

National Specialist SCITTs

National Mathematics and Physics SCITT

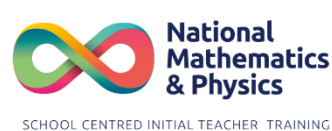
National Modern Languages SCITT

Fitness to Practise Policy

Important: this document can only be considered valid when viewed on the 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.

Version number:	3.1
Implementation date:	31 August 2017
Last review:	February 2026
Next review:	February 2027
Name and job title of author:	Katrin Sredzki-Seamer, Director of NML SCITT
Target audience:	Staff / Trainees / O.I.A.
Related documents:	SCITT Disciplinary Policy, SCITT Cause for Concern Policy, SCITT Fitness to Study Policy, SCITT Complaints Procedure, SCITT Occupational Health and Reasonable Adjustments Policy, SCITT Training Contract, Chorus Education Trust Data Protection Policy, Chorus Education Trust Whistle Blowing Procedures, Chorus Education Trust Record Retention Schedule



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Preamble.....	3
2.1 What is a concern?	4
2.2 Confidentiality and anonymity	5
2.3 Support and representation.....	5
2.4 Fitness to practise concerns.....	6
2.5 Behaviour that amounts to a criminal offence.....	8
2.6 Placements.....	8
2.7 Reasonable adjustments to the process	8
2.8 Relationship with other procedures.....	9
3. Concerns Relating to Professional and Personal Misconduct (Teachers' Standards Part Two)	9
3.1 Meeting the Teachers' Standards	9
3.2 Serious Misconduct.....	10
3.3 Written Record	10
3.4 Unfit to proceed.....	10
4. Concern relating to progress against the Teachers' Standards Part 1	11
5. Other Substantial Reason.....	12
5.1 Health and disability issues	12
6. Procedures, appeals, and record keeping	12
6.1 Procedures.....	12
6.2 Outcomes and conditions imposed by fitness to practise panels	13
6.3 Appeals and Complaints.....	14
6.4 Record Keeping	15
7. Appendices: Expectations of the Role of a Trainee Teacher	16
7.1 Appendix 1: Role of a Trainee Teacher	17
7.2 Appendix 2: The Trainee Teacher Person Specification	18
7.3 Appendix 3: Work Pattern and Work Context, Secondary Teacher General Subjects	19
7.4 Appendix 4: Work Pattern and Work Context Secondary Teacher Sciences.....	20
8. Publishing this Policy.....	21

1. Introduction

National Specialist SCITTs as the accredited provider has a responsibility to ensure that trainees following a programme of study leading to a professional qualification which is registrable with the statutory regulatory body are suitable to enter the profession having the skills, knowledge, character, and health to practise their profession safely and effectively.

The DfE sets out a clear baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers from the point of qualifications in [The Teachers' Standards](#), which were introduced on 1 September 2012. The Teachers' Standards are used to assess all trainees working towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and all those completing the statutory induction period, in line with the Early Career Framework. They should also be used to assess the performance of all teachers subject to the [Education \(School Teachers Appraisal\) England Regulations 2012](#). The Teachers' Standards should also be used in conjunction with [the DfE Teacher Misconduct regulations](#) to determine ultimately whether a trainee is fit to practise upon qualification as well as when studying.

The SCITT has a duty:

- a) to ensure that trainees are fit to practise in the teaching profession, or will be when they complete the course
- b) to protect present or future pupils, colleagues, and members of the wider school community
- c) to safeguard public confidence in the profession
- d) to comply with the requirements of professional/regulatory bodies
- e) to ensure that trainees are not awarded QTS if they are not fit to teach.

This guidance explains the procedure that the SCITT will follow in investigating concerns about a trainee's fitness to practise. It should be noted that this procedure applies to all trainee teachers registered with the SCITT but does not replace or supersede the policies of any Higher Education Institution who may be providing an academic qualification on behalf of the SCITT. It is therefore possible that a trainee teacher can be subject to the ***Fitness to Practise*** procedures of the SCITT and a University, as the PGCE provider. The policy and process of each institution will remain the responsibility of each organisation and should be considered as standalone policies.

If the student has failed to comply with the expectations within the '***Fitness to Practise***' requirements of the SCITT is no longer prepared to accept the trainee, the SCITT will confirm that the trainee should no longer attend the placement. In such circumstances, the PGCE Provider's '[Student Fitness to Practise Regulations](#)' procedures will be followed.

2. Preamble

There may be occasions when an individual is judged not to be suited to a career as a teacher. Concerns about trainees may take many forms and may be raised by staff, other trainees or by persons external to the SCITT.

The SCITT will follow the core principles and operational good practice set out by the Good Practice Framework of the Office of Independent Adjudicator (OIA): accessibility, clarity, proportionality, timeliness, fairness, independence, confidentiality and improving the trainee experience.

A fitness to practise process is distinct from a disciplinary process. The purpose of a fitness to practise process is not to punish the trainee for wrongdoing. It is to ensure the safety of the trainee and those around them, including members of the public, and to safeguard public confidence in the profession. The process will be supportive even when the outcome is that the trainee can't continue with their studies.

The SCITT sets out the professional requirements of the course clearly in all information available to applicants and during the pre-course programme via its websites, policies, the training contract and pre-course sessions. Applicants, recruits (an applicant who has accepted a conditional offer from the SCITT) and trainees are regularly informed and reminded about the need to disclose when they apply or before they are able to fully enrol into the SCITT programme.

This information may include:

- whether the trainee has relevant previous convictions;
- any safeguarding concerns including concerns about close family members;
- whether the trainee has previously been found not fit to practise;
- whether the trainee has a physical, mental or cognitive impairment or health condition that may be relevant to their ability to reach the necessary professional requirements.

The Role of a Trainee Teacher, the Trainee Teacher Person Specification and the Work Pattern and Work Context for Secondary Teachers are available via the SCITT websites, and all applicants and recruits are expected to familiarise themselves with these key documents and are invited to disclose relevant information during the application process and pre-course programme.

When an applicant discloses information during the application process the SCITT will consider that information and decide whether it will affect the trainee's fitness to practise, or the support that they will need. When a recruit discloses information during the pre-course programme, the SCITT will consider that information and decide whether it will affect the trainee's fitness to practise, or the support that they will need.

In some cases, the SCITT may be able to give a disabled student more support than might be available in the workplace. This might mean that the SCITT can support the trainee to achieve the necessary professional and academic standards, but that they might not be able to practise because their support needs cannot be met in the workplace. If the SCITT knows this might be an issue, it should explain to the trainee at the disclosure stage that there is a risk they may not be able to practise their profession, so that they can make an informed choice about whether to begin their studies.

2.1 What is a concern?

The SCITT will ensure that:

- a) trainees understand any allegations and/or concerns, and how they relate to the relevant professional standards and the trainee's fitness to practise

- b) reasons are given for decisions reached about a trainee's health or behaviour, and what to do about it
- c) there is a route of appeal
- d) the investigation, any hearing and any appeal is carried out as quickly as possible, consistent with fairness.

2.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

The SCITT is aware of its obligations under the data protection legislation regarding sensitive personal information or "special category data". The SCITT will follow the [Chorus Education Trust Data Protection Policy](#) and information about recruits or trainees who are subject to fitness to practise proceedings will be kept confidential as far as possible. The information will be disclosed to as few people as possible, and only to those involved in investigating or deciding the matter. Sensitive information will not be disclosed to panel members until their membership has been confirmed (so that the recruit or trainee has had an opportunity to object to a panel member, for example on grounds of bias, before they have seen the sensitive information).

If a person makes an anonymous complaint about a trainee, under **whistleblowing procedures**, Chorus Education Trust will take extra care to ensure that it investigates the concerns carefully. Those investigating the concerns will normally need to know the identity of the person making the complaint so that they can rule out the possibility that the report is made maliciously. Witnesses who are giving their professional opinion are not expected to be anonymous. If the witness does not agree to the trainee knowing their identity it may not be appropriate to rely on their evidence. Where evidence comes from service users during a practice placement, the placement provider will need to protect the confidentiality of service users, particularly where those service users are children or vulnerable adults. In these cases, the provider should obtain as much information and evidence from the placement provider as possible. This may include a summary of allegations made by service users, or anonymised witness statements. In every case the trainee needs to have enough information about the concerns raised to be able to respond to them.

2.3 Support and representation

The SCITT will support trainees to achieve fitness to practise by ensuring that they understand why the professional standards are important and what this means for them. As well as giving applicants, recruits and trainees information about what they need to disclose, the SCITT pre-course programme will, at an early stage, bring to recruits' attention the expected standards of behaviour, and the consequences of breaching the SCITT Trainee Codes of Conduct and the Teachers' Standards. Trainees are reminded of these expectations regularly during the programme, and before the start of placements.

The SCITT has ensured that the course structure incorporates opportunities for trainees to work through examples of fitness to practise issues, so that they are well equipped for training sessions, placements and academic studies.

Trainees are expected to behave professionally and competently at all times. But trainees who fall short of the expected standards of professionalism and competence early in their studies are more likely to have the chance to improve their behaviour than those nearing the end. It is the responsibility of the SCITT to teach, train, mentor and support trainees towards the standards that apply at each level.

Sometimes fitness to practise concerns are related to the student's mental or physical health, or to a disability. The SCITT is aware of its duties under the [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance) to make reasonable adjustments for disabled trainees in relation to a provision, criterion or practice other than a competence standard. A competence standard is defined in the Equality Act as "an academic, medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability".

When information is disclosed, the SCITT will ensure that applicants, recruits and trainees are properly supported. The SCITT will agree with the applicant, recruit or trainee before the start of the interview process, pre-course programme or training programme what information can be shared with the relevant facilitators and the placement to make sure that support is in place. If the matter leading to the fitness to practise concern may be related to a disability, the SCITT will consider whether additional support is required, and whether it should make reasonable adjustments to the assessment. This might include agreeing and arranging additional support for the trainee in their placement. The SCITT will consider each case individually.

The SCITT will consider what evidence, if any, it requires from the applicant, recruit or trainee so that it can properly assess their fitness to practise and support them. This might include medical evidence and/ or a occupational health referral as outlined in the **SCITT Occupational Health and Reasonable Adjustments Policy**. The SCITT will support trainees in obtaining this evidence, for example, by directing them to the appropriate expert and paying for the report where this is proportionate.

The SCITT has an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, recruits and trainees and will work with disabled students and disabled people's organisations when considering how best to remove barriers to learning. When applicants, recruits and trainees think that they might need additional support it is important for them to tell the SCITT. Although applicants, recruits and trainees don't have to tell the SCITT about a disability, the SCITT will make sure that there is a supportive environment that encourages them to; and that trainees understand the need for insight into their condition. The SCITT will explain to applicants, recruits and trainees that they need to tell the SCITT if there is anything that might affect their ability to study or fulfil competence and for which they might need additional support, even if they don't want to give details of what it is.

The SCITT will direct a trainee who is going through **fitness to practise procedures** to the support services available, for example the trainee's union, or relevant professional trade unions, which can provide independent support and advice.

The trainee will be advised to bring a member of their professional association or academic representation.

In extreme cases regulators permit legal representation when dealing with fitness to practise issues.

2.4 Fitness to practise concerns

Concerns may arise for any trainee from:

- a) failing to meet the high standards of professional and personal conduct required of a teacher
- b) a lack of progress in the development of their teaching skills
- c) concerns that the trainee's teaching is not on track to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of training; these concerns may be raised by a placement school, the school-

based subject Mentor, the Senior Mentor Coordinator (SMC), the Hub Lead Teacher, the Programme Lead, the Course Leader, the Quality Assurance tutor, or other staff associated with the SCITT

- d) any safeguarding issues raised
- e) some other substantial reason.

Examples of issues that may lead to fitness to practise concerns, if the trainee's ability to meet professional standards may be impaired, include:

- a) academic misconduct (for example plagiarism, cheating in examinations, forging records)
- b) other disciplinary offences (for example antisocial, abusive, or threatening behaviour, sexual misconduct, violence, bullying or harassment, damage to property, internet access abuse, substance/alcohol abuse)
- c) health and safety breaches
- d) failure to disclose convictions or other information that the trainee is required to disclose
- e) forged certificates of qualifications obtained
- f) inaccurate or falsified placement documentation
- g) unsafe practice, incompetence or requiring too much supervision
- h) unprofessional behaviour, including:
 - lack of respect, aggressive or poor attitude, laziness
 - indiscipline, failure to follow dress code, inappropriate use of mobile phone, poor time keeping, poor attendance
 - failure to self-reflect, lack of insight
 - failure to engage with investigations into unprofessional behaviour
 - poor self-management, lack of personal accountability
 - dishonesty
 - breaking trainee confidentiality
- i) behaviour away from the trainee's studies, including
 - criminal conviction e.g., violent offence; offence of dishonesty
 - disruptive behaviour in the community
 - inappropriate use of social media
- j) safeguarding concerns
- k) poor mental or physical health or serious physical impairment that interferes with the trainee's ability to practise safely

- l) failure to seek help or engage with appropriate services in relation to health issues
- m) poor communication or language skills.

It is reasonable for the SCITT to attach significant weight to the professional opinion of staff at the placement. But the SCITT will also listen to the trainee's account of what happened on the placement and investigate any factual disputes or allegations that the trainee has not been treated fairly.

2.5 Behaviour that amounts to a criminal offence

If the police or courts are involved, the SCITT will normally wait for the outcome of the investigation or proceedings before conducting an internal investigation. The SCITT will keep in touch with the recruit or trainee involved and with the police during this process. The SCITT may need to take some form of temporary action against the person, in order to protect other recruits or trainees, staff members and service users. For example, a trainee may be suspended, or temporarily withdrawn from their training and /or placement.

The SCITT will consider each case individually, weighing up the risk to others against the potential disadvantage to the recruit in not being able to attend the pre-course programme or enrolment week, or to the trainee of what might be a long suspension while the criminal investigation is happening.

Where a recruit or trainee is acquitted of a criminal offence, or where the criminal investigation has been dropped, the SCITT may still take action under its disciplinary and/or fitness to practise process.

If the recruit or trainee is convicted of a criminal offence, the role of the fitness to practise panel is to determine whether what they have done impairs their fitness to practise.

2.6 Placements

Concerns about a trainee's fitness to practise often first arise during placements. Where a placement is suspended or terminated by the school because of concerns about the trainee's fitness to practise the SCITT will carry out its own investigation into events which led to the termination. Where possible the SCITT will get witness statements from staff at the placement which the trainee can comment on. In some cases, it may be appropriate to ask placement staff to attend a fitness to practise hearing.

If the SCITT decides that the trainee should be allowed to continue with their studies (with appropriate support in place) it may not be possible for them to return to the same placement because the relationship has broken down. Every effort will be made to find other placement opportunities for the trainee. It is reasonable for the SCITT to expect trainees to positively engage in this process. If it proves to be impossible to find an alternative placement the SCITT will discuss options with the trainee.

The SCITT will, where possible, distinguish between a trainee's failure to achieve the standard necessary to pass the placement and a trainee's fitness to practise. A trainee who fails to achieve the necessary standards might be given an opportunity to extend a placement so that they can improve their practice. A trainee who is found to be unfit to practise will not be able to continue unless the SCITT agrees supportive improvement measures to give the trainee an opportunity to put right the issues identified with their practice.

2.7 Reasonable adjustments to the process

All policies and procedures are available in accessible formats. The SCITT will consider in each case whether to make reasonable adjustments to procedures to take account of the individual needs. In fitness to practise

procedures, the SCITT may need to make adjustments for hearings, or allow a recruits or trainees longer to respond to allegations.

In some cases, the recruit or trainee may not be well enough to go through a fitness to practise process. In those cases, the SCITT will offer additional time for recruits or time away from their studies for trainees until their health is improved. The SCITT will explain to the recruit or trainee that the fitness to practise process will start again when they are ready to return.

The SCITT will tell recruits and trainees who have mental health difficulties about the specific support services available to them, for example counselling services and, where appropriate, services external to the SCITT.

2.8 Relationship with other procedures

Fitness to practise concerns can arise from disciplinary or misconduct issues, or from health-related or disability issues, and different procedures may apply in each case. The SCITT will explain how procedures relate to each other and will set out clearly to the individual recruit and trainee how the different processes will be followed in their case and in what order.

Fitness to practise is not disciplinary in nature and is distinct from support for study (or fitness to study) processes. A disciplinary matter might lead to fitness to practise proceedings if the behaviour that led to disciplinary action against the recruit or trainee calls into question their fitness to practise.

If a separate disciplinary process is conducted before fitness to practise proceedings, the recruit or trainee will be given the opportunity to appeal the disciplinary outcome. If the recruit or trainee is disputing the facts of the case, the SCITT will not usually start fitness to practise proceedings until the internal disciplinary procedure is concluded. It may be necessary to take immediate action to protect the recruit, trainee or others

Where a recruit or trainee submits a complaint during fitness to practise proceedings, it may be appropriate to pause the fitness to practise process while the complaint is being investigated. This will depend on the nature of the fitness to practise concerns and the nature of the complaint, and how they relate to one another. Where the issues are closely related, it will normally be appropriate for the SCITT to consider the issues raised in the complaint as part of the fitness to practise process.

3. Concerns Relating to Professional and Personal Misconduct (Teachers' Standards Part Two)

3.1 Meeting the Teachers' Standards

Trainees must, at all points within the training, demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct, as set out in the preamble to the Teachers' Standards and Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards. All members of the SCITT and staff in Hub and partner schools have a duty to inform the SCITT Director if they believe a trainee's attitude, or personal or professional conduct does not meet these high standards.

The SCITT Director, acting with the agreement of a member of the SCITT Strategic Board, has the right to suspend a trainee from training, with immediate effect, if their attitude or professional or personal conduct falls seriously short of any of the requirements in any part of the Teachers' Standards. The SCITT Director may also refer to the **SCITT's Disciplinary Policy** in this case.

If the SCITT Director has any reason to believe a trainee's attitude, behaviour or conduct is not consistently meeting the requirements set out in the Teachers' Standards the trainee will be informed of these concerns. If the concern is serious, this will lead to a formal meeting within the **SCITT Disciplinary Policy**.

3.2 Serious Misconduct

Most serious concerns/misdemeanours will be dealt with using the **SCITT Disciplinary Policy**.

Implementation of the **SCITT Disciplinary Policy** is a serious matter. Any trainee who finds themselves at the centre of disciplinary procedures will be advised to consult or bring with them a trade union representative. In the case of serious misconduct in the placement school, it is the Headteacher's right to ask the trainee to leave the premises.

Where a trainee may be a danger to themselves or others, providers have a responsibility to do what they can to protect their trainees, staff, service users at practice placements, and members of the public. In some cases, the provider may need to take immediate action, particularly where a trainee is undertaking a practice placement. These may include, but are not limited to:

- a) cases involving a threat of serious harm to the trainee and/or others
- b) cases involving gross misconduct/serious incidences of unprofessional behaviour
- c) cases where a trainee has demonstrated unsafe practice
- d) cases where a trainee's mental health is at risk
- e) cases raising serious safeguarding concerns.

3.3 Written Record

A non-verbatim written record of all meetings will be kept outlining:

- a) the areas of concern and the implications for the recruit or trainee in meeting the Teachers' Standards
- b) targets set for the recruit or trainee to meet the standards, with a clear timescale for improvement using the **SCITT Cause for Concern Policy**
- c) any decisions made in the meeting regarding further disciplinary actions, including whether the recruit or trainee is considered 'unfit to proceed' with the training.

3.4 Unfit to proceed

If a recruit or trainee is considered 'unfit to proceed', the following procedure should be followed:

- a) The recruit or trainee is informed of the decision at a hearing that includes representatives of the SCITT Strategic Board
- b) This decision will be confirmed in writing within 3 working days, including reasons, and the trainee's right to appeal
- c) The recruit or trainee has 10 working days from the receipt of the letter to make representations to the SCITT Appeals Committee
- d) If the recruit or trainee does appeal, the SCITT Appeals Committee should review both sides of the case and decide whether to uphold or override the decision

- e) If the decision is overridden, there may be conditions attached
- f) The recruit or trainee must be informed in writing of the decision and reasons within 3 working days of the review
- g) In cases where it is deemed the recruit or trainee is 'unfit to proceed' this matter must be discussed at the next meeting of the SCITT Strategic Board.

4. Concern relating to progress against the Teachers' Standards Part 1

All staff involved in the assessment of trainees will be reminded of the paramount importance of early detection of underperformance. If it becomes apparent at any point throughout the programme that a trainee is not making satisfactory progress against Part 1 of the Teachers' Standards, then the procedures, as detailed below, must be followed by **all** staff supporting the trainee. It is important that either the Hub Lead Teacher, the Programme Lead, the Course Leader or the SCITT Director is contacted immediately by the SMC or School Based Subject Mentor where there is a concern. This will ensure appropriate supportive action for the trainee, school and pupils is put in place as soon as possible.

Trainees are assessed on a weekly basis on all aspects of their work in school, against the criteria provided by the SCITT.

Early identification of any trainee causing concern or failing to meet the Teachers' Standards is essential. School Based Subject Mentors will normally be the first to raise this concern through the **SCITT Cause for Concern Policy**. Any trainee for whom practical work in school is giving serious cause for concern or for whom other aspects of the work in school, including professional conduct, generate concern about their suitability for teaching should be referred to the Hub Lead Teacher, Programme Lead or Course Leader as soon as possible.

This will be communicated immediately to the SCITT Director who will discuss the situation with relevant staff. An official Cause for Concern will be initiated via the **SCITT's Cause for Concern Policy**.

The trainee will be given an opportunity at any point to set out their perception of the issues of concern. They may also contact the Hub Lead Teacher or the Course Leader at any time during the training to seek guidance. Trainees may also request of the SCITT Course Leader or SCITT Director that they be given the opportunity to speak to another representative such as the Internal Moderator, External Examiner, or a member of the Assessment Board regarding concerns that may have arisen.

Throughout the process in this policy, there will be weekly communication between the school, the SCITT and the trainee and all communications will be documented.

Should the trainee's performance improve, the normal procedures for assessment, including weekly reviews and the review points, will be used for further review and development of the trainee's skills against the SCITT criteria and the Teachers' Standards.

5. Other Substantial Reason

Where none of the above are applicable but the **SCITT Cause for Concern Policy** has ‘Some Other Substantial Reason’ for questioning the trainee’s suitability to remain on the course e.g., medical fitness reasons, there will be appropriate interventions in line with **SCITT Fitness to Study Policy**.

5.1 Health and disability issues

Sometimes fitness to practise concerns are related to the trainee’s mental or physical health, or to a disability.

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), the SCITT will make reasonable adjustments for disabled trainees in relation to a provision, criterion or practice other than a competence standard. A competence standard is defined in the Equality Act as “an academic, medical or other standard” applied for the purpose of determining placements. The SCITT will agree with the trainee before the placement starts what information can be shared with the placement to make sure that support is in place.

If the matter leading to the fitness to practise concern may be related to a trainee’s disability, the SCITT will consider whether the trainee requires additional support, and whether it should make reasonable adjustments to the way in which it is assessing the trainee. This might include agreeing and arranging additional support for the trainee in their practical placement setting. The SCITT will consider each case individually.

The SCITT will consider what evidence, if any, it requires from the trainee so that it can properly assess their fitness to practise and support them in their studies. This might include medical evidence and/or occupational health referral. The SCITT will support trainees in obtaining this evidence, for example, by directing them to the appropriate expert and paying for the report where this is proportionate.

When trainees think that they might need additional support it is important for them to tell the SCITT. Although trainees don’t have to tell the SCITT about a disability, the SCITT will make sure that there is a supportive environment that encourages them to; and that trainees understand the need for insight into their condition. The SCITT will explain to trainees that they need to tell the SCITT if there is anything that might affect their ability to study or fulfil competence and for which they might need additional support, even if they don’t want to give details of what it is.

6. Procedures, appeals, and record keeping

6.1 Procedures

The formal stage of the **Fitness to Practise process** will be conducted by a panel constituted of:

- The SCITT Director (Chair) or nominee
- Senior Leader from a partner school
- The SCITT Internal Moderator
- HR representative from Chorus Education Trust

- SCITT Administrative Manager (Minute taker).

The recruit or trainee will be given at least five working days' written notice to attend any formal meeting under this procedure.

The written notification will also contain:

- Sufficient information about the concerns and their possible consequences (including the possibility of issuing a warning, withdrawing a conditional offer or termination of training) to enable the recruit or trainee to prepare to answer the case at the formal meeting
- Copies of any written evidence
- Copies of witness statements and details of witnesses attending (if appropriate)
- Details of the time and place of the meeting
- The recruit's or trainee's right to be accompanied.

The panel will first establish the facts and allow the recruit or trainee an opportunity to put forward their defence. Once the facts leading to the fitness to practise concerns have been proven, either through a separate disciplinary procedure or a criminal conviction, or during the fitness to practise hearing, the panel will consider whether the established facts lead to a genuine fitness to practise concern, and if so, what action should be taken.

The SCITT must prove that the recruit or trainee has done what they are accused of doing. The SCITT will need to produce evidence to prove this and explain how this impairs the recruit's or trainee's fitness to practise.

Once the SCITT has produced evidence to prove an allegation, if the recruit or trainee disputes the allegation, they will need to provide evidence to rebut it. Recruits or trainees will also need to prove any mitigating factors that they wish to rely on.

The standard of proof required is similar to that in civil cases which is normally 'the balance of probabilities' that is, it is more likely than not that something has happened. Decisions must still be supported by evidence. This standard is higher than simply believing something has likely to have happened and is lower than standard of proof required in legal proceedings.

Fitness to practise proceedings can be stressful for recruits or trainees, and the outcomes can have serious consequences for their studies and future careers. It is therefore particularly important that the investigations, hearings, and appeals are conducted as quickly as possible, consistent with fairness.

The SCITT will:

- Inform recruits or trainees as soon as possible that fitness to practise concerns have been raised
- Complete the entire process, including any appeal, within 90 days (it may be reasonable that this will take longer where the case is complex) of the recruit or trainee being told of the concerns
- Ensure that, where the recruit or trainee has been through related disciplinary proceedings, the ***fitness to practise process*** is carried out as quickly as possible, and within 45 days of the disciplinary decision. In such cases, the ***fitness to practise process*** will not need to prove facts, allowing for proceedings to be concluded.

6.2 Outcomes and conditions imposed by fitness to practise panels

A finding that a recruit or trainee is not fit to practise is different from a finding of misconduct. A finding of misconduct under a disciplinary process may attract a range of penalties whereas a finding that a recruit or trainee is not fit to practise may result in the conditional offer being withdrawn or the trainee being removed from their course, with little chance that they will be able to train elsewhere. The SCITT may sometimes suspend trainees for a period or put in place a series of supportive improvement measures to give recruits or trainees an opportunity to put right the issues identified and demonstrate fitness to practise.

Where the SCITT puts in place conditions that the recruit or trainee needs to meet, those conditions will be proportionate, carefully explained to the recruit or trainee, and have a clear and demonstrable outcome. If the conditions are related to the recruit's or trainee's health the SCITT will tell the recruit or trainee what evidence they will need, for example a satisfactory occupational health report, before they can resume their studies.

The decision as to what action to take when a recruit's or trainee's fitness to practise is found to be impaired will usually require professional judgment. The panel will explain the reasons for the action or actions it has decided to take, especially in cases where the action has serious consequences and may prevent the recruit or trainee from starting or continuing with their intended career.

Before reaching a decision about what action it should take, the panel will consider each option, starting with the least serious. The intention is not to punish the recruit or trainee, but to act proportionately where there is a need to protect the public or preserve public confidence in the profession. The SCITT will explain what they have decided to do, why remedial action is not considered to be possible and how the decision relates to the relevant professional requirements.

The panel will also consider mitigating and aggravating factors, such as the level of insight the recruit or trainee has shown, evidence of good practice, personal circumstances and previous disciplinary concerns or patterns of behaviour. The recruit or trainee should be given the opportunity to put forward any mitigating factors before the panel decides what action it should take.

If the SCITT concludes that the recruit or trainee is currently unfit to practise, but that they may become fit to practise in the future, it will explain to the recruit or trainee what steps they may be able to start or resume their studies.

If the SCITT concludes that the recruit or trainee is unfit to practise and the conditional offer should be withdrawn or the training should be terminated, the SCITT will consider whether the student can be given a reference without professional registration.

The SCITT may have to report to the Department for Education that the conditional offer has been withdrawn of a trainee has been withdrawn from their course because they are not fit to practise. The SCITT will explain this to the recruit or trainee and whether the outcome will also need to be disclosed by the recruit or trainee when applying for other regulated courses.

6.3 Appeals and Complaints

The trainee has the right to appeal against a fitness to practise decision, including the action the SCITT has decided to take. The trainee must submit an appeal in writing.

Grounds might include:

- That the procedures were not followed properly

- That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision
- That trainee has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide before the fitness to practise decision was taken by the SCITT
- That there was a bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure
- That the action the SCITT has decided to take is disproportionate or not permitted under the procedures.

The SCITT may decide to reject an appeal without assembling the Appeals Committee if the trainee's appeal submission does not fall within one the grounds set out in the **Complaints Procedure**, or if it submitted out of time without a good reason. This decision will be taken by the Chief Executive Officer of Chorus Education Trust who will not have been involved in the **Fitness to Practise process** up to this point.

An appeal may be considered at a hearing or only the basis of written submissions. The appeal stage may involve a review of the formal stage or a complete rehearing of the case.

The Appeals Committee can overturn the outcome of the formal stage and substitute its own decision or refer the matter back to the formal stage for reconsideration. The constitution of the Appeals Committee will be:

- a) CEO of Chorus Trust Education (Chair) or nominee
- b) Senior Leader from a partner school (was not involved in previous stage)
- c) SCITT Hub Leader
- d) HR representative from a partner school
- e) SCITT Administrative Manager (Minute taker).

The trainee will be given information about how to access support and advice during the appeal process.

If the appeal is not upheld or does not fall under the grounds of appeal as stipulated in the **Appeals Policy** the trainee will receive a written notification within 28 days. This Completion of Procedures Letter will include an explanation of the decision reached and the reasons for it. The Completion of Procedures Letter will advise the recruit or trainee of their right to submit a complaint to the OIA within 12 months from the date of the notification. If applicable, the recruit or trainee will also be advised of any conditions set by the SCITT that they must meet before they can start or continue with their studies.

If an appeal is upheld, the SCITT will give the recruit or trainee a written outcome that explains what action will be taken. If the outcome involves referring the case back to the formal stage for reconsideration, the SCITT will ensure that reconsiderations are concluded as soon as possible and, where practical, within the 90-day time frame.

6.4 Record Keeping

The SCITT will ensure that proportionate records of fitness to practise proceedings and outcomes are kept. Records will be kept even when the proceedings don't result in any action being taken against the recruit or trainee. This is because behaviour or concerns that are not considered serious enough to need any action

may be relevant in later proceedings if the recruit or trainee behaves in a similar way again or other concerns are raised.

The SCITT will keep a record even if the recruit or trainee is completely exonerated in case a dispute later arises about the proceedings or outcome. Please refer to the ***Chorus Education Trust Record Retention Schedule*** and the [Chorus Education Trust Data Protection Policy](#), which sets out how long records will be kept, and under what circumstances they might be disclosed to other bodies.

The SCITT will explain to the recruit or trainee what record has been kept and for what purpose.

7. Appendices: Expectations of the Role of a Trainee Teacher

The following appendices should be referred to by all applicants, recruits and trainees when preparing for their teacher training, completing the Occupational Health New Starter Questionnaire and the SCITT Suitability Declaration.

The descriptions of the role, person specification, typical work patterns and work contexts set out by the National Association of School Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT) should provide a clear idea of expectations of the role. These are representations of the typical demands experienced by those in the teaching profession; they are not articulations of the requirements for teaching.

Applicants, recruits and trainees should also refer to the [Teachers' Standards](#) set out by the Department for Education (2011). These form the basis of the SCITT course objectives and trainees are expected to meet these Teachers' Standards by the end of their training when the SCITT will consider the recommendation for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Appendix 1: Role of a Trainee Teacher

Appendix 2: The Trainee Teacher Person Specification

Appendix 3: Work Pattern and Work Context, Secondary Teacher General Subjects

Appendix 4: Work Pattern and Work Context Secondary Teacher Sciences

7.1 Appendix 1: Role of a Trainee Teacher



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

Trainee Teacher Role Description

The role of a trainee teacher during periods of school experience, acting within the statutory frameworks which set out a teacher's professional duties and responsibilities, is to:

1. Act at all times in accordance with the statutory frameworks which apply to teachers, having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards of personal attendance and punctuality;
2. Recognise the need to safeguard pupils, in accordance with statutory provisions;
3. Be tolerant of and show respect for the rights of others including those with different faiths and beliefs;
4. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils by establishing a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect; setting goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions;
5. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge, with a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas being taught; foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, addressing their misconceptions and misunderstandings; take responsibility for modelling and promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English;
6. Read, critique, assimilate and use research and other relevant theoretical information and guidance to inform and improve practice;
7. Promote the value of scholarship and a love of learning by stimulating children's intellectual curiosity and demonstrating consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils;
8. Plan and teach well-structured lessons, taking into account the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities and imparting knowledge and developing understanding through effective use of lesson time; using distinctive teaching approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively according to their physical, social and intellectual stage of development;
9. Reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching; contributing to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s);
10. Set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils are acquiring;
11. Promote and be accountable for good pupil progress, attainment and outcomes;
12. Use relevant data to monitor pupil progress, set appropriate targets, and plan subsequent lessons; provide pupils with regular and timely feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, encouraging pupils to respond to the feedback they receive; reflect on the progress they have made and their subsequent emerging needs;
13. Make accurate and productive use of assessment within relevant subject and curriculum areas, becoming confident in the application of statutory assessment requirements and use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress;
14. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a positive and safe learning environment; establishing a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly;
15. Use behaviour management techniques which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them; exercising appropriate authority and acting decisively when necessary whilst maintaining good relationships with pupils;
16. Promote good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy;
17. Engage in wider professional responsibilities, making a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school; developing effective professional relationships with colleagues and knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support;
18. Deploy support staff effectively and take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, including responding to advice and feedback from colleagues;
19. Communicate effectively with individuals holding parental responsibility with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

The Teachers' standards in full can be found [here](#).

The Voice of School-Based Teacher Training

www.nasbtt.org.uk

Copyright © 2020 by NASBTT. All rights reserved.

7.2 Appendix 2: The Trainee Teacher Person Specification



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

Trainee Teacher Person Specification

Qualifications

- You will have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 GCSE in English and mathematics, and if you intend to train to teach pupils aged 3-11 you will have additionally achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 GCSE in a science subject.
- You will hold a first degree of a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification.

Health and Physical Capacity

- You will have the health and physical capacity to teach without constituting a risk to the health, safety or well-being of pupils. This includes:
 - the ability to communicate effectively with pupils, colleagues and individuals holding parental responsibility;
 - possession of sound judgement and insight;
 - the ability to remain vigilant and attentive at all times while supervising, assisting and supporting pupils and/or working in hazardous situations;
 - the ability to respond to pupils' needs in a timely and effective manner;
 - the ability to manage classes/groups of pupils;
 - planning and preparing lessons and learning sequences for pupils;
 - delivering lessons and learning sequences;
 - assessing pupils' development, progress and attainment;
 - reporting on pupils' development progress and attainment.

Suitability

- You will be subject to appropriate pre-selection or pre-employment checks. These will include, but are not limited to, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal records check and a children's barred list.
- Fee-paying trainees will be expected to undertake a pre-training health questionnaire according to the normal practice of the provider. Salaried trainees and apprentices will be expected to undertake a pre-employment health questionnaire according to the normal practice of the employer.
- Where disabilities exist, you will be able to meet the role description, person specification and functional capacity with reasonable adjustment(s).

Personal Characteristics

You will:

- need to be flexible, motivated and resilient;
- have consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct;
- maintain high standards in ethics and behaviour both within and outside school;
- uphold public trust in the profession;
- be able to attend work and carry out tasks punctually in a regular and consistent manner.
- have an easily recognisable yet realistic enthusiasm for working with children and young people, treating them with dignity, being able to build relationships rooted in mutual respect, whilst at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to your professional position;
- be tolerant and respectful of others' actions and beliefs, upholding fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect;
- have the resilience to cope effectively with a variety of stressful situations and the energy and stamina to thrive in a challenging environment.

The Teachers' standards in full can be found [here](#).

The Voice of School-Based Teacher Training
www.nasbtt.org.uk

Copyright © 2020 by NASBTT. All rights reserved.

7.3 Appendix 3: Work Pattern and Work Context, Secondary Teacher General Subjects



The National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers

Work Pattern and Work Context Secondary Teacher General Subjects

Work Pattern

	Occasional 0-33% of work time	Frequent 34-66% of work time	Constant More than 67% of work time
Vision (with or without glasses/lenses)			✓
Hearing (with or without hearing aids)			✓
Mobility (to monitor and intervene)			✓
Communication demands (phone/email/face-to-face)			✓
Clarity of speech with good voice projection			✓
Ability to concentrate/good memory			✓
Vigilance			✓
Memory			✓
Manual dexterity		✓	
Sound judgement			✓
Working to tight deadlines		✓	
Working under significant stress		✓	
Dealing with challenging or distressing situations	✓		
Dealing with anxious/aggressive students	✓		
Supervising other adults		✓	

The Voice of School-Based Teacher Training

www.nasbtt.org.uk

Copyright © 2020 by NASBTT. All rights reserved.

Work Context

	Occasional 0-33% of work time	Frequent 34-66% of work time	Constant More than 67% of work time
Up to 30 pupils aged 11-16 years			✓
Up to 15 pupils aged 16-19 years	✓		
In a classroom with sensible free movement allowed			✓
In a boundaried outdoor environment	✓		
In a public place	✓		
Teaching basic skills such as speaking, reading, writing, etc., within subject context		✓	
Clear speech - ability to pronounce all phonemes			✓
Pupils engaged in hazardous activities/using potentially dangerous equipment	✓		
Significant monitoring and intervention required		✓	
Urgent monitoring and intervention needed	✓		
Repetitive/complex tasks requiring attention to detail		✓	
Working in a team		✓	
Lone worker	✓		

7.4 Appendix 4: Work Pattern and Work Context Secondary Teacher Sciences



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

Work Pattern and Work Context Secondary Teacher Sciences and Design and Technology (and any other subjects where hazardous materials/tools are involved)

Work Pattern

	Occasional 0-33% of work time	Frequent 34-66% of work time	Constant More than 67% of work time
Vision (with or without glasses/lenses)			✓
Hearing (with or without hearing aids)			✓
Mobility (to monitor and intervene)			✓
Communication demands (phone/email/face-to-face)			✓
Clarity of speech with good voice projection			✓
Ability to concentrate/good memory			✓
Vigilance			✓
Memory			✓
Manual dexterity		✓	
Sound judgement			✓
Working to tight deadlines		✓	
Working under significant stress		✓	
Dealing with challenging or distressing situations		✓	
Dealing with anxious/aggressive students	✓		
Supervising other adults		✓	

The Voice of School-Based Teacher Training

www.nasbtt.org.uk

Copyright © 2020 by NASBTT. All rights reserved.

Work Context

	Occasional 0-33% of work time	Frequent 34-66% of work time	Constant More than 67% of work time
Up to 30 pupils aged 11-16 years			✓
Up to 15 pupils aged 16-19 years	✓		
In a classroom but with sensible free movement allowed			✓
In a bounded outdoor environment	✓		
In a public place	✓		
Teaching basic skills such as speaking, reading, writing, etc., within subject context		✓	
Clear speech - ability to pronounce all phonemes			✓
Pupils engaged in hazardous activities/using potentially dangerous equipment			✓
Significant monitoring and intervention required			✓
Urgent monitoring and intervention needed		✓	
Repetitive/complex tasks requiring attention to detail		✓	
Working in a team		✓	
Lone worker	✓		

8. Publishing this Policy

This policy is available through the SCITT website. A copy can also be requested via the 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 is unhappy with decisions made by the 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>.