

Fitness to Train to Teach (FTT)

Policy and Procedure



# Fitness to Train to Teach Policy

## 1. Purpose

The Fitness to Train to Teach policy and procedure is relevant to:

- all Initial Teacher Training applicants, where Bath Spa University is the accredited ITT provider,
- all returning Initial Teacher Training students from an official study break, where Bath Spa University is the accredited ITT provider,
- any current student, where Bath Spa University is the accredited ITT provider, and it is deemed necessary to have an updated assessment

The University recognises that in offering a place to study on an ITT course that requires a placement within a school or teaching establishment, it must be satisfied that the student will be a safe and suitable entrant to the teaching profession.

Department for Education (DfE) section C1.3 of the ITT Criteria and supporting advice, refers to the capacity to train to teach rather than to teach:

*‘Providers have a responsibility to ensure that trainees have the health and physical capacity to train to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm. The activities that a teacher must be able to perform are set out in the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003. Providers are responsible for ensuring that only trainees who have the capacity to train to teach remain on the programme.*

*Fitness to Train to Teach is the ability to meet teaching standards, both physically and mentally; it is about professional competence and health. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure the safety of the student and those around them, including children, members of the public, and to safeguard public confidence in the relevant professions.’*

This policy document is designed to complement the University’s Regulations and any relevant policies.

## 2. Contacts

Please contact Teacher Training Checks [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk) in the first instance, if you would like to discuss any part of this policy.

## 3. Definitions

FTT                      Fitness to Train to Teach process

DBS	<a href="#">Disclosure and Barring Service</a> : a UK government department that allows employers to check whether a person has a criminal record that would make them unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults
MP	Medical Practitioner
FPHC	<a href="#">Fairfield Park Health Centre, Bath</a>
RUH	<a href="#">Royal United Hospital, Bath</a>
GP	General Practitioner, Fairfield Park Surgery, Bath
DfE	<a href="#">Department for Education</a>
OIA	<a href="#">Office for Independent Adjudicator</a>

#### 4. Introduction

Due to the vocational nature of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses and recognising that the fundamental principles of the profession of a teacher is the care and protection of children “in loco parentis”, it is a requirement under [The Education Act \(2002\)](#) for the health of all applicants to teaching courses to be assessed. The standards used to assess against are specified in [The Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) and the [Initial teacher training \(ITT\): criteria and supporting advice 2020](#).

The first concern of a teacher is the education of their pupils. They are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct, and they'll be expected to forge positive professional relationships with parents and other professionals.

The [Department for Education](#) (DfE) outlines a teacher's duties as follows:

- Planning and preparing lessons and courses for children
- Delivering lessons to children (including distance learning or computer-aided techniques)
- Assessing the development, progress and attainment of children
- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of children
- An activity which assists or supports teaching
- Supervising, assisting and supporting a child
- An administrative or organisational activity which supports the provision of education
- An activity which is ancillary to the provision of education

#### Teachers' Standards

The University assesses trainees using the DfE's official Teachers' Standards, which can be summarised as follows (the full Teachers Standards can be read [here](#)):

## Part 1 - Teaching

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

## Part 2 - Personal and Professional Conduct

1. Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the school
2. Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach
3. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

## Duties of a Teacher

Teaching is a demanding career and teachers need a high standard of physical and mental fitness to fulfil their duties. The health, education, safety and welfare of students must be taken into account when deciding on an individual's fitness to train to teach. A teacher will be expected to:

- Have the health and well-being necessary to deal with specific types of teaching and associated duties (adjusted, as appropriate) in which they will be engaged
- Communicate effectively with children, parents and colleagues
- Possess sound judgement and insight
- Remain alert at all times
- Respond to pupils' needs rapidly and effectively
- Able to manage classes
- Not constitute any risk to the health, safety or well-being of children in their care

## 5. Assessing Fitness to Train to Teach

For every applicant offered a place on one of our Teacher Training courses, it is important for everyone to establish whether they are fit to train to teach.

The Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire is a compulsory part of the admissions process for all Initial Teacher Training courses. These forms are to protect children's welfare and the students too. If an applicant needs reasonable adjustments whilst they study with the University/attend a placement, we'll create an AAP and/or SAP (School Action Plan) Support to Study Action Plan (StSAP) with them, with the help of the Programme Leader and their Academic Tutor.

The applicant should answer the questions as thoroughly as possible, even if they have not disclosed it before in the application/admissions process.

Their questionnaire will have many positive benefits, it will enable the University to make well-informed decisions about their fitness to train to teach, to consider any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, and to ensure that all agreed adjustments and support are in place at the beginning of their programme/placement.

It is the role of an independent Medical Practitioner (MP), at Fairfield Park Health Centre, Bath to make this health assessment, and not the student's General Practitioner (GP), although the MP will work closely with other services (as appropriate) in reaching a decision on their fitness to train to teach.

The aim of the Fitness to Train to Teach requirements is to ensure that a future teacher has both the physical and mental fitness to perform their duties without putting children and young people at risk. However, there is a duty on Bath Spa University to ensure that health and safety or child protection requirements are not used to justify discrimination against a disabled student ([Equality Act 2010](#)). Each case will be looked at individually, on its merits and in the light of the particular circumstances.

Following completion of this online questionnaire the applicant information will be held and processed by Bath Spa University (BSU), Fairfield Park Health Centre (FPHC) and the Royal United Hospital (RUH) where relevant, as the occupational health provider to Bath Spa University. If required, the information provided within this questionnaire will also form the basis of applicants occupational health record. Any information applicants provide will be dealt with in a confidential manner and in line with [General Data Protection Regulations](#).

By completing the questionnaire the applicant is stating that the answers to all the questions asked are true and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief and that they understand that making false statements or failure to declare a health problem could lead to them to be withdrawn at any stage of their application/course.

It is extremely important that the applicant's personal details are correct when completing the online form, in particular their email address and phone numbers, to ensure that this clearance process is efficient. During the process it is advisable that applicants monitor spam/junk folders as any correspondence may be automatically diverted into this folder. It is applicants responsibility to ensure that they cooperate with all Occupational Health procedures, attending appointments that are arranged or rearranging as appropriate. The applicant will be responsible for any charges relating to non attendance at occupational health appointments.

**Important: Any applicant with an offer for an Initial Teacher Training course who has not been cleared as 'Fit to Train to Teach' by the beginning of the course will not be allowed to register and may have their offer of a place rescinded.**

If applicants, students or staff would like to discuss any aspect of this process in confidence, please send an email to Teacher Training Compliance Checks [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk)

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# Fitness to Train to Teach Procedure

## Step 1

Applicants (and students where necessary) will receive an email from [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk) with a secure link to the Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire - no Bath Spa account is required.

All applicants for teacher training must complete a Fitness to Train to Teach assessment to ensure that they meet the legal requirements to teach. Teachers, and those training to become teachers, need a high standard of physical and mental fitness to enter the teaching profession. Teaching is a demanding career and teachers have a duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. The health, education, safety and welfare of pupils, is taken into account when the Fitness to Train to Teach Questionnaire is assessed.

The reasons for addressing the issue of Fitness to Train to Teach centre around the following requirements:

- To ensure the health, safety and well-being of teachers
- To ensure the health, safety, well-being and educational progress of students
- To manage any risk to the health of teachers which may arise from their teaching duties including ensuring that those duties do not exacerbate pre existing health problems
- To ensure the health and safety of other teachers and support staff is not adversely affected by a colleague being medically unfit
- To enable all, including those with disabilities, who wish to pursue a career in teaching to achieve their potential within the bounds of reasonable adjustment.

## Step 2

The Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire should be completed as soon as possible - the link to the questionnaire will have a time limit of two weeks.

It can take up to eight weeks for clearance to be received by Bath Spa University.

## Step 3

Applicants will receive email confirmation once the University has been notified that their Fitness to Train to Teach has been cleared.

They will not be able to enrol or start their course/school placement unless they have completed this questionnaire and have been officially declared fit to train to teach.

The University has a responsibility to partnership schools and the pupils attending those schools that our trainees on placement are fit to train to teach and where appropriate, have in place reasonable adjustments to manage the impact of any disability, medical condition, or mental health issue on their teaching.

In addition, if they are not fully registered they will not be eligible to receive any funding – including the ITT bursary from the Department of Education (for PGCE students) and all loans and grants from Student Finance England or other relevant funding body.

The Fitness to Train to Teach assessment is a compulsory compliance check for admission to an initial teacher training course. If applicants fail to satisfy this condition, they will be withdrawn from the admissions process/their studies.

#### Step 4

The information contained within the Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire will be assessed by appropriate health professionals. In some circumstances the applicant may be asked to attend a medical assessment.

#### What happens if applicants don't disclose a disability, long-term medical condition, or mental health issue?

Under the [Health & Safety at Work Act \(1974\)](#) individuals have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own and other people's health and safety at work. In addition, schools, academies, colleges and institutions have a statutory responsibility for 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people' [Education Act \(2002\)](#).

If the applicant has a disability, long-term medical or mental health condition, which has a bearing on their occupational health, they are required to disclose these on the Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire. If they decline to disclose a condition which affects their Fitness to Train to Teach, or give false information then it may result in their withdrawal from the course. On a more practical level it also prevents them from accessing any support that they would be legally entitled to during their training under the [Equality Act 2010](#). According to this legislation, the University and partnership schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to support any students disclosing a disability, long term medical or mental health condition.

#### What happens if applicants do disclose a disability, long-term medical or mental health condition?

If applicants have a disability, medical, or mental health condition then it's possible that the Medical Practitioner will request further medical evidence of their condition from their GP or Consultant and refer them to the Occupational Health Team at RUH for further assessment before a final decision is made. This is an opportunity to identify access requirements or support needs, including any reasonable adjustments, which may be required.

If applicants have access requirements or identify as disabled we strongly encourage them to disclose this as soon as possible so that we can assess and discuss with them any reasonable adjustments that may be helpful and to which they may be entitled. Bath Spa University has a strong record of enabling students with disabilities to ensure they become successful teachers.



There are times when Bath Spa University may need the Course, or placement/school staff to be aware of a condition. We have School Access Plans (SAP's) which are created by Academic Tutors (ATs) and trainees, and trainees are encouraged to share or allow the AT to share relevant information with the school to support them on placements.

### What kind of support can be accessed?

The support that can be accessed will depend on individual circumstances, so applicants should liaise with the Student Wellbeing Team at Bath Spa University about their needs. They may also be eligible for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs).

Examples of the type of support available are as follows:

- Help with travel costs if they are unable to use public transport
- Assistive technology software
- Specialist ergonomic equipment
- Sessions with one-to-one study skills support tutors or specialist mentors

### Are there any conditions which will automatically prevent applicants from pursuing an Initial Teacher Training course?

There is no specific list of conditions incompatible with teaching.

### Step 5

The final outcome will be assigned one of the following categories:

Category A: Assessed as being fit to train to teach

Category B: Assessed as being fit to train to teach. The medical practitioner may advise that reasonable adjustments would be appropriate.

Category C: Assessed as not fit to train to teach at the current time.

Occupational Health will pass on information given 'in confidence' only if there is a significant identified risk to the candidate/trainee concerned, to pupils or others.

### Step 6

Following these classifications, Bath Spa University will email the applicant one of the following outcomes:

Category A: confirmation that they have been declared Fit to Train to Teach

Category B: confirmation that they have been declared Fit to Train to Teach. The medical practitioner may advise that reasonable adjustments would be appropriate.

Category C: confirmation that they have been assessed as not Fit to Train to Teach. Applicants will be able to resubmit a new questionnaire after appropriate medical treatment, and/or recovery. They will be required to submit with their application a satisfactory current medical report.

### Change in the applicants/students health or wellbeing after the initial questionnaire has been completed

If there is a change in the applicant's health or wellbeing after they have completed their Fitness to Train to Teach Questionnaire, they should contact [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk) in the first instance.

If there is a change in the student's health or wellbeing once they have enrolled with the University, the student should inform their Academic Tutor in the first instance and/or contact [partnership@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:partnership@bathspa.ac.uk).

Any change in the applicants or current students health and/or wellbeing will be initially assessed by the Medical Practitioner.

They may be required to complete a new Fitness to Train to Teach questionnaire following their or their Academic Tutors declaration of a change in their health and/or wellbeing. This is compulsory and failure to complete the request would result in the student being referred to the Fitness to Study (FtS) policy/procedure.

It is a student's responsibility to inform their Academic Tutor if, following a change in their health, a GP or Health Professional advises them to take a break in their studies or employment. Their Academic Tutor would then inform the Partnerships Team so that they can arrange a break or a delay in their placement, and a new Fitness to Train to Teach assessment can be completed. The student may also be advised to contact SWS for support/advice.

This is an opportunity to identify support requirements and/or the need for reasonable adjustments, following a change in their circumstances. Our Student Wellbeing Service Team, can offer assistance and advice on available support, such as reasonable adjustments and accessing funding support that they could be legally entitled to during their training.

All returning Initial Teacher Training students from an official study break, where Bath Spa University is the accredited ITT provider, are required to complete an updated Fitness to Train to Teach assessment. The Partnerships Team will liaise directly with [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk) to request a new assessment, and arrange a return to study and placement at an appropriate time when the student has been cleared fit to train to teach again.

If a member of staff has a significant concern for a student's well being, or fitness to continue to train to teach, then they should contact the Partnership Team as a matter of urgency. The

Partnership Team would liaise directly with the Senior Management within the School of Education, and where relevant the SWS, to provide support and guidance to the student. The Partnership Team would also arrange a break or a delay in their placement and inform [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk) to request a new FTT assessment.

Please see the [Fitness to Train to Teach Flowchart](#) for reference.

## Fitness to Train to Teach Flowchart

[Fitness to Train to Teach Flowchart](#)

## Useful links to Documents, Information and Guidance

Bath Spa University: Privacy for Students and Applicants

Department of Education: Initial teacher training (ITT) criteria and supporting advice

Legislation.gov.uk - Education Act 2002

Legislation.gov.uk - Data Protection Act 2018

Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Health and Safety Executive: Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Legislation.gov.uk: Data Protection Act 1998

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: Info for Applicants

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: What is Fitness to Practise

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: The Process

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: Good Fitness to Practise Procedure

## Contact Details

### Fairfield Park Health Centre

Tynning Lane

Camden Road

Bath

BA1 6EA

01225 331616

### Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

Combe Park

Bath BA1 3NG

01225 428331

### Bath Spa University

Newton Park

Newton St Loe

Bath

BA2 9BN

01225 875875

Teacher Training Compliance Checks: [ttc@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:ttc@bathspa.ac.uk)

### Department for Education (DfE) helpline

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Online: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe>

Office for Independent Adjudicator  
enquiries@oiahe.org.uk

## Document details

**Responsible Office:** School of Education

**Responsible Officer:** Head of School of Education

**Approving Authority:** Academic Board

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**Related Procedures:** DBS Procedure; Prohibition Procedure; Childcare Disqualification Check Procedure; Support to Study Policy (previously named Fitness to Study)

**Related University Policies:** Admissions Policy; Data Protection Policy; Safeguarding, Wellbeing and the Prevent Duty

**Amended (if applicable):** N/A

**Supersedes:** N/A

**Next review due:** January 2023