed.

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Within partnerships, placements must be jointly planned with the roles and responsibilities of staff clearly defined.

Programmes must develop in student teachers an understanding of the importance of partnership between the different sectors of education in order to ensure the smooth transition of pupils from one sector to another.

Programmes must address current educational issues and develop in student teachers the flexibility to play a positive part in educational developments, such as A Curriculum for Excellence, by encouraging a disposition for professional enquiry.

Programmes which offer a Gaelic medium pathway must ensure that at the end of the programme student teachers can demonstrate the Standard for Provisional Registration through Gaelic.

The quality of student teachers' teaching and classroom management must be assessed and the award of a teaching qualification will be conditional on such quality being satisfactory.

### **3.2 Requirements applying to programmes leading to the award of a Teaching Qualification (Primary Education)**

#### ***General***

Programmes must prepare teachers to teach children through two full years of pre-school education, and those attending primary school. They must ensure that all new teachers are able to deliver teaching programmes which are appropriate for these stages. New teachers must, therefore, have knowledge and understanding of children's learning and development and be able to deliver the full curriculum. They should also have an awareness of the transition issues between pre-school, primary and secondary schools.

Programmes must make student teachers aware of their contribution to pupils' development, including the acquisition of core skills. They should also raise student teachers' awareness of primary teachers' wider role in protecting the children they teach as set out in the Scottish Government's Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

Student teachers must, therefore, undertake blocks of experience, including in a pre-school environment, and giving appropriate coverage to the range of stages of the primary school.

#### ***Undergraduate (Primary Education) Degrees***

Undergraduate programmes leading to a TQ (Primary) may be of two types: combined degrees or concurrent degrees:

- ❖ Combined degrees are those where the TQ is awarded within the degree, (The 'traditional' form of the BEd.)
- ❖ Concurrent degrees are those where the degree is awarded with the TQ being awarded separately.

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### ***Combined Degrees***

Combined degree programmes leading to an integrated TQ (Primary Education) must involve 4 academic years of full-time study or equivalent part-time study.

At least 30 weeks must be devoted to school/educational placement experience. More than half of this experience should occur in the final 2 years of the programme, with a substantial block taking place in the last year.

Programmes must contain appropriate elements of study, including in-depth academic study in areas beyond education, to allow student teachers to extend and deepen their knowledge, understanding and experience in order to meet the Standard for Provisional Registration.

### ***Concurrent Degrees***

Concurrent degree programmes (where the final degree is awarded and a TQ is awarded separately) must involve four academic years full-time study or the equivalent through part-time study. Universities must ensure that, on graduation, student teachers have an area of specialism within the Primary curriculum and meet the Standard for Provisional Registration. There must be a total of school/educational placement experience equivalent to that in a PGDE (Primary) programme, ie a minimum of 18 weeks.

### ***Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE): Primary***

The PGDE (Primary) programme must be a full-time programme, lasting for a minimum of 36 weeks, or the equivalent on a part-time basis.

At least 50% of the programme must be devoted to school/educational placement experience which will occur in each school term, with a block of at least 4 weeks taking place towards the end of the programme.

Programmes must contain appropriate elements of study to allow student teachers to extend and deepen their knowledge, understanding and experience in order to meet the Standard for Provisional Registration and should enable all student teachers to build on relevant elements of their original degree programme for use in primary schools.

## **3.3 Requirements applying to programmes leading to the award of a Teaching Qualification (Secondary Education)**

### ***General***

Programmes must be designed to prepare teachers to teach pupils in secondary schools in one or more subjects and will lead to a TQ (Secondary Education) in a subject (or subjects). Consideration must also be given to the needs of adults taught in some secondary schools.

Student teachers' study of the secondary curriculum must cover current national guidance and prepare student teachers to identify and meet pupils' needs in the cross-curricular aspects of their subjects, including literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing.

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Student teachers must have some experience and understanding of the primary sector, the secondary/further education/higher education interface and of progression beyond formal education into the world of work.

Programmes must make student teachers aware of the contribution made by their subject(s) to the secondary school curriculum and to pupils' development, including the acquisition of core skills. They should also raise student teachers' awareness of secondary teachers' wider role in schools beyond subject teaching, through contributing to the ethos of the school and to interdisciplinary learning.

### ***Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE): Secondary***

The PGDE (Secondary) programme must be a full-time programme lasting for a minimum of 36 weeks, or the equivalent on a part-time basis.

At least 50% of the programme must be devoted to school/educational placement experience which should take place in each school term with a block of at least 4 weeks taking place towards the end of the programme. In the case of student teachers seeking a qualification in more than one subject, the arrangements for school experience must allow student teachers to meet the requirements for the Standard for Provisional Registration in each subject.

Student teachers undertaking a PGDE (Secondary) programme leading to a TQ or TQs in physics, chemistry or biology must also be appropriately prepared to teach general science within the school stages relating to a broad general education.

### ***Undergraduate programmes leading to secondary Teaching Qualifications***

Concurrent degree programmes (where the final degree is awarded in a Secondary subject and a TQ in that subject is awarded separately) must involve at least three and a half academic years full-time study or the equivalent part-time study. Universities must ensure that, on graduation, student teachers' level of academic attainment in their subject specialism complies with the relevant PGDE (Secondary) entry requirements in the 'Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Teacher Education in Scotland'. There must be a total of school/educational placement experience equivalent to that in a PGDE (Secondary) programme, ie a minimum of 18 weeks. Concurrent programmes leading to a TQ or TQs in physics, chemistry or biology must prepare student teachers to teach general science in the school stages relating to a broad general education.

Combined degree programmes in which the degree awarded at the end of the programme is also a TQ are normally Bachelor of Education (BEd) programmes. Such programmes must involve 4 academic years full-time study or the equivalent part-time study. Universities must ensure that, on graduation, student teachers' level of academic attainment in their subject specialism complies with the relevant PGDE (Secondary) entry requirements in the ***Memorandum on Entry Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland***. Not less than 30 weeks of the programme must be devoted to school/educational placement experience. In the case of the BEd (Technology) a minimum of 30 weeks must be spent on placement with a minimum of 24 weeks spent specifically on school experience and a further minimum of 6 weeks available for an optional industrial placement depending on the student teacher's needs and previous experience. The industrial placements should be drawn from a range of industrial, commercial and service organisations.



*GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities*

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**Main site:**  
[www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk)

**Probation department:**  
[www.gtcs.org.uk/probation](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/probation)

**Probation site for teachers:**  
[www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk](http://www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk)

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