

iPGCE with iQTS

What to expect as a placement school

What is iQTS and why offer it to your teachers?

iQTS stands for “International Qualified Teacher Status” and is a UK-government recognised qualification. Once a teacher successfully completes the iQTS qualification, they will automatically be awarded ‘QTS’ – the qualification required to teach in English schools.

Offering iQTS to your staff is a great way to demonstrate your commitment to their professional development. The iQTS programme is a rigorous initial teacher education programme that supports new teachers to understand and apply key principles from evidence and research in the classroom. It ensures that participants meet the iQTS Teachers’ Standards which are essential elements of quality teaching:

iQTS Teachers’ Standards
1) Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
2) Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
3) Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
4) Plan and teach well-structured lessons
5) Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
6) Make accurate and productive use of assessment
7) Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
8) Fulfil wider professional responsibilities
Part Two: demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct

The main benefit of hosting an iQTS student is to contribute to the development of a teacher who can make a substantial contribution to the learning of the pupils in your school.

Additional benefits of hosting an iQTS student include:

- improved retention and continuous professional development for your existing staff through iQTS training or mentoring
- the contribution iQTS trainees make to your school while on placement
- new teaching talent in your region and a network of professionals sharing resources, best practice and expertise
- local iQTS graduates who are then available for recruitment
- enhanced leadership for your school in your region

What is an iPGCE?

iPGCE stands for ‘International Post Graduate Certificate of Education’ and is an academic award from the University of Chichester. We offer students the opportunity to gain the iPGCE and 60 Masters level credits alongside their iQTS qualification. The iPGCE recognises the students’ engagement with research and enhances their future career prospects. The iPGCE credits can also be used towards further study for an MA degree.

What does my school need to do?

As a partner school hosting an iQTS student, you would need to:

- give student teachers 120 days of classroom experience (this is the required minimum amount)
- Give student teachers opportunities to observe and teach as part of their 20 days of Intensive Training and Practice (ITAP)
- release an experienced member of your staff to take on the role of mentor to support the professional development of the student teacher and to provide pastoral support
- enable this member of staff to attend relevant mentor training
- work closely with the University of Chichester to maintain standards
- supply feedback to DfE to help improve iQTS for future candidates
- allow student teachers to be observed in school as part of their assessment

Classroom experience

The iQTS/iPGCE programme lasts for 36 weeks and during that time, students will spend 4 days per week in school (during term-time) and 1 day each week studying (reducing to ½ day study time in the third term). Each week they will be expected to spend a minimum of 15 hours in classrooms (teaching, observing, etc).

While in school, they will complete weekly training activities and tasks set by the university – these will be linked to their iQTS study and typically involve observing, speaking with experienced colleagues, or applying their learning in their own practice and reflecting on this.

The iQTS course is designed to enable students to teach over a minimum of 4 consecutive school years - therefore as part of the course they will need to spend time working with different age groups within your school. In the case of Primary trainees, this will likely involve some periods working in classes with younger or older pupils.

Volunteers and Employed Students

The iQTS/iPGCE programme is open both to students who are working in your school as a volunteer and those who are employed as teachers or teaching assistants.

In the case of volunteers, you will need to be willing to offer the student sufficient experience of teaching classes. If they are new to volunteering at the school, they will start by observing and working with groups or individuals before gradually building up teaching responsibilities over the course. However, by the end of the course, they will need to be teaching 80% of the timetable of an experienced teacher for at least 6 weeks.

In the case of employed students, they can start with the same level of teaching responsibility that they had prior to starting the course but you will need to allow the student sufficient time away from their teaching duties to complete the school-based tasks (e.g. observations of teachers) and for their study time (see below). If required, you will also need to consider how they can be supported to have a second school placement (also below).

Study time

Each week, students will be required to undertake up to 6 hours of directed study. These will take up a full day at the start of the programme but will reduce to one half-day per week in the final third of the course as students take on more teaching responsibility. The study time will usually need to be scheduled as one full day or two half-days – it is not practicable to do this course in shorter periods throughout the week.

Study activities will consist of a mixture of video lectures, readings, online tasks and live Teams sessions. The live Teams sessions are compulsory, and students will need to be released from other duties to attend these as scheduled.

For student teachers starting in September 2026, the Live Teams Tutorials will be scheduled on Wednesdays between 12noon and 3pm UK time.

Mentoring

Placement schools will need to identify an experienced teacher to act as ‘mentor’ for the iQTS student. The mentor will meet with their student weekly to review progress, discuss their student’s learning and to set targets. These will be completed on our online Abyasa system. They will also observe the student regularly (e.g. weekly) to give them feedback on their progress.

The university provides a free mentor development programme. This consists of online training units, placement briefing meetings, recommended reading and individual coaching that can be studied over the year at the participant’s own pace. Mentors will complete an audit of prior learning to identify which parts of the mentor training course are appropriate and will not be asked to attend training on topics that they may already have covered in a previous role. Schools are asked to support their mentors to attend training, and the university will pay a placement fee to schools on completion of the student’s placement to help facilitate this.

Mentors will also be supported by a lead mentor employed by the university. The lead mentor will meet with and support the mentor in carrying out their role and also quality assure the work of the mentor to ensure the best outcomes for each student. Schools are asked to allow the lead mentor to take part in remote observations of the iQTS student teaching using a secure observation platform and to facilitate the meeting between the mentor and lead mentor.

What is Intensive Training and Practice (ITAP)?

Intensive Training and Practice (ITAP) are periods of the course where students will focus on one fundamental aspect of teaching to develop expertise in this area. They will complete three ITAPs over the course each lasting for 7 days. During the ITAP, they will need to be released from some aspects of their usual teaching timetable so that they can observe and teach lessons which relate to the ITAP focus. The dates of these periods are agreed before the start of the academic year.

Is there a second school placement?

A placement in a different school is an opportunity for students to broaden their experience and develop as a professional. Ideally, all students will spend approximately 2-4 weeks in a different school. This requirement may not apply to students who have previous teaching experience in a different school prior to beginning the course.

If it is not possible to arrange a second school placement, students will complete a one-week virtual school shadowing task including video observation and/or remote teaching.

How can I find out more?

More information can be found on the course website:

<https://www.chi.ac.uk/teaching/course/ipgce/>

If you have any questions, or would like to speak to a member of the iQTS team, please email iQTS@chi.ac.uk