



Teaching



OVERVIEW

The compulsory UK education system is broadly divided into primary and secondary schools, with a few authorities running a three-tier system. Afterwards students move on to 6th Form, FE or apprenticeship / work with training. The key stages include:

Early years foundation stage (EYFS): 0–5-year-olds - nursery and reception

Key Stage 1: 5–7-year-olds - school years 1-2

Key Stage 2: 7–11-year-olds - school years 3-6

Key Stage 3: 11–14-year-olds - school years 7-9

Key Stage 4: 14–16-year-olds - school years 10-11

SKILLS

To become a good teacher, you need:

- The ability to relate to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Enthusiasm for the subjects you teach & knowledge of the age range and curriculum.
- The ability to deliver information in an engaging and understandable way.
- Organisational skills.
- Dedication, commitment and resilience.
- The ability to deal with conflict.

Routes to qualification and professional accreditation

Primary and Secondary School Teachers need to have a degree qualification. Secondary School teachers need to be qualified to teach their degree subject or a closely related alternative. Some degrees courses have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) incorporated in the degree programme. With QTS you also get additional training and support in your first 2 years as a teacher, now known as the ECT (previously the NQT), helping you to grow in confidence and develop the skills you need to succeed. Having QTS is a requirement in state schools, but not in all independent schools. Teachers in the FE sector train via the Level 5 Diploma in Teaching (for adult students).

Entry Requirements to degree courses and degree apprenticeships

Many Secondary teachers will study a subject degree first followed by via the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) to qualify as a teacher, whereas Nursery and Primary teachers can qualify via a 3-year degree in Early Years or Primary Education with QTS or take the degree subject followed by PGCE route. Nowadays, there are also some 3-year degrees in Secondary Education with QTS available.

For Primary Teaching you need:

5 GCSEs at grade 4-9, including English Language, Maths and Science, plus degree, etc.

For Secondary teaching you need:

5 GCSEs at grade 4-9, including English Language and Maths (unless you will be teaching a Science/Sciences of course), plus degree/PGCE, etc.

If you do not have a degree, you can do undergraduate teacher training via a degree alongside qualified teacher status (QTS). Or you may be eligible to do a [teacher degree apprenticeship \(TDA\)](#).

For more information see: [Teacher Degree Apprenticeships: how they work and when to apply](#)

Work Experience

You can visit schools or FE colleges to get unpaid experience in the classroom before you start your initial teacher training (ITT) or Level 5 Diploma in Teaching. It can help you:

- decide if you want to train to be a teacher
- discover if you'd like to teach in a primary or secondary school or in an FE college
- build a relationship with a school or college you might want to work for later

During your experience, you'll get to do things like:

- observe lessons
- see how teachers manage a classroom
- find out how specific subjects are taught
- speak to teachers and meet pupils
- learn more about teacher training - including the application and interview process

What can it lead to?

Entry is generally competitive, but less so for shortage subjects such as Maths, Physics and Modern Foreign Languages. Register and find out more about Initial Teacher Training with [Get Into Teaching | Prospects.ac.uk](#). For information on training to teach in the FE sector, including gaining QTLS (Qualification to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector), see: [Teach in further education - Department for Education](#)

Useful websites

[Early career teachers \(ECTs\)](#)

[Careerpilot:education](#)

[How To Become A Teacher In The UK](#)