

# National Specialist SCITTs

## National Mathematics and Physics SCITT

## National Modern Languages SCITT

### Admissions Policy

**Important:** This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the SCITT intranet and SCITT website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.

The accredited provider for both the National Mathematics and Physics SCITT and the National Modern Languages SCITT, is Chorus Education Trust operating as National Specialist SCITTs.

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## 1. Introduction

The Admissions Policy provides the basis for the admissions practice across all SCITT programmes. The good practice principles and ethos identified in this document apply equally to all categories of applicants who submit an application to study at both the NMAP SCITT and NML SCITT.

Responsibility for compliance with the Admissions Policy lies with any member of staff of both SCITTs and colleagues in Hubs who play a role in the admittance of trainee teachers into the programme.

All colleagues with admissions responsibility must be familiar with this Admissions Policy and will be provided with the appropriate guidance, training and support.

This policy addresses the Entry Criteria in the DfE's Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Criteria.

Both SCITTs are committed to encouraging applications from the widest range of educational, social and cultural backgrounds.

In addition, the policy is consistent with the **Chorus Education Trust Equality & Diversity Policy** in that all applicants to the programmes are considered equally on merit, irrespective of race, nationality, gender, age, creed, sexual preference or physical ability.

### 1.1 Equity

The SCITTs are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all our trainees. We recognise that the programme and the teaching profession is enriched by a diverse intake. No potential trainee teacher will be excluded from entry to either SCITT programme as a result of discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, disability, nationality, ethnic or national origin, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy or maternity status.

### 1.2 Responsible Recruitment

On the basis of the evidence provided and within the limitations of the number of available placements in each Hub, the SCITTs will use all reasonable efforts to attempt to match applicants' aspirations and level of subject knowledge to placements which ensure the successful completion of the programme.

### 1.3 Inclusivity

The SCITTs are committed to diversity in the group of trainee teachers and will make available a range of measures by which applicants may demonstrate their readiness and commitment to train to teach their subject(s) at KS3, 4 and 5.

### 1.4 Transparency

The SCITTs will be open and accessible in its requirements and selection processes. Each applicant will be entitled to a prompt and professional assessment of their application against clearly available criteria, and complaints and appeals will be handled in an independent process.

The main aims of this policy are to secure the highest possible calibre of entrant to the programme and to be timely and responsive in dealing with applicants at all stages of the process.

## 2. Information for enquirers and applicants

Both SCITTs are committed to providing accurate admissions and course information which is clear, comprehensive and easily accessible for enquirers and applicants.

Admissions and course information, including detailed information about entry requirements and how we assess applicants, is published on our website.

Recruitment nationally and regionally will take place through:

- regular taster days in hub lead schools or online
- marketing at partnership schools including flyers, banners, emails and newsletters to parents, and discussions with volunteers and staff who meet the training criteria
- social media
- SCITT representation at relevant events, e.g. careers fairs, recruitment events and Train to Teach events
- targeted press advertising, where appropriate
- involvement of partnership schools in the School Experience Programme and other volunteering programmes.

Prospective applicants will be made aware that various financial incentives and support are available.

Prospective applicants will be supported from first contact and throughout the admissions process irrespective of whether their intention is to apply for a place on either SCITT programme.

Prospective applicants can access Terms and Conditions and SCITT Policies on the SCITT website.

## 3. Admissions Criteria

Both SCITTs welcome applications from applicants who can demonstrate that they have the potential to train to teach and are able to benefit from the programme and from the learning, research and social environment which the SCITT programmes provide.

All applications to a SCITT programme must be made through DfE Apply. Applications are dealt with by the SCITT Admissions Team in accordance with the timetable specified by DfE Apply.

### Academic entry requirements

To ensure that all applicants are prepared for their Initial Teacher Training, both SCITTs have academic entry requirements which applicants will need to fulfil.

Entry requirements are determined by the SCITT Strategic Board following the DfE Entry Criteria, supplemented by the advice from academic staff and informed by their professional opinion of the level of academic preparation required for a candidate to succeed on the programme.

All candidates must have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C (or grade 4 of the new GCSE) in the GCSE examinations in English and Mathematics. (ITT Criteria 2024 to 2025, C1.1)

Equivalence is at the discretion of the SCITT and in most cases we will only accept GCSE, O-Level, iGCSE, Scottish Standard grades 3 or higher or an international equivalent certified by UK ENIC. For applicants who are not native speakers of English, we require an IELTS test taken within the last 2 years where the overall score is 7.0 and the score for each strand is 6.5 or higher as equivalence to English GCSE.

All candidates must hold a first degree of a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution or equivalent qualification from a non-UK institution accompanied by an ENIC statement of comparability and a degree transcript. The qualifications achieved or expected should normally be a 2:2 or above. (ITT Criteria 2024 to 2025, C1.2)

Academic qualifications achieved, or expected, will normally be a degree of a 2.2 or above, or equivalent in the same, or a related subject. In some cases, it may be possible to consider graduates with degrees in subjects not directly related, providing that the content of the candidate's previous education or work experience provides the necessary foundation for work as a teacher for the subject they are training to teach.

Candidates for the NML SCITT programme are required either to have a degree in the appropriate language, or a degree in which the appropriate language is a significant element, or to have spent a substantial period of residence in a country where that language is the main language. Native speakers are exempt from the requirement to have a degree in the main subject but must have an acceptable, alternative degree. All candidates will preferably hold a qualification in a second language which is equivalent to GCSE or higher, but this is not essential.

Candidates for the NMAP SCITT programme are required to hold a minimum of an A-level qualification grade B or above in the subject they wish to train to teach in. If a candidate cannot fulfil the A-level requirement then their degree and experience in industry may be considered.

Candidates may be required to complete a Subject Knowledge Enhancement course prior to training.

### 3.1 Non-academic entry requirements

We welcome applications from applicants who have obtained a wide range of UK, European and international qualifications that offer effective preparation to embark on a SCITT programme.

Applicants will be advised and supported to enable them to obtain any necessary documentations and equivalencies to enable them to embark on their training.

There are also non-academic additional requirements for candidates, for example providing a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure, obtaining world-wide criminal record checks and completing a satisfactory health check. Candidates are advised to read the **DBS Policy**. More information is also supplied by the admissions team.

## 4. The shortlisting process

When applications are received through DfE Apply, the SCITT Admissions team check:

- That the applicant meets our academic entry criteria

- The applicant's residency status – the SCITT can only accept applications from applicants from the UK or those who have the right to study in the UK
- The teacher's records and the children's barred list via the Teaching Regulation Agency database.

As the SCITT is not a licensed visa sponsor, applications from international applicants who are not eligible to study in the UK will be advised to apply to Higher Education institutions who are licensed to sponsor visas.

The applicant will be rejected if the entry criteria are not met. The admissions team will seek further information prior to interview on the other points if concerns arise.

The Course Leader has responsibility for shortlisting supported by the Director.

The selection for interview is based on:

- The quality of the overall application
- The employment history - we will clarify gaps in employment at interview
- An assessment of the suitability of the applicant's GCSEs, A-levels and degree (or equivalent) as well as the level of subject knowledge they offer
- The applicant's motivation to teach
- The applicant's experience of working with children or young people
- The quality of the applicant's written English.

Throughout the shortlisting stage of the selection process proper regard will be given to ensuring equality of opportunity. When a candidate is invited for an interview, they will be asked to identify any support needs for the interview and completion of written tasks, and reasonable adjustments will be made to allow equal access for any candidate with an additional need.

An online search is completed for all shortlisted applicants in line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Reasons for rejection will be shown on the DfE Apply system. Further feedback will not normally be provided at the pre-interview stage.

## **5. The interview Process**

The interview process will be designed to assess applicants' suitability to train to teach and their potential to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of their training.

With the invitation to interview the applicant will receive links to a detailed introduction to the SCITT programme and our interview process as well as answers to the most frequently asked questions.

Prior to attending an interview, the applicant will have the opportunity to talk to the SCITT administrators to clarify our processes, discuss their qualifications and receive personalised advice.

All applicants will be required to complete two written tasks either on the interview day or separately via zoom:

- A written task in English based on an article the applicant will be sent prior to the day
- A written task in the subject they wish to train to teach in.

The Interview and teaching task will normally take place at a SCITT hub lead school or partnership school, but online interviews may be offered as an alternative when government guidance or the candidate's circumstances require this.

The interview process will be conducted by at least two panel members from the hub lead team and/or the SCITT central team.

The panel will assess the applicant's suitability for the course using the criteria published on the SCITT website and in the invitation to interview pack.

The interview process will include:

- The two written tasks mentioned above
  - A teaching task with a group of pupils / or interview panel for on-line interviews
  - A formal interview
  - A conversation about the subject the candidate would like to train to teach in and conversations about any other subjects the candidate may be able to teach.
  - Languages applicants will be required to have a conversation in the main language they wish to train to teach to KS5 and in all languages they can offer.

Applicants/candidates will have the opportunity to speak to hub lead staff and current or past trainees about the details of the programme and the demands of the course wherever possible on the interview day. However, if this is not possible, candidates may be invited to zoom meetings, taster days or school experience days organised by the SCITT to offer this opportunity.

As part of the interview process the panel will establish the applicant's subject knowledge in the subject(s) they offer and their level of English. This is to ensure that applicants are ready to meet the academic demands of the programme and to inform development points prior to the start of the training.

Subject knowledge enhancement courses and other development points such as the applicant's knowledge of English will be discussed at interview and the applicant will be advised of possible conditions to be met should an offer be made. The applicant will have opportunity to discuss their personal situation at this point, possible support and solutions are explored, and deferrals will be explained if applicable.

The interview panel must be aware of guidelines relating to equal opportunities and how they relate to the conduct of the interview. At least one member of the panel will have completed courses in Safer Recruitment and to raise their awareness of Unconscious Bias. All panel members will follow the SCITT interview script and will not ask questions which an applicant from a group subject to discrimination may find intimidating, such as questions about presumed problems, or disadvantages, relating to race, nationality, gender, age, creed, sexual preference or physical ability. No applicant may be questioned about marital status, the views of the spouse or partner towards the application, provision for children or any other purely domestic arrangements, unless the applicant broaches the topic. Interviewers must not ask any questions or enter into discussion regarding criminal convictions, however, if the applicant has declared a conviction on their DfE Apply application or during the interview process, the panel will advise them that this will be referred to the SCITT suitability panel.



Applicants will be invited to provide information about a special need or disability they may have so that appropriate support and adjustment can be made for the interview process. If the applicant is successful further discussions will be arranged prior to the start of the programme to ensure the appropriate support and adjustments are in place.

The **Equality Act 2010** makes it illegal to reject an applicant because of disability. There are however three instances in which a provider can reject a disabled applicant if they have the entry criteria necessary, these are:

- overriding health and safety concerns
- barriers resulting from competence standards
- reasonable adjustments cannot be made.

The SCITT will be proactive in encouraging disclosure at all stages of the application process. Information will be treated in accordance with the relevant legislation. Should the SCITT be unable to make reasonable adjustments, support will be offered to find alternative provision with an alternative provider.

Successful applicants will usually be informed of the decision to recommend them for a place on the programme by phone on the day of the interview or the following morning.

A conditional offer will be entered on the DfE Apply system and sent to successful applicants by email. This will:

- specify any conditions to be met including:
  - successful completion of a degree
  - equivalency tests
  - proof of original documentation
  - completion of Subject Knowledge Enhancement
- state the procedures for the assessment of physical and mental fitness for teaching
- include information about background checks including DBS procedures and worldwide criminal record checks
- include pre-course actions.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via DfE Apply. Applicants can request further feedback by emailing the SCITT Admissions Team.

Appeals - should a rejected applicant feel that there are grounds for appealing the decision, they should write, explaining the grounds for their appeal, to: Chris James, CEO, Chorus Education Trust, Unit 4 Acres Hill Business Park, Acres Hill Lane, Sheffield, S9 4LR. All appeals should be made within **ten working days** of the relevant decision.

Should an applicant feel that there are grounds for complaints about matters relating to the SCITT marketing and admissions process, they should write, explaining the grounds for the complaint to Chris James, CEO, Chorus Education Trust, Unit 4 Acres Hill Business Park, Acres Hill Lane, Sheffield, S9 4LR.



All appeals and complaints will be processed in the same way as those for existing Trainees. Details are available in our **Appeals Policy** and **Complaints Policies**, which are available on the SCITT website.

The SCITTs reserve the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information. The SCITTs may also withdraw the offer of a place if an applicant has been found to have omitted key information from their application. Any trainee teacher found to have been admitted on the basis of fraudulent information may have their studies terminated.

Both SCITTs will consider re-applications on an individual basis and reserves the right to use information from a previous application in assessing a re-application.

The SCITTs are committed to ensuring that interaction with applicants is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and it expects that communication from applicants is conducted in the same way. The SCITT will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees or members of the partnership during the admissions process. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. The SCITT will normally warn an applicant or adviser that their behaviour or language is inappropriate, and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include a referral in line with the Chorus Education Trust's disciplinary procedures, the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of a current or future application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

All SCITT trainees are expected to follow the **Code of Conduct** set out on the SCITT website. Where we become aware of a prospective trainee teacher conducting themselves in a manner inconsistent with this code, we may refer them to the SCITT suitability panel.

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Admissions Policy

For each cohort of Trainees admitted to a SCITT Training programme:

- The Admissions Team keeps a record of withdrawals and reasons for withdrawals
- The SCITT Director and Course Leader will attend a selection of interviews for quality assurance purposes
- The Administration Team will keep a record of Trainees who do not complete the programme for monitoring purposes
- The Administration Team will keep a record of the employment and career progress of Trainees
- The SCITT Director and Course Leader will review data and other feedback on selection and recruitment in their annual reviews, self-evaluations and improvement plans
- The **Admissions Policy** will be reviewed annually by the SCITT Strategic Board unless an earlier review is required.

## 7. Data collection

In connection with the application process the SCITTs collect, hold and process information about applicants. This information may include personal data (which identifies an applicant as an individual) and sensitive personal data.

The personal data submitted as part of each application is used to assess the suitability of an applicant for study on a SCITT programme. Applicant personal data may also be passed to government bodies.

The personal data within applications will form part of the trainee teacher record for candidates who are admitted to the SCITT programmes. Further details about how such personal data will be processed are set out in the [Chorus Education Trust website policy section](#).

When processing applicant personal data, the SCITTs comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, as well as all other legislation enacted in the UK in respect of the protection of personal data. Further information about data protection policies at the NMAP SCITT and NML SCITT as part of the Chorus Education Trust can be found [here](#).

## 8. Publishing this Policy

This policy is available through the SCITT website and Intranet. A copy can also be requested via our SCITT office.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. Chorus Education Trust operating as National Specialist SCITTs, and the accredited provider for the National Modern Languages (NML) SCITT and the National Mathematics and Physics (NMAP) SCITT is a member of this scheme. If a trainee teacher is unhappy with decisions made by the NMAP SCITT or NML SCITT regarding this Policy, they may be able to ask the OIA to review this decision. More information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong can be found here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.