



**Faculty of Education, Health, and Human  
Sciences**

**School of Teacher Education**

**Programme Code P12915**

**ASSESSMENT ONLY ROUTE TO QTS**

**HANDBOOK**

**Updated September 2022**

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome. This handbook aims to provide full information needed for all partners involved in the Assessment Only route to QTS in primary or secondary schools with the University of Greenwich.

The AO route is for experienced teachers already working in schools who could be eligible to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) without undertaking a full initial teacher training programme. There are a range of circumstances where teachers do not have QTS but have experience of teaching in maintained schools, academies, the independent sector, or in further education. Applicants will not be accepted onto the AO programme typically until they have been teaching successfully for at least two years full-time or equivalent. **Short-term supply placements, which do not allow the teacher to take full responsibility for classes by undertaking the roles and responsibilities of a normal timetabled teacher, are not recognised. Neither are school experiences undertaken as part of an Initial Teacher Training programme (for example PGCE, apprenticeship, or School Direct).** For this programme, relevant teaching experience involves being responsible for planning, teaching and assessment of classes of, typically, 20 pupils or more.

Our programme at the University of Greenwich meets the Assessment Only requirements as specified by the Department for Education (DfE, Jan 2021). It is designed to assess the ability of experienced unqualified teachers to demonstrate that they have met the Teachers' Standards (2012) during an assessment period typically not exceeding one term.

The University of Greenwich programme is only available to experienced but unqualified teachers who are already employed in schools in London and the South East. Often these schools will already have an ITT partnership with the university, but even where this is the case, schools will be asked to sign a bespoke AO partnership agreement prior to the candidate being accepted onto this route. The University of Greenwich is able to consider applications from candidates who teach in primary schools, and those who teach in secondary schools.

## KEY PERSONNEL

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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility Criteria for the Assessment Only route to QTS (updated March 2021)

There are strict DfE eligibility criteria that teachers need to meet in order to apply for the AO route. The key non-negotiable eligibility criteria are as follows:

- 1, The teacher must have a UK or equivalent degree
- 2,  
For the Primary award, the teacher must have a relevant undergraduate degree, plus GCSE English, a science, and Maths at Grade 4 or higher (or equivalent\*).  
For the Secondary award, the teacher must have a relevant undergraduate degree, plus GCSE English, and Maths at Grade 4 or higher (or equivalent\*).

*\*Equivalencies can be accepted, but qualifications in key skills at level 2 are not recognised as equivalent to GCSE in terms of content. Similarly, Level 2 components of an access to HE course are not recognised as equivalent to GCSE.*

*It is for applicants to demonstrate that the qualifications they hold are equivalent. The university will not make decisions about equivalency.*

3. The teacher must currently be employed in a primary or secondary school in the UK as an unqualified teacher and have a minimum of 2 years full-time equivalent teaching experience undertaken in a minimum of TWO schools, across TWO or more consecutive age ranges (key stages) within the past 5 years. The two key stages can and must be consecutive within the range of KS1 – KS5. This university does not offer an Early Years Assessment Only route to QTS.
- 4, Evidence can be provided at the commencement of the programme that as a result of in-school formal performance assessment the standard of the applicant's teaching to date is 'good' or 'outstanding'.
- 5, Additionally, the school in which the candidate is currently employed is required to confirm that s/he possesses the appropriate qualities, attitudes and values expected of a teacher; has undergone the necessary safeguarding and fitness to teach checks; and agrees to support the teacher through the assessment process.

The DfE guidance (**Assessment only route to QTS: criteria and supporting advice, updated 22 January 2021**) can be found through this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-assessment-only-route-to-qts/assessment-only-route-to-qts-criteria-and-supporting-advice>

## PROGRAMME CONTENT

There is no specified curriculum for this programme. The programme is an assessment against the Teachers' Standards (2012) only.

The Assessment Only route is supported and assessed by experienced and expert teachers both in schools and the University.

The employing school is expected to arrange for the candidate to be mentored through the programme by a qualified teacher who could be another experienced teacher in the same department or a member of SLT with particular responsibility for professional development.

A named university tutor will manage the assessment process from the initial interview in school, through formal observations of teaching, and the final scrutiny and assessment of the portfolio of evidence.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications for the AO route to QTS need to be made online.

*N.B. The AO route is **NOT** a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).*

Candidates should go to [the main university website](https://www.gre.ac.uk/study/apply/pg) at <https://www.gre.ac.uk/study/apply/pg> and make an application under the heading 'Applying for a Master's Degree, Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) or Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)'.

You will be invited to create a unique log in ID and PIN

On the next screen the application type is 'postgraduate'.

Fill out the required fields in the application form as instructed but please note

1. There are 3 possible starting points for Month/Year of Entry for the AO programme – January, April, and September.
2. The programme of study you need to select is 'PG Non Credit Bearing Assessment Only route to QTS'.
3. The mode/point of entry is 'FT<24 wks'

The process above captures your basic personal details. Once this online application is received you will be emailed a Supplementary Information Form to complete in order to gather an overview of your experience and current teaching commitments.

**Please note that, in order for us to carry out the various stages of making a judgement on your suitability for the programme (see below: School Visit 1, lesson observation and initial audit), it is recommended that you submit the online application in the first 4 weeks of the term BEFORE that in which you are applying to be assessed. (i.e. by the end of September for a January start, by end of January for a April start etc).**

## SELECTION PROCESS

On receipt of your application, if indications are that the criteria are satisfied you will be sent an audit against the standards to complete. This needs to be completed in as much detail as possible since it is an important part of your claim to be a competent teacher without any further training. It also needs to be supported by appropriate evidence. You should draw on your teaching career so far to outline your experience and achievements. You should present a breadth and variety of experience in order to address each standard, but do take care to ensure that you are including relevant examples and evidence. At this stage it is not necessary to cover every aspect of every standard but an important outcome from the auditing process is the identification of specific areas where you will need to be gathering further evidence during the assessment period.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for examples of how you might complete this audit.

### School Visit 1 – Lesson observation, discussion of initial audit, and scrutiny of criteria evidence

Once the audit has been received by the university tutor, and it is confirmed that you comply with all the entry requirements, the tutor will visit your school to see you teach, and will also expect to see your original certificates and documents. The purpose of this is preliminary visit is solely to assess your competence as a teacher and is the first stage in deciding whether the university can consider you for the AO route programme, and to discuss the coverage of your audit with you and your mentor. The tutor will also want to meet with the qualified teacher who will be mentoring you through the process.

You will be required to complete a suitability declaration at this point and the school will be asked to confirm that they have undertaken the necessary safeguarding and fitness to teach checks as part of the employer's responsibilities.

Original certificates for GCSE qualifications, degree, as well as proof of ID should be presented at this meeting. **Additionally, you will be required to present originals of your qualifications in person at the university Student Centre before you can fully register for the programme** (see Registration below).

Following the first school visit the university tutor will draw up an action plan highlighting where supplementary evidence against the Teachers' Standards may be required. You will be expected to address this during the assessment period.

Assuming you are successful in the observation and initial audit review, you will be made a formal offer of a place on the AO route programme for the next start date (January, April, September). **It is important to accept this offer when official notification is received from the university in order that subsequent registration information is received.**

A partnership agreement between university and school is required before you can commence the period of assessment.

### School Visit 2

On this visit the university tutor will want to see you teach a second time, and will meet with your mentor. The portfolio of evidence that you have collated over the assessment period will be scrutinized (in particular those standards which were highlighted in the first visit).

If the evidence is sufficiently broad and comprehensive, the tutor will sign off the portfolio as satisfying the standards (including part 2). and the university will subsequently recommend QTS status.

You are asked to keep the evidence portfolio complete and safe for a period of three years, as Ofsted may take an interest in it when they come to inspect the university's ITE provision.

### **Registration**

There are two parts to the registration process with the university – Part 1 (online) in which you confirm your personal and contact details, fee payment arrangements etc, and Part 2 which is a check of your qualifications and ID. You have to complete Part 2 in person at the university Student Centre at Southwood House at the university's Avery Hill Campus unless originals of your certificates, identify documents etc have been seen and copies taken by the tutor at the interview.

Once you have completed registration in full you will be registered by the university with the DfE as starting the AO route.

**N.B. You cannot register with the university until you have met any outstanding conditions. You cannot start your assessment period until you are registered with the university.**

## ASSESSMENT PERIOD

The assessment period is 12 weeks / 3 months (i.e. approx. one school term). During this time you will be formally observed teaching on a regular basis by your mentor or another qualified teacher in school, receive one monitoring and support visit from the university tutor, and be building up your portfolio of evidence. **It is an expectation that a formal lesson observation is completed by a qualified teacher at least once every two weeks during the assessment period.** The university tutor will make a further visit towards the end of the assessment period to observe teaching and carry out the final assessment of the portfolio.

Assessment is through the collection of evidence to support progress and achievement against the Teachers' Standards<sup>1</sup>. Assessment is on a pass/fail basis against these standards, all of which must have been met by the end of the programme. [SEP] The evidence base will develop to reflect progress and will include well maintained, systematic records of progress through professional learning and practice.

Evidence might include:

- Subject knowledge audits
- Written lesson observations
- Lesson evaluations and reflections on practice
- 'Witness statements' – accounts of specific events and conversations which are particularly pertinent to attainment of the Teachers' Standards
- Records of professional development activities
- Assessment reports including a final written report summarising attainment

During this time in your professional practice you are expected to:

- set high expectations to inspire, motivate and challenge pupils and promote good progress and outcomes
- plan and teach well-structured lessons and adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils
- use appropriate formative and summative tools effectively to assess pupil learning in order to secure good progress
- demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- manage behaviour effectively to ensure an appropriate learning environment for all pupils
- support the ethos of the school/setting and demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional behaviour including personal attendance and punctuality
- engage fully with the wider life of the school/setting and build strong professional relationships, demonstrating that you can work collaboratively with colleagues responding positively to all advice and feedback
- show initiative by contributing to curriculum planning and develop effective and appropriate learning resources
- be proactive in seeking opportunities to develop your own professional practice and develop a rigorous and well organized evidence base of your professional learning and practice
- constantly evaluate and review your practice, setting targets for progress

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<sup>1</sup> The Teachers' Standards (2012) can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards)

The school-based mentor is expected to monitor your progress on a regular basis throughout the period of assessment and evidence and progress will be formatively reviewed by the university tutor during the first monitoring visit.

Towards the end of the assessment period the mentor is required to write a report summarizing attainment against the Teachers' Standards. (see Appendix 2). Grades are required on this report to reflect your performance in each standard area and, in turn, these inform the overall summative grade. Criteria for making these judgments are contained in the published Teachers' Standards Descriptors.

In order to be recommended for the award of Qualified Teacher Status you must provide evidence to show that all of the Teachers' Standards have been met.

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) is awarded by the DfE following recommendation by the university.

If illness or other serious circumstances necessitate absence during the assessment period you or your school must inform the university tutor. In the case of an extended period of absence the teacher may need to defer or extend the assessment period.

## THE PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

This portfolio is either

- a lever-arch file, organised with eight sections according to the Teachers' Standards, as well as Part 2, to present the evidence relevant to each standard.
- A collection of nine separate folders, each clearly titled against a standard (including Part 2)

As a rough guide, your final portfolio is expected to include between **six and ten** pieces of evidence for each of the 8 standards in Part 1. There will be no more than ten. Do not fill your portfolio with every bit of evidence you can find. Be selective. It is the quality and not the quantity of the evidence you provide that counts therefore think carefully about what you include. A portfolio typically includes:

- a range of lesson observation reports and evaluations made by experienced teachers
- your evaluations of your lessons
- lessons plans and resources
- assessment records (marked work, reports to parents, trackers and targets, etc)
- witness statements, eg from a senior colleague
- reflections about incidents/your own performance in relation to specific Standards
- involvement in out-of-school learning activities
- certificates of attendance and summaries of what was learned from CPD courses and in-school training sessions (printed handouts on their own are not sufficient evidence)

Experience shows that the following often help to provide evidence for particular standards:

- Lesson plans or observations showing innovative teaching
- Evidence of pupils' progress in relation to their Target Minimum Grade
- Planning for effective use of additional adults in lessons, etc.
- Observations of the teacher as a form tutor
- Copies of pupils' work with evaluation comments and feedback

- Assessment and tracking records
- Records of meetings with senior staff eg. pupil data manager or SEN co-ordinator
- Personalised lesson plans to take account of individual pupils' needs as shown on their IEPs
- Contributions to phase planning or department meetings and staff meetings
- Letters, memos or records of phone calls made to parents and colleagues about student issues
- Teaching and Learning development with colleagues, eg peer coaching
- Teaching resources

### **General advice on the Portfolio of Evidence**

Where a piece of evidence meets more than one standard you can add it to your portfolio under more than one standard and cross-reference to it under another. However, it would be unwise to use one piece of evidence too often. A well-developed portfolio of evidence includes a range of evidence types and a variety of evidence to show your professional development in different contexts.

In most cases, evidence arises from the normal work of a teacher and making the portfolio should not require 'starting from scratch'. You may use evidence from previous teaching including in other schools, and evidence from training, if appropriate and available.

Include evidence from two age ranges/key stages: not necessarily half from each key stage, but a reasonable balance. Lesson observations are a good source of evidence but it will obviously not be possible to gain all your evidence from these. You may use evidence from any relevant experience over the past few years and, if you have not been working in your current school for long, try to cover some standards from your previous school.

Include photocopied/internet documents in your Portfolio only where you have worked on them yourself (for example by summarising, highlighting or annotating). They can be referred to, but the Portfolio should contain your own work.

### **EARLY CAREER TEACHER (ECT) PERIOD**

Assessment on the AO route leads to recommendation to the DfE for QTS. After this recommendation, the full requirements for Newly Qualified Teachers apply including the successful completion of an ECT Period (2 years). Employing schools are expected to support the ECT as they would any Newly Qualified Teacher.

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The quality of the AO programme is monitored through

- External examiner scrutiny and reports<sup>2</sup>
- AO teacher feedback
- University's Progression and Award Board procedures (PABs)
- Statistical information

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<sup>2</sup> External Examiners are selected from Teacher Education providers. The function of the External Examiner is to oversee professional standards on the course in order to ensure their compatibility with national standards for Teacher Education programmes

## **APPENDIX 1**

<b>TS6: Make accurate and productive use of assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements</i></li> <li><i>make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress</i></li> <li><i>use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons</i></li> <li><i>give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>This demonstrates ....</b>
<p>Lesson Observation 11/5/20 completed by Deputy Head Written feedback on marking scrutiny</p> <p>Marked mock exams.</p> <p>English and Media Pro-Forma.</p> <p>Adapted Level Descriptors for students' books.</p> <p>Nimbl data sheets and examples of literacy work with targeted students</p>	<p>I have consistently been judged as providing good to outstanding feedback to students in marking of books and assessment during school observation, learning walks and Quality Assurance of marking that take place each term.</p> <p>Marking of mock exams for both English and Media (GCSE and A Level) showing accurate application of awarding body's criteria</p> <p>I have developed and implemented a marking pro-forma and level descriptors for the National Curriculum Levels that allow students to respond to feedback given, as well as understand what is required to progress to each level. Students fix these level descriptors to their books and use throughout the year. Additionally, these sheets and students' responses act as a form of data that I use to set targets and plan subsequent lessons. Nimbl data is also used to plan literacy interventions inside and outside of class time.</p>
<b>Note below aspects of this standard that you will need to target for evidence during the assessment period</b>	
<p>Incorporate effective use of formative and summative assessment.</p> <p>Ensuring marking is more consistent and useful.</p>	

<b>TS5: Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be accountable for attainment, progress and outcomes of the pupils</li> <li>• know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively</li> <li>• have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these</li> <li>• demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development</li> <li>• have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.</li> </ul>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>This demonstrates ....</b>
<p>Observation feedback noting the high quality of questioning in lessons.</p> <p>Examples of differentiated materials provided for EAL student in Yr 11 GCSE group.</p> <p>GCSE cohort data showing how students have met or exceeded target grades in Psychology and yet failed to meet targets in other subjects</p> <p>The framework, example of homework, and data to show that pupils that took A level Psychology went on to achieve their target grades.</p>	<p>My use of questioning has been commended in lesson observations. I use questioning as a good tool to delve into the understanding of my pupils.</p> <p>Addressing the needs of pupils with EAL through appropriate intervention and differentiation to ensure such pupils still make adequate progress.</p> <p>Taking a varied approach to different learners to ensure that they make progress over time.</p> <p>'Plan based' homework framework implemented at A level as I believed that this would be key to high achievement and would meet the needs of our KS5 pupils. This is especially the case for pupils who do not have English as their first language and therefore need assistance with essay based questions.</p>
<b>Note below aspects of this standard that you will need to target for evidence during the assessment period</b>	
<p>Evidence demonstrating better awareness of social and intellectual development of children. Case studies of FSM pupils in order to understand which measures work the best for them.</p>	

## APPENDIX 2



### FACULTY OF EDUCATION & HEALTH ITT Programmes

## Assessment Only Route to QTS Final Report

The supervising mentor is asked to complete this report towards the end of the assessment period in discussion with the teacher who is being assessed.

The completed report should then be given to the teacher (for inclusion in the evidence file) and also emailed to Dr Mark Betteney (m.w.betteney@gre.ac.uk) at the University

Name of teacher to be assessed:

Subject (Secondary) or Key Stage (Primary):

Name of school:

Name of mentor:

**Overall Grade Recommendation (Highlight or circle)**

**PASS / FAIL**

When grading the individual standards, mentors should use the university's '**Teachers' Standards: Ensuring Assessment Only Standards**' booklet as criteria

**1 Exceeding the Standards (Outstanding)**

**2 Embedding the Standards (Good)**

**3 Developing the Standards (Requires Improvement)**

**4 Not yet developing the Standards (Inadequate)**

Please note

- Grade 4 for any standard is a judgement that the student is not meeting the expectation therefore must be a Fail overall)

Report completed (date):

Please comment on the teacher's performance under each of the following headings.

<b>TS 1: Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils.</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 2: Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 3: Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 4: Plan and teach well- structured lessons</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 5: Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 6: Make accurate and productive use of assessment</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 7: Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment</b>
Grade:
<b>TS 8: Fulfil wider professional responsibilities</b>
Grade:

<b>TS Part two: Personal and Professional Conduct</b>

<b>Further comments (optional)</b>
<b>Teacher comment (optional)</b>