Welcome to the teaching profession and the start of your journey to gain your Qualified Teacher Status (usually just referred to as QTS). By now you have probably chosen to teach either primary or secondary, probably intend to teach in England or Wales, and already know in what subject you will specialise. You may already have a degree and be intending to use this to teach a specialist subject; alternatively, you may be taking an undergraduate degree in Education.

You have recognised that the rewards of teaching far outweigh the hard work and effort that goes into training and into becoming an effective classroom practitioner. More than that, though, you have also accepted that you are about to set out on a lifelong journey of learning and discovery. You will have recognised that, as individuals, we never stop learning, but that as young people, we need to be equipped with the skills and competencies to enable learning to take place. You should also know that you will be entering one of the most hard-working, dedicated and rewarding professions.

There are over 40,000 teacher trainees per year, spread over higher education institutions (HEIs) such as universities and teacher training colleges, employment-based routes, ‘SGiTTs’ (School-based Initial Teacher Training) and Teach First (based in challenging schools in London and Manchester), and GTPs (Graduate Teacher Programmes) and RTPs (Registered Teacher Programmes). Intending teachers can choose the route that is most appropriate to their own needs, circumstances and experience.
This book is designed to be of use to anyone either contemplating teaching or who has already joined a teacher training course. It will also be of value to those on post-compulsory (16+) courses. It is designed and written to give you an overview of requirements for each standard, and to point you towards specific further reading, reflection, study and practice. Appropriate reference is made to underpinning theory, and features are used to link this to practical applications in the classroom and generic areas of professional studies.

Features

Each chapter is linked directly to one or more of the new standards. However, this does not stop any appropriate standard being referred to in any chapter, or the information in any chapter being used to support an appropriate standard. The standards flagged refer merely to the focus of that chapter. You will find that some concepts, ideas and policies are so important that they are mentioned in many different contexts. Every Child Matters, for example, has its own chapter, but cannot be avoided in several other important areas. Each of the boxed features you will find in every chapter has a specific function or purpose. At the end of the chapter, there is a bullet-pointed summary to help you remember and apply what you have learned. The group exercise is an idea for an activity or discussion that can take place during university or college-based learning sessions or can be adapted for use by those of you who are on non-HEI-based training routes. The individual reflection is a prompt for you to think about your own practice and progress, and how you can improve. There is a short list of focused, key reading – in general reduced to particular articles, webpages or chapters of books to make it manageable, but a full list of references is also provided. The application to teaching is a suggestion for a lesson plan or technique that will help you to underpin the particular standard or standards that are the focus of the chapter. In each chapter there are also several ‘thoughts’. These are tips, ideas or thought-provokers to encourage thought and reflection on your part.

What is QTS?

Qualified teacher status is the accreditation that enables you to teach in state-maintained and special schools in England and Wales. Your initial teacher training (ITT) provider recommends you for this status; the Training and Development Agency (TDA) awards it. To gain accreditation you must follow a course of initial teacher training and meet all of the standards as set out by the TDA. These standards are a set of statements that set out, in a formal way, the knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences that you must demonstrate. The QTS Standards have been rewritten to provide the first stage in a continuum of teacher development from trainee to qualified teacher status.
(on successful completion of the induction year) through to excellent and advanced skills teachers. They are published under three headings:

- **Professional values and practice.** These outline the attitudes and commitment expected of anyone qualifying to be a teacher. Fairness, honesty, integrity and mutual respect feature highly.
- **Knowledge and understanding.** These detail required levels of subject knowledge from the teacher, along with expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- **Teaching.** These relate to the skill set needed to deliver effective lessons such as managing a class, assessment and monitoring progress. QTS standards in Wales are similar but cover some issues specific to Wales. In addition, in order to teach in England, you must pass the QTS skills tests in numeracy, literacy and information and communications technology (ICT).

You will also become a member of the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE), the independent professional and regulatory body for teaching in England. From September 2008, provisional registration with this body will be automatic, via your ITT provider.

**Primary or secondary?**

Compulsory schooling in England and Wales is divided into four key stages, sandwiched between pre-school learning and post-16. You will train to teach at least two key stages. The stages are:

- Age 0–3: Pre-school
- Age 3–6 – Years 1, 2, 3: Key Stage 1
- Age 6–11 – Years 3, 4, 5, 6: Key Stage 2
- Age 11–14 – Years 7, 8, 9: Key Stage 3
- Age 14–16 – Years 10 and 11: Key Stage 4
- Age 16–19 – Post-16: Years 12 and 13: sixth form or post-compulsory education.

The role and importance of your subject specialism is greater at secondary level than at primary. At primary your ‘specialism’ is the core curriculum. To teach primary at Key Stage 1 or 2 you will train to teach all the national curriculum subjects – the core of English, Mathematics and Science, plus the eight foundation subjects. You are expected to have a good knowledge of all subjects. (The only exception to this ‘general’ rule is modern foreign languages. Because every Key Stage 2 pupil in England is entitled to study a foreign language it is possible to train as a primary teacher specialising in languages.) The teaching and learning emphasis is therefore on a range of subjects, but to a level appropriate for children of this age group.
HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR QTS

At secondary (Key Stage 3, 4 and Post-16) you will be expected to be a subject specialist, in a national curriculum subject or an accepted non-national curriculum subject such as Business Education, in which you have an appropriate and relevant degree. In some subjects, where there are shortages of teachers, you can undertake an enhancement course to improve your subject knowledge to the required level. These are currently available in physics, mathematics and chemistry. Details of all courses, requirements and training routes can be found on the TDA website at www.tda.gov.uk/.

A thought (1)

If you are teaching secondary, go and watch a primary teacher at work. You will be amazed at their energy, ingenuity and enthusiasm. Of course, the opposite case holds if you are training at secondary level!

Application to teaching

When introducing yourself to a new class it is essential that you learn names. Children and young people respond much more readily when spoken to by name. You could make this part of a game or exercise, supply labels, or make learners state their name before answering a question. A seating plan will also help you to remember.

The reflective practitioner

You are entering a profession where lifelong learning is an expectation. Innovation and experimentation will always be a part of your working life. This is just one reason why the skills you will gain in the classroom and through your study should be augmented by further professional development. You will find that you go through a number of stages on your way to becoming a confident classroom practitioner. Fuller (1969) suggests a three-stage model of teacher training. Initially, the trainee has a concern about ‘self’ – how am I doing? how will I cope? what will the kids think of me? Secondly, a concern about tasks is developed – how are my lesson plans? have I prepared enough material? what about my marking? Finally, the focus turns to the learners, firstly as a class, then as individual learners – how well is so-and-so doing?
what extra materials might help? how can I explain this more clearly? Each stage of this development requires you to reflect on your progress, i.e. to think about the journey, where you are, where you want to be and what is going to take you to the next stage. As one who delivers education, you are a practitioner; as one who considers how they can improve and move forward, how they can learn from their own and others’ experience, you are reflective. Your goal is therefore to be a reflective practitioner.

GROUP EXERCISE

Consider Fulton’s three stages of trainee teacher development. Talk about these with a qualified teacher in post and see if they agree with the stages. Discuss the intermediate stages that might also take place and how you could manage them.

Reading and writing

In order to progress and reflect, you must read extensively. While each chapter will introduce you to some key texts, you will need to find others for yourself. Should you find an area particularly useful or interesting, use your library service to find out more about it. A good starting point is often the list of references that the writer of a chapter, article or book has themselves cited. As with any ‘social science’ education has its different theorists who may not agree with each other. You need to consider what each is saying and how it applies to your own set of circumstances before making your own judgement as to which theorist you feel is correct. In time you will develop your own theories and methods that are particular to your, and your learners’, needs.

You will be expected to write at a reasonably high level. On many teacher training routes you will not only have the opportunity but be positively encouraged to write at Masters level. You will find this (and subsequent professional development) easier if you are used to reading widely. More detail on this is in Chapter 7.

Some things of which you should be aware!

There are several features which single out education and training from other professions. You will encounter many of these within the pages of this book. Three key areas are particularly apposite to education: external factors, change as the norm and the use of specialised terminology and acronyms.
External factors

Unlike other professions where the professional can often take the lofty position that s/he is the expert, in education everyone is an expert. All have been to school and therefore all have an opinion on some aspect or other of education. You must learn to take this in your stride and not be phased by the many times a parent, governor or friend will tell you that ‘this is how it should be done’ or ‘this is what really works’ or the even more traditional ‘in my day’. Ignore them. You are doing the best possible job for these young people, in this situation, here and now.

Your effectiveness will also increase or decrease in relation to the circumstances in which you are teaching. Social and economic circumstances, for example, may have a huge effect on a child’s ability to learn and their ultimate attainment. Recently published research (Blanden and Machin 2007) suggests that social class is still the most powerful influence on educational attainment, even to degree level. Forty-four per cent of the richest fifth of the population have degrees, compared to just 10 per cent of the poorest fifth. The authors of this Sutton Trust report state that both attainment and behaviour are affected by social class, and movement from one class to another has slowed to a standstill since 1970.

A thought (2)

How important do you think social and economic circumstances are to educational attainment. What other external factors do you think might be important. How could you mitigate their effects?

Change as the norm

There is never a moment when there is not some change being proposed, implemented, monitored, measured or assessed. As this book was being written, the Secretary of State Ed Balls contacted all state schools to tell them of the current bout of changes. These include:

- the new Secondary National Curriculum published in July 2007 for implementation in September 2008, with new programmes of study designed to give teachers a less prescriptive, more flexible framework for teaching, creating more scope to tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of individual learners;
- the new A Levels produced for 2008 with a reduction in the number of units of assessment from six to four to encourage greater depth of understanding and to reduce the assessment burden;
- an A* grade introduced to the grading of A Level for those who score 90 Per cent or more on the uniform mark scale across their A2 units;
the new A Level extended project being introduced as a separate qualification that students may add to their programme. Projects will involve planning, research and evaluation, and their outcome may be a dissertation, the findings of an investigation or field study, a performance or an artefact. This is designed to develop research skills and independent learning skills.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Which of the three sets of changes described here is likely to have the most effect on your teaching? Think about how you can alter your teaching to take this into account.

As the book goes to press there will be new diploma courses at 14–19, there will be new GCSE courses, written to new subject criteria, economic well-being (personal finance) will have become part of PSHE and a cross-curricular theme (again), coursework for 16–19 year olds will be either on or off the menu. The ‘Children’s Plan’, in whatever form it ends up, will have been launched. This is a long-term vision to improve schools and produce a step-change in the way parents and families are supported to deal with the new challenges faced by young people in the twenty-first century. It encourages the development of ‘world-class’ schools, the greater involvement of parents and a greater emphasis on activities for children, including sport and play.

It proposes ‘a root and branch review of the primary level curriculum to ease the transition from early years into school, to create an even sharper focus on mathematics and English … Sir Jim Rose, whose groundbreaking review placed the teaching of synthetic phonics as the key to literacy, will lead the review’ (DFCF Press Release, December 2007).

Even the fabric of education changes. For example, it is proposed that new (and existing) schools will combine child health services, social care, advice, welfare services and police where possible on the same site. Specifically with regard to educational attainment, 90 per cent of children will be expected to develop well across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage profile by age 5, 90 per cent of children should reach or exceed expected levels in English and mathematics by age 11, 90 per cent should achieve the equivalent of five higher level GCSEs by age 19 (with 70 per cent achieving at least two A levels or equivalent) while every young person will have the skills for adult life and further study.

Terminology

‘Children and young people’ is now the preferred nomenclature for pupils or any young person in an educational setting. In this book, to save using the entire ‘children and young people’ phrase at every turn, we tend to use it sometimes, but at others to refer
to ‘pupils’, ‘children’, ‘young people’, ‘students’ or even ‘learners’. You can presume that these terms are interchangeable. Trainee teachers are generally referred to as ‘trainees’, although the book addresses the reader directly whenever possible. Teachers are also referred to as ‘practitioners’.

You will find that education is rife with ‘TLAs’ – no, not teaching and learning assistants (although they are, of course, TLAs), but Three Letter Acronyms. Examples include AQA, HMI, CPD, QTS, QCA, ICT and ZPD along with other codes such as ‘Key Stage 3’, ‘Key Stage 4’ and ‘Early Years’. If someone uses one of these, whether it is at a meeting, on your placement or during taught sessions, they will be using it in the expectation that everyone in the audience recognises and understands it. This is seldom the case. If you are the one that doesn’t know what the acronym stands for, don’t be afraid to ask. Often you will find that you are one of many who did not know, as new terms are coined almost on a daily basis. There is a list of some of the terms in most widespread use in the appendix at the back of the book, along with space for you to add others as they are invented.

And the reason you are taking up teaching?

You will remember what it was all about when Shawn (sic), Kylii (sic) or Leeza (sic) (for it will be they) come up to you on the last day of term and say ‘Thanks, Sir’, ‘Thanks, Miss’; when you have sweated over a trip, through the minefield of health and safety, travel sickness and the emotional trauma of being more than five miles from home and the last kid off the bus, in the dark, says ‘That was great, Miss, I’ve never seen anything like that before, can we go again?’; when the examination results are published and your quiet pleasure is greater in the D grade that your ‘failing’ student achieved rather than the A grade that your top student gained. As teachers, we all have the potential to have a huge influence on the lives and outlooks of all of those that we teach. If we have been effective, we will loom large in their memories; if we’ve been fair, we’ll be remembered with respect, if we’ve been kind, or humorous, we’ll be remembered with affection. Pupils will come up to you years later and say ‘Hi Sir, remember me?’

Summary

- Qualified teacher status is the accreditation that enables you to teach in state-maintained and special schools in England and Wales.
- The QTS Standards are a set of statements that set out, in a formal way, the knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences that you must demonstrate to become a qualified teacher.
The QTS Standards are published under the three headings of professional values and practice,
knowledge and understanding and teaching.
You will train to teach at least two key stages.
You will aim to become a reflective practitioner and a lifelong learner;
You are entering a profession where, in spite of numerous external factors, you have the power to change young people’s lives.

Key reading

www.tda.gov.uk/ The Standards for Qualified Teacher Status

References and bibliography

www.tda.gov.uk/ The Standards for Qualified Teacher Status