


Initial Teacher Training Recruitment Policy

Responsibility:	Director of ITT (Initial Teacher Training) programmes	Date doc. created:	April 2024
Print name sign off:	Sian Marsh	Last review date of doc:	April 2024
Signature:		Next review date:	April 2025

Best Practice Network is committed to the fair treatment of applicants and students, regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Best Practice Network is committed to ensuring that all recruitment and selection decisions for its EYITT, Primary and Secondary ITT programmes are fair, transparent, and conducted according to our agreed policies and procedures. Each procedure will meet the requirements of the Secretary of State's ITT criteria and shall align with safer recruiting/safeguarding best practice.

Best Practice Network has adopted the following recruitment and appeals policy. No applicant or candidate shall be prejudiced or disadvantaged by using this policy.

Safeguarding (Recruitment)

Best Practice Network and its partner schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and trainees to share this commitment. To ensure this, our recruitment and selection policy is in accordance with national guidance, for example:

- Safeguarding questions are included at interview
- All interviewers have completed the Safer Recruitment training

All entrants onto our ITE (Initial Teacher Education) courses are subject to pre-employment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records with Barred List check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Our commitment to maintaining a culture of vigilance regarding safeguarding and recruitment for initial teacher training reflects our unwavering dedication to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for all.

Selection Stage

The process for admissions is co-ordinated by Best Practice Network in collaboration with its delivery partners. All applications for EYITT and apprenticeship must be made through the Best Practice Network Candidate Management System (CMS) or DfE (Department for Education) Find and Apply. Applications for fee-funded teacher training or apprenticeship position in Primary and Secondary ITT must be made through DfE Apply using their proforma.

- All applicants will initially be screened by a member of the Best Practice Network ITT team to check they meet or will have the capacity to meet the entry criteria set out in the ITT requirements. Notes are made if an applicant will need a specific equivalency test so this can be discussed and explored with them at interview.
- Work history will be examined, and interviewers informed of any 'gaps' in work history, so this can be discussed with the candidate
- We will also undertake safer recruitment checks so further questions can be asked about any previous convictions that have been declared and any references from personal email accounts, that cannot be verified
- Applicants who have lived or worked overseas may be asked to apply for a certificate of good conduct in addition to their DBS check.
- Any reasons for rejecting an applicant will be clearly identified at this stage.
- BPN (Best Practice Network) publishes role descriptions and person specifications for EYITT and ITT on its website

Interviews

Interview dates are set by Best Practice Network and take place throughout the year. Candidates are selected for interview based on their application forms.

- All applicants are asked to provide original copy evidence of their identification, name changes (where relevant), right to work and study in the UK (if appropriate) as well as their qualifications.
- The interview process explores the applicant's ability to train to teach
- Interviews will be either online and/or face-to-face depending on the location
- Interviewers will scrutinise applications ahead of the interview day. Any concerns will be raised with the BPN team ahead of an interview taking place.
- Applicants will be asked to prepare a short presentation and complete written and maths tasks prior to the interview taking place. The written and maths tasks must be submitted to the BPN office **at least 24 hours** prior to the interview.
- No questions are asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer being made.
- Following the interview and associated tasks, a final selection decision is made.
- If an applicant is successful, a conditional offer will be placed on the DfE Apply system.

Employed apprentices (Primary & Secondary ITT only)

- All employed apprentices will need to have an employing school prepared to employ them on the unqualified teacher scale point 1, as a minimum
- Candidates successfully considered for the salaried route following Stage 1 will have a further interview at the employing school (details will be shared via the BPN CAPs team)

Postgraduate Teacher Apprenticeship Vacancies (Primary & Secondary ITT only)

Applicants who are successful at interview, will be offered a conditional place. One of the conditions of their place will be to secure an apprenticeship employer. We will support all applicants with sourcing a suitable apprenticeship employer. We work with a number of schools to seek opportunities for applicants. (please note successful employment is not a guarantee of your apprenticeship placement)

If employer cannot be secured by the date of enrolment, the place on the programme will need to be deferred – applicants cannot start the course without an employer.

BPN will advertise apprenticeship vacancies on behalf of its partner schools. Successful applicants can choose to apply for the vacancies and will follow Stage 1 of the BPN recruitment and selection process before being introduced to schools.

References

References will be requested from two individuals following acceptance of a conditional offer.

Referees should be appropriately selected to comment on the applicant's suitability for teacher training. References from family and friends are not deemed appropriate and will not be accepted.

Referees will be asked to confirm "if they know of any reason why the candidate should not work with children?"

Additional references will be requested if initial references are not appropriate

Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Well-being, Mental Health, and Equal Opportunities

All candidates who progress through the interview stage will be asked if there is any further support, or reasonable adjustments required during the training year for BPN to accommodate/support any adjustments where possible.

Health and physical capacity to teach

- Best Practice Network has a responsibility to ensure that trainees have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm.

- Successful applicants will be asked to complete a health questionnaire once an offer is accepted.
- Only targeted and relevant health- related questions which are necessary to ensure that a person can teach will be asked.
- Best Practice Network will provide support and guidance to trainees who provide further information about identified needs. This may be following a DSA (Disabled Students Allowance) request via Student Finance England.

Subject Knowledge Enhancement (Secondary only)

For applicants who need to improve their knowledge of the subject they wish to teach, completion of an SKE (Subject Knowledge Enhancement) will be indicated as a condition of any offer.

Appeals

An appeal is defined as a request for reconsideration of a decision to reject an application. Should a rejected applicant or a withdrawn candidate consider that either:

- Best Practice Network has not adhered to its own policies or procedures or is in breach of any national policies or relevant legal requirements; or
- the administration of an application
- there is evidence of bias or prejudice against the applicant/candidate

then the applicant/candidate is entitled to ask for a review of the decision to reject/withdraw.

A complaint may be about:

- a perception that a Best Practice Network or national policy or relevant legal requirement has not been correctly implemented or adhered to when dealing with an application procedure

An applicant/candidate wishing to lodge an appeal should write to:

ITT Candidate Support Manager

Best Practice Network

Newminster House

27-29 Baldwin Street

Bristol

BS1 1LT

Email: teach@bestpracticenet.co.uk

Appeals will only be considered from the applicant or candidate concerned and not from any third party.

- An applicant/candidate wishing to lodge an appeal should do so within 21 days of the date of the letter, informing him or her of the decision on his or her application/withdrawal.
- An applicant/candidate wishing to make a complaint should do so within 21 days of the matter with which the complaint is concerned.

If an appeal or complaint is lodged, the Best Practice Network ITT Candidate Support Manager will contact the applicant to acknowledge receipt of the appeal or complaint. Best Practice Network will endeavour to deal with any appeal or complaint within 28 days. The applicant will be kept informed of the progress of their appeal or complaint if the period of investigation is likely to exceed 30 working days.

The Head ITT will investigate the circumstances of the appeal or complaint consulting relevant staff including, but not limited to, staff in the department which oversees the programme to which the applicant sought admission/was participating in. In certain circumstances the results of the investigation may be passed to a director of the organisation for a ruling.

During the investigation, the applicant may be asked to provide further information on, or clarification of, any points made in his or her initial correspondence.

Outcomes of appeals

Appeals

Should the investigation establish that a decision to reject was made in breach of any Best Practice Network policy or procedure, any national policy or law, or if there is evidence of bias or prejudice against the applicant, the decision regarding the candidate's application/place on the programme will be reconsidered. Should the reconsideration result in a decision to admit the applicant/re-engage the candidate (subject to any conditions being met) but at such a time in the cycle that the original entry point is not possible, a suitable alternative entry point will be offered.

Should the investigation determine that the original decision be upheld, the applicant/candidate will be informed accordingly with a statement as to why the appeal has been rejected.

Further consideration

Should an applicant or trainee be dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal, they should write to the Early Years/ITT Director stating the reasons for dissatisfaction and the outcome they are seeking. The Director, in conjunction with the Managing Director, will investigate the appeal or complaint.

The decision of the Director and the Managing Director is final. Once this decision has been communicated to the applicant, no further correspondence will be entered into regarding this application/withdrawal from the programme.