

Entry requirement and equivalencies policy

2023/4

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Introduction

KMT SCITT understands and recognises the need to establish and maintain a high-quality recruitment procedure to ensure its vision in producing excellent teachers. Our internal GCSE Equivalency Tests have been designed to support applicants who are otherwise suitable for the training programme but, for whatever reason, do not have the required evidence to meet the GCSE grade 4 (or recognised equivalent) in English, mathematics and/or, for Primary only, Science. These internal tests give suitable candidates the opportunity to show that they can meet the required standard with minimal cost (£12.50 per paper - for the AO route this charge is in place from 2023-24; for the SD route this charge is in place from 2024-25) hence underpinning KMTs philosophy to enable equal opportunity for all in its fair and transparent recruitment process,

KMT follows the [DfE criteria for ITT](#) and, as this document states "The aim of this criterion (C1.1 GCSE standard equivalent) is to ensure that all entrants to ITT have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment, and for primary trainees that they demonstrate an acceptable level of subject knowledge in the core subjects of the National Curriculum". GCSE equivalencies are required regardless of any higher qualification in a related subject. An individual with an A Level or Undergraduate degree in Mathematics, English or Science also requires the appropriate GCSEs to undertake a teacher training programme.

KMT will ensure that each applicant sitting an internal equivalency test is clear that this test is only suitable for their training course and cannot be used as a GCSE equivalent in future job applications.

In our drive for excellence this process will be reviewed to ensure that there is no complacency and that academic standards are set and maintained at a high level.

Recognised Equivalence

KMT follows the [DfE criteria for ITT](#) and has processes in place to ensure qualifications other than GCSEs can be checked for suitability and equivalence. There is an expectation that candidates with overseas qualifications will use UK ENIC to verify the equivalency of these qualifications in line with their UK equivalent. KMT also expects these applicants to share their school and degree transcripts so the breadth of their study can be seen.

KMT needs to ensure that the equivalent qualifications held by an applicant have enough subject depth and breadth of curriculum coverage. In viewing potentially equivalent qualifications, KMT will assess a range of evidence to determine if an equivalency is required from the applicant. It is worth noting that GCSE English Literature at a grade 4 or above is now accepted as an alternative but equivalent qualification for GCSE English Language however a Level 2 Functional Skills qualification is not (it does not have the required breadth and depth of study).

Any applicant not holding recognised Level 2, equivalent qualifications will need to complete the required Equivalency Tests prior to the commencement of their training year.

Applicants have the option to provide evidence from an external equivalency provider if they wish.

KMT GCSE Equivalency Test Development

KMT has used relevant and current subject specialists to create the internal tests, the use of GCSE past paper questions was advocated (December 2023). The tests have been created with each GCSE qualifications assessment objectives in mind. Each paper covers questions ranging from GCSE grade 3 to 5 and a pass mark within the range of 48 to 55%, which is inline with the Foundation tier and other external providers' equivalency tests.

KMT GCSE Equivalence for English:

This paper is based around the AQA GCSE English Language paper 2, with an additional question from paper 1 to ensure all assessment objectives are covered. The paper is broken down into two sections. Section A (Reading) requires you to read two short non-fiction extracts and to answer 5 questions of different mark value and length. Section B (Writing) requires you to choose from one of two (one fiction, one non-fiction) extended writing questions. It is 2 hours in duration, including 15 minutes for reading time. The pass mark for this paper is 45 out of 100 (45%), this is inline with other equivalency provider gradings and GCSE grade boundaries. You can use the amount of marks for each question as a guide for how much you should write, and how long you should spend answering it.

Breakdown of questions:

Section A			
AQA Paper and Question	KMT English Equivalency Question	Question focus	Marks
Paper 2 - Q1	Q1	Identify information	4
Paper 2 - Q2	Q2	Summary	8
Paper 2 - Q3	Q3	Language analysis	12
Paper 2 - Q4	Q4	Comparison of writers' ideas and perspectives	16
Paper 1 - Q4	Q5	Critical evaluation	20
Section B			
AQA Paper and Question	KMT English Equivalency Question	Question focus	Marks
Paper 2 - Q5*	Q6 option a	Effective writing	40
Paper 1 - Q5*	Q6 option b	Effective writing	40
*NB: You choose one option to answer from Section B		Total marks	100

Tips for Section B (Effective Writing)

You will be marked on your ability to write engaging and technically accurate texts. Therefore, you should pay close attention to: the content (e.g. language choices, vocabulary and use of imagery) as well as the organisation (e.g. sentence and whole text structure and paragraphing) of your piece in addition to the spelling, punctuation and grammar. We advise you to spend some time planning your answer before you begin. As the highest-mark question in the exam, we also strongly urge you to plan your time carefully so that you allow enough time for this section - you may choose to answer this question first, before returning to Section A, for example.

We strongly advise that you spend some time prior to your exam revising the AQA English Language GCSE, in conjunction with the question breakdown above, so that you are familiar with the format and intent of the questions.

Possible revision resource: *AQA GCSE English Paper 1 and 2 revision guides, Youtube (e.g. Mr Bruff, Mr Everything English).*

KMT GCSE Equivalence for mathematics:

This paper is based on a Foundation GCSE mathematics paper 2 to allow the use of a calculator as well as non-calculator techniques across topics in Number, Algebra, Data and Geometry. It is 1.5 hours in duration. The pass mark for this paper is 40 out of 80 (50%).

Possible revision resource: <https://justaroo.co.uk/the-gcse-thing/> (Grade 4/5 content)

KMT GCSE Equivalence for Science:

This paper robustly covers topics linked to KS2 through all 3 scientific disciplines whilst incorporating scientific method and mathematical skills. It is 1.5 hours in duration and a formula sheet, along with a copy of the periodic table, will be shared. The pass mark for this paper is 44 out of 85 (52%) which is based around the boundary for a double award of 4-4 in the 2023 GCSEs.

Possible revision resource: *CGP AQA Trilogy Science Foundation Revision Book.*

Equivalency Marking Procedures

To ensure consistency and accuracy, the tests are marked by subject specialists that have extensive experience in exam board marking. Mark Schemes were created by the specialists and utilises GCSE marking criteria / expectation.

Mitigating Circumstances

KMT understands that there is a need, on very rare occasions, to take into consideration extenuating circumstances for a candidate. These are considered on a "as needed" basis and will be assessed by the CPL overseeing AT Support, the relevant Hub CPL and the Head of KMT.

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are unavoidable, unexpected and beyond a candidate's control. It may have a direct, substantial and negative impact on a candidate's ability to undertake or complete the test. When candidates are disadvantaged we can sometimes make mark adjustments as part of our mitigating circumstances process.

Candidates are eligible for mitigating circumstances consideration if they were fully prepared for the sitting of the equivalency tests, were disadvantaged due to unavoidable circumstances beyond their control at the time of the tests, and have attempted the following:

- Two attempts of the KMT Equivalency and/or
- At least one attempt at an external equivalency or the actual GCSE qualification in the summer before the training year begins

In some cases the placement school may be requested to confirm they are happy to train the candidate if mitigating and extenuating circumstances are applied.

Assessing the Prior teaching experience of trainees on a employment based (Salaried/PGTA) routes

Trainees must have taught pupils in two schools prior to the award of QTS. It is not sufficient for trainees only to have had non-teaching work experience in another school.

If a trainee on an employment based route has prior assessed experience of teaching in a school then we may consider whether this teaching experience is relevant and recent enough for us to approve a reduction to the B Placement (from 5 weeks to 4 or 3 weeks). The exception is for employment-based trainees in special schools unless their previous teaching experience is in a mainstream setting.

[This form](#) should be completed and returned to the relevant Course Programme Lead before the end of September.

All Trainees must still complete the ITAP blocks regardless of prior experience.

Subject Knowledge Enhancement

KMT follows the DFE guidance on access to a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course. This is listed as a condition of offer if, at interview, KMT and / or the host school feels the applicant could benefit from following a course before commencing their teacher training.

Factors considered when determining if a SKE course is required:

KMT will consider a wide range of evidence as well as the DFE guidance. The wider evidence will be a combination of any of the following:

- Was the subject studied at A level?
- Was there an appropriate depth and breadth of subject coverage in completed degree modules?
- When the qualifications were completed e.g. if it has been over 5 years prior to the application being submitted
- Was an appropriate amount of knowledge and understanding displayed during the interview process?
 - seen in the interview presentation (PGFF route) or teaching episode (PGEB / PGTA route)
 - Judged from the answers to subject based interview questions

Subjects:

As stated in the KMT Training Provisional Checklist the SKE courses are only offered in the specific subjects listed below; any other subject will require the applicant to engage in their own SKE by following guidance from KMT and their host school.

- Biology
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- English
- MFL (Spanish, French, **German**¹) - up to two SKE courses, the longest being in the weaker language
- Computing
- RE
- DT¹

Duration:

¹ Offered with a different provider

SKE courses can vary in duration, ranging from 8 to 28 weeks

- All SKE course are full time
- Our SKE courses will be provided by Vidlearn
- Can be completed before or alongside the ITT courses (although the latter is not advisable)
- Courses are all online
- Weekly sessions are expected to require a minimum of 25 hours study.

Funding:

Applicants can access government funded SKE if they have:

- A degree that's related to the subject rather than an exact match for it
- Studied the subject at A level, but not degree level
- An unrelated degree but relevant professional knowledge in the subject
- Studied for a language degree, but need a second language at an acceptable level for teaching in schools
- A degree in the subject but have not used their degree knowledge for many years

Applicants who have a degree in their chosen ITT subject awarded in the previous 5 years are not eligible for a funded SKE course.

For all SKE courses in the 2023 to 2024 academic year: the candidate will receive £175 per week. Those with a degree pending will receive this bursary once they receive their Degree Classification and provide the SKE provider with the evidence.

The SKE will be free for those with a Third Class or Ordinary Degree but they will not be entitled to the bursary.

Mitigating circumstances:

An extension to complete and SKE beyond the start of the course needs to be authorised by a member of the Senior Team and will only be agreed in the case of mitigating circumstances. Mitigating Circumstances are where an unexpected exceptional event has a significant impact on an AT's ability to submit assessment. KMT defines mitigating circumstances as circumstances which are:

- a) beyond the control of the AT
- b) could not be reasonably accommodated by the AT
- c) had a significant impact on their performance

Once requested and agreed a completion date will be set and must be adhered to.

Overseas qualifications

All overseas nationals arriving to work or study in the UK from 1 January 2021, including those from the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) and Switzerland, come under the UK's [points-based immigration system](#). KMT cannot sponsor student visas so KMT advises all overseas applicants to refer to the DFE website where they offer [support to international candidates on the Get into Teaching website](#) and guidance on [training to teach in England if you're a non-UK citizen](#).

Applicants who have their qualifications from a non-UK institution will need to have a '[statement of comparability](#)' from [UK ENIC](#) showing their equivalence to UK qualifications. The DFE offer the following guidance:

"Candidates are invited to call Get into Teaching on 0800 389 2500 for:

- guidance on the UK equivalents of their qualifications
- a free statement of comparability once they've submitted their application if their provider

asks for this

The final decision on eligibility still lies with the accredited ITT provider before an applicant enters teacher training."

Applicants can apply before their qualifications are verified and checked by ENIC. However, KMT strongly advises applicants to carry out the relevant checks as soon as possible as they can take a long time to be processed. If an applicant is successful at an interview, presenting a satisfactory statement of comparability will be a condition to their offer. However, this will need to be in place before the start of the course.

The 'statement of comparability' will state if the qualifications from overseas are equivalent and this will be the key evidence on deciding if an equivalency test is required (see recognised evidence above). KMT and ENIC will require an applicant to send their qualification transcripts and certificates to them. KMT will need to see the original documentation before the training year starts, which will be a condition to any training offer.

Possible external providers:

<https://www.equivalencytesting.com/>

<https://astarequivalency.co.uk/>

<https://laser-awards.org.uk/>