

2012

A Single Admissions  
Process for Postgraduate  
Initial Teacher Training -  
**Consultation document**

January 2012

gttr

Graduate Teacher Training Registry

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## Foreword

The quality of teaching is central to an effective education system and critical to the success and stability of society. Inspirational teachers pass on knowledge, skills and values to prepare young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who can make a positive contribution to society. It is one of the most challenging jobs available to graduates but it is also one of the most rewarding. The influence of outstanding teachers on the life of our nation cannot be over-stated.

It is therefore essential that we attract candidates of the highest calibre to a career in teaching and are able to identify those with the personal characteristics and attributes to make outstanding teachers. Academic excellence is critical but is not the only criterion. We must be able to attract and identify those who can motivate, enthuse and inspire.

The process for selecting candidates for initial teacher training courses is central to achieving these objectives. We need to have a process that is straightforward for the applicant to use while at the same time being able to reflect the complexities required to achieve a highly-functioning and diverse teaching workforce.

Prospective teachers come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some will already have been successful in other careers; some will be new graduates who have always aspired to a career in teaching; some may already be working in a school as a teaching assistant. The needs of this diverse group can only be met by having different delivery models for postgraduate teacher training. Some will want a university- or college-based course while others will perhaps want a more practical hands-on approach, based in a school.

The current systems of applying for postgraduate teacher training have evolved over time to meet the changing needs of applicants and schools. The two main routes, the one-year course for those who are already graduates, either university or school-based, and the employment-based Graduate Teacher Programme have developed independently.

There are two different processes for admission, the first managed by UCAS through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry, and the Graduate Teacher Programme managed directly by providers and overseen by the Training and Development Agency for Schools. Applicants tell us that they find this confusing and providers are concerned that it is not achieving the best match of applicants to courses and school placements.

UCAS and the Training and Development Agency for Schools have therefore been reviewing the processes for application for postgraduate teacher training. This report introduces a model to create a single admissions process managed by UCAS for initial teacher training courses for those who are already graduates. We believe this presents a real opportunity to reshape the process to one which is more efficient, gives applicants a more positive experience and secures the recruitment of the best possible prospective teachers on to courses that ensure they acquire the skills to teach our children successfully.

The people who understand these issues best are the providers, in universities, colleges and schools. We present this report knowing that there are many questions still unanswered and we now welcome input from all those who have an interest in or experience of providing initial teacher training.

No decisions have been made but we present a model which has the potential to both streamline the process and improve the already high standards of the teaching profession. We now need your input to understand its strengths, its weaknesses, and how we can make it better.

Thank you for your interest in this consultation. We welcome your views on how we can work together to achieve the most effective process for recruiting the right people to this most important profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Thompson', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

[Martin Thompson](#)  
GTTR Advisory Board Member

## Section I

### 1. Purpose

1.1. In September 2010, the UCAS Board ratified a new corporate strategy, which included a fundamental review of undergraduate and postgraduate admissions processes, and UCAS is currently consulting on changes to the admissions process for undergraduate courses in the UK.

1.2. As part of the review, and in response to the DfE White Paper *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers* (June 2011), UCAS has also been working in partnership with the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) to consider the processes for application to courses in initial teacher training (ITT). These can be followed either at undergraduate or postgraduate level. Undergraduate ITT admissions are managed by UCAS through the same process as that for all other undergraduate admissions and form part of the existing consultation.

1.3. In respect of postgraduate admissions, UCAS manages the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR), an admissions service that processes over 50,000 applications each year for full-time and part-time postgraduate teacher training courses at:

- most universities, colleges of higher education and school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) consortia in England
- most universities and colleges of higher education in Wales
- almost all higher education institutions (HEIs) in Scotland.

1.4. Applicants following courses in the GTTR scheme will achieve the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) needed to teach in state schools in

England and Wales or the Teaching Qualification (TQ) required to teach in Scottish schools. Many schools in the independent sector also require their teachers to have QTS or the TQ, even though this is not a government requirement.

1.5. The GTTR does not currently process applications for teacher training courses at any universities or colleges in Northern Ireland.

1.6. The TDA manages the application process in England for the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) which enables graduates to gain QTS while working as an unqualified teacher.

1.7. GTP providers do not operate in the same way in Wales. Applications for employment-based ITT are made to the Welsh Government assembly.

1.8. A further policy development, announced by the Government in *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers*, is to allow certain schools in England to recruit and select trainees and then to work with an accredited ITT provider to train them to be qualified teachers. Applications to schools taking part in this new initiative, called 'School Direct' in the DfE's Implementation plan (November 2011), will be made through a central list.

1.9. The purpose of this document is to give information and to consult on a proposed model to create a single admissions process for postgraduate teacher training courses. This would be managed by UCAS and available to providers in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The aims of this reform would be to:

- provide a simplified process for obtaining information and applying for postgraduate teaching programmes

- support all providers in the management of places by giving greater clarity and transparency about applications
- remove the inefficiencies for those providers who have to work through multiple systems
- ensure a better match of applicants to the postgraduate teacher training course most appropriate for them.

1.10. This consultation is about the process for admission to postgraduate teacher training courses. It will not impact on the content or delivery of the courses or any financial support attached to them. It is a timely response to the DfE White Paper *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers* (June 2011) and its *Implementation plan* (November 2011), which:

- called for a system to make it easier to apply for teacher training
- asked for the development of options to provide a single system of applications to all courses
- identified the length of time taken to process first choice applications and the resultant negotiation of a meaningful second choice as significant issues in the current system.

1.11. We will continue to monitor any policy changes and ensure that all parts of the system are aligned. The proposed model is very flexible and can adapt to any future policy developments.

1.12. We wish to consult widely on these proposals and welcome feedback from applicants, potential applicants, all types of providers, schools and teachers who have any involvement in postgraduate teacher training.

1.13. The consultation is open until 21 March 2012. In addition to the online consultation UCAS will continue to hold face-to-face consultations with stakeholder groups. All responses to the consultation will be analysed carefully and a report will be submitted to the GTTR Advisory Board and the UCAS Board. Individual consultation responses will not be

published but a summative report will be published by the end of May 2012.

1.14. All consultation questions are embedded in the main body of the text in the section to which they refer. We hope you will find this helpful as you consider your responses. You may respond to the consultation online at [www.gtr.ac.uk/aboutus/review](http://www.gtr.ac.uk/aboutus/review) where you will find full instructions on how to respond.

## 2. Overview of the current admissions system

2.1. QTS (or TQ in Scotland) is required in order to work as a teacher in state-maintained schools. Graduates who wish to achieve QTS can do so by studying through a university or college, with time spent on teaching practice in schools, or by working in a school as an unqualified teacher. Many will acquire a qualification, the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in Scotland as well as QTS; others will progress direct to QTS.

2.2. There are currently a number of routes to QTS or the TQ, of which the two main routes are through the GTTR for England, Wales and Scotland and the GTP in England.

2.3. In 2010 there were 26,050 placed applicants through the GTTR, 4,864 for the GTP and only 992 for all other routes. Since these are the routes used by the vast majority of entrants to the profession, this consultation will focus on ways to improve the application process for the PGCE, the PGDE in Scotland and the GTP.

2.4. Application for postgraduate teacher training is very competitive. In 2010 there were 97,000 applications for a total of 30,914 places on PGCE, PGDE and GTP courses.

### 3. Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

3.1. The PGCE route (PGDE in Scotland) is the more traditional route and has been in existence for over 40 years in its present form.

3.2. Applications for PGCE or PGDE courses are generally made through the GTTR, which is administered by UCAS. Places are offered at universities and colleges and with SCITT consortia that have chosen to be members of the GTTR.

3.3. The GTTR initially allows applicants to make a maximum of four course choices, including no more than two primary teaching courses. These are considered by one provider at a time in the applicant's order of preference. Due to the nature of this sequential process and the ratio of applicants per place, applicants are not always considered by all their choices.

3.4. Applications can be made from early October. Applications for primary school courses must be submitted by 1 December for guaranteed consideration at the applicant's first choice. There is no deadline for submitting applications to middle years, secondary or further education courses to guarantee consideration.

Applicants can apply for any courses in the GTTR scheme with vacancies up to the end of the application cycle in October of the following year.

3.5. Providers can make the following decisions:

- Conditional offer
- Unconditional offer
- Unsuccessful application
- Course closed
- Delayed confirmation
- Withdraw the choice (sometimes at the request of the applicant)

3.6. Within the GTTR rules, providers have 28 days from the receipt of an application to invite

an applicant for interview and a further 28 days to make a decision. However, the 28 days does not become applicable until after the 1 December deadline. Providers can also 'stop' an application if for any reason they feel they do not have sufficient information or time to make a decision.

3.7. If an applicant is unsuccessful at all of their initial choices they can either make additional choices up to the maximum permitted, make a new set of choices or apply to one provider at a time, through Extra or Clearing. The option that applies is dependent on how many choices an applicant has initially made and the time within applications cycle. If an application is stopped, applicants can opt to continue with their application to this provider or to withdraw it and ask for their application to be sent to a different provider.

### 4. Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP)

4.1. The GTP is a programme in England and Wales for graduates who want to gain QTS while employed in a school as an unqualified teacher. It has been in existence since 1998 and was originally restricted to applicants over the age of 24, though the age restriction was dropped in 2004.

4.2. Applications to GTPs in England are made through the TDA website but this only acts as a portal; all other communication is between the applicant and the training provider. Applicants have to choose a training provider and in some cases secure a place at an employing school before applying. GTP training providers usually recruit well in advance of the programme start dates and application deadlines and processes vary between providers. Applicants can make as many applications as they wish simultaneously and have to apply separately to each GTP provider where they want to be considered. GTP providers do not know if applicants are also being considered for GTPs at other providers.

4.3. From September 2011 the portal was enhanced to provide full course information and allow applicants to apply for the GTP direct.

## Section II

### 5. Rationale for reform

5.1. The current application systems for postgraduate teacher training have evolved over time to meet the changing needs of applicants and schools. As a result they have become diverse and can be confusing and frustrating for applicants. They can also create difficulties and inefficiencies for providers, particularly those who have to use multiple systems, and there are concerns that they are no longer conducive to achieving the best match of applicants to places available.

5.2. In its White Paper *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers*, the Government's stated intention was to make it easier to apply for ITT. The proposed solution was to consider options to provide a single system for applications to all courses. In the Implementation plan it acknowledged the work done by the TDA and UCAS in developing this proposal.

### Applicants

#### 6. Different application systems for each training route mean that applicants wishing to apply to more than one postgraduate teacher training route must make at least two different applications through separate systems.

6.1. A PGCE can either be based at a university or college or in a school with a SCITT consortium. In neither case is it remunerated though there are bursaries available for shortage subjects, with plans to increase them. While most applications are made through the GTTR, some are made through the GTP.

6.2. GTPs are school-based. Participants are appointed to a remunerated post within the school as an unqualified teacher. They follow an individual training programme that leads to QTS in conjunction with partners, normally universities, colleges, local authorities or private educational companies. Some may have the opportunity to achieve a PGCE as well as QTS.

6.3. There is no single process for application to the GTP. In some cases the schools act as the first point of selection, reducing the number of applications by interviewing applicants, checking qualifications and suitability for teaching. The number of those applying direct to schools is not known, though anecdotally some schools receive as many as 100 applications per place. Application deadlines are provider specific.

6.4. In some cases GTP providers require applicants to find a school placement themselves but some providers will find a place for them. The two approaches are fairly evenly distributed.

6.5. There is a different process for SCITT applications which come through the GTTR. Application rules for the number of choices and dates are as for the university and college members of the scheme. Around 50% of applicants are interviewed, normally after January; interviews often include a classroom-based activity and are normally held in schools.

6.6. GTP providers assess schools to ensure they have sufficient capabilities to offer the training required, but have different rules and approaches regarding the schools with which they work.

## 6.7. Quotes

*“I have opted for a GTP route eventually but it was luck I achieved it as I did not appreciate I could put one application into GTTR yet several GTP applications at once and missed most intakes. I appreciate this is not your responsibility but it highlights difficulties in finding the most suitable route into the teaching profession.”*

*“Quite often there were requirements to contact multiple academic institutions for different routes into teaching. There is little information on the advantages of SCITT and GTP for instance. Sometimes you apply direct to the institution, sometimes to GTTR, sometimes to the school – not very consistent.”*

*“People pay to do a PGCE or get paid to do a GTP but very often end up with the same qualifications as many offer PGCEs in the SCITT and GTP systems!”*

## 7. Information on the different routes and options is not all available in the same place and can be difficult to obtain.

7.1. The content and delivery of a course can vary between routes, courses and institutions. Applicants need to decide whether they prefer a university/college or school-based course. If they prefer a school-based course, they need to decide whether they want or need it to be remunerated. They then have to decide whether to apply for a PGCE or GTP or both and choose their universities, colleges and schools.

7.2. The TDA website provides a valuable resource in bringing together information on teacher training options and the Teaching Information Line (TIL) gives prospective applicants the opportunity to speak to the TDA about any aspect of teacher training and development.

7.3. However, the complexities between the different routes, and programmes within routes, make it difficult for applicants to access the information they need and to make comparisons between courses. There is also a confusing lack of consistency between the processes and requirements for the different routes. For GTP courses, for instance, each provider has its own arrangements and dates for application deadlines; sometimes a second competition is held within the year if places have not been filled.

7.4. The different requirements of the many options are not clear to applicants and they feel they have limited access to advice. From the many options available, applicants find it difficult to work out which course is the most appropriate one for them to meet their skills and aspirations. The planned introduction of ‘School Direct’ will further emphasise the importance of information being collected in the same place.

## 7.5. Quotes

*“There are too many processes to go through to obtain the information needed. It would be easier if all the different routes into teaching were displayed in one place.”*

*“Initially I wanted to do a GTP. Unfortunately it was very time-consuming and research heavy, writing to every conceivable school. It would have been helpful for GTTR to have a bank of GTP ready schools. This would have narrowed my search considerably and made the process less daunting.”*

*“You have to know the places to look or hear about schemes such as Teach First or SCITTs through a friend. Universities should offer an “Interested in Teaching,” pack or something like that so that students are aware of all the options and requirements.”*

## 8. The overall time taken by providers to make decisions is too long and is an unsatisfactory experience for applicants.

8.1. Selection of applicants with the right skills and attributes for teaching is crucial and there are a number of important elements in making decisions which can make it a protracted process. While this may be understandable from an institutional perspective, many applicants found it slow compared to their experience with other professions.

8.2. As the table below shows, applicants can wait an average of over 60 days<sup>1</sup> to receive an unconditional offer and nearly 50 days<sup>1</sup> to be told that a course is full or that their application has been unsuccessful.

**Table 1: Average time taken for decisions to be recorded during the GTTR 2010 admissions cycle<sup>2</sup>**

Decision	Days
Rejected by default	70.2
Withdrawn	70.1
Stop	69.7
Unconditional	61.5
Conditional	58.7
Course full/withdrawn	48.3
Rejected	47.4
Not qualified	46.8
Course closed	43.6

<sup>1</sup> Average decision times include 'stop' decisions.

<sup>2</sup> UCAS data for 2010 year of entry.

8.3. Selecting the right applicants for the teaching profession is a critical process and must remain rigorous. Academic success cannot be the only selection criterion and providers need to be satisfied that applicants have the right personal characteristics and talents to make them effective teachers. A rigorous assessment of interpersonal skills can only be achieved by a multi-stage process that includes interviewing each applicant. This is time-consuming and often involves non-university/college/SCITT provider staff; this is the major contributor to the length of the decision-making process.

8.4. It is also essential that potential teachers have the right level of literacy and numeracy, which is why tests in both literacy and numeracy are part of the process. Until now, these have been taken after entry to a teacher training course, so do not effectively screen candidates unsuitable for teacher training. Subject to final decisions on timing, it is the Government's stated intention that in future these will be taken prior to application and become an entry requirement. If this is not properly aligned with the admissions system there is the potential to slow down the process further.

### 8.5. Quotes

*"It takes too long to receive decisions to submit one choice at a time and have fair chance of a place later on."*

*"Absolutely disgusted that my first choice took four months to reject me without even an interview!!"*

*"The amount of time that my first choice took over my application meant that all my other choices had closed when they had rejected me. I am now not likely to attend university in September and have paid £17 for nothing."*

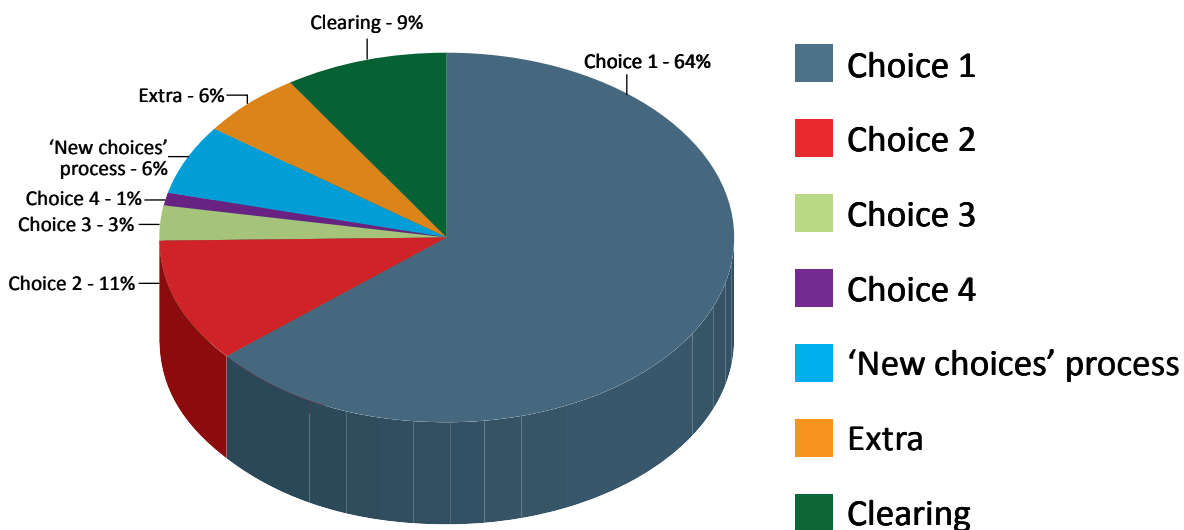
*"The GTTR process required nerves of steel – my first choice took months to offer me a place and I wondered whether I would be better off withdrawing my application from them and trying for luck with my second choice before they filled up their places and I was left with nothing."*

9. Through the current GTTR sequential application process, approximately 50% of applicants are often not considered by their second choice provider because they are full when applicants' first choice decisions are received.

9.1. In 2010, 64% of successful applicants for postgraduate teacher training were successful in achieving a place on their first choice of course.

**Graph 1: Split of applicants securing a place at their first, second, third or fourth choice, or through the 'New choices' process, Extra or Clearing**

**64% of successful applicants were successful with their first choice**



9.2. However, since GTTR applications are sent to one choice of provider at a time, many applicants who are unsuccessful at their first choice are not considered at further providers as all places have been filled.

9.3. From 2010 applicant data we know that:

- 60,949 applications were made during the main part of the GTTR cycle
- 8,649 applicants applied to a single choice; all others applied for at least two choices
- 20,094 applicants were made offers of which 16,612 ended up being placed
- the remaining 3,482 applicants either were unsuccessful in meeting the conditions of their offers or perhaps withdrew later in the cycle due to personal circumstances
- 32,206 applicants tried to move on to their second choice
- 16,289 applicants had course closed or course full/withdrawn decisions.

9.4. This means that just over 50% of applicants who were unplaced with their first choice did not get a place with their second choice because that choice was unavailable.<sup>3</sup>

## 9.5. Quotes

*“You should be able to apply to several providers and reply via acceptance to whoever responds the quickest; currently if your first choice takes a long time in replying you may lose your place at your second choice while waiting for your first.”*

*“I was disappointed with the time it took my first choice to give me a decision regarding my interview. This affected the rest of my GTTR application as by the time they did respond, my second choice university had already allocated all of their places.”*

*“GTTR needs to be more flexible. I was undecided where my partner and family would be in September so I would have*

*preferred to have been able to apply to two institutions. I had to guess where I was more likely to be in September and chose the wrong city and consequently had to pull out of a PGCE place.”*

*“I think my application should have been sent to all four institutions at once, like applying for an undergraduate course. The delay caused by waiting for one institution to make a decision before it was passed on, almost cost me a place.”*

## Providers

**10. Providers lack visibility over how many applications are being made across different ITT routes by one applicant, making final number management challenging.**

10.1. Providers currently have to manage applications in a complex environment. Applicants may apply through more than one route at a time and if they make applications within the GTP route, they can make as many applications as they wish simultaneously. Providers do not have visibility of other applications a candidate is making and applicants can hold a place through the GTTR and potentially several GTP places.

10.2. As a result, providers do not know what applicants might do in respect of the places they hold. In practice, some withdraw late or simply fail to turn up on the course. This can be exacerbated by both the different time frames and the fact that some opportunities are remunerated and some are not. It is known that some candidates turn down a place on a GTTR course in favour of a remunerated GTP, resulting in unexpected vacancies on PGCE programmes late in the cycle.

<sup>3</sup> UCAS data for 2010 year of entry.

**11. Providers offering more than one ITT route have to work with multiple application systems which can be inefficient.**

11.1. Some university and college providers offer both PGCE and GTP courses. Many will also offer undergraduate ITT courses for which admission is through the general UCAS scheme for undergraduate admissions. This means that the same admissions offices and tutors may have to administer up to three very different processes to decide which applicants are best suited to a career in teaching. In the case of the PGCE and the GTP, they may even be processing different applications from the same candidate.

Although they are not involved in the selection process for SCITT courses, universities and colleges approve SCITT consortia programmes for the award of the PGCE.

## Section III

### 12. Proposals for reform

12.1. The DfE Initial Teacher Training Strategy<sup>4</sup> published in June 2011 and the subsequent Implementation plan published in November 2011, made it clear that the Government wanted it to be easier and more straightforward to apply for postgraduate teacher training.

12.2. The report proposed obtaining information about a single system for applications to all courses, which would also include initial literacy and numeracy tests and make it possible for all applications to both PGCE and GTP courses to be made on the same application form.

12.3. As part of the Admissions Process Review, UCAS has been working with the TDA and other stakeholders to assess the feasibility of running a centralised admissions service for all postgraduate initial teacher training routes through UCAS. Changes are also being planned which will mean that new systems will be necessary. The Government has announced that, from September 2012, only those who have passed tests in literacy and numeracy will be able to access initial teacher training; and a new route is to start immediately for some schools to receive applications direct for training places that they can sponsor.

12.4. The central recommendation is to deliver a single postgraduate teacher training admissions system and process that would benefit applicants applying through the GTTR and for GTP programmes and prevent providers

from having to work with multiple systems. The proposed model is very flexible and can adapt to any future policy developments from the Government in respect of changes to the GTP.

12.5. It is expected that the business model would be the same as that currently used to support the GTTR and the introduction of 'School Direct'.

12.6. The proposed date for implementation is for year of entry 2014. If the proposals are accepted a detailed implementation plan will be produced.

### 12.7. Questions

12.7.1. What are the potential advantages of a single admissions process for GTTR and GTP courses?

12.7.2. What are the potential disadvantages of a single admissions process for GTTR and GTP courses?

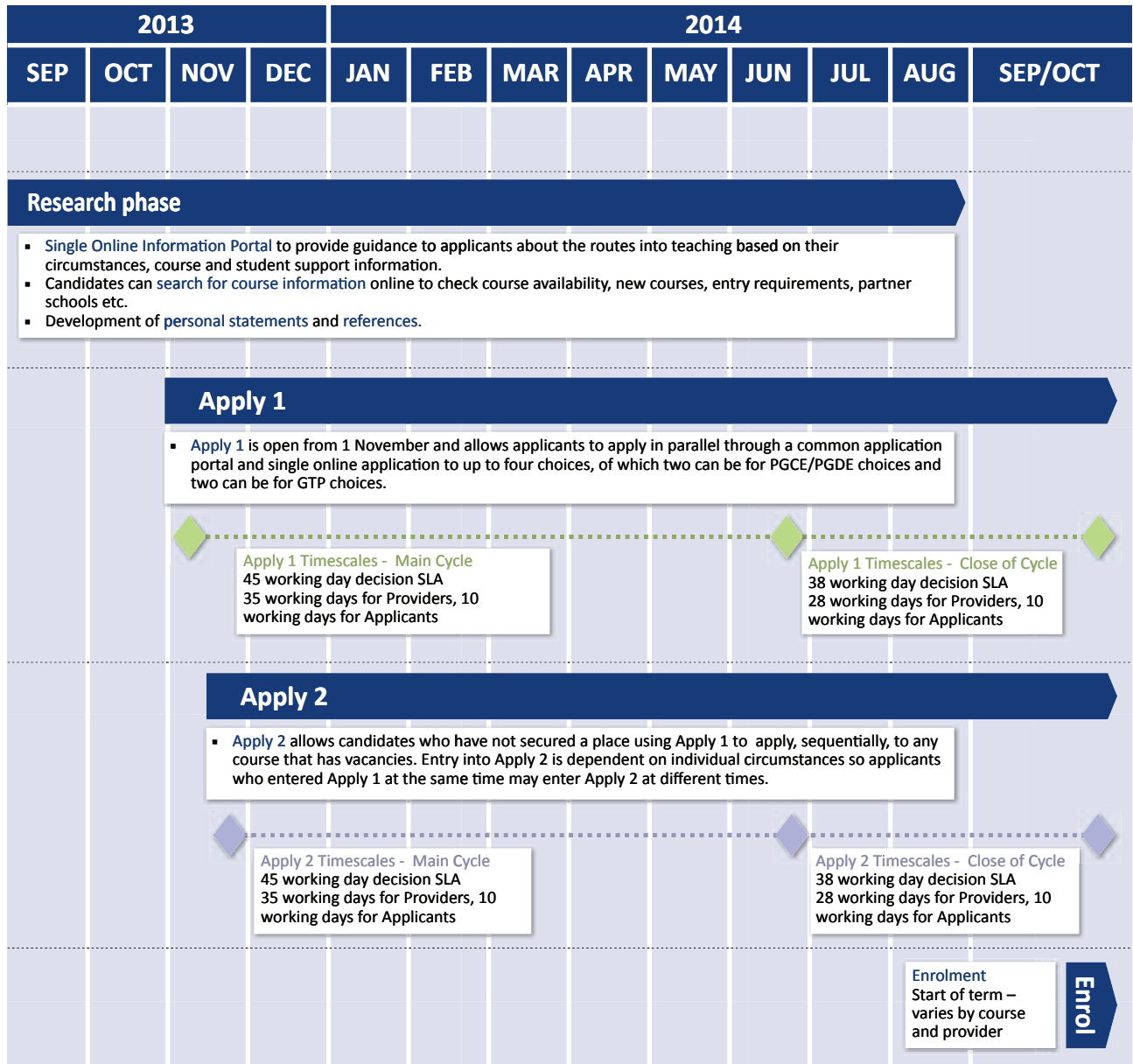
### 13. Interim improvements

13.1. The TDA has already made enhancements to the GTP application process for July 2011. These will improve the process in the short-term for applicants applying for GTP courses but will not fundamentally reform the process for all applicants to postgraduate teacher training.

<sup>4</sup> Training our next generation of outstanding teachers – An improvement strategy for discussion, June 2011, Department for Education

## 14. A single admissions process for postgraduate initial teacher training

Figure 1: Model for implementation 2014



14.1. Key features of the proposed system are that it would:

- **be more efficient**, enabling clearer deadlines and a more consistent turn-around period
- give applicants a **more positive overall experience** by offering them greater flexibility and choice and providing a central portal containing all the information they require
- give more **support to the full range of providers**.

#### Be more efficient

14.2. There will be a single application system with the functionality to transfer application data to providers.

#### Offer applicants a more positive overall experience

14.3. There would be a single portal for access to information so that applicants can access all this information in the same place. This would include:

- a centralised course search functionality
- clear advice and applicant guidance
- information on whether GTP applicants have to find a school placement for themselves.

14.4. There would be a single application form for GTP and GTTR courses.

14.5. UCAS would support providers to streamline the assessment process and reduce the decision-making time.

14.6. Initial parallel applications for GTTR and GTP would ensure that applicants are considered for a maximum of four choices simultaneously.

14.7. UCAS will consider providing a centralised system for interview scheduling and acceptance; if this system is introduced, it

should reduce the administration for providers and make the process less stressful for applicants.

### 14.8. Questions

14.8.1. The features of the single applications system will secure a better overall experience for applicants. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

14.8.2. What features can be built into the single admissions process to support applicants in selecting the appropriate routes into teaching?

#### Give more support to the full range of providers

14.9. There would be transparency for providers about the number of applications being made for different types of course and the status of those applications.

14.10. There would be automatic validation and verification of all PGCE and GTP course applications, with CV screening for gaps and plagiarism.

14.11. Pre-populated data earlier in the application process would streamline the CRB checking process.

14.12. UCAS could support providers with an optional centralised interview scheduling and acceptance process, including giving applicants visibility about the availability of interview dates and the facility to book interviews.

14.13. Subject to government decisions, the new system would ensure that the results of applicants' pre-entry literacy and numeracy tests are made available to providers.

14.14. As part of the review of all admissions processes, UCAS will be providing improved systems, for instance in respect of GCSE matching, electronic document collection and quality of data.

## 14.15. Questions

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

14.15.1. A single application form would be able to give different providers all the information that they need.

14.15.2. Access to test results would be of value to providers

14.15.3. The centralised interviewing planning facility would aid efficiency and help streamline the process.

14.15.4. My institution could be adequately prepared to move to a single admissions process for year of entry 2014.

## We would like your ideas

14.15.5. For school-based courses, how could UCAS incorporate application processes that meet the needs of both providers and schools?

## 15. Process timetable

15.1. There would be two Apply windows: the working titles are Apply 1 and Apply 2.

### Apply 1

15.2. The distinctive feature of Apply 1 is that applicants could be considered by up to four providers at the same time. This would remove the frustration expressed by current applicants that they are not considered by each of their choices.

15.3. UCAS would open Apply 1 for PGCE and GTP applications in the November before the year of entry. This would streamline the process by bringing it nearer to the date when the TDA allocate places.

15.4. In Apply 1 applicants could make up to four choices in total, consisting of up to two GTP choices and up to two PGCE choices in parallel through a common application portal and single online application.

15.5. The applicant would have four choices at

whatever point they enter Apply 1 and can apply for up to two GTP and two PGCE courses. These choices do not have to be made all at once; however the way in which they are made could affect the point at which the applicant has to make replies to offers.

15.6. It is recognised that the PGCE and employer-based routes have distinct characteristics and meet the needs of different types of potential teachers. Applicants would not have to use their four choices and they would not have to apply for both PGCE and GTP courses but would have the option to do so.

15.7. Applications would only be valid for courses which are open at the point of application; some programmes do not open until mid-cycle. This information would be available on the central information portal.

15.8. To recognise their distinctiveness, PGCE and GTP choices would be treated as two separate categories of application. If an applicant has been unsuccessful for both choices in either category, he or she could enter Apply 2.

### Apply 2

15.9. Apply 2 would be differentiated from Apply 1, in that applicants would only be able to apply for one course at a time.

15.10. In Apply 2 applicants could apply for one course at a time where there are still vacancies. Applicants cannot re-enter Apply 1 if they have previously used all four choices.

15.11. There would be no single start date for Apply 2, but entry would depend on where the individual applicant is in the process.

15.12. Clearing would no longer exist and Apply 1 and Apply 2 would be open until the end of October of the year of entry. There would be no separate deadline for primary applications.

### 15.13. Questions

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 15.13.1. It would be an improvement for applicants to allow parallel applications in Apply 1.
- 15.13.2. It would be an improvement for providers to allow parallel applications in Apply 1.
- 15.13.3. Sequential application is the best approach to Apply 2 for applicants.
- 15.13.4. Sequential application is the best approach to Apply 2 for providers.

### What are your views?

- 15.13.5. What is your view of four choices in Apply 1, a maximum of two PGCE and two GTP courses?
- 15.13.6. Will this give applicants sufficient flexibility and choice?

## 16. Responses

### Providers

16.1. If a particular GTP course is not yet open when an applicant submits an application, the applicant would be informed of this and given the date at which applications would be open, subject to information being made available by providers.

16.2. For **all** applications made before the end of June providers would have to make a decision within 35 working days of receiving the application. This timescale would be supported by a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

16.3. Providers accepting applications after the end of June for a start in the same year would have a shorter decision SLA.

16.4. The Stop facility would only be used to deal with exceptional cases, for example an applicant who misses an interview due to sickness, and the time taken to address such issues would be reduced.

16.5. All providers would have visibility of offers being held by applicants for both PGCE and GTP courses. This means they would be able to access information about:

- all applications made by an applicant
- the status of each application.

### Applicants

16.6. Applicants would also have visibility of the process and during the 35 working days would be able to track the progress of their applications.

16.7. Applicants would have to reply to offers within 10 working days of the date on their offer letters. This timescale would be supported by an SLA. Their options would be Decline, Firm acceptance or Hold as provisional if they are waiting for other decisions.

16.8. In Apply 1 applicants could hold up to three offers as provisional. They would have 45 working days from the submission of the first application (35 working days for the provider's decision and 10 working days for their response) to accept one offer as firm. All other offers must be declined at this point. This same 45-working day period would still apply even for any choices that may be added after submission of the original application.

16.9. At the end of 45 working days applicants would be sent a reminder followed by a five working day period of grace. After this any offers not responded to would automatically be deemed to be declined.

16.10. Once there has been Firm acceptance of an offer, if an applicant wished to make a further application, for instance to a GTP course that had opened later in the cycle, he or she must first turn down the place being held.

### 16.11. Questions

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 16.11.1. A 35-working day response period from providers is still too long.
- 16.11.2. A 10-working day response period from applicants would be acceptable.
- 16.11.3. It is right to give applicants 45 working days from initial submission of an application to firm acceptance of an offer.
- 16.11.4. It would be difficult to reduce the use of Stops and the time taken to address the issue which made the Stop necessary.
- 16.11.5. It would help providers to have visibility of all applications.
- 16.11.6. A centralised administration system for interviews would streamline the process to help providers meet deadlines.

### We would like your ideas

- 16.11.7. If the single admissions system results in school-based providers receiving many more applications than they did previously, what measures need to be in place to limit this or to help them manage the increased volume?
- 16.11.8. If providers have significantly different application periods, how would the sector manage the process of finalising student numbers?

17.4. Less pressure on applicants to make 'strategic applications' in the hope that this will improve their chances of getting a place.

17.5. Early decisions will be received by shortening the end decision-making process.

17.6. Greater transparency of applicants' offers and acceptances for providers.

17.7. Provider access to a wider pool of high calibre applicants.

17.8. Process efficiencies for providers through centralised assessment tests, interview scheduling and validation or verification checks to support decision-making.

### 17.9. Questions

- 17.9.1. The Government has asked for a simpler process for application to teacher training. Does this proposal for a single application process deliver this?
- 17.9.2. If not, how could the process of applying for teacher training be simplified?
- 17.9.3. Would the single system achieve a better match of applicant to course and a higher calibre of applicant?
- 17.9.4. Overall, would you be happy to see the proposals outlined in this consultation taken forward for 2014?

## 17. Key benefits of the proposed changes

17.1. A consistent and enhanced applicant experience as a result of a single application process.

17.2. Better applicant choice on a single application for up to four choices, including both PGCE and GTP courses being considered at the same time.

17.3. Increased fairness since applications for up to four courses are considered in the same period and applicants will know the outcome of all their applications before having to make a final decision.

## Section IV

### 18. Glossary

#### Decline

The offer is turned down by the applicant.

#### Firm acceptance

The applicant accepts the offer that they wish to take up.

#### GTP

The Graduate Teacher Programme. A programme in England and Wales for graduates who want to gain qualified teacher status while working as an unqualified teacher.

#### GTTR

The Graduate Teacher Training Registry. The UCAS-managed process by which applications are currently made for most postgraduate ITT courses.

#### Hold as provisional

The applicant has not yet made a decision on this offer as they are still awaiting decisions from other choices.

#### ITT

All courses that lead to a teaching qualification and/or to qualified teacher status. Courses can be taken at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

#### Parallel applications

Two or more applications can be made at the same time.

#### PGCE

The Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education This is an academic qualification that gives Qualified Teacher Status in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### PGDE

The Postgraduate Diploma in Education. This is an academic qualification that gives the Teacher Qualification (TQ) in Scotland.

#### Providers

Institutions which provide teacher training; these may be schools (individual or consortia), colleges, universities, local authorities or private companies.

#### QTS

Qualified Teacher Status; the accreditation required to teach in state-maintained schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### SCITT

School-centred initial teacher training; a partnership between a group of schools and a university or college that provides a school-based model for PGCEs.

#### Sequential applications

Applications that are made one at a time, after each other.

#### SLA

The contracted delivery time for performance.

#### Stop

The facility to put an application on hold because there are reasons why it cannot be progressed at that stage.

#### TDA

The Training Development Agency for Schools; the national agency and sector body responsible for the training and development of the school workforce.

#### TQ

Teaching Qualification; the accreditation required to teach in maintained schools in Scotland.

## Section V

### 19. How to respond

19.1. All consultation questions are embedded in the main body of the text in the section to which they refer. We hope you will find this helpful as you consider your responses.

19.2. You may respond to the consultation online at [www.gttr.ac.uk/aboutus/review](http://www.gttr.ac.uk/aboutus/review) where you will find full instructions on how to respond.

19.3. Responses should be received no later than 21 March 2012.

19.4. For more information about the Single Admissions Process for Postgraduate Initial Teacher Training consultation, please visit: [www.gttr.ac.uk/aboutus/review](http://www.gttr.ac.uk/aboutus/review) or email: [gttradmissionsprocessreview@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:gttradmissionsprocessreview@ucas.ac.uk)

19.5. You can also contact the team or return your response (no later than 21 March 2012) to:

APR Team  
UCAS  
Rosehill  
New Barn Lane  
Cheltenham  
GL52 3LZ

