

Teacher Training: Admissions Policy

Teacher Training Admissions Policy

Published:	August 2023
Next review date:	August 2024
Responsible division:	Partnerships Division
Author:	Director, Admissions and Partnerships Operations
Audience:	Teacher Training applicants, Internal staff, Lead Partners,
Applicable laws and other relevant regulation:	Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

Contents

1	Objectives.....	2
2	Policy Intent.....	2
3	The Application Process	4
4	Assessment and Selection.....	5
5	Notification and appointment of candidates.....	7
6	Deferrals.....	9
7	Pre-Programme entry criteria checks	10
8	Complaints on the application process.....	11

1 Objectives

- 1.1 This policy sets out Ambition Institute's Admissions procedures to ensure recruitment of trainees on the Teacher Training programme is fair, equitable and transparent. Our goal is to recruit trainees, who meet the entry requirements for the profession, with the most potential to be outstanding teachers, irrespective of their background. Through this policy and our practice, we will ensure that the admissions process minimises barriers to entry, is reliable, is based on merit and potential, is fair with regards to diversity, and is professional in its nature.
- 1.2 Ambition Institute is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in the wider partnership and expects all staff and all Lead Partners' staff to share this commitment. In order to meet this responsibility, it follows a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

2 Policy Intent

- 2.1 Ambition's application procedure is designed to support as many prospective trainee teachers as possible to access a training programme that is right for them. Ambition aims to offer places to those eligible applicants who best meet the selection criteria as outlined by The Department for Education and are judged to have the most potential to become a good or outstanding teacher by the end of the course.
- 2.2 Our general principles of assessment and selection are:
 - 2.2.1 Ambition promotes equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from a wide range of backgrounds. Applicants are selected based on their skills, qualifications, and experience, with consideration for the requirements of the programme.
 - 2.2.2 The assessment process is open for long enough to be fair and open to applicants of all protected characteristics and backgrounds.
 - 2.2.3 Ambition and the Lead Partner must ensure that applicants meet the entry requirements as described in the Department for Education's [ITT criteria and supporting advice](#).
 - 2.2.4 Recruitment must be transparent as well as being open to inspection by Ofsted. All documentation must be recorded and archived. Ambition only collects the data required for assessing eligibility for courses and to meet reporting requirements outlined by the DfE / Ofsted in our contractual requirements. Please refer to Ambition's Teacher Training Privacy Notice and our Data Protection policy for more information.
 - 2.2.5 Applicants will be given the opportunity to best represent their skills and experience.
 - 2.2.6 The application process will be thorough and consistent. (More details can be found below in the "Application Process" and "Assessment and Selection" sections)
 - 2.2.7 Feedback will be made available to successful applicants when they request it. All rejected applicants will be given a reason for their rejection.

Applicants with non-UK qualifications

- 2.3 Ambition welcomes applicants whose previous education includes qualifications obtained outside of the UK. Applications from international applicants will be assessed against the same entry criteria as all other applicants. Where necessary, Ambition will consult UK ENIC (European Network of Information Centres) or Higher Education partners for guidance on equivalent overseas qualifications.
- 2.4 Applicants without the right to work in the UK will not be considered for a place on an Ambition teacher training cohort.
- 2.5 If international applicants wish to gain their PGCE, they must score 6.5 or more in the International English Language Testing System Assessment or equivalent.

Applicants who may require additional support

- 2.6 Ambition welcomes applications from those with additional support needs. The application form provides space for applicants to state if they require reasonable adjustments for the assessment and selection process, and the programme itself. Ambition encourages applicants to share any reasonable adjustments which would support them to perform at their best. Ambition and its partners will endeavour to support this adjustment as much as is reasonable and practical.
- 2.7 Applicants can refer to our Reasonable Adjustments policy for guidance on how to request additional support.

Equal Opportunities

- 2.8 At Ambition, we are committed to helping educators serving children from disadvantaged backgrounds to keep getting better. We are, therefore, committed to taking action that will help move equality, diversity, and inclusion forward in the teacher workforce. We follow the guidance set out in The Equality Act (2010) and ensure there is no unlawful discrimination against people with protected characteristics, including: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, caste, pregnancy, and maternity. Our recruitment strategy strives to be transparent, reliable, inclusive, and supportive of social mobility.
- 2.9 Ambition provides all the relevant information that prospective trainee teachers need to know about our programmes on our website. This ensures that all the key information is available and accessible to all.

3 The Application Process

- 3.1 Ambition and its Lead Partners will follow a thorough and consistent application process that manages the flow of applications efficiently and effectively and is fair to all applicants who apply.
- 3.2 Applications to Ambition’s Teacher Training programme can be made in one of two ways:
 - 3.2.1 Applicants can apply directly via Ambition either on the Ambition website or using a specified link provided by one of our associated Lead Partners. Applicants will choose a Lead Partner to apply to using either of these routes.
 - 3.2.2 All opportunities to train to teach with Ambition and our Lead Partners will also be listed on the DfE website where applicants will be able to make an application through the DfE ‘Apply’ Portal. In this case, applicants’ information will be sent to Ambition and then Lead Partners automatically for consideration should they meet the initial criteria.

Enquiries

- 3.3 If an applicant applies directly to Ambition’s website or discovers Ambition through any marketing materials, they will have the opportunity to contact Ambition directly to discuss their interest in Teacher Training. Ambition has a dedicated contact number and email address, and an enquiry form available through the website.
- 3.4 Applicants can normally expect an initial response to their enquiry within 2 working days of submitting their initial call/email/enquiry form.

Application sift

- 3.5 Applications for the Teacher Training programme, in the first instance, will undergo automated sifting based on the essential entry criteria (as required by the Secretary of State’s ITT Criteria for entry).
- 3.6 Ambition will ensure a fair and transparent selection process. The criteria are outlined below and are also published on Ambition’s website.

Phase	Essential entry requirements
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > British citizen or right to work in the UK > A UK Bachelor’s degree or an equivalent as judged against ENIC > GCSE or equivalent in Mathematics, English and Science Grade C/4 or above
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > British citizen or right to work in the UK > A UK Bachelor’s degree or an equivalent as judged against ENIC > GCSE or equivalent in Mathematics and English Grade C/4 or above

- 3.7 Eligible/suitable applicants will be passed on to their chosen Lead Partner by Ambition. Where there is a question about whether an applicant meets the criteria, they will be passed to Ambition’s Admissions team for review and further information will be gathered before they are either passed to a Lead Partner, placed on hold, or rejected manually. Applicants will receive communication and updates from Ambition about their application status.
- 3.8 The passing of personal applicant information (collected in application forms, pre-employment checks, and other relevant conversations with an applicant) between Ambition, Lead Partners and HEI partner is covered in the Data Protection Agreement between the parties, and in the terms and conditions agreed to by applicants.
- 3.9 Where applicants have not registered with the DfE first, Ambition will ensure that applicant data is reflected accurately in DfE’s system.

4 Assessment and Selection

- 4.1 Our Lead Partners will invite applicants who pass the initial sift and where there are vacancies for the phase, subject and training route to an Assessment Centre to further assess their suitability to teach.
- 4.2 Ambition will provide Lead Partners with Assessment Centre models, and Lead Partners will then select from a menu which activity/activities they run with their applicants.
- 4.3 All Lead Partners will include a structured interview and review of eligibility documentation as part of their assessment centre. This will ensure we are upholding our commitment to safeguarding and safer recruitment.
- 4.4 Prior to running other optional Assessment Centre tasks, the Lead Partner will ensure that:
 - 4.4.1 Any adaptations made to an optional Assessment Centre task designed by Ambition are quality assured by Ambition ahead of an Assessment Centre being conducted.
 - 4.4.2 Applicants have been sent any relevant pre-release materials for each task where suggested by Ambition, with at least one week to prepare.
- 4.5 No offer of appointment will be made without the applicant having attended an Assessment Centre with a Lead Partner.

Prior to Assessment Centre:

- 4.6 Where possible, applicants will be asked by Ambition to upload certification proving their eligibility to teach via their application portal.
- 4.7 Prior to inviting applicants to Assessment Centres, the Lead Partner will have ensured that:
 - 4.7.1 The chosen and finalised model for the Assessment Centre is shared with Ambition.
 - 4.7.2 Applicants are asked to bring identification and proof of eligibility documents to the Assessment Centre if not uploaded.
 - 4.7.3 A member of the Lead Partner interview panel has reviewed any reasonable adjustments requested by the applicant for interview and where possible made appropriate adaptations.
 - 4.7.4 A member of the Lead Partner Leadership Team and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team of a Placement School working with the Lead Partner will be present at all Assessment Centre tasks.
 - 4.7.5 A member of the recruitment panel must have completed the following courses through Ambition: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and Safer Recruitment (2023-2024).
- 4.8 Prior to running the mandatory structured interview, the Lead Partner will ensure that:
 - 4.8.1 Applicants are made aware that the structured interview will assess their suitability to work with children and will include questions relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
 - 4.8.2 Applicants have been sent the pre-release materials for this task, including a selection of interview questions, with at least one week to prepare.

During the Assessment Centre:

- 4.9 All qualification details (and other documents) provided by the applicant are cross-checked against details on the application form.
- 4.10 Identification documents are cross-checked against the details uploaded to Ambition's applicant portal (My Teacher Training), in order to rule out possible anomalies. Where anomalies are found, follow-up action will be taken by Ambition and the Lead Partner to establish the candidate's suitability for the course. If documentation cannot be provided at the time of the Assessment Centre or if a digital Assessment Centre is run, it is the responsibility of the Lead Partner to arrange to see these in-person at a future date.
- 4.11 During the structured interview, the Lead Partner will ensure that:

-
- 4.11.1 A member of Lead Partner Leadership Team and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team of a Placement School working with the Lead Partner is conducting the interview or is present on the panel.
 - 4.11.2 The panellists are given appropriate documentation and training as supported by Ambition.
 - 4.11.3 A core set of mandatory competency and scenario-based questions provided by Ambition are used at every interview. Lead Partners are able to add additional questions.
 - 4.11.4 All interview panellists are aware of the required standards set out by Ambition and how they are to be measured. This information will have been provided by Ambition through documentation and training given to all Lead Partners.
 - 4.11.5 The interview panel agrees beforehand what additional issues specific to each applicant need to be explored at interview (based on the individual's application).
 - 4.11.6 Applicants are reminded that their identity needs to be checked, along with proof of eligibility documents, and that they are subject to an enhanced DBS and barred list check.

5 Notification and appointment of candidates

- 5.1 At the end of the Assessment Centre, the panellists discuss the marks for the various tasks completed by the applicant.
- 5.2 The Lead Partner will input interview and other activity (if applicable) scores and feedback into the ITT Partner Portal. From the portal they will also be able to reject applicants, make offers, and stipulate conditions of offers.
- 5.3 Any conditions of offer will be the responsibility of the applicant to meet, and both the Lead Partner and Ambition will monitor these.
- 5.4 If an offer is made, the applicant will be notified through their application portal, and will be able to accept or reject the offer.
- 5.5 Applicants who receive positive feedback from assessment centres, but are not offered a place by the Lead Partner, can be returned to Ambition for submission to another Lead Partner. This is only in certain instances where the trainee has been deemed suitable to be a trainee by the assessing Lead Partner but is not able to accommodate them. This might be due to lack of availability of school placements in that particular subject. This will then be monitored by the Admissions team at Ambition to ensure the candidate is suitable for consideration by another Lead Partner, where they will undergo another assessment process. It is the responsibility of the Admissions team to contact the candidate and discuss which Lead Partner, if any, the candidate would like to be submitted to.
- 5.6 Unsuccessful candidates who are not deemed suitable to be passed to another provider will be contacted to confirm that they are no longer being considered for the programme and given feedback.

Conditions of offer

- 5.7 Every offer made is conditional upon standard pre-programme checks being met by the trainee prior to the programme start date. The standard conditions of offer for all applicants include:

Phase	Pre-programme checks
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Identification check > Right to work check > Qualifications check > Successful clearance of an Occupational Health check > Successful clearance of Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check > Overseas criminal record check (where necessary) > References > Completion of online tests (Literacy and Numeracy for all applicants)
Secondary	> All of the above and a further specialist subject test

- 5.8 Identification, right to work and qualification documents will be physically validated in person by Lead Partners.
- 5.9 As Lead Partners and Ambition are committed to safer recruitment, Ambition will perform additional safeguarding and suitability checks before the programme commences. These checks include, but are not limited to:
 - 5.9.1 Identity and enhanced with barred Lists DBS check for all tuition-fee candidates. Salaried trainees are employees of a school and therefore the Lead Partner or Lead School would need to undertake Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check as it would for any employee of the school.
 - 5.9.2 Additional review and quality assurance on all identification and qualification documentation.

-
- 5.9.3 Reviewing right to work evidence.
 - 5.9.4 Reviewing fitness to practice assessments from the occupational health assessor, Corazon.
 - 5.9.5 Reviewing work history and any gaps in employment.
 - 5.9.6 Reviewing returned references
- 5.10 Additional conditions of offer may be requested by the Lead Partner. These could include, but are not limited to completion of a Subject Knowledge Enhancement course (SKE) ranging from 8-28 weeks or spending time in a school setting.
- 5.11 The ITT Admissions team and the Lead Partner are responsible for monitoring any outstanding conditions of offers.
- 5.12 Applicants must meet all the requirements of their offer to begin the programme.

6 Deferrals

- 6.1 If an applicant wishes to defer their place during the application process but before an offer has been made, they should notify Ambition's Admissions team via email or telephone. The application will then remain at its current status until the following year.
- 6.2 If an applicant wishes to defer once an offer has been made to them by a Lead Partner, they should notify the Lead Partner. There is no guarantee that a place will be available in the same phase, subject, location, school, training mode or funding route in the next window.
- 6.3 All funding available for initial teacher training is only available for the current recruitment cycle and is updated each cycle. See the DfE 'Get into Teaching' website for current training and funding routes. [Teacher training funding | Get Into Teaching GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-into-teaching)
- 6.4 Where possible, Ambition will endeavour to work with Lead Partners to place deferred applicants on the ITT course the following year.
- 6.5 Applicants deferring at the point of receiving or accepting an offer will not have to reapply the following year, unless they move to an alternative Lead Partner for a more suitable vacancy.
- 6.6 Ambition will require deferred candidates to retake occupational health assessments and Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check to ensure their continued eligibility for the programme.

7 Pre-Programme entry criteria checks

- 7.1 Prior to starting the programme applicants must meet the essential entry criteria and complete the pre-programme checks, in line with our commitment to safeguarding, which are referenced in the tables on pages 3 and 5.
- 7.2 A full, and up to date, list of criteria can be found here: [DfE ITT criteria](#)

Appeals against application outcomes

- 7.3 Applicants can appeal against application decisions. It should be noted that the dispute of academic or professional judgements is not possible under the appeal system. However, applicants may appeal on the grounds that:
 - 7.3.1 There has been a procedural irregularity. A situation where the applicant believes that the organisation has not adhered to its own stated policy and procedures.
 - 7.3.2 The emergence of new material which may have affected the decision. It must be made clear by the applicant as to why this information was not made available at the time of application. It should be noted that if this information was available at the time of application but not included, for any reason, it will not be considered as new information.
 - 7.3.3 There is evidence of bias or prejudice.
- 7.4 Any formal appeal must be submitted, in writing, by the applicant or by someone to whom the applicant has given written consent to appeal on their behalf.
- 7.5 **Request for further feedback.** All unsuccessful candidates will have received feedback on their application. For those candidates unsuccessful at the point of application, this information is communicated by Ambition. For applicants who are unsuccessful after the interview, they will be contacted either by the Lead Partner or Ambition to either discuss next steps if they are suitable to be passed to another Partner, or to inform them that they are no longer being considered and offered feedback. At this point, further feedback can be given to clarify the reasoning at the request of the applicant in response to the Lead Partner or Ambition. This feedback may be given in person, by telephone or in writing (including by email).
- 7.6 **Formal appeals.** Following feedback, an applicant may lodge a formal appeal to have their case heard by an independent appeals panel. For full details of the appeals procedure and timeframes, please see the Teacher Training Appeals Policy. If the appeal is successful, the application will be reconsidered via the normal admissions process.

8 Complaints on the application process

- 8.1 Ambition will address all complaints seriously and in a timely manner and invoke our formal complaints procedure where necessary.
- 8.2 If the complainant would like to record any conversation during of the complaints process, for instance because they have a disability which may affect their ability to process or record information, please agree this in advance with the staff member designated to investigate the complaint.
- 8.3 The process will follow our official Complaints policy which can be found on Ambition's website.