School Direct

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Academic Year 2013/14

Version 2: February 2013
## Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 3  

1. School Direct ................................................................................................................................. 4  

2. School Direct Partnerships .......................................................................................................... 5  

3. Requesting School Direct places ................................................................................................. 5  

4. Recruitment and selection ............................................................................................................ 8  

5. Data Requirements and reporting ................................................................................................. 11  

6. Receiving funding School Direct Training Programe (tuition fee) ... 12  

7. Receiving funding School Direct Training Programme (salaried) .... 17  

8. Training ......................................................................................................................................... 19  

9. Expectation of Employment ........................................................................................................ 20  

10. Audit and Evaluation .................................................................................................................. 21  

11. Application System ..................................................................................................................... 22  

12. Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses (SKEs) ................................................................. 23  

Annex A: Further Information & Points of Contact ........................................................................ 26
Introduction

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) guide is a support tool for the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

It should not be used in isolation, or as a single point of reference for the operational delivery of School Direct or Training Bursaries.

This is a live document and the FAQs are relevant to starting in academic year (AY) 2013/14 only. The operations manual for School Direct and supporting FAQs for the next academic year, AY 2014/15 will be published in the autumn term of 2013.

This document should also be used in conjunction with the fortnightly School Direct bulletin which can be found here.

Changes may be made to this document. When this happens a new version of this document will be issued and supersede this version. Any such changes will be notified in the School Direct bulletin with a link to the new version of the guidance. The School Direct bulletin will also confirm which version of the guidance is the most up to date and should be in use.
1. School Direct

Q1.1: What is School Direct?

A1.1: School Direct is an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) route that provides the opportunity for schools or partnerships of schools to apply for ITT places working in conjunction with an ITT provider. It offers 2 types of training, School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee) and School Direct Training Programme (salaried).

Q1.2: Who is School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee) open to?

A1.2: School Direct Training Programme (tuition fees) is open to all home or EU graduates. The route is funded by tuition fees paid obtained by the trainee from the Student Loans Company (SLC), or directly by the trainee. For more information on this route, please see Section 1 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q1.3: Who is the School Direct Training Programme (salaried) route open to?

A1.3: School Direct Training Programme (salaried) is only for high quality graduates with at least three years’ work experience. Prospective candidates are expected to be career changers, who can bring valuable skills and experience to the profession. Other criteria also apply; please see Section 4 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q1.4: What type of experience would be considered relevant for the School Direct Training Programme (salaried) route?

A1.4: The experience does not have to be from an educational setting and examples could include those who have worked in the financial, engineering or manufacturing sectors; however there are no restrictions. It is for schools to decide which skills and experiences are relevant.

Q1.5: What should the School Direct Training Programme (salaried) trainee be employed as?

A1.5: Trainees will be employed as unqualified teachers at one of the schools in the partnership and need not be in a ‘supernumerary’ position (i.e. in addition to your regular teaching staff numbers). For more information please see Section 4 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.
2. **School Direct Partnerships**

Q2.1: What is a ‘School Direct Partnership’?

A2.1: A ‘School Direct Partnership’ is a partnership between a ‘lead school’, other ‘partner schools’ and an accredited ITT provider.

Q2.2: Who requests places?

A2.2: School Direct places are requested by the lead school to the Teaching Agency (TA). Lead schools can be maintained (primary, secondary, academies or free schools).

Q2.3: Who ‘holds’ the places?

A2.3: The lead school holds the allocated places for the School Direct partnership and both the ITT provider and the lead school are responsible for ensuring that the criteria for School Direct places are met. For more information please see Section 1 of the [School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14](#).

Q2.4: Who decides what provider to work with?

A2.4: The lead school must decide which provider they wish to work with before it applies for School Direct places.

3. **Requesting School Direct places**

Q3.1: Which schools can request School Direct places?

A3.1: Any maintained school (primary, secondary, academies or free schools) can request School Direct places through their lead school. Sixth form colleges and private schools cannot be lead schools unless they are also designated as Teaching Schools. For more information please see Section 1 of the [School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14](#).

Q3.2: Which ITT Providers can be involved in School Direct?

A3.2: Schools can choose any type of ITT provider to work with on School Direct. They must have been accredited to provide ITT courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and can be HEI (university) or non-HEI-led. If the lead school is itself accredited as an ITT provider it can act as both the lead school and the partner provider.
Q3.3: Who is responsible for the recommendation of QTS?

A3.3: The provider is accountable and responsible for the recommendation of the award of QTS. The provision must therefore be compliant with the Secretary of State's ITT Criteria and align with the 2012 Ofsted Framework for the inspection of ITT. Please see Section 4 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q3.4: Who is responsible for securing the agreement of the roles and responsibilities of the provider and schools?

A3.4: The lead school is responsible for this and the schools in which training will take place. This should be set out in a formal partnership agreement. For more information please see Section 1 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q3.5: What should be in a ‘partnership agreement’?

A3.5: The following link provides a steer on what should be taken into account when drawing up a partnership agreement:
http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/i/itt%20criteria%20supporting%20advice%202012.pdf

Q3.6: Who will the TA correspond with?

A3.6: The TA will correspond with the lead school on high level issues relating the School Direct; however the TA will correspond with the ITT provider regarding allocations change requests. For Funding, Allocations and School Direct general queries please see Annex A at the end of this document for contact details.

Q3.7: How can a lead school change their contact name?

A3.7: A change to the School Direct Lead school should be emailed to both teach@ta-recruit.education.gov.uk to ensure communications are sent to the correct contact and TA.ALLOCATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk to make changes to the School Direct application system.

Q3.8: How does a school make changes to School Direct allocated places, either tuition fee or salaried?

A3.8: The request must be confirmed by the ITT provider. Lead schools may not request changes via e-mail directly to the TA, for more information please see Section 1 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.
Q3.9: How do schools change ITT provider?

A3.9: If a lead school decides to change partner ITT provider, they should inform the TA at TA.Allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk, setting out the subject(s), number of places, who the previous ITT partner was and the new partner ITT provider with whom they are delivering the place(s). For more information please see Section 1 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q3.10: What does a lead school do if it cannot fill its allocated places?

A3.10: If lead schools hold School Direct allocated places that are unlikely to be filled, they should be handed back (relinquished) to the TA as soon as possible. This will enable redistribution to other school partnerships that need them.

Q3.11: What if the places are in the highest priority subjects; mathematics, physics, chemistry and modern languages?

A3.11: The TA would encourage the school to keep the priority places and continue to fill them if possible. For more information please see Section 1 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q3.12: Can a sixth-form college apply for School Direct places?

A3.12: A sixth form college cannot be a lead school for funded places (on either School Direct strand), unless they are a Teaching School. There is a clear expectation that sixth-form colleges that are Teaching Schools use their places for the good of their partnership. In this case, the expectation of employment should be in a school in the partnership, rather than the college.

So, a School Direct Training programme (salaried) trainee cannot be employed by a sixth-form college while training. However, a lead school with School Direct places can work in partnership with a sixth-form college to enhance the quality of training, such as for a placement or to provide specific training.

The money attached to the School Direct place belongs to the lead school and it is for them to determine the distribution of spend with their ITT provider. They may choose to transfer some of their funding to the sixth-form college to cover services they provide. Again, the expectation of employment should be in a state school in the partnership.

If a sixth-form college decides to self-finance a School Direct Training Programme (salaried) place, these rules do not apply.
Q3.13: Can an independent or private school apply for School Direct places?

A3.13: A private school cannot be a lead school for funded places (on either School Direct strand), unless they are a teaching school. There is a clear expectation that private teaching schools use their places for the good of their partnership. In this case, the expectation of employment should be in a state school in the partnership.

The money attached to the School Direct place belongs to the state school and it is for them to determine the distribution of spend with their ITT provider. They may choose to transfer some of their funding to the private school to cover services they provide. Again, the expectation of employment should be in a state school in the partnership.

If a school decides to self-finance a School Direct Training Programme (salaried) place, these rules do not apply.

Where academy chains include publicly funded and privately funded schools, the money received for training should be accounted for separately to facilitate any audit TA commissions, ensuring adherence to the policy set out above.

Q3.14: How do I request places as an academy chain?

A3.14: The central office for the academy chain should act in the same way as a lead school and should submit requests and receive places on an academy’s behalf. The central office is also responsible for securing agreement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the provider and schools, including the schools in which training will take place, and this should be set out in a formal partnership agreement.

4. Recruitment and selection

Q4.1: How do schools recruit for their places?

A4.1: Schools can recruit locally through their own processes, work with their ITT provider to use its marketing and recruitment processes, or use a combination of the two. For more information please see Section 2 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.
Q4.2: What type of graduates should places be offered to?

A4.2: The TA promotes entry to teaching, including through School Direct, to attract graduates with degree classes at 2:1 or above. Schools will be encouraged to select participants on this basis.

Q4.3: What if the graduate has a 3rd class honours?

A4.3: Schools are encouraged to give places to those graduates with a 2:1 or above, however degree classification should not be a barrier to good candidates undertaking ITT.

Q4.4: Who should take the lead in the interview and selection process?

A4.4: Schools should take the lead in interviewing and selecting candidates, but all School Direct candidates must meet ITT eligibility and entry criteria. All School Direct candidates will also have to meet the entry requirements of the school’s chosen provider.

Q4.5: What if the candidate fails the provider entry requirements?

A4.5: Providers retain the final accountability for ensuring that all trainees meet all of the ITT criteria. If the candidate fails the provider’s entry requirements they will be declined by the provider and cannot be offered the School Direct place. For more information on this and the ITT criteria please see Section 4 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q4.6: What if the candidate already holds Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)?

A4.6: Individuals who hold QTS on the first day of their ITT course are not eligible to take up a place either on the School Direct Training Programme (tuition) fee or School Direct Training Programme (salaried) route. This includes candidates from countries in the EEA or Switzerland who are able to receive QTS if they apply directly to the TA and those who are fully qualified teachers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the USA who can now also apply to the TA directly for QTS. Those who are subsequently awarded QTS may not take up a place. Those who are unsuccessful may be eligible to take up a place subject to satisfying all other criteria.

Q4.7: What is the definition of a ‘career changer’?

A4.7: School Direct Training Programme (salaried) is only for high quality graduates with at least three years’ work experience. Schools decide
which skills and experience are important to them. Career changers can bring valuable skills and experience to the profession, which they have developed since leaving university. This experience will normally have been gained since leaving university and does not have to be from an educational setting.

Q4.8: Can I reserve a School Direct Training Programme (salaried) place for a Teaching Assistant in my school?

A4.8: Recruitment activities should be high quality, open and transparent and will be subject to inspection by Ofsted. The recruitment period must be long enough to allow open and fair access to places and well-communicated to potential trainees.

Schools should be open on their recruitment needs with their teacher training providers. It is the provider who remains accountable for ensuring trainees meet their ITT entry criteria and has the final decision on the choice of a trainee. Whilst the ITT requirements and Ofsted criteria would not prevent a school putting forward internal candidates, schools and providers should satisfy themselves that rigorous processes were being followed to identify candidates.

If an internal candidate has accepted an offer of a place, the lead school should ensure that the provider records the acceptance on the School Direct application system promptly.

Q4.9: What role does the provider have in the selection of candidates?

A4.9: Schools should take the lead in interviewing and selecting candidates, but all School Direct candidates must also meet the standard entry requirements of the school's chosen accredited ITT provider, and be approved by the provider.

Q4.10: Can equivalences be applied to School Direct?

A4.10: The Secretary of State's ITT criteria specify that all entrants to ITT must demonstrate a standard equivalent to a grade C in GCSE English, mathematics and (for primary trainees) science. The criteria do not require specific qualifications, nor does the TA specify qualifications that may be deemed equivalent. It is for individual providers to make a judgment about what they will or will not accept as demonstrating equivalence (including whether to accept/offer equivalence tests), and we would not comment on specific equivalence tests. This applies to all ITT.
5. **Data Requirements and reporting**

Q5.1: How are applications submitted and managed?

A5.1: All applications to School Direct must be submitted and managed via the School Direct Applications System.

Q5.2: Who is responsible for updating this?

A5.2: The ITT provider is responsible for updating the status of these applications to inform the TA of recruitment to allocated places. It is vital that decisions are recorded on the application system and communicated to candidates promptly. It also means the Teaching Agency can monitor the number of offers and acceptances made to inform decisions on whether any potential future reallocation of places is needed, once the majority of applications have been decided and recorded. The TA will advise applicants who accept an offer of either a School Direct or GTTR place to contact any other schools/providers they applied to and inform them of their decision.

Q5.3: Who informs the applicant of progress?

A5.3: It is for the schools and/or providers to inform applicants of their progress as agreed in their partnership agreements. Details of the application system are available [here](#) and for more information please see Section 2 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q5.4: What are the data requirements from schools?

A5.4: Lead schools are required to give accurate data to ITT providers regarding which schools the trainee is undertaking their training with the dates of the training periods so that the relevant uplifts can be calculated for Free School Meals (FSM).

Q5.5: What are the data requirements from the ITT provider?

A5.5: There are different data requirements whether the Provider is a HEI or non HEI. Further information can be seen at Section 2 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14. Failure to comply with requests for data may result in non-compliance for the ITT provider, which may lead to eventual withdrawal of accreditation. If this does happen the lead school would have to find a new ITT accredited provider to work with.
6. Receiving funding School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee)

Q6.1: How will tuition fees be paid?

A6.1: Providers are advised to contact the Student Loans Company (SLC) to determine the level of tuition fees chargeable to their trainees and get information on when payments will be made.

Q6.2: Will I need an OFFA agreement?

A6.2: Providers are also advised to contact Office for Fair Access (OFFA), an independent public body who are responsible for promoting and safeguarding fair access to higher education to establish whether an OFFA agreement is required.

Q6.3: When can trainees apply for a loan?

A6.3: Trainees can apply for tuition fee loans from the SLC as soon as they have accepted an ITT place. They will need to be confirmed as eligible (see Section 2 on eligibility in the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14) by the Student Loans Company (SLC) in order to be able to draw down tuition fee loans. For more information please also see Section 2 of the training bursary guidance.

Q6.4: How do I know if the trainee is eligible to access student finance?

A6.4: It is for the provider to establish if the trainee is eligible to access student finance, this may involve checking their residency in the UK.

Q6.5: What happens if the trainee is not eligible or choose not to access student finance?

A6.5: Home or EU status trainees who are not eligible or choose not to access student finance will have to pay the ITT provider directly. They will need to agree timings of payment with the ITT provider prior to the start of the programme.

Training Bursaries

Q6.6: Who is eligible to receive a training bursary?

A6.6: Home or EU status trainees on School Direct Training Programme (tuition fees) courses may be eligible to receive training bursaries in the same way as trainees on other eligible post graduate ITT courses. The
bursary awards are relevant to the academic year of study and can change from year to year. The following information is relevant to AY 2013/14 only. The full eligibility criteria can be seen at Section 7 of the training bursary guidance.

Q6.7: What will the bursary award be?

A6.7: The bursary award will depend on the degree class or other relevant qualification and the subject in which they are training to teach. To follow is a brief summary of degree classifications further details can be seen in Section 2 of the training bursary guidance:

- Trainees will need to hold at least a 2:2 to attract award for:
  - mathematics;
  - physics;
  - chemistry; and
  - Modern languages.

- Trainees will need to hold at least a 2:1 or Master's degree to attract bursary award for:
  - English;
  - geography;
  - history;
  - computer science;
  - Greek;
  - Latin;
  - music;
  - biology;
  - physical education; and
  - Primary (including key stage 1).

Q6.8: Are there uplifts for higher qualifications?

A6.8: Masters, professional medical degrees and PhDs are included as
higher relevant academic qualifications and are eligible to attract bursaries. A full list of eligible ITT subjects and relevant academic qualifications can be found in Annex A of the training bursary guidance.

Q6.9: Can I award a bursary to a trainee with a 3rd class degree and a masters?

A6.9: Depending on the subject in which the trainee is training to teach a bursary award may be appropriate as the masters is the highest relevant qualification.

Q6.10: Can I award a discretionary bursary to a trainee with a 3rd class degree?

A6.10: No. The discretionary fund cannot be used for any trainee who does not meet the base eligibility criteria for a core bursary award which is a minimum of a 2:2 and depends on the subject in which the trainee is training to teach. NB the discretionary pot is very limited and a full audit of awards will be carried out. Any deemed to have been made in error will be received in full. For more information on core and discretionary bursaries please see Sections 2 and 3 in the training bursary guidance.

Q6.11: How do I classify a degree from abroad?

A6.11: A grade comparison exercise has been carried out by UK NARIC and a full data set can and the methodology to be used when assessing an overseas degree can be seen in Section 5 of the training bursary guidance.

Q6.12: How are training bursaries paid?

A6.12: Funding for training bursaries is paid directly to the ITT provider in equal monthly installments from October to July. The ITT provider, in turn is responsible for passing on the funds to the trainee in monthly installments. Trainees on part time courses may receive the bursary in larger installments. Please see Section 12 of the training bursary guidance for more information on how the bursary is paid to eligible trainees.

Q6.13: Who is responsible for assessing the level of the bursary award payable?

A6.13: The ITT provider should retain overall responsibility for assessing eligibility for core bursary payments to eligible trainees. Lead schools
may recommend candidates for higher bursaries, but it is the ITT provider’s responsibility to assess candidates for eligibility. Lead schools may not inform trainees of their bursary awards, this is the role of the ITT provider. More details of core and discretionary bursary funding can be found in Section 3 of the training bursary guidance.

Scholarships

Q6.14: What subjects are scholarships available in?

A6.14: Prestigious teacher training scholarships of £20,000 are available to eligible trainees holding at least a 2:1 or Master’s degree (or equivalent). These scholarships are awarded through the following professional subject bodies:

- The Institute of Physics (IoP) for teaching physics;
- The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) for teaching chemistry;
- The British Computer Society (BCS) and Microsoft for teaching computer science (if unsuccessful normal bursary rates will apply), and
- The Institute of Mathematics and it’s Applications (IMA) for teaching mathematics in collaboration with the London Mathematical Society (LMS) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS).

Q6.15: How are scholarships awarded?

A6.15: Candidates must go through a competitive process of an interview and assessment, conducted by the relevant professional body who will then recommend successful candidates to the candidates’ ITT provider of choice. Successful candidates are known as ‘scholars’ once they have accepted a place on a School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee) course. No bursary award is payable to scholars and they will not receive the scholarship if they take up a salaried place.

Q6.16: Does the provider have input to the selection process?

A6.16: Recommendation for a scholarship does not guarantee a place on the course; the candidate will still be subject to the ITT provider’s full application and interview process for securing an ITT place. For more information on scholarships please see Section 11 of the training bursary guidance and at http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-
teaching/funding/postgraduate-funding.

25 per cent Bursary uplift Free School Meals (FSM)

Q6.17: How do School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee) trainees qualify for a FSM uplift to their bursary?

A6.17: Trainees who do the majority of their training (more than 50 per cent) in a school which has more than 35 per cent of pupils that are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), will be entitled to a 25 per cent uplift to their existing bursary award or scholarship. Details of the awards and how they will be paid are set out in Section 12 of the training bursary manual.

Q6.18: Who advises the TA in order to secure the uplift for the trainee?

A6.18: The lead school in the School Direct partnership will be expected to inform the ITT provider of the schools in which the trainee is undertaking their training.

Q6.19: How does the TA know the school has 35 per cent or more of pupils eligible for FSM?

A6.19: The TA will cross-reference the information provided with the School Spring Census data, published by DfE in spring 2013, to determine whether the school has more than 35 per cent pupils eligible for FSM. The extra funds for the uplift will only be paid after the trainee has been identified in the 2013 Census collection and the school has been appropriately verified. For more information please see Section 10 of the training bursary manual.

Withdrawals

Q6.20: What happens if a trainee withdraws? Does the bursary have to be re-paid?

A6.20: No. The bursary will cover up to the last month of participation on programme, any monies issued by TA that cover beyond this date will be recovered in full from the provider.

Q6.21: Can I use surplus funds for other purposes?

A6.21: No. Bursary awards are for the named trainee only, any surplus funds as a result of withdrawals cannot be used for any other purpose, i.e. to fund additional trainees. The TA will recover all funding that is unused as a result of:
under-recruitment against allocated places; in addition to,

- trainee withdrawal.

7. Receiving funding School Direct Training Programme (salaried)

Salary Rates

Q7.1: How can allocated salaried places be used?

A7.1: TA allocated places can only be used for trainees who are eligible for TA funding, as set out in Section 2 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q7.2: How are salary rates determined?

A7.2: The salary rates are based on locality and subject; the definitions of areas and rates can be found in Annex D of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q7.3: How are salaries calculated?

A7.3: All salary rates are paid on the basis of full-time places, but trainees with a full-time equivalence of 0.5 will be classified as part-time.

Q7.4: How will salaries be paid?

A7.4: Salaries will be paid in equal monthly instalments from September to July. Exact arrangements are still being finalised and we will contact you with more information. A full breakdown of payments will be available to view on the TA Extranet, and guidance documents and support tools will be issued at the start of the academic year.

Q7.5: What should the funding cover?

A7.5: The TA provides funding to cover training costs for QTS and subsidise salary costs. Because it is an employment-based route, trainees are not eligible for student loans. As the costs of training to achieve QTS are included within the funding provided by TA, individual trainees should not incur any costs for this.

It is for the school to negotiate with their partner teacher training...
provider/s whether further academic qualifications, such as a PGCE, will be offered in addition to QTS. Schools will want to consider the impact on recruitment if they charge trainees for the additional costs for an academic award when trainees are not eligible for student loans.

Maintained schools should pay trainees at least at point 1 of the unqualified teachers’ scale and the employing school is expected to fund any shortfall in salary. Academies are not required to meet this condition, but they must pay trainees at an advertised rate. For more information on School Direct Training Programme salaried please see Section 3 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

10 per cent Salary Uplift (Free School Meals)

Q7.6: How do School Direct Training Programme (salaried) trainees qualify for a FSM uplift to their salary?

A7.6: Trainees will receive a 10 per cent uplift to their salary if they spend the majority of their time (more than 50 percent) in a school where more than 35 per cent of the pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). This information will be cross-referenced with the School Spring Census data, published by DfE in Spring 2013, to determine whether the school has more than 35 per cent pupils eligible for FSM.

Q7.7: Who advises the TA in order to secure the uplift for the trainee?

A7.7: The lead school in the School Direct partnership will be expected to inform the ITT provider of the schools in which the trainee is undertaking their training.

Q7.8: How does the TA know the school has 35 per cent or more of pupils eligible for FSM?

A7.8: The TA will cross-reference the information provided with the School Spring Census data, published by DfE in Spring 2013, to determine whether the school has more than 35 per cent pupils eligible for FSM. The extra funds for the uplift will only be paid after the trainee has been identified in the 2013 Census collection and the school has been appropriately verified.

Withdrawals

Q7.9: What happens if a trainee withdraws? Does the salary have to be re-paid?

A7.9: No. The salary covers up to the last day of participation on the
programme, any monies issued by the TA that cover beyond this date made will be recovered in full.

Q7.10: Can I use surplus funds for other purposes?

A7.10: No. Salary funding is for the named trainee only; any surplus funds as a result of withdrawals cannot be used for any other purpose, i.e. to fund additional trainees. The TA will recover all funding that is unused as a result of:

- under-recruitment against allocated places; and
- training location changing; in addition to
- trainee withdrawal.

8. Training

Q8.1: Who decides what and how the training should be delivered?

A8.1: The school and the provider should train the trainee in accordance with their partnership agreement (see earlier section on finding an ITT provider) and the ITT Criteria. This is a school-driven model of ITT and the TA would expect that the models of training developed should reflect the leading role of the school.

Q8.2: What criteria should the training be based on?

A8.2: The following criteria apply to all employment-based provision, in addition to the ITT Criteria that apply to all provision:

- C4.1 For the period of training all candidates must be employed as unqualified teachers at a school, and (except candidates employed in academies or independent schools) must be paid in accordance with at least point one on the unqualified teachers’ pay scale for the period of their training.
- C4.2 Candidates are only admitted to employment-based programmes by either the TA or by an accredited provider.
- C4.3 No candidate will be required to perform more than 90 per cent of the teaching duties normally required of a full-time qualified teacher.
For more information on Training please see Section 4 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

**Schools in special measures**

Q8.3: Can a school in special measures be a member of the partnership?

A8.3: Yes. Partnerships should satisfy themselves that schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities.

Q8.4: Can schools in special measures be involved in both School Direct Training Programme (tuition fees) and School Direct Training Programme (salaried)?

A8.4: Schools in special measures should only be used for School Direct Training Programme (tuition fee) places if the lead school and the accredited provider are confident that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the school experience, and the situation will need to be kept under close review.

Q8.5: What happens if a school has School Direct Training Programme (salaried) trainees and goes into special measures?

A8.5: If a participating school goes into special measures while a trainee is already employed, the trainee may remain in place provided that:

- there are no risks to the individual's training;
- another school provides any necessary additional support, and
- the partnership agreement is amended to reflect increased support, monitoring and revisions to the Individual Training Plan (ITP).

For more information on schools in special measures please see Section 4 of School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

**9. Expectation of Employment**

Q9.1: What does the TA mean by an expectation of employment?

A9.1: The TA expects the school or partnership of schools to have a clear capacity to employ the trainees when they successfully complete their training programme. The Government’s Training Our Next Generation
of Outstanding Teachers: Implementation Plan published in November 2011 stated “Once the trainee has completed training and gained qualified teacher status, the school will be expected to employ the trainee.” For further information on post training employment please see Section 5 of the School Direct Operations Manual 2013/14.

Q9.2: Do we have to employ the trainee during training?

A9.2: For School Direct Training programme (salaried) places, a school must employ the trainee for the duration of the training. They must be employed as an unqualified teacher and the school is responsible for meeting all employment responsibilities. For School Direct Training programme (tuition fee) places the trainee is deemed to be a student of higher education for the period of training and will receive student support (e.g. loans) and may receive a bursary for the duration of their training.

Q9.3: Does a school have to employ the trainee once they qualify?

A9.3: The Government's Training Our Next Generation of Outstanding Teachers: Implementation Plan published in November 2011 stated 'Once the trainee has completed training and gained qualified teacher status, the school will be expected to employ the trainee.'

Schools should intend to employ trainees once qualified but this commitment can be shared across schools in a partnership. This expectation of employment will be for one year after the trainee has qualified. In determining how many School Direct places to request, schools should review their previous employment patterns and use any current knowledge on staffing/budgetary issues to make an assessment of future need. This assessment should enable schools to request a number of places that broadly matches the future employment requirements within the school or partnership of schools where the trainee will be based. The TA expects the school or partnership of schools to have a clear capacity to employ the trainees when they successfully complete their training programme.

10. Audit and Evaluation

Q10.1: What governance, financial management and audit arrangements will the partnership be expected to complete?
A10.1: The TA’s expectation of managing money remains the same, and providers will be expected to return details of expenditure via audited accounts. Further guidance will be made available shortly on governance, financial management and audit.

Q10.2: Who is responsible for the monies issued by the TA?

A10.2: Lead schools and ITT providers should work together to ensure correct expenditure of any TA funding. As the accredited ITT provider and beneficiary of the funding, providers will be responsible for that funding. The TA reserve the right to request financial information from the ITT provider at any point, and ITT providers must ensure that they have control of their governance and financial sustainability.

11. Application System

Q11.1: How do I remove an apply button from my individual subject/phase allocations?

A11.1: If you no longer wish to receive applications across all your allocated subjects, you can email schooldirectsupport@texunatech.com, and request the removal of the apply button.

Q11.2: Are applicants automatically taken out of the School Direct application system if they are offered and accept a place?

A11.2: No, applicants that accept a place are advised to contact any other schools/providers they have applied to and inform them of their decision.

Q11.3: What if an applicant changes their mind / receives a rejection letter but cannot submit any further applications?

A11.3: An applicant can only submit three applications at any one time. If an applicant has changed their mind and wishes to withdraw an application and submit a new one to another school, they need to inform the school to whom they applied to originally and advise them to reject their application (via the provider) so they can submit a further one.

If an applicant has been notified of a rejection but is still not able to submit any further applications, they need to contact the school they
received the rejection notification from to check that the provider has updated the status of the applicant’s application to ‘rejected’.

Please note: An applicant is not able to see the status of their application within the School Direct Application System itself. Applicants are entitled to contact lead schools if they have not heard an initial outcome of their application within a 28 day period (calendar days) which schools and providers are asked to adhere to.

Q11.4: Can an applicant attend a PGCE interview if they have accepted a School Direct place?

A11.4: They can, however, if an applicant accepts an offer of either a School Direct or GTTR place they should contact any other school/providers they have applied to and inform them of their decision.

Q11.5: How can a lead school change their contact name?

A11.5: A change to the School Direct Lead school should be emailed to both teach@ta-recruit.education.gov.uk to ensure communications are sent to the correct contact and TA.AlLOCATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk to make changes to the School Direct application system.

12. Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses (SKEs)

Q12.1: What is SKE?

A12.1: SKE courses are flexible programmes designed to support applicants to initial teacher training who are generally well suited to teaching but who need an identified amount of additional subject knowledge to enable them to meet Standard 3 of the Teachers’ Standards.

They are intended to address the subject knowledge of candidates where their previous studies have not covered the breadth of knowledge required to commence an ITT programme. SKE programmes can only be accessed as a condition of an offer of a place on an ITT programme.

Approximately 25 per cent of trainees entering maths, physics or chemistry ITT undergo some form of SKE before commencing their training. It is therefore important that schools recognise the key role these course play in recruitment to teacher training.
You can visit the [SKE web page](#) for further information

Q12.2: Is SKE relevant to School Direct

A12.2: SKE is available to all prospective candidates for post graduate initial teacher training, regardless of their route into the programmes, as long as they are applying for one of the identified shortage subjects. When schools are interviewing for their School Direct places, they should be aware that they can make a conditional offer to someone if they think SKE will enable them to meet the QTS requirements.

Q12.3: How do you access SKE if you think your preferred applicant needs it?

A12.3: Your chosen provider should be familiar with SKE and can give you additional information and advice. If they don’t run SKE courses themselves they will be able to advise you about other providers who run them.

The Teaching Agency website has a searchable database of current SKE courses available, which the candidate and school can consult.

SKE courses are fully funded by the TA so there is no cost to the school or candidate. A bursary is also available to contribute to the living costs of candidates undertaking SKE courses.

Q12.4: How long are SKE courses?

A12.4: SKE programmes are designed to be flexible, so you can negotiate with the candidate and the SKE provider the length of the programme. They are described in terms of units of study – where one unit is equivalent to 50 hours activity on the part of the student or approximately 2 weeks academic work. This can be delivered in a variety of ways by the provider and include face to face contact, on line work or directed study.

Q12.5: What is the communication skills course?

A12.5: For 12/13 recruitment year the TA have piloted a communication skills course. This course was designed to ensure that applicants to physics, chemistry, mathematics and computer science ITT who have excellent subject knowledge but who have not yet developed the skills of communication and expression required of the teaching profession are supported to be able to complete a course of ITT. The programme was designed to provide a short intensive course of up to 2 units (in
half unit increments). These courses included significant practical experience and were only available to candidates with a degree of 2:1 or above.

Q12.6: How does this all fit with the need to look at degree quality?
A12.6: The entry requirements for SKE are the same as those for ITT, so the general minimum requirement is to have a 2:2 in a related subject. Degree quality is one way that we measure the overall quality of entrants to ITT, which we hope is reflected in general approaches to recruitment. We therefore assume that overall the majority of people taking an SKE will have a good degree, will be suitable to teach and will be using SKE to make sure they have sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge to achieve QTS. We recognise that there will be a number of candidates who have a 2:2 degree and who will make good teachers, so they can also benefit from a SKE course, where it is appropriate.

Q12.7: Is a list of SKE providers available?
A12.7: Information about SKE is available on our website we will also circulate a list of current providers and subject areas to all School Direct schools for information.
Annex A: Further Information & Points of Contact

Additional supporting information available on the Department for Education website for the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get Into Teaching: Initial site for teachers to find out about teaching</td>
<td><a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/schools">http://www.education.gov.uk/schools</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and routes into teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Direct Funding: pages which support and inform on routes of</td>
<td><a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/funding.aspx">http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/funding.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funding for Teacher training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Equivalency: information on compatibility of qualifications</td>
<td><a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/ta-assets/~/media/get_into_teaching/resources/subjects_age_groups/overseas_grade_comparison.pdf">http://www.education.gov.uk/ta-assets/~/media/get_into_teaching/resources/subjects_age_groups/overseas_grade_comparison.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across the World with UK recognised degree standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTTR site: the Graduate Teacher Training Registry. Support in</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gttr.ac.uk/">http://www.gttr.ac.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applying for Post-Graduate teacher Training in England, Wales and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding communications should routinely be e-mailed to:

FA.Team@education.gsi.gov.uk

Questions surrounding allocations or available places should be e-mailed to:

TA.Allocations@education.gsi.gov.uk

For all other School Direct Queries not answered on the website should be e-mailed to:

schooldirect@education.gsi.gov.uk