



Assessment Only Route to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) – Primary

Course summary

Who is the Assessment Only Route (AOR) for?

- People who have significant experience working in schools (or equivalent educational settings), but do not possess Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This particularly applies to people who are working as an unqualified teacher, but may also include cover supervisors and Higher Level Teaching Assistants, depending on qualifications and the exact nature of their role;
- It is also an appropriate route for people who are Overseas Trained Teachers and do not automatically qualify for QTS;
- It is also available for experienced FE lecturers who are now working in school and wish to gain QTS.

About the course:

Successful candidates are expected to demonstrate that they are a reflective practitioner who has met the Teachers' Standards and are able to demonstrate that they can apply their skills, knowledge and understanding effectively and flexibly in a range of school settings and age phases. They will also be able to show evidence of their ability to link educational theory and practice.

As this is an Assessment Only route, there is no formal taught element to the course. Candidates will normally be assessed over the period of the course in the school in which they are employed (their supporting school). Over this period there is an expectation that the supporting school will provide the candidate with appropriate and effective mentor support. The supporting school must not be in an Ofsted category.

During the assessment period the supporting school will need to ensure that candidates have sufficient opportunity to fully meet the Teachers' Standards. This includes ensuring that candidates comply with the current requirements of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) including a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and 'fitness to teach'.

The maximum period for the AO route is 12 weeks. The AO route is not suitable for candidates who require training in order to meet the Teachers' Standards. Candidates who require training are advised to consider the one of our other routes into teaching, such as School Direct.



Entry requirements:

For admission to the course, applicants will need to be able to provide evidence that:

- They hold a good Honours Degree (normally a 2.2 classification or above; in exceptional circumstances a lower degree classification, supported by further evidence of appropriate study, may be accepted).
- They hold GCSE grade C or above in Mathematics, English Language and Science (or an equivalent, verifiable qualification).
- They have passed the QTS Skills Tests in Numeracy and Literacy (which must be taken before an application will be processed).
- They are employed as an unqualified teacher in a suitable school. The school must be able to confirm its commitment to Initial Teacher Training and must not be in an Ofsted category. This school will become the applicant's 'sponsoring school'.
- They have been observed teaching by the sponsoring school and have had the effectiveness of their teaching over time graded as 'Outstanding' or 'Good'.
- They have experience teaching in two or more schools/colleges, including the school they are currently working at. The experience should be relevant and recent (within the last 5 years) and across two consecutive age phases. Age phases are defined as:
 - Ages 3-5 (Foundation stage)
 - Ages 5-7 (School years 1-2)
 - Ages 7-9 (School years 3-4)
 - Ages 9-11 (School years 5-6)
- They have been teaching in their current role (or similar) for a minimum of 2 years.

Before being admitted to the course, candidates will also be submitted to a full DBS check, including checks of appropriate barred lists, and must also pass a fitness to teach assessment.

Application Process:

Our selection process for the Assessment Only route is a very rigorous one, reflecting the fact that candidates admitted on to the programme are not expected to need further

explicit training, beyond high quality mentoring, to successfully meet the standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

We run a two stage application process for the AOR, to ensure that we recruit the best candidates for the programme, and to ensure that the programme is the most appropriate route to QTS for both the applicant and their supporting school.

Stage 1:

- Completion of an application form with a supporting statement from the applicant's school;
- Submission of an initial self-assessment against the Teachers' Standards;
- Submission of a Declaration of Prior Experience, detailing teaching experience across schools and age phases.

Candidates will then be visited in school by a senior member of the Mersey Boroughs' staff, who will conduct initial interviews with both the candidate and the headteacher of the supporting school.

At this stage, a Pre-Acceptance Plan will be devised. This will include details of how any further experience identified in the Declaration of Prior Experience will be undertaken (e.g. second school, alternative age phase) and a strategy to begin to address any significant gaps in the candidate's self-assessment against Teachers' Standards. A small number (usually between 3 and 5) of elements of the Teachers' Standards will be identified for which samples of evidence will be required to be presented at Stage 2.

Stage 2:

The timing of Stage 2, following on from Stage 1, will be dependent on the content of the agreed Pre-Acceptance Plan. Stage 2 of the process will normally consist of:

- Submission of a self-evaluation of progress made against the targets set out in the Pre-Acceptance Plan;
- Scrutiny of evidence identified during Stage 1;
- A joint observation of the candidate's teaching (with a senior member of staff from the supporting school).

At this stage a decision will be made as to whether the candidate:

- Meets the criteria for acceptance on to the AOR;
- Is working towards meeting the criteria for acceptance on to the AOR;
- Does not meet the criteria for acceptance on to the AOR

Where a candidate is deemed still to be working towards meeting the criteria, further detail will be added to their Pre-Acceptance Plan. Candidates not meeting the criteria for the AOR will be given further information about alternative, taught routes to QTS that may better suit their particular needs and circumstances.

Prior to Stage 1, we are also happy to have informal discussions with applicants and/or supporting schools to help support a decision to apply the application process.



Learning and Development:

Once candidates are formally registered on the programme, dates will be agreed for regular monitoring and support from a QA (Quality Assurance) Tutor identified by Mersey Boroughs. Although there is no 'taught' element on this programme, it is important that candidates demonstrate that they are continuing to develop professionally as a teacher while on the AOR. To support this development, the supporting school will be expected to provide a skilled mentor in school (a School Based Tutor) who will conduct weekly observations and meetings with the candidate for the duration of the programme.

Assessment is made via the production of a portfolio of evidence measured against the Teachers' Standards, the observation of successful teaching by school and Mersey Boroughs staff and a final, successful review against the Teachers' Standards. Over the course of the 12 weeks of the programme, it is expected that lesson observations will have identified teaching that has a consistently good/outstanding impact on pupils' learning and achievement.

All candidates will need to provide a variety of high quality evidence to demonstrate that they have met the Teachers' Standards across two or more consecutive age ranges, and also evidence of having taught in two schools.

Fees and finance:

2018/19 Fees

UK students

- £2,500 (in total)

These fees apply if you're starting this course between September 2018 and August 2019. We recommend you check fee details with us though, as they can change. Costs can increase each year. Additionally, if a candidate requires support from Mersey Boroughs to facilitate a placement in an alternative school, a further cost (typically between £380 and £500, depending on placement length) may be incurred.

Route Overview:

