

The Assessment Only (AO) route

The Assessment Only route to qualified teacher status (QTS) allows experienced teachers to demonstrate that they already meet all the QTS standards, without the need for further training. Candidates will need to present detailed evidence and their teaching will be assessed in a school by University of Hertfordshire tutors.

What are the requirements to be eligible for the Assessment Only route?

The AO route is not an Initial Teacher Training programme and all candidates must be fully ready for assessment at the time of application. The application and interview process will review candidates' eligibility and places are allocated when requirements have been met.

To be eligible for AO all potential candidates must:

- ✓ Have GCSE English, Maths (and for primary candidates, a Science) passed at C/grade 4 or above. The AO route will accept GCSE equivalencies (see equivalency testing <https://www.equivalencytesting.com/>). Original certificates or a certified statement of results are required.
- ✓ Normally, have an honours degree awarded at 2:2 or higher. Original certificate required. For any potential candidate with a degree that is without honours or is awarded at less than a 2:2, there are additional steps to be taken. Similarly, for secondary candidates, if the degree has less than 50% of their teaching subject, there will be additional steps to be taken to evidence subject knowledge. These steps are agreed with the AO Manager.
- ✓ Provide assurances of competency in fundamental English and Maths by successful assessment against the UH Competency Audit in Fundamental English and Maths – this can be provided by the AO lead on request
- ✓ Have at least two years' teaching experience (of whole classes, where they plan, teach and assess pupils over time. Cover is usually not suitable experience for AO.)
- ✓ Be employed by a school within our catchment area, and have already taught there for one term. This school must be in support of their potential application for AO.
- ✓ Have teaching experience in two schools. The minimum requirement for the second school teaching is 30 days. Evidence is required from this experience and guidance on this provided by the AO Manager.
- ✓ Meet all the Teachers' Standards for QTS without the need for any further training, and have compelling evidence of this including lesson observations and much more, so a portfolio can be created that cross references all the Teachers' Standards
- ✓ Select an age range for assessment that reflects their experience to date and their current timetable (age ranges for assessment are: 3 – 7; 5 – 11; 7 – 11; 11-16; and 14 – 19.)
- ✓ Have some knowledge and understanding of the age ranges directly adjacent to their age range.
- ✓ Must have successfully undergone a range of suitability checks as specified by the AO Manager and agreement that the outcome of these checks poses no barrier to the candidate pursuing a route to QTS

What is the timescale for assessment?

The maximum time allowed for the AO route is 12 weeks from the point of registration to Final Assessment.

What is the process?

1. Candidates must speak with their headteacher to seek their support for the process.
2. Candidates send the *Initial Expression of Interest* form and their CV to the AO Manager, Fran Copeman F.Copeman@herts.ac.uk This is not an application and there is no cost at this stage.
3. The AO Manager provides advice on next steps to reach readiness for application. This stage can take some time, depending of each individual case. The potential candidate shares information with the AO Manager to help evidence eligibility. In school, the potential candidate is supported by a mentor while they prepare for AO, and formal lesson observations take place, referenced against the Teachers' Standards.
4. When the AO Manager is assured that the candidate is ready, the AO Application form is completed. The application is submitted and when approved, the interview is arranged.
5. The AO Manager interviews the candidate at the school. If the candidate is successful at interview, they are registered for AO and the process begins. The process must conclude within 12 weeks (which includes holiday periods).
6. Final Assessment 1 (FA1) is undertaken by UH staff. This involves a lesson observation, discussions with the candidate and mentors, and full scrutiny of the Portfolio of Evidence. The candidate is given advice on how to strengthen their evidence before Final Assessment 2 (FA2).
7. FA2 is undertaken by a different UH assessor. There is a second lesson observation, discussions with candidates and mentors, and further scrutiny of the Portfolio of Evidence. With the school, this assessor decides if the candidate meets the Teachers' Standards and should be awarded QTS.
8. Following this assessment, in a timely fashion, the AO Manager will formally notify the candidate that they have been recommended for QTS and the process is concluded. The candidate downloads their QTS certificate.

How much does AO cost?

There is no funding for the AO route. The 2024/25 fee for AO is £2500. This must be paid by the candidate and/or their school. The payment must be made in full before the candidate will be registered. There is no charge for completing the Initial Expression of Interest.

How to apply

For further information and the Initial Expression of Interest form, please go to: <https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/schools-of-study/education/initial-teacher-education/assessment-only-route>

AO Manager contact details

Fran Copeman F.Copeman@herts.ac.uk