POLICY

TITLE: EQUIVALENCY TESTING

POLICY HOLDER: Director of NTTC

APPROVAL BOARD: NTTC Board

VERSION NO: V1.4

LAST REVIEWED: July 2026

REVIEW PERIOD*: 1 year

* The review period refers to our internal policy review process. The published policy is current and is the most recent approved version.

Summary:

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Amendments Log

DATE	VERSION NO.	REASON FOR CHANGE	AUTHOR
31.8.24	1.2	Annual update	L Goram
14.7.25	1.3	Annual Update	L Goram
21.7.25	1.4	Annual Update	L Goram

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1. Rationale

Initial Teacher Training guidance and criteria issued by the Department for Education (DfE) sets out the responsibility for accredited providers to satisfy themselves that all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C/4 in the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics for those who wish to train at secondary phase. Entrants applying to teach at primary phase must also have achieved a standard equivalent to a C/4 or above in a science subject.

The current ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice (for the academic year 24/25) section C1.1 makes it clear that:

> *Applicants who are otherwise suitable but have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade 4, or recognised equivalent, may be given an opportunity to show that they can meet the required standard either by taking an equivalence test or by offering other evidence of attainment, which should demonstrate a similar level and breadth. Accredited ITT providers should consider making similar arrangements for applicants who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.*
>
> *DfE does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English, mathematics, and science. It is the provider's role to determine the equivalency of a qualification. When accredited ITT providers look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade 4, they should look at the content not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth.*

Initial teacher training (ITT): criteria and supporting advice

This policy is therefore set in the context of this guidance.

2. The Aim

To ensure that all applicants for a place on NTTC's course who do not already hold a GCSE C/4 or above in English/mathematics/science are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate that they can meet the required standards prior to confirmation of an unconditional offer.

3. Criteria for Selection for Equivalency Testing

Candidates must address the following criteria in order for NTTC to recommend equivalency testing and make it a condition of an offer to train:

- Candidates must have disclosed the missing GCSEs at the point of application.
- Where candidates claim that they do indeed have a C/4 or above at GCSE they must pursue all reasonable endeavours to find certificates or results notifications or obtain duplicates: Equivalency tests are not a substitute for finding certificates.
- Overseas candidates must seek verification of their current certificates from ENIC before requesting equivalency tests.
- Candidates must be clear that equivalency tests are not recognised by every institution.
- All other course requirements must be met, or plans put in place to be met: for example in the case of undergraduates an offer of a place will be conditional on the class of their final degree.

4. Equivalency Testing

NTTC recommends that candidates use Birmingham City University equivalency testing service.

Candidates may use other reputable providers but must check with NTTC first.

Candidates are responsible for covering testing fees.

Candidates should prepare for their testing and take responsibility for their study; they must complete the testing in advance of enrolment.

Candidates who do not sit testing before enrolment will not meet the entry criteria and will therefore not be invited to enrolment.

Candidates should check that the tests they plan to complete satisfy NTTC's entry requirements before booking any tests.