



Trainee Recruitment Policy

Version 2

<p>Note: This policy can only be considered current and valid when viewed on the VNHTT portal and website. If this document has been printed or saved from another location, you must check the version number matches that of the online copy.</p>	
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<p>Target Audience:</p>	<p>Trainee Teachers and Candidates for the ITT Programme</p>
<p>Related Documents:</p>	<p>VNHTT Equality Policy VNHTT Safeguarding Policy VNHTT Data Protection Policy VNHTT Appeals Policy</p>

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1 – Introduction

VNHTT is committed to the fair treatment of applicants and trainees, regardless of age, disability, race, religion and belief, sex (including issues of transgender), gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

VNHTT is committed to ensuring that all recruitment and selection decisions for its Initial Teacher Training programmes are fair, transparent, and conducted according to our agreed policies and procedures.

Each procedure will meet the requirements of the Secretary of State's ITT criteria and shall align with VNHTT and SCRCAT safer recruitment & safeguarding policy and best practice.

VNHTT has adopted the following recruitment policy. No applicant or candidate shall be prejudiced or disadvantaged by using this policy.

2 - Safer Recruitment

VNHTT and its partner schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and trainees to share this commitment. To ensure this, our recruitment policy and selection procedures are in accordance with or safeguarding policies and national guidance, for example:

- All members of VNHTT staff involved in any part of the recruitment and selection process will hold Safer recruitment in Education training;
- Safeguarding questions are included at interview;
- At least one member of the VNHTT leadership team will be involved in all ITT programme selection panels and will hold Safer Recruitment training.

All entrants onto our ITT (Initial Teacher Training) programmes are subject to pre-employment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records with Barred List check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Our commitment to maintaining a culture of vigilance regarding safeguarding and recruitment for initial teacher training reflects our unwavering dedication to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for all.

3 - Selection Stage

The process for admissions is co-ordinated by VNHTT in collaboration with its delivery partners. All applications for VNHTT ITT programmes must be made through the Department for Education (DfE) Apply website (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training>) using their proforma.

- All applicants will initially be screened by a member of the VNHTT leadership team to check they meet or will have the capacity to meet the entry criteria set out in the DfE ITT criteria and supporting advice 2025-26 (sections C1.1, C1.2). Notes are made if an applicant will need a specific equivalency test so this can be discussed and explored with them at interview.
- Work history will be examined, and interviewers informed of any 'gaps' in work history, so this can be discussed with the candidate

- We will also undertake safer recruitment checks so further questions can be asked about any previous convictions that have been declared and any references from personal email accounts, that cannot be verified.
- Applicants who have lived or worked overseas will be asked to apply for a certificate of good conduct in addition to their DBS check.¹
- Applicants for secondary Mathematics, Music or English will also be asked to complete a timed subject aptitude test under examination conditions. The pass mark for these tests is 40%. Candidates who score a narrow pass are directed towards a Subject Knowledge Enhancement course, either with a reputable external provider or using in-house materials. Candidates who fail this test will not be called for interview.
- Applicants for secondary Music, Art & Design and Design & Technology will be asked to send through a selection of their work (e.g. video clips, images or powerpoint slides) to support the interview process, and will be given the opportunity to explain and discuss their selection at interview.
- Any reasons for rejecting an applicant will be shared through the DfE Apply portal.
- VNHTT publishes entry requirements for ITT trainees on its website.

4 - Concerns about a candidate's honesty or past conduct

- VNHTT is committed to fair, transparent, inclusive and safer recruitment practices in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and statutory safer recruitment guidance. All applicants are assessed consistently against published selection criteria.
- Where, at any stage of the recruitment process (including application scrutiny, interview, references, verification checks or pre-appointment safeguarding checks), information comes to light that raises substantiated concerns about a candidate's honesty, integrity or professional conduct — including but not limited to misrepresentation of qualifications or experience, unexplained discrepancies, or evidence of persistent unreliability, poor conduct or breaches of professional expectations in previous employment or training — the SCITT reserves the right to withdraw the candidate from the process.
- Any such decision will be evidence-based, proportionate, consistently applied, and will take into account the relevance of the information to the role, the time elapsed, and the candidate's right to provide clarification or explanation.
- No decision will be influenced by protected characteristics, personal circumstances, or unsubstantiated allegations.

Procedure for Reviewing Concerns

- **Identification of Concern**
Concerns may arise through:
 - Application form scrutiny
 - References
 - Interview responses
 - Employment and identity verification
 - Training provider reports
 - Safeguarding or suitability checks
- **Evidence Review**

¹ VNHTT recognises that some countries (E.G. United States of America) require a minimum residency period prior to issuing a certificate of good conduct. Applicants are advised to request the certificate whilst they are still overseas were possible.

- Only **factual, relevant and verifiable information** will be considered.
- Decisions will not be based on hearsay, opinion alone, or discriminatory assumptions.
- **Right to Respond**
 - Where appropriate, the candidate will be given the opportunity to clarify or explain discrepancies or concerns prior to any final decision.
- **Decision-Making**
 - Decisions will be made by at least **two trained recruiters**, one of whom will hold current **Safer Recruitment certification**.

Consideration will be given to:

 - Relevance to teaching and safeguarding
 - Pattern vs isolated incidents
 - Professional expectations
 - Time elapsed and evidence of improvement
- **Recording and Transparency**
 - The rationale for any decision to withdraw a candidate will be **clearly documented** and retained in line with GDPR and data protection principles.
- **Safeguarding Duty**
 - Where concerns relate to safeguarding or suitability to work with children, appropriate referrals will be made in line with statutory guidance and **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)** requirements.
- **Governance**
 - The Vantage Strategic Board will receive regular assurance that recruitment decisions, including those involving withdrawal of candidates on suitability grounds, are being made in line with this policy, statutory guidance, and equality duties.

5 - Interviews

- Interview dates are set by VNHTT and take place throughout the year. Candidates are selected for interview based on their application forms.
- All applicants are asked to provide original copy evidence of their identification, name changes (where relevant), right to work and study in the UK (if appropriate) as well as their qualifications.
- Invitations to attend an interview will ask applicants if they have any accessibility requirements that we will need to make reasonable adjustments for.
- The interview process explores the applicant's ability to train to teach
- Interviews will be face-to-face but VNHTT may offer the option of a live, online interview for any candidate residing overseas or a long distance from Hull, or due to any requirement to make reasonable adjustments.
- Interviewers will scrutinise applications ahead of the interview day. Any concerns will be raised with the VNHTT team ahead of an interview taking place.
- Applicants will be asked to prepare a short presentation and complete a timed written literacy audit under examination conditions during the interview process.

- The literacy audit is used for diagnostic purposes only to assess how much support the applicant, if offered a place, would require to reach the required standard of literacy to achieve QTS during the course.
- Applicants will attend a formal panel interview during the interview process. The panel will be made up of at least 2 members including 1 member of the VNHTT leadership team and representatives from partnership schools.
- No questions are asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer being made.
- Following the interview and associated tasks, a final selection decision is made.
- If an applicant is successful, a conditional offer will be placed on the DfE Apply system.

6 – References

References will be requested from two individuals following acceptance of a conditional offer.

Referees should be appropriately selected to comment on the applicant's suitability for teacher training. References from family and friends are not deemed appropriate and will not be accepted.

Referees will be asked to confirm "if they know of any reason why the candidate should not work with children?"

Additional references will be requested if initial references are not appropriate

7 - Equal Opportunities

All candidates who progress through the interview stage will be asked if there is any further support, or reasonable adjustments required during the training year for VNHTT to accommodate/support/provide. Candidates should refer to the VNHTT Equality Policy which can be found at <https://www.vnhtt.org/about-us/governance>.

8 - Health and physical capacity to teach

- VNHTT has a responsibility to ensure that trainees have the health and physical capacity to teach and will not put children and young people at risk of harm.
- Successful applicants will be asked to complete a health questionnaire through our outsourced Occupational Health provider (University of Hull Occupation Health Department) no more than 3-months prior to starting the programme.
- Only targeted and relevant health- related questions which are necessary to ensure that a person can teach will be asked.
- VNHTT will provide support and guidance to trainees who provide further information about identified needs. This may be following a DSA (Disabled Students Allowance) request via Student Finance England.

9 - Subject Knowledge Enhancement (Secondary only)

For applicants who need to improve their knowledge of the subject they wish to teach, completion of an SKE (Subject Knowledge Enhancement) will be indicated as a condition of any offer.

10 – Appeals against recruitment decisions

Applicants may appeal on the grounds that:

- There has been a procedural irregularity: a situation where an applicant believes VNHTT have not complied with their own policies and procedures.
- Where new material is presented that may have affected the decision made at the time. The applicant must provide reasonable justification for why the information was not made available at the time of the application.
- Evidence of bias or prejudice.

Applicants wishing to appeal should refer to the VNHTT Appeals Policy which can be found at <https://www.vnhtt.org/about-us/governance>.

11 - Monitoring

Effectiveness and compliance of this Policy will be monitored by the VNHTT Strategic Board who report to Directors of SCRCAT Education Committee. Directors of SCRCAT retain full and final accountability for all aspects of ITT as set out in Initial Teacher Training: Criteria and Supporting Advice. Statutory Guidance for Accredited ITT providers.

12 - Review

The policy will be reviewed within two years of the date of implementation or sooner if alternative routes to QTS are provided by VNHTT.