

AO – What preparation is required for an application?

Exactly as the name suggests, the Assessment Only Route involves no training; it is assessment for QTS only. The assessment process is fast – it is completed within 12 weeks at the very most. As a result, careful preparation before making an application is key. All candidates must provide thorough evidence of eligibility, have sufficient teaching experience (with evidence) and confirmation of the support of their school before they can be invited to apply.

Following the submission of the Initial Expression of Interest form, the AO manager will ask for further information to ensure that the candidate satisfies the requirements, and a process must be followed. (Please note that the Expression of Interest is not an application.) Some documentation will need to be checked by other staff at UH, and where there are queries, the AO manager will resolve this through discussion with advisors. In addition, some documents will take time for a potential candidate to complete – the Competency Audit and Subject Audit are examples – and once these are completed and submitted, time must be allowed for UH staff to check the detail in order that the documents can be approved for application.

As a candidate plans to embark on their AO journey, they must allow time for requisite preparation. This preparation can be completed within weeks, or it can take months, (or even years) depending on the unique profile of each candidate. Certainly, 'readiness for application' is not achieved until the AO manager has received sufficient information and evidence from the candidate and the school, and every aspect of recommended preparation completed. Details of such potential preparation is listed below.

Be encouraged though - there is no one start date for AO. Instead, there is a last date for the submission of application forms each year, but applications are positively encouraged earlier than this point. As the process takes a maximum of 12 weeks, applicants can start and finish the whole assessment process within the school year, and before the specified deadline for applications, if they apply in September.

To help provide an idea of which documents and information might be required before a candidate can achieve readiness to apply, please see the following two illustrations.

NB: Please note that every candidate is different, so these lists are not exhaustive. They are for illustrative purposes only and do not provide a complete checklist for an AO application.

Documentation that a candidate might typically be asked to provide prior to application
1. Initial Expression of Interest form
2. Up-to-date CV detailing all teaching experience and qualifications to date
3. Timetables to show the range of classes and experience taught
4. Certificates for GCSEs (namely English and Maths, with Science also for primary applicants)
5. Certificates for 'A' levels
6. Certificate for first degree
7. Transcript of first degree

8. Certificates for other degrees or relevant qualifications
9. Transcripts for other qualifications if requested
10. ENIC verification for any overseas qualifications
11. Completed Competency Audit of Fundamental English and Maths, (CAFEM) signed by you and assessed by your PM
12. Second School Report, signed by the mentor at the second school and bearing the second school's stamp
13. Two Lesson Observation Forms on your teaching (LOFs) completed at your second school
14. A range of compelling Lesson Observation Forms on your teaching (LOFs) from your employing school
15. Marriage Certificate or other evidence of name change, if appropriate
16. Subject Audit (only if advised)
17. A level papers, sat in-house with accompanying report from the HoD, (secondary candidates only, and then only if advised)

Information that the AO manager will need to receive prior to application
1. An expression of support for the candidate from the employing school (this must be in response to a detailed request from the AO manager)
2. Confirmation that candidate has sufficient successful teaching experience in the age range for assessment and subject/s, both in general, and in their employing school alone
3. Confirmation that the Second School Experience meets the requirements
4. Confirmation that the candidate has sufficient compelling lesson observations on their teaching, recorded formally as written feedback
5. Confirmation that the candidate has a portfolio that is ready for assessment, showcasing evidence against all the TS
6. The names and contact details of suitable mentors
7. Confirmation of a recent successful OFSTED Inspection for the employing school
8. Confirmation of payment details