



Thinking about Teacher Training?

By Zoe Bett

Teaching can be a rewarding occupation of the right person both financially and personally. It can be a career that will allow you to use your skills, qualifications and personal qualities. There are great opportunities for development and career progression. Training grants of up to £20,000 are also available for some subjects. However, teaching is not for everyone and the decision as to whether to consider it as a career option should be carefully thought through.

Routes into teaching

- **PGCE**

In order to complete a PGCE you must first complete an undergraduate degree. You can also complete a PGCE after completing a postgraduate qualification such as a Masters or PhD. You will also be required to hold GCSEs with a Grade C or above in English and Mathematics and, if you are applying to the Primary PGCE, also in Science (or equivalent).

- **Other Options**

Another option is to do a SCITT course which are much more school based than the standard PGCE. SCITT courses normally require you to have more teaching experience than PGCE and are normally run by schools rather than universities. Click [here](#) for more details for providers.

You can also do the Graduate Teaching Programme (GTP). Like SCITT this is a school based programme. Click [here](#) for further details.

It is most likely that most people who want to become a teacher straight after completing an undergraduate degree will do a PGCE since the SCITT and GTP generally require more extensive classroom experience.

Passing QTS involves fulfilling a number of criteria. You will be assigned a mentor when you start your first job after the PGCE who will decide if you have fulfilled [all the criteria](#).

Terminology

QTS (Qualified Teacher Status): The accreditation that enables you to teach in state-maintained and special schools in England and Wales. Achieving QTS means that you are fully qualified to teach.

NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher): A teacher who has completed a PGCE and is in their first year of teaching

PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education): A postgraduate qualification in England and Wales which is one route to becoming a school teacher

SCITT (School-centred initial teacher training): Training which leads to QTS but is more school based than the PGCE.

GTP (Graduate Teaching Programme): A programme that leads to QTS while training and working in a paid teaching role.

GTTR (Graduate Teacher Training Registry): The organisation responsible for graduate students applying for initial teaching training.

TDA (Training and Development Agency for School): An agency responsible for teacher training in England.

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Work experience and ways to get it.

It is essential to gain work experience before doing teacher training. It will not only aid your application but will also help you decide which level or subject you want to teach at. You will probably be asked about your work experience at interview

Contact Schools directly - Many schools will be willing to let you observe classes or shadow teachers. Use this [website](#) to find school close to you and contact details.

Volunteer - There are a wealth of opportunities that you can fit around your studies ([link](#)). UEA also run a [Volunteers in Primary School Scheme](#)

Become a Teaching Assistant/ Classroom Assistant - You would normally do this after completing your degree as posts tend to be between 20 and 35 hours a week. However posts with less hours a week are available) in this post you would never be solely responsible for class but would instead either assist the teachers with the class or individual pupils (for example those with special educational needs)

Become a Cover Supervisor - In these positions you will be required to be available to cover classes if for example a teacher becomes sick. These positions are generally full time.

Click [here](#) for school vacancies in Norfolk

Most SCITT courses and GTPs will give you Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) after one year (in essence you are able to skip being an NQT after the course in over because of the amount of classroom time within the course) but may not give you a PGCE (some councils may have agreements with a local university to award you the academic qualification). It's a little complicated but the only real difference that you will notice in the course is that the SCITT course and GTPs are a lot more classroom based. It's really a decision about how you learn best and how much experience you have had in the classroom prior to training to be a teacher.

Pay scales

Pay scales for teachers are shown here ([Link](#)) and you will increase one scale point a year. In your NQT year you will be on scale point 1. Starting salaries for teachers outside London are just over £21,000 increasing in increments of about £2000 a year.

Entry Requirements

For secondary PGCE you will need an undergraduate degree in the subject you want to teach. However some universities will allow you to enrol on their PGCE in a subject other than your degree subject if you can show that a significant proportion of your degree was related to that subject such as business or maths. However remember that if you are applying to do a PGCE in a subject that was not your primary degree subject, you will be up against people who did. Apply early and

make sure you can explain why you have chosen a different subject to your degree specialisation.

Some universities will also require that you do a subject enhancement course if they feel that your knowledge of the subject should be improved before starting the course. These can normally be taken 6 months before the course starts and their completion may be a condition of entry to the course.

The subject area you studied is largely irrelevant if you want to study for a primary PGCE. However courses in subjects that feature in the primary curriculum are preferred. There are also Primary years PGCEs which specialise in languages, art, English, English as an additional language, humanities, maths, music and science for which you may need specific qualifications

Application Process

You apply for all university based PGCE course through the [GTTR website](#). You apply for some SCITT courses through the GTTR website too but some ask you apply directly to them. You always apply for the GTP directly through the provider. Please look at individual websites to find out more. It costs £19 to apply through the GTTR website for courses starting in 2012. However if you apply for a secondary maths, physics, chemistry or modern foreign languages course through the GTTR you can claim the money back. You will need to register on the website, fill out the application form (together with a personal statement) and provide two referees ([link](#)) Deadlines can be found [here](#) but remember that some courses may be filled before the

Top Tips:

- Never apply for both the primary and secondary course. The people accessing your application may see this as you being indecisive or not certain about a career in teaching
- Get experience! This will help convince people assessing your application that you are serious about wanting to be a teacher.
- If you are applying for high school PGCE choose a subject and stick to it! (Economics, Maths)
- Prepare for the interview! Click [here](#) for some advice.





Who to contact

For more information on the UEA PGCE please contact edu.pgce.admiss@uea.ac.uk Tel: 01603 592855 ([link](#))

For information of SCITT courses in Norfolk and Suffolk please contact edward.hill@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 01473 265080 ([link](#))

For information on GTP in Norfolk and Suffolk please contact beverley.gregory@norfolk.gov.uk or debbie.barr@norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01603 307703 or 307706 ([link](#))

For information on a career in teaching call the teaching information line on 0800 389 2500 or visit the [TDA Facebook page](#)

For information on the application please call the GTTR on 0871 468 0469 or visit their [website](#).

Tuition fees and Bursaries

You will have to pay tuition fees to complete a PGCE and SCITT and tuition fees will vary by course, university and SCITT provider. With GTP providers some programmes are funded and some aren't. Contact each directly to find out exact tuition or training fees. However Home and EU students on PGCE and SCITT courses could be eligible for a tuition fee loan through [Student Finance England](#)

The bursaries are the same for SCITT and PGCE. In order to get a training bursary from the government (you don't have to pay these back) you will need at least at 2:2 degree although many universities require that you have a 2:1 degree to get onto their PGCE. Bursaries are given out according to subject taught, level taught and degree classification and the level of payment increases for subjects where there is a shortage of teachers.

For example for an Economics PGCE and Primary PGCE you would receive a £9000 bursary if you got a first, £5000 if you got a 2:1 and nothing if you got a 2:2. For a Mathematics PGCE you would receive a £20,000 bursary if you got a first £15,000 if you got a 2:1 and £12,000 if you got a 2:2. Click [here](#) for further details. Bursaries are subject to UK residency requirement so please check the [TDA website](#) to check you are eligible.

On the GTP you will be paid as an unqualified teacher (<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6000189>).

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UEA offers the following courses

- **Lower Primary** (Specialising in the Foundation Stage -Nursery and Reception- and Key Stage 1 -Years 1 and 2)
- **Primary** (Specialising in Key Stage 1 - Years 1 and 2 - and Lower Key Stage 2 - Years 3 and 4)
- **Upper Primary** (Specialising in Key Stage 2 - Years 3, 4, 5 and 6)
- **Primary Specialising in French/ German/ Spanish** (Specialising in Key Stage 2 - Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 - including language teaching)
- **High school (age 11+) Biology/ English/ Chemistry/ French/ Geography/ German/ History/ Maths/ Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish) / Physical Education/ Physics/ Religious Education**

Many thanks to Rebecca Lewis (History Teacher at Wymondham College) and Leigh Osborne (Administrative Assistant – PGCE Admissions) for their input and advice!