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# PGTA reforms - Q and A

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## What is the PGTA?

- The postgraduate teaching apprenticeship (PGTA) is an initial teacher training (ITT) route that combines paid work with off-the-job training and leads to qualified teacher status (QTS).
- For AY25/26 grant funding for chemistry, computing, mathematics, physics, French, German and Spanish is the same value as the bursary (available to trainees on fee-funded routes). In other subjects, the grant will continue to be £9,000 lower than the bursary to reflect additional funding available via the apprenticeship levy. The grant funding available for each subject is as follows:
    - £29k in chemistry, computing, maths, physics
    - £26k for French, German or Spanish.
    - £17k for other languages, biology, D&T, geography
    - £1k in RE, Art and Design and music.
- The PGTA is part of our wider salaried ITT offer which also includes the School Direct salaried route, High Potential Initial Teacher Training (current delivered by Teach First), and the Teacher Degree Apprenticeship (where a funding pilot is currently being carried out in maths).
- There is strong and growing candidate demand for the PGTA, a route which has seen a 58% increase over the last three recruitment cycles. In 2024/25, 1,432 trainees are training to teach on a PGTA course.
- Guidance for employers (including schools) who are interested in hiring a postgraduate teaching apprentice is available here.
- Guidance for providers on how to provide training for the postgraduate teaching apprenticeship (PGTA) is available here.
- The updated postgraduate teaching apprenticeship funding manual is available here.

## Shorter duration

### What are the reforms?

- From the 1st August 2025, the minimum duration of the PGTA will be shortened from 12 to 9 months. This will align the PGTA with the academic year and the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- Following the changes, we would also expect more candidates to apply for this route.

### How do these changes affect the PGTA?

- Shortening the PGTA to a minimum of 9 months will bring this route into teaching in line with other postgraduate initial teacher training routes and will make the PGTA easier to deliver for schools and providers.
- The off the job learning requirement will continue. This equates to 278 hours over 9 months and there will be no reduction in learning hours or changes to content.
- For providers and schools, as well as making this route more deliverable, we expect PGTA provision to increase, helping us to better meet candidate demand.

### When do these changes come into effect?

- Providers can deliver 9-month courses from 1 August 2025.

## End-point assessment

### What are the reforms?

- We are improving the way assessment works in apprenticeships as part of our continuous drive to deliver greater value and a better experience for apprentices and employers, while retaining the high levels of rigour and quality associated with the programme.
- Guided by a new set of assessment principles published during National Apprenticeship Week 2025, we will streamline the assessment process for apprenticeships.

### How do these changes affect PGTA?

- For PGTA, we anticipate that there will no longer be a requirement for assessments to occur at the end of a programme. Instead, assessment should be able to happen at the right time and place to ensure apprentices are assessed on what matters most to employers, removing any unnecessary duplication.

### When do these changes come into effect?

- Skills England will be reviewing assessment plans for each individual standard on a case-by-case basis. We anticipate that the teacher postgraduate (ST0490) and teacher undergraduate standard (ST1502) will be reviewed in August 2025.
- However, these timelines are subject to change and we recognise the need to provide clarity on how providers should proceed for the 2025/26 academic year.
- We have therefore agreed that until the assessment plans for the above standards have been reviewed and published, providers should continue to follow the current assessment rules. This means providers do not need to engage an EPAO before the start of the apprenticeship. This is outlined in paragraph 110 of the apprenticeship funding rules.

- Once the assessment plans have been reviewed and published, the rules around changing to a new version of a standard, found in paragraphs 290 and 291 of the funding rules, will apply.
- At paragraph 341, Annex B of the new funding rules, it states that 'the provider must engage an assessment organisation at the start of the apprenticeship'. We can confirm that for the 2 teaching standards (ST0490 and ST1502), this will not apply if providers, in agreement with the employer and apprentice, wish to switch to the new assessment plan part way through a course.
- As part of our ongoing work to support the implementation of the apprenticeship assessment principles, published in February 2025, we are currently drafting a companion document designed to provide practical guidance for employers, training providers, and apprenticeship assessment organisations.
- This document will supplement the funding rules during the current transition period and aims to support effective delivery and assessment of apprenticeships in line with the new principles. We are working towards publishing this on GOV.UK in summer 2025, and will share it with providers in due course.
- We would also welcome your thoughts on what would be most helpful to include in this guidance, particularly from a provider perspective, to ensure it meets the needs of those delivering and assessing apprenticeships on the ground.

## Will changes to EPA affect the quality of the assessment or the apprentice coming through the apprenticeship?

- No, all assessments will continue to be high quality, rigorous and provide valid outcomes as required by employers.
- By streamlining the assessment, we will reduce unnecessary duplication and focus on the core requirements for occupational competence.
- This will make the assessment timelier for apprentices and employers and eliminate unnecessary duplication, while maintaining the quality and rigour employers and apprentices rely on.

## Will trainees undertaking their end-point assessment in September 2025, at the same time as beginning the Early Career Framework, be classed as being double-funded?

- No, there is a distinct difference in purpose between apprenticeship funding, which is designed to enable the individual to achieve occupational competence, and funding provided to support ECT training programmes which are designed to support new teachers in the first few years of their teaching careers.
- There may be a short period of overlap, up to four weeks, at the start of a term where an apprentice completes their End Point Assessment while also starting their ECT training programme. This is not considered to be double funding, and

ECT training providers should ensure ECTs are enrolled to begin their training course on time in September.

## Updated English and maths requirements

### What are the reforms?

- In National Apprenticeship Week 2025, we also announced changes to English and maths apprenticeship exit requirements.
- All apprentices will continue to be required to secure and be assessed on the job-specific English and maths skills they need as part of the apprenticeship standard.
- Moving forward employers will have more flexibility over whether adult apprentices (those aged 19+ at the start of the apprenticeship) are required to achieve a standalone English and maths qualification on top of that.

### How do these changes affect the PGTA?

- PGTA employers are able to take advantage of these reforms, using their discretion over whether or not adult apprentices are required to achieve standalone English and Maths qualifications.
- We will continue to fund English and maths qualifications for learners of all ages as part of the apprenticeship, including where the adult apprentice or employer has decided the standalone English and maths qualifications are necessary as part of the apprenticeship.

### When do these changes come into effect?

- The policy change to English and maths requirements became effective on 11 February 2025 and will apply to new starts and existing learners currently on programme. More detail is set out in the apprenticeship funding rules.

### Do these changes apply to apprenticeships where candidates are teaching children maths and English?

- The government has made changes to the English and maths requirements in apprenticeship exit requirements. All apprentices will continue to be required to secure and be assessed on the job-specific English and maths skills they need as part of the apprenticeship standard. Moving forward employers will have more flexibility over whether adult apprentices (those aged 19+ at the start of the apprenticeship) are required to achieve a standalone English and maths qualification on top of that.
- ITT criteria around English and maths requirements remain, and under ITT requirements, all accredited ITT providers must ensure that all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examinations in English

and mathematics. The aim of this criterion is to ensure that all entrants to ITT have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment.

- Applicants who are otherwise suitable but have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade 4, or recognised equivalent, may be given an opportunity to show that they can meet the required standard either by taking an equivalence test or by offering other evidence of attainment, which should demonstrate a similar level and breadth. Accredited ITT providers should consider making similar arrangements for applicants who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.
- DfE does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics for ITT entry. When accredited ITT providers look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade 4, they should look at the content not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth. Accredited ITT providers should look for additional evidence of breadth of knowledge and understanding in applicants who have key and functional skills certificates but do not have GCSEs at grade 4 or above in English and mathematics.

## General Q&A

### What do the reforms mean for the PGTA and TDA occupational standards?

- The two updated occupational standards are now live on the IfATE webpage.
- We continue to operate two separate standards and will continue to work with ITT providers and the trailblazer group on any changes to this for the future.
- We will communicate further with the sector before any changes are made.

### What about Further Education (FE) teachers? Does this apprenticeship cover them?

- The Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship is available for those wishing to teach in the FE sector. This is focused on the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective teacher of technical and vocational subjects.
- The PGTA may be appropriate for those wishing to teach academic subjects, for example in a sixth-form college. Ultimately this is a decision that employers will need to make with the relevant training provider.
- The ITT criteria states that for all courses leading to QTS, including PGTA courses, no training programme should cover fewer than four consecutive school years, for example, covering a 14-19 secondary age range.