St Mary's University Twickenham London

School of Education

Initial Teacher Education Policy, Protocols and Frameworks

2025-26

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Part 1: Recruitment, Safeguarding and GDPR

Recruitment

Application process

The Admissions team's review of an application includes:

- A check of the applicant meeting the minimum qualification requirements (Appendix 1);
- checking the candidate's eligibility for the course based on their personal statement and relevant experience listed. The checks also extend to the candidate's work and education history, ensuring that there are no unexplained gaps within their CV.

Undergraduate Primary candidates apply through the UCAS system and follow the UCAS timeline. This includes when to choose their firm choice in May and when clearing is opened in August.

Work-Based Routes Primary candidates can apply via UCAS or apply directly via our website which leads the candidate to our student applicant portal. We recommend that WBR candidates apply directly to our website so that they are not restricted by UCAS timelines and deadlines, but we accept applications from both UCAS and from direct applicants.

PGCE Primary and Secondary candidates apply through the DfE Apply page and follow the DfE Apply timeline. This includes when applications open in October. However, St Mary's University Admissions and PGCE team can decide when to close applications at our discretion.

PGTA Primary and Secondary candidates apply through the DfE Apply page and follow the DfE Apply timeline. This includes when applications open in October. They may also apply directly via our website which leads the candidate to our student applicant portal.

International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS) candidates apply through our website which leads the candidate to our student application portal. The applications are processed by Admissions

and reviewed by the Course Lead and Head of Education Partnerships. Applications will be accepted throughout the year. However, St Mary's University Admissions and iQTS team can decide when to close applications at our discretion.

All applications include personal statements from candidates, references, personal details, and work/education history.

Pre-enrolment checks

Prior to allowing an individual to train to teach at St Mary's University, the following checks are administered and recorded on the single central record (SCR) against each person:

1. Confirm identity and place of abode
2. Does the applicant appear on the prohibition order list
3. Do they appear on the Children's Barred List/List 99
4. Have they made a signed declaration about their DBS status
5. Completed a DBS application form
6. Minimum of two references are from an appropriate professional body and are satisfactory
7. An overseas check has been conducted on an applicant who has lived and/or worked overseas
8. Any gaps in employment or education have been reasonably accounted for
9. The applicant holds the relevant qualifications to train to teach
10. The applicant has a satisfactory fitness to teach check status
11. An online search has been conducted on the applicant according to set parameters

iQTS: Where appropriate, pre-enrolment child protection checks will include local equivalents.

Criminal convictions declarations

If a candidate discloses a criminal conviction at application, the Admissions and Recruitment teams will scrutinise the declaration using the following form and process in line with the St Mary's ITT Safeguarding Policy. This outcome will determine whether the candidate will proceed to interview or be rejected at application.

If a DBS check is returned with a minor criminal conviction which was not disclosed on the application, pre interview form or at interview, the Admissions and Recruitment teams will follow the same process in deciding whether the candidate can proceed to the course or be withdrawn due to falsification at application. HEI training partners replicate these processes. The processes for both pre- and post-enrolment declarations are detailed at Appendix 2.

Safer Recruitment

We have ensured that all staff involved in ITE recruitment have completed the NSPCC Safer Recruitment training to maintain recruitment practices in line with KSCIE requirements. Questions in our interview schedule also reflect our commitment to safer recruitment.

Pre-interview form

The Pre-Interview form acts as an opportunity for disclosure by collecting relevant information that may impact a candidate's application to an ITT course that involves working with children. The form addresses the following areas in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025):

- Whether candidates have ever failed an ITT course in the past;
- Whether they have been refused funding for an ITT course (resulting in QTS);
- Whether candidates have ever been removed from an ITT programme leading to QTS;
- Whether there are any gaps in employment or education;
- Whether candidates are aware of any reason why they may be barred from teaching or working with children in any country;
- Whether there are any concerns about their online presence which may jeopardise their position on the course.

Pre-Interview forms are collected by the recruitment and admissions tutors, and it is their responsibility to disseminate any necessary information with the interviewing panel to support the candidate's additional needs and/or share disclosures stated in the Pre-Interview form.

Interviews

At interview, candidates are asked the following questions pertaining to child protection:

- To describe their motivations to become a teacher and work with children;
- To outline their understanding of a teacher's role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding;
- Whether there are any gaps in employment or education;
- Whether candidates are aware of any reason why they may be barred from teaching or working with children in any country;
- Any other information that should considered as part of their application.

Interview Panel & Review

Interview panels will have representation from our Partnership schools to support an external review and quality assurance.

A selection of interviews is also reviewed, for both quality assurance and to confirm interview results, by the relevant Associate Head and Course lead. A review can occur if the interviewer(s) find the candidate to be borderline and/or has not met the requirements in their entirety. The reviewers will assess the interview notes, and recording via Zoom, and confirm the results (Accept/Reject).

Once the interview is complete, the candidate can expect their interview results within two working days and a formal offer via email/update to their applicant portal by the end of the week.

Reference checks

References must adhere to the requirements specific to each ITE programme and all references are checked by a member of the ITE team prior to enrolment, in addition to the below.

For Undergraduate Routes: References can be from the school/college they have applied from. If the candidate has had gap in their education and were most recently employed, we would require a professional reference from their workplace. These references are checked by the Admissions team initially and subsequently signed off by a member of the ITE team. Any concerns are flagged to the Recruitment Lead and/or Associate Head of School.

For Work-Based Routes: References must include a reference from their recent/current employer in a Primary/Early Year setting. WBR and PGTA candidates must also ask their Headteacher of their current Primary/Early Year setting to provide a statement that enables them to progress onto the course whilst continuing in their employment at the setting. These references are checked by the Admissions team initially and subsequently signed off by a member of the ITE team. Any concerns are flagged to the Recruitment Lead and/or Associate Head of School.

For postgraduate ITE programmes: References must be submitted by referees using professional emails (i.e. not Gmail, Hotmail, yahoo, etc). If the candidate has been in education since the past 5 years, one of the two required references must be an academic reference from their place of study. PGCE references are initially checked by the Admissions team and are then signed off by a member of the ITE team. Any concerns are flagged to the Recruitment Lead and/or Associate Head of School.

For iQTS programmes: References must include reference to professional standing, if the trainee is already working in school, and one should be from the school in which the trainee will complete their iQTS programme. They should make clear the candidate's suitability to work with children in their context.

Online searches

As part of its due diligence and KCSIE (2025) compliance within the recruitment process, St Mary's University may conduct online searches for candidates invited to interview. Candidates are informed of this on the pre-interview form and will be asked to confirm that they have no concerns about their online presence during their interview. Prior to enrolment, online searches will be conducted by as outlined below.

The following set of parameters will be used to check an applicant's online history, and where there is any concern raised concerning the suitability of the applicant to work with children, the

issues will be raised pre-enrolment and recorded on a standard template that is shared with the Head of Admissions and Designated Safeguarding Officer for the programme to which the applicant is applying (Appendix 3):

Parameter 1: A Google search will be conducted of the applicant's name and:

+ current employment / voluntary work
+ previous employment / voluntary work
+ current educational establishment
+ previous educational establishment

Parameter 2: A website search will be made of the applicant's name in:

- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Facebook
- X
- TikTok

LinkedIn search: Details of any inconsistencies between educational, employment history and qualifications against the application form will be recorded and queried.

Social medial platforms: Any post which indicates the applicant may not be suitable to work with children (e.g. personal posts; discriminatory opinions) will be recorded and queried.

Conditions of offers

All offers provided are initially conditional offers, meaning that the candidate must meet the requirements to enrol on an ITT route. This includes:

- an enhanced DBS check, which the applicant is responsible for providing;
- completing a Fitness to Teach (FTT) form;
- ensuring that suitable references are provided.

At the start of a new academic year, candidates can enrol online provided they have met the entry requirements of their conditional offer. At the stage of induction, the pre-interview form is replicated, and the student completes and signs a hard copy of the disclosure form to complete induction and can then pick up their student ID. At this point, they are now fully enrolled and prepared to commence their studies.

Overseas applicants

For overseas applicants, this includes the relevant police check from their country of origin as well as an enhanced DBS upon their arrival in the UK. Failure to meet the mandatory requirements by the specified deadline would result in the candidate being withdrawn from the course.

At the point of an offer being made, a criminal record check for overseas applicants is made a condition of enrolment. This is followed by an enhanced DBS check, which is pursued by the University on the candidate's arrival in the UK. Overseas applicants are subject to police checks in their home countries.

ITE training partners

Salaried routes and apprenticeships: In the case of salaried routes and apprenticeships, the employing school takes responsibility for the above. As part of its due diligence, St Mary's University also records relevant details on the SCR.

HEI training partners: HEI training partners follow the above processes as outlined. St Mary's University oversees and is responsible for these and holds all details centrally on the SCR.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and Prevent

The School of Education works within specific guidance pertaining to safeguarding, including Prevent, FGM and online safety. The ITT Safeguarding Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the University and schools with a specific focus on safeguarding based on the unique nature of initial teacher education. The aforementioned policies are to be read in conjunction with the St Mary's University Safeguarding and Prevent policies.

As the accredited ITT provider, we have established clear safeguarding procedures and protocols that are agreed by all partnership schools in our Partnership Agreement.

Safeguarding training

All staff complete the following on an annual basis:

- Safeguarding Essentials or Refresher modules;
- Confirm that they have read and familiarised themselves with updated KCSIE policy;
- Confirm that they have read and familiarised themselves with updated Prevent duties.

This is recorded centrally to ensure compliance and understanding of updates in key policy relating to Safeguarding and Prevent. All staff must have confirmed the above prior to visiting trainees in school. New staff will be asked to complete this during their induction period.

LSOs and DSOs

The **Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)** in the School of Education is Jane Chambers, Head of School. The **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** for placement-based training is Mary Nkune, Head of Education Partnerships.
The team of **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)** in the School of Education include:

- Sarah Brooks, Head of Initial Teacher Education
- Eleanor Stewart, Associate Head of School Education Partnerships
- Jemima Davey, Associate Head of School PGCE Primary and Secondary
- Susannah Robert, Course Lead iPGCE
- Fiona Wilson, Course Lead PGCE Secondary English
- Sam Lovatt, Course Lead PGCE Primary

Course content

All trainees receive safeguarding input as part of the Professional Studies modules and must have completed this prior to commencing any period of placement. The content of these sessions can be found on the ITE Safeguarding Training overview.

iQTS: Safeguarding in England is centred around *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. While each trainee will be required to follow the protocols in their international context, we require all

trainees and staff supporting them to be aware of this important policy. This will be included in course content and also used to inform discussion around local statutory frameworks for safeguarding children.

Safeguarding on placement

While on placement, trainees are expected to act in accordance with the safeguarding policy and protocols in their placement school. Key aspects of our ITT Safeguarding Policy pertaining to this are as follows.

All trainee teachers, at the start of training in any school, are provided with:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- information about the role of the designated safeguarding lead;
- a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Trainees are also prompted to demonstrate their understanding of the disclosure and reporting structure in their placement school and asked to consider local safeguarding priorities.

In the event of a trainee teacher being removed from a programme because the trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, or if they would have been removed had they not left, as the accredited ITT provider, we will seek guidance from DBS and inform the DfE by contacting itt.safeguarding@education.gov.uk. In the case of iQTS trainees, concerns will also be reported to relevant local authorities in the placement school region.

DBS and Prohibited Checks

As the accredited ITT provider we confirm in writing to schools that a non-salaried trainee's criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list, has been completed and that the individual has been judged by us to be suitable to work with children (Appendix 4). Where a school or college allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.

iQTS: If the candidate has ever lived, worked or studied in the UK, we require an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) dated within 6 weeks of application. If they have never lived, worked or studied in the UK, local police checks, DBS (where appropriate) and local equivalents of DBS, Prohibited List and the Children's Barred List.

Single Central Record

Our single central record (SCR) holds all relevant details pertaining to recruitment and pre-enrolment checks. This includes all checks carried out in line with KCSIE and is recorded for all trainees on ITE programmes.

Post enrolment criminal convictions process

If St Mary's University becomes aware of a criminal conviction or concern post enrolment, the process outlined in Appendix 3 will be followed. In the event of a trainee teacher being removed from a programme because the trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, or if they would have removed had they not left, as the accredited ITT provider we will seek guidance from DBS and inform DfE by contacting itt.safeguarding@education.gov.uk

ITE training partners

Salaried routes and apprenticeships: In the case of School Direct Salaried and PGTA, the responsibility lies with the employer to ensure that DBS checks have been carried out. The employing school should inform the accredited ITT provider that a satisfactory check has been obtained and provide the DBS number and date of check.

HEI training partners: DBS applications are made through St Mary's University and recorded centrally on our systems. Details of DBS application progress and status are shared with partners.

iQTS partner schools: St Mary's University will provide written confirmation of relevant safeguarding checks and, in return, require partner schools to provide written confirmation of the checks they have carried out as part of their due diligence. Together, the provider and St Mary's University will confirm agreement that the trainee has been deemed suitable to work with children. St Mary's University will hold this information centrally on our systems.

GDPR and Data Protection

Student data

St Mary's University will hold and process student data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Further details of our data protection policy can be found on the St Mary's University website. Data regarding declared disabilities and/or learning support is not shared with school partners, or anyone outside the University, without the express permission of the trainee.

Accessing pupil data on placement

Trainees on placement require access to pupil data as part of their training. It is understood that trainees are to use and store pupil data in line with UK General Data Protection Regulations and should familiarise themselves with the data protection policy at their placement school as it pertains to their role as a trainee teacher. This is discussed with trainees and mentors during the initial training meeting in the early stages of placement.

Equality Act 2010

ITE Equality Act 2010 compliance

St Mary's University is committed to promoting the success of all students, including those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Trainees on our ITE routes are supported from application to the completion of their training in a variety of ways, which are outlined in our ITE Equality Act 2010 compliance overview (Appendix 5).

Part 2: Curriculum, Assessment and Quality Assurance

Curriculum

ITE curriculum vision

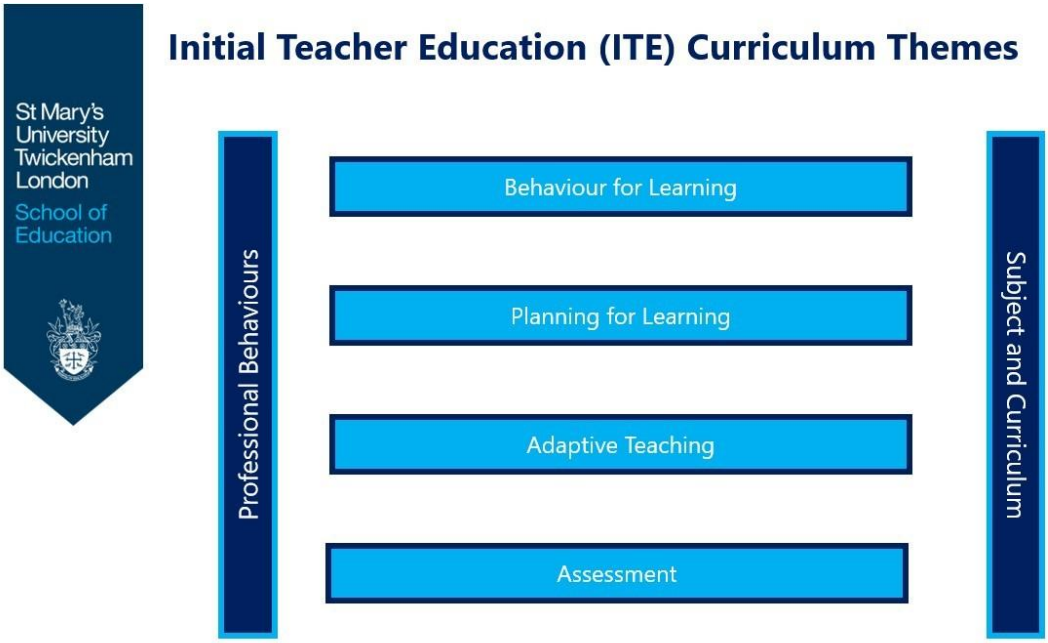
St Mary's ITE curriculum serves to prepare the next generation of Early Career Teachers who are expert in evidence-based disciplinary and phase-specific pedagogical practice; who effectively manage the demands of the profession and exemplify the highest standards of professional conduct and embody the University's values of inclusiveness, excellence, respect and generosity of spirit.

Being educated to teach at St Mary's University will ensure trainee teachers are confident subject and phase specific practitioners in the pedagogy of behaviour for learning, planning for learning, assessment and adaptive teaching, with a deep understanding of the relationship between educational theory and practice.

St Mary's University has a proud legacy of teacher training, and we are at the forefront of educating the next generation of teachers.

ITE curriculum themes

All ITE curricula reflect the themes outlined below to promote connectivity in course content.



ITE compliance

St Mary's ITE curriculum is carefully designed to comply with the Department for Education's *Initial Teacher Training: Criteria and Supporting Advice*. ITT providers must ensure that training programmes are designed to provide trainee teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools to enable them to demonstrate that they have met all the standards for QTS. This means that our courses are designed to include this time in placement-based training:

- Three-year undergraduate programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
- Postgraduate ITE programmes - 120 days (24 weeks)
- Work-based route programme - 120 days (24 weeks) of which 50 days are assessed in an away school.

Each cohort will complete three phases of teaching practice during their teacher training course (Foundation, development and consolidation) with further opportunities to further develop their experience in the classroom through enhancement placements and school-based directed tasks.

N.B. Work based route trainees complete two phases to placement-based training.

Trainees are required to complete placements in at least two schools, including experience in different key stages. This is to ensure a breadth of placement-based training in contrasting settings, where possible.

IQTS: The DfE recognises the challenges that some providers and trainees will face in sourcing a second placement internationally. Therefore, the 2-school requirement is encouraged wherever possible but is not mandatory.

Intensive training and practice (ITAP)

Intensive Training and Practice should focus on specific, foundational, or pivotal areas of the ITT curriculum. It should also demonstrate and build the interplay between evidence-based theory and practice, engaging trainees in critical analysis, application of learning to classroom practice, and focused feedback on such practice.

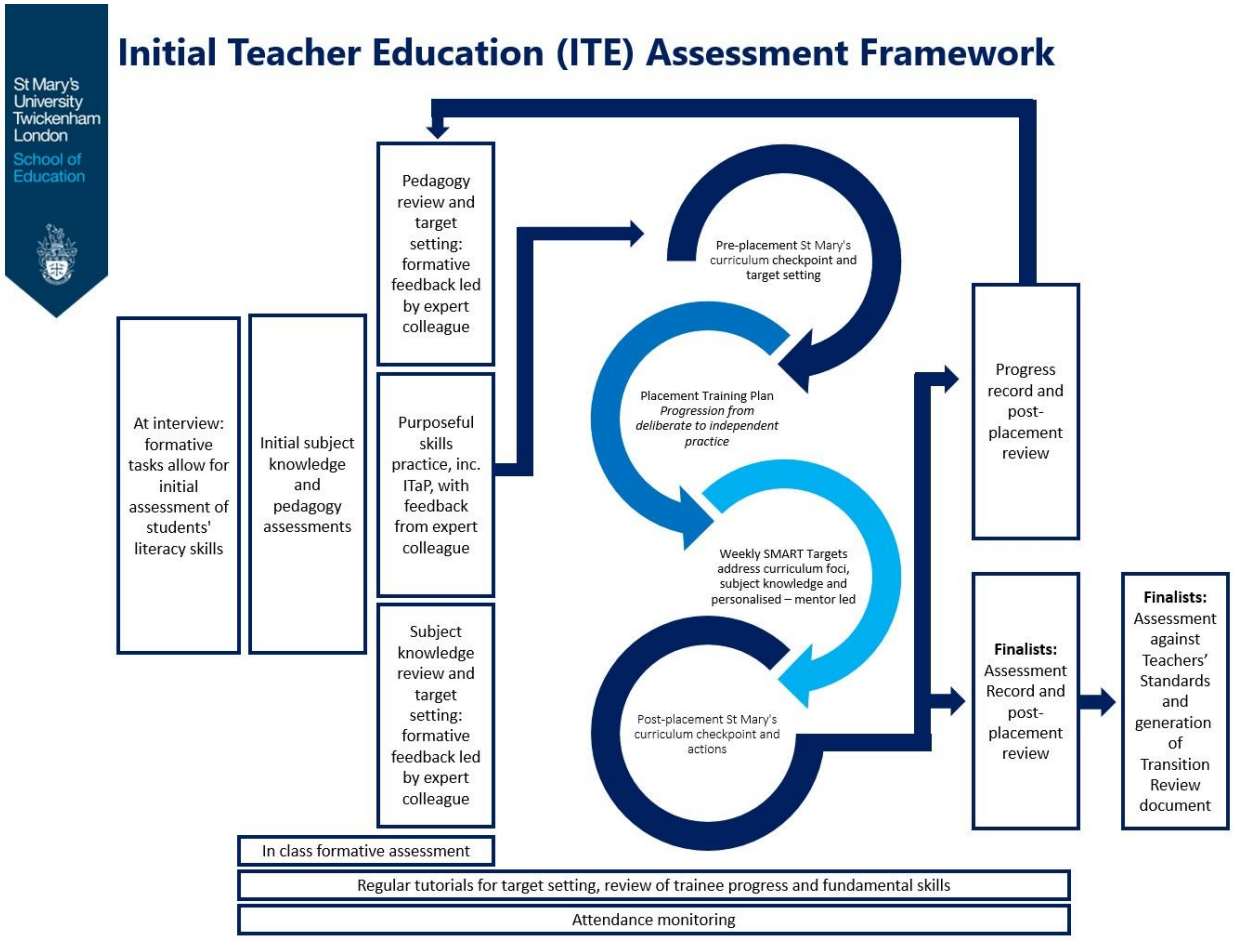
All trainees will be required to complete ITAP activities as part of their curriculum and may be completed at university or in school. Students must complete a minimum number of ITAP days as follows:

- Three-year undergraduate programme – six weeks (30 days)
- Postgraduate programme – four weeks (20 days)
- Work-based route programme – four weeks (20 days)

Assessment

Assessment framework

The ITE assessment framework details the key formative and summative assessment structures in place on all ITE programmes. These assessments take place across periods of both centre-based and placement-based training.



N.B. PGTA trainees will complete an End Point Assessment (EPA) as part of their programme.

Points of Centre-Based Assessment

Initial assessments of literacy skills are conducted as part of the interview process across ITE programmes to identify the need for additional support for individual trainees. This may involve a reading and/or writing task during a candidate's interview.

Initial assessments of subject knowledge and pedagogy take place during the early stages of a trainee's programme to gauge areas of strength and those in need of development. This may involve audits, formative in session or written assessments etc.

Pedagogy and subject knowledge reviews are carried out on a regular basis and are led by relevant expert colleagues at St Mary's University. This process results in ongoing target setting and may involve tasks such as the formation of action plans and/or subject knowledge files.

Purposeful skills practice provides trainees with the opportunity apply their developing knowledge to their emerging professional practice. They are provided with feedback from expert colleagues and this may include activities such as lesson planning and microteaching.

Points of Placement-Based Assessment

Pre-placement St Mary's curriculum checkpoints are completed by trainees to provide them with the opportunity to reflect on their individual areas of confidence in their practice.

Placement training plans are designed to scaffold trainees from deliberate practice in the early stages of their training to independent practice towards the end of their programme. These provide structure and enable progression throughout placement-based training.

Weekly SMART targets are tailored to trainees' development needs and address subject knowledge, a curriculum focus and a personal target. These targets are used to provide targeted feedback and structure weekly training meeting discussions.

Post-placement St Mary's curriculum checkpoints are completed by trainees following the completion of their placement-based training. These allow trainees to reflect on the impact their placement-based training has had on their confidence in particular areas of the curriculum and set actions to continue making progress in individual areas for development.

Ongoing Assessment

In class formative assessment is overseen by a range of expert colleagues working with trainees, who respond to the needs of their cohorts to provide opportunities for ongoing development.

Regular tutorials allow for continuous review of trainee progress, which is supported by reflection, target setting and consideration of the fundamental skills. Personal tutors work closely with their tutees to provide individualised support over the course of their training.

Attendance monitoring ensures that trainees are engaging sufficiently with their programme of study in order to make appropriate progress. A high level of attendance is expected on ITE programmes based on both the intensive and professional nature of the course of study.

Finalists

Assessment records are completed and reviewed following a trainee's completion of their placement-based training. This includes evidence collected against the Teachers' Standards.

Assessment against the Teachers' Standards is conducted, which may involve the submission of a Standards Evidence Portfolio (SEP) or Portfolio of Evidence (POE) and demonstrating the ability to discuss the collated evidence. At this stage, a transition review document is completed to prepare finalists for the next stage of their training as an early career teacher (ECT) by offering opportunity for reflection and target setting.

Extenuating circumstances

St Mary's University defines extenuating circumstances as "serious unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt a student's ability to undertake assessment." Full details of the EC policy and other grounds which would qualify a student for ECs can be found on within the University's Extenuating Circumstances policy.

For St Mary's ITE programmes, extenuating circumstances can apply to both academic and school experience modules.

Programme Level ECs: Trainees can be granted an extension of up to 10 working days from the due date[1] by their programme team. This must be agreed 48 hours in advance of the deadline as extensions will not be granted on the day of submission. Please note that extenuating circumstances cannot be granted for technical issues or transport problems.

University Level ECs: In some circumstances, trainees may experience longer-term situations which will affect main examination periods and/or a delay to the submission of coursework of more than 10 working days. In these cases, students can apply for University Level ECs. University Level Extenuating Circumstances claims are submitted to Exams and will be presented to the University Extenuating Circumstances Sub-Board for consideration. Please note that Sub-Boards take place periodically and, as such, may cause delays to programme progression. For example, if a submission date is moved into the following semester. In the case of a submission deadline passing before a decision is reached, the student's mark will be entered as a non-submission and overturned upon approval by the Sub-Board.

Further details of how to apply for extenuating circumstances through the student portal and the dates of the Sub-Boards can be found on the St Mary's Extenuating Circumstances page.

ITE training partners

Salaried routes and apprenticeships: Trainees on salaried routes and apprenticeships are supported by the same mechanisms outlined above. However, some may differ due to the employment based nature of their training. Ongoing individualised assessment remains a core component of their ITE programme. Extenuating circumstances will be managed by St Mary's University.

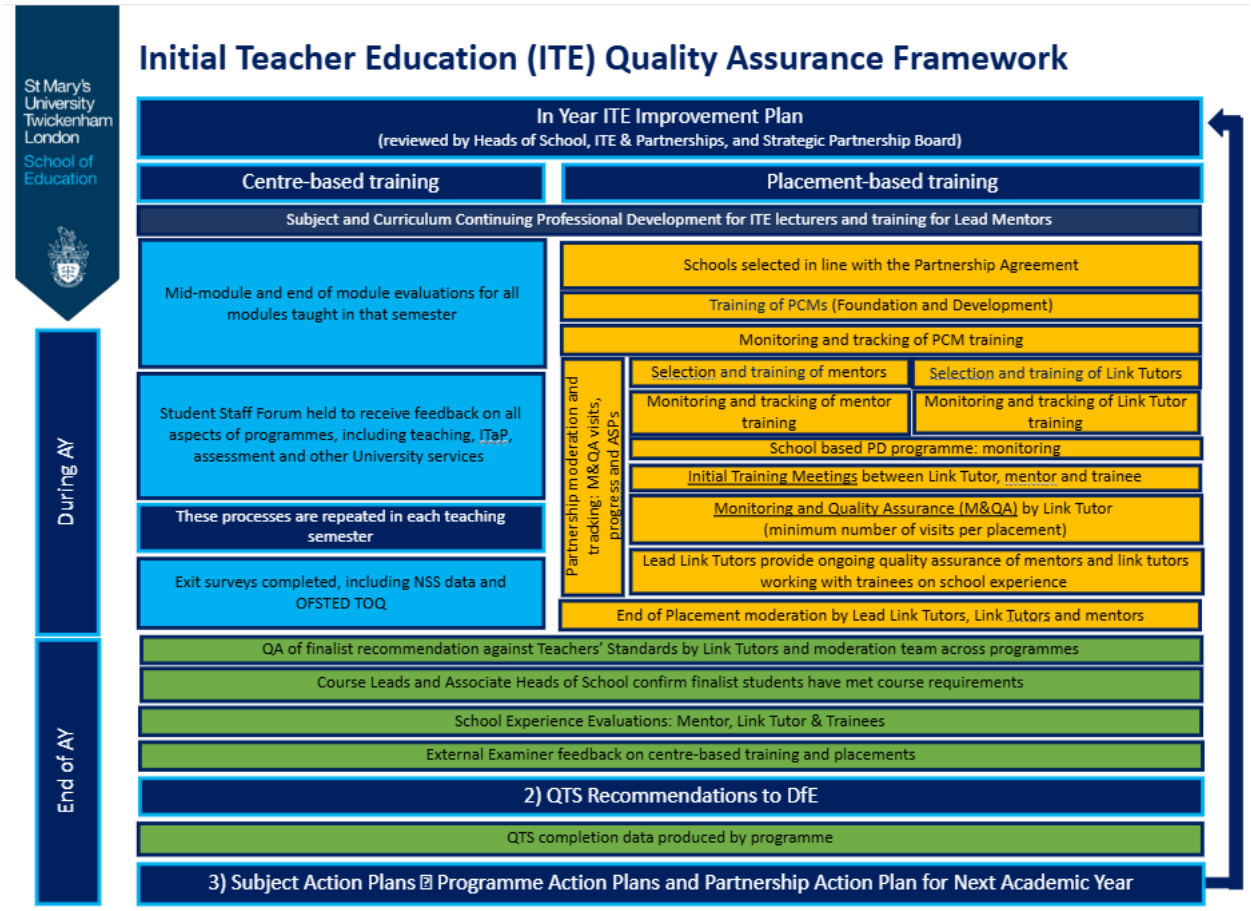
[1] Submission date includes progress and assessment record completion dates

HEI training partners: Programmes delivered in collaboration with training partners are subject to the framework outlined above. Review and moderation of these processes takes place on a regular basis. Extenuating circumstances will be managed by training partners.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance framework

The framework below depicts the mechanisms in place to quality assure all initial teacher education programmes at St Mary's University. This consists of a combination of centre-based and placement-based structures, which are outlined in more detail below.



Quality assurance of centre-based training

Module evaluations are completed at the mid-point and end of modules. This data is used to inform future module content and structure.

Student staff forums provide an opportunity for student representatives, staff and professional services to participate in discussion around areas of strength and those for development on each programme.

Exit surveys are completed following the exit programme to collect final responses to the questions. This includes the NSS and OFSTED TOQ on relevant programmes.

Quality assurance of placement-based training

Partnership agreements outline compliance related information for school partnerships, as well as the roles and responsibilities of those involved in facilitating placement-based training. These are signed annually and form the agreement by which placements can be assigned.

Student agreements outline the universities expectations of trainees, including their professional practice during placement-based training and are signed annually.

Training plans are tailored to each phase of placement-based training and provide a clear structure for progression over the course of a programme. These include teaching expectations, research foci, weekly activities and other relevant details for placement. Different training plans are also provided for specific settings, such as EYFS and SEND.

Professional Coordinating Mentor (PCM) training is offered at the start of and periodically throughout the academic year. This training supports those overseeing the mentors working with trainees on placement-based training. Agenda items include role of a PCM, placement expectations, the St Mary's curriculum and support for working with mentors.

Mentor training is required for those working with St Mary's trainees. Curriculum training is offered in key areas to allow for connectivity between centre-based training and placement-based training. Depending on the phase of placement, mentors are required to attend different training sessions to best enable understanding of how to promote trainee development. Additional training is available on the Partnership Portal and forms part of our CPD package for St Mary's mentors.

Link tutor training is provided throughout the academic year in response to needs arising from moderation and context specific requirements. They are also offered training that mirrors the curriculum content delivered to mentors to allow for triangulation of understanding and to enable them to effectively fulfil their quality assurance role. Additional training is offered to new link tutors in conjunction with the opportunity to shadow and experience link tutor prior to fulfilling this role independently.

Lead link tutors support the moderation and quality assurance of school experience, including supervision of link tutors. They contribute to the design and delivery of mentor training, including support for expert colleagues during ITaP. They maintain oversight of trainee progress and identify CPD needs for partnership schools.

Placement timelines provide a clear overview of the quality assurance functions that take place over the course of each phase of placement-based training and when they can be expected by all parties involved in placement-based training.

Additional support plans (ASPs) ensure that individual needs are met on placement by facilitating tailored support as the need arises. Link tutors support mentors in implementing ASPs and work with trainees to review their progress against their targets.

Internal moderation is conducted by a selected quality assurance team, who focus on specific aspects of placement-based training to ensure parity of support and quality across phases and levels of experience.

End of academic year quality assurance

Evaluations of placement-based training are completed by trainees, linked tutors and mentors. These form an integral part of the action planning process.

External examiners provide detailed reports at the end of each academic year to promote a continuous cycle of improvement and inform action planning.

Completion data is collated and analysed each year to support program teams with action planning for the new academic year.

Action and Improvement Plans

Subject action plans are overseen by each subject knowledge lead and contributed to by all members of the subject's teaching team. These are shared with Associate Head of Schools to inform action plans for each IT programme.

Programme action plans utilise the end of academic year QA functions to inform individual action plans. These are also informed by subject action plans using details pertaining to their module or programme content.

The **Partnership action plan** focuses on the cyclical improvement of partnership related functions. These actions are informed by the above processes, with a particular focus on placement-based training and building/maintaining partnerships.

The **ITT Improvement Plan** provides an overarching plan of improvement for the new academic year that is informed by programme level, subject level and Partnership action planning. This plan also incorporates University KPIs and relevant strategic goals.

ITE training partners

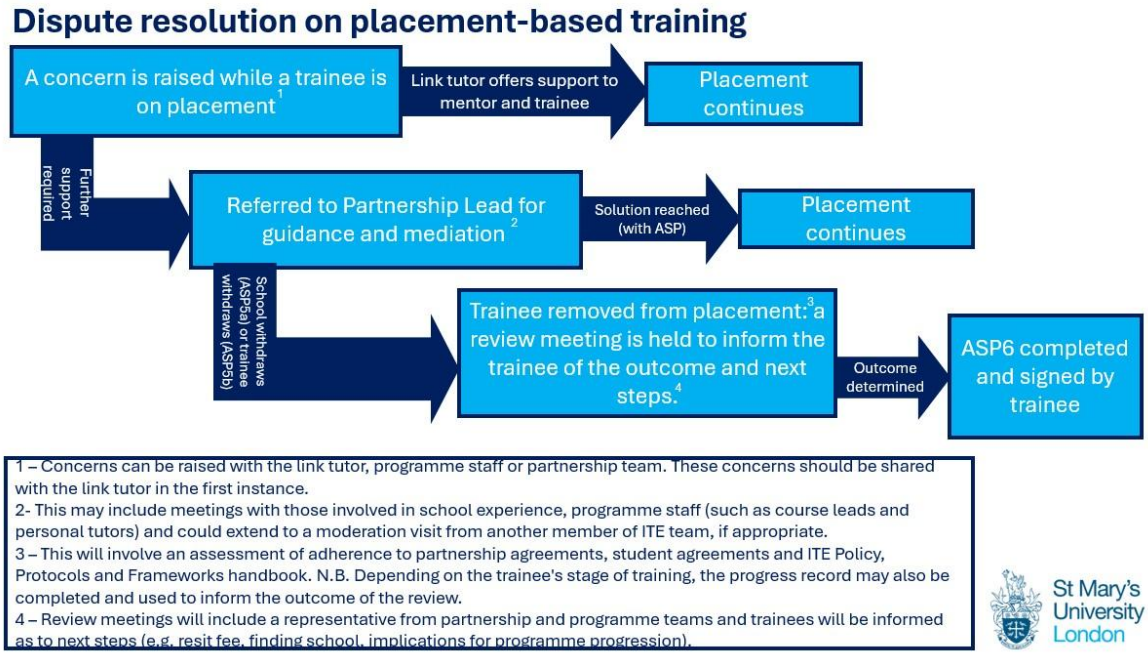
Salaried routes and apprenticeships: Trainees on salaried routes and apprenticeships are supported by the same mechanisms outlined above for placement-based training. However, other aspects of centre-based training may differ due to the employment-based nature of their training.

HEI training partners: Programmes delivered in collaboration with training partners are subject to the framework outlined above. Reviews and moderations of these processes take place on a regular basis.

Withdrawal of Placement

Dispute resolution on placement

In circumstances where there is a dispute during placement, the St Mary's team aims so support trainees, mentors and other school-based colleagues to reach an amicable resolution in a timely manner. While each situation is considered on an individual basis, the following process is adhered to promote transparency and clarity for all involved:



In exceptional circumstances, adjustments may be made to the above process in recognition of the complexity and nuance of individual situations. All claims and evidence relating to the withdrawal of a placement will be considered prior to the outcome being determined.

As a provider, St Mary's will not normally have the ability to investigate complaints about employees within a placement school and will pass these on to the leadership team at the school. However, the issues raised will be considered as part of the review to ascertain whether this inhibited the trainee's ability to meet the expectations of the placement. Additionally, if a placement comes to an end for reasons outside of the student's control, St Mary's will support them in finding an alternative arrangement that allows them to continue their programme.

Where the student is employed by the placement organisation, they will also have rights as an employee and therefore all matters concerning employment issues are the responsibility of the school.

Students are entitled to appeal the outcome of an academic module: https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/policies/academic-appeals-process.aspx

School withdrawal

In the event of a placement being withdrawn by the school in line with the Additional Support Plan (ASP) process, paperwork is completed with support from the Link Tutor and Partnership team.

In exceptional circumstances, a school may decide to withdraw a placement with immediate effect.

Depending on the stage of training, those involved in the placement may be required to complete the progress record at the point of withdrawal. The Partnership team will use this information to confirm the outcome of the placement based on whether sufficient progress has been evidenced.

Student withdrawal

If a student withdraws from placement, they will be considered to have failed the module. If this is their first unsuccessful placement, they will have the right to resit. All decisions are subject to ratification by the University exam board.

Placement resits

In the event of an unsuccessful placement outcome, subject to approval the trainee will have an opportunity to resit. Students are permitted to resit only one school placement over the course of their programme of study.

Students may be required to organise a placement for the resit and arranged for this to be completed in agreement with the Head of Education Partnerships. A resit fee is associated with the additional placement and this, in most circumstances, is to be paid by the student before completing their final placement.

Students should resit their placement at the earliest appropriate opportunity, although this may vary due to school availability. The timing of the resit may impact upon when the student can be presented to the University exam board and therefore subsequent recommendation for QTS.

Change of Status

Leave of Absence (LOA)

In the event of a student taking a leave of absence, during their period of leave the Registry department will be in contact to establish a return date. The entitlement for a leave of absence, without extenuating circumstances, is 12 calendar months.

Withdrawal by student

In the event of a student seeking to withdraw from their programme of study, they should contact their Course Lead or Associate Head of School to discuss this in the first instance.

Withdrawal by University

In the event of a student being recommended to the University exam board for course termination, the student will be called to a meeting with their Course Lead or Associate Head of School.

Appendices

Appendix 1: ITE entry requirements

Programme	Qualifications	Other
Primary		
PGCE Primary with QTS (Full time, Part time and PE)	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above **GCSEs:** Minimum Level 4 in maths, English and science or equivalent (two must be held at point of application, with a third being a condition of offer) *Irish: Leaving Certificate (C at Ordinary, D at Higher)* *International: 'pass' at high/senior school exam level* **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Ability to write at postgraduate level ("high standard of basic writing")
BA Primary Education with QTS	**UCAS:** 106-112 points **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English, maths and science (GCSE equivalency accepted) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.0 overall with no less that 5.5 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists
BA Primary Education with QTS Work Based Route	**A Level, BTEC or NVQ Level 3** **Foundation degree in Education** **GCSEs:** English, maths and science or equivalent **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.0 overall with no less that 5.5 in any section	Employed in work with children and young people for at least 2.5 days a week (paid/voluntary) 3 years experience working in school prior to starting programme Supporting statement from Headteacher Enhanced DBS check with barred lists
Secondary		
PGCE Secondary English	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in English or related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary Geography	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in geography or related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references

PGCE Secondary History	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in history or related subject (such as politics) **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary Maths	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in maths or related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary MFL	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary PE	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in a previous degree **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (two must be held at point of application, with a third being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary RE	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in theology or related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
PGCE Secondary Science	**Bachelor's degree:** 2:2 or above in related subject **GCSEs:** Grade 4/C in English Language and Maths (GCSE equivalency accepted) (one must be held at point of application, with a second being a condition of offer) **EAL:** IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less that 6.0 in any section	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references
Other Programmes		
International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS)	**Bachelor's degree:** from a UK or non-UK university (or other institution) **GCSEs:** a maths qualification of the same standard as GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) grade C/4 or above. For teaching children aged 3 to 11, a science qualification of the same standard as GCSE grade C/4 or above.	Enhanced child protection checks (based on local regulations) Two references: one of which must be from the school in which you will be completing your iQTS.

Postgraduate teaching apprenticeship (PGTA)	**Bachelor's degree:** from a UK or non-UK university (or other institution) **GCSEs:** a maths qualification of the same standard as GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) grade C/4 or above. For primary only, a science qualification of the same standard as GCSE grade C/4 or above.	Enhanced DBS check with barred lists Two appropriate references

Appendix 2: Pre-enrolment checks

Pre-enrolment Checks for New Students

Before someone can enrol at St Mary's University, checks are made against the following:

- **Qualifications** – we verify they meet GCSE requirements and verify their Level 3 results (for BA) and degree results (for PGCE, PGTA and iQTS)

- **References** – these come via UCAS or DfE – for BA it is one reference and for PGCE, PGTA and iQTS it is two – one academic and one professional – we don't accept references from friends/family or from generic email addresses.

- **Immigration** – we verify that they are legally entitled to live and study in the UK – if they do not have a UK or Irish passport we obtain copies of UK Residence Permits or we check the Home Office website for confirmation of settled or pre-settled status (N.B. this is for students studying in the UK only).

- **Fitness to Teach** – offer holders complete our medical form and if anything is declared it is reviewed by an external Occupational Health provider

- **DBS** – We will accept an Enhanced DBS if it is on the update service and we will check the update service. If not, we work with them to obtain a new UK Enhanced DBS via First Advantage. We will check 2 ID documents, one which includes a photo and one which confirms current address – we follow UK government guidelines. The DBS check includes a check of the Children's Barred List.
  N.B. For iQTS trainees, we work with schools to ensure appropriate child protection checks are completed based on the country of residence.

- We ask for legal documents to show any name changes

- We ask for clarity on any gaps in education and employment

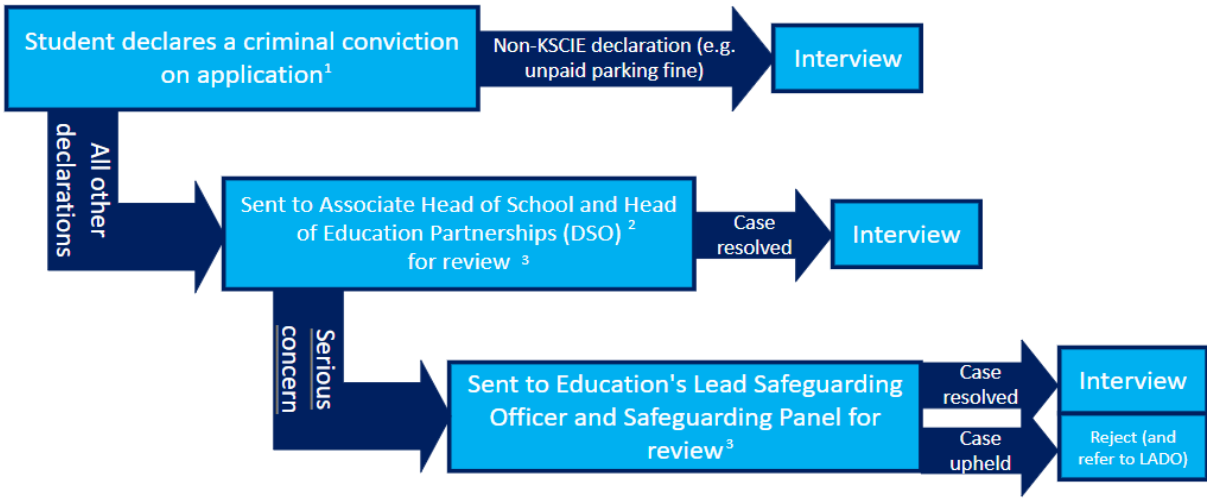
- We may carry out online searches as part of our due diligence

- We ask all candidates to complete this prior to interview:
  Primary Pre-Interview Form
  Secondary Pre-Interview Form

- If the applicant has lived outside of the UK for 6 months or more during the last 5 years or is currently living outside of the UK, then we ask for police checks from those countries.

Appendix 3: DBS/criminal convictions progression flowcharts

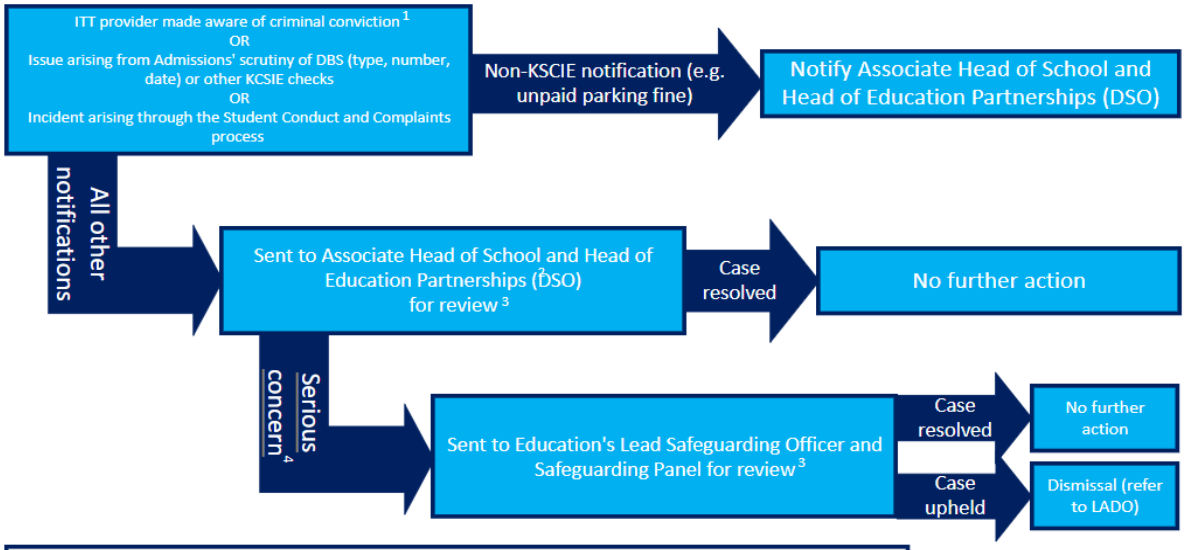
Admissions: Declaration of Criminal Convictions at Application



1 - Students are sent a form to complete if they have declared a conviction on their application. All declarations will be referred to Associate Head of School and Head of Education Partnerships, except those that would not relate to child protection, such as an unpaid parking fine.
2 - Wrexham University cases referred to St Mary's Associate Head of School.
3 - All decisions are logged on Education's ITT safeguarding system.

St Mary's University London

ITT: Notification of Criminal Convictions Post Enrolment



1 - Students are sent a post application form to complete if the provider is notified of a criminal conviction.
2 - Wrexham University cases referred to St Mary's Associate Head of School.
3 - All decisions are logged on Education's ITT safeguarding system.
4 - Serious concern can include the severity of the notification and a non-declaration of conviction.

In the event of a trainee teacher being removed from a programme because the trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, or if they would have been removed had they not left, as the accredited ITT provider, we will seek guidance from DBS and inform the DfE by contacting itt.safeguarding@education.gov.uk.

St Mary's University London

Appendix 4: DBS Confirmation Letter to Schools

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024): DBS and Child Protection Checks for St Mary's University Trainee Teachers Attending School Placement

To whom it may concern,

The Department for Education (DfE) and Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) requires us as an ITT provider to ensure our trainee teachers undergo all relevant checks to confirm they are suitable to work with children.

In accordance with the following statement from the Department for Education:

> 'Providers should confirm in writing to schools that a non-salaried trainee's criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list, has been completed and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. Providers are not required to provide any information to schools in addition to this confirmation.' (DfE, 2024, ITT Criteria – Supporting Advice, Academic year 2024/25)

St Mary's University ensures all trainee teachers undergo all relevant checks to confirm they are suitable to work with children. St Mary's University is committed to the safeguarding of children and recognise that all our trainee teachers are subject to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'The Childcare Disqualification Regulations.'

St Mary's University accordingly adopts the following approach to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) for trainee teachers while on placement:

1. St Mary's takes the role of employer in relation to ITT students, and it is our legal responsibility to ensure that DBS and all other related child protection checks are carried out. Responsibility in respect of a salaried trainee rests with their employer.

2. ITT providers are subject to routine Ofsted inspections. St Mary's University's compliance with DBS regulations is scrutinised as part of this process and if found failing to comply it risks having accreditation withdrawn.

3. With the permission of the trainee, ITT providers can share information relating to their DBS number, its level and date.

4. The University is not required to share details of the content of DBS certificates with third parties, such as schools or colleges. Schools or colleges may request to see DBS certificates from trainees who will be on placement with them. Please liaise with the student directly if you would like to request to see their DBS certificate It is the decision of the trainee to share the information with an appropriate named person employed by the school given the information is data protected.

5. St Mary's University staff who visit trainee teachers in school are also subject to enhanced DBS clearance and are fully trained in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

St Mary's University can confirm that XXX is considered suitable to work with children because they:

- Have undergone identification checks
- have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check;
- do not appear on the children's barred list;
- have met the 2018 Childcare Disqualification requirements and are not included on the prohibition order check list.
- have completed a self-declaration (in relation to the Children's Act 2006)
- have satisfactory checks relating to qualifications and previous employment
- have a satisfactory Fitness to Teach assessment
- have suitable references detailing their suitability to work with children
- have completed introductory safeguarding training before commencing their school placement

Where relevant, they may also have been subject to:
· Checks for clearance to work in the UK
· Criminal Records checks for overseas students
· Additional checks where student has worked or lived outside the UK

Appendix 5: ITE Equality Act 2010 Compliance

Recruitment

An opportunity for disclosure is provided at the point of application and during interview for an initial teacher education (ITE) course. On pre-interview forms, candidates are prompted to share details of their mental and physical health, learning needs, religious requirements and ethnic origin. These details are used to ensure that equal access and opportunities are provided in recruitment to ITE programmes.
Relevant declarations are shared with the interviewer(s) to ensure the interview is accessible and provides all candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to train as a teacher.

Induction

Once enrolled onto an ITE programme, a student's declared disabilities, additional needs and/or personal circumstances are shared with relevant programme staff and teams within Student Services to make enrolling students aware of support structures in place at St Mary's University. Personal tutors meet with students during induction to ascertain individual requirements and signpost to relevant services in a timely manner.

International trainee teachers are invited to attend an on-campus orientation to studying in England. For postgraduate trainees, this takes place a day ahead of the start of the induction programme and for undergraduate trainees, this forms part of their induction schedule.

St Mary's Student Union (SMSU)

The SMSU facilitates a wide range of societies and groups in order to promote community and a sense of belonging for all students at St Mary's. These include groups based on faith, culture, nationality, disability, sexuality, gender equality, mature student status and British Sign Language (BSL). All enrolled students are able to join SMSU societies free of charge.

Student Services

Student Services provides frontline support for students studying at St Mary's. They provide advice, guidance, pastoral care and signposting to relevant resources. Through the Wellbeing Service, students have access to specialist guidance for matters relating to disability, dyslexia and additional need, as well as access to support relating to both mental and physical health. Enrolled students are provided with resources such as Togetherall, Student Space and counselling by self-referral. The Wellbeing Service also provides mentoring, assistive technology and support with screenings, needs assessment and study skills to promote success for all on academic programmes.

Learning Support Forms

The Wellbeing Service support trainees with declared needs in assessing and making recommendations for reasonable adjustments during a trainee's programme of study. This is recorded on a learning support styled form and is shared with members of the programme team involved in teaching and/or supporting that trainee. These forms detail the nature of the disability/additional need, required adjustments for learning and teaching, exams and placements.

Studying

The Equality Act (2010) requires HEIs to make both anticipatory and individual adjustments. As part of our anticipatory duty, the following inclusive practices are implemented on ITE programmes:

- Reading lists are provided in advance.
- Slides and resources are provided ahead of teaching sessions.
- Accessibility (including digital accessibility) is considered in teaching materials.
- Changes in timetables, rooms, and assessments are communicated clearly and specifically.
- Recordings to lectures provided if key information is provided, e.g., assignment input.
- Deadlines are staggered across modules.

Reasonable Adjustments

St Mary's is committed to providing an inclusive and successful learning experience for all students. Staff always endeavour to support students in a person-centred and respectful manner, in line with the University values. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate flexibility are provided to support individual access to our programmes of study. This might include:

- Adjustments to timetables, where possible;
- Additional resources for learners;
- Additional tutorials and/or support from staff;
- Adapted assessment materials, where possible and appropriate;
- Access and alterations to physical learning spaces and/or halls of residence.

Supporting Students on Placement

Placement-based training forms a significant part of our ITE programmes. As such, we offer individualised support to trainees while on placement. Prior to going into school, trainees are offered the opportunity to meet with either a subject, course, and/or partnership lead to explore how they will be best supported during their teaching practice.

Link tutors are informed of relevant information, and students are supported in advocating for themselves and communicating their needs in professional settings. Trainees are advised, where appropriate, to discuss their learning support needs with their mentor and are supported by link tutors in doing so, if necessary.

In some circumstances, students will have their placement confirmed ahead of their cohort to allow for liaison with schools so as to prepare appropriate support in a timely manner. If additional staff are required for a placement, e.g. an interpreter, they will also be introduced to the school in advance of placement.

Resources for ITE Students, Mentors and Link Tutors

Students, mentors and link tutors are provided with a range of resources that are continuously developed to support all involved in initial teacher education. These include:

- Wellbeing on Placement handbook;
- Supporting Students with Declared Disabilities on Placement guidance for students, mentors and link tutors (developed with St Mary's trainees);
- Access to personal tutors who provide individualised academic and pastoral support to promote success for all trainees;
- Access to Wellbeing team members who understand the unique nature of ITE programmes.

Promoting Success in Gaining QTS

In alignment with its values, St Mary's ITE programmes serve trainees to be successful in achieving QTS. In doing so, we endeavour to offer a personalised approach to meeting individual needs to remove barriers for our trainee teachers. In recent years, we have supported numerous trainees with protected characteristics to complete their training successfully.