The General Teaching Council for Scotland

Trusted Teaching

Applying for Provisional Registration:

A guide for student teachers

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Introduction

This guide is for student teachers to read before applying for provisional registration.

The purpose of the guide is:

- To share information relating to the two ways to achieve the Standard for Full Registration – the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) and the Flexible Route (FR);
- To inform you of your responsibilities and key considerations before submitting your application form; and
- To provide the information you need to make the registration process as smooth as possible.

Five steps to Provisional Registration

There are 5 steps to be completed to become provisionally registered. It is your responsibility to complete these:

1. Complete the application for provisional registration on the student portal. Applications open on 4 November 2026 and should be submitted by 18 December 2026.
2. Apply for Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership.
3. Apply for an overseas police check if you have spent a period of 6 months or more outside the United Kingdom within the last 5 years.
4. Pass the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme at your Higher Education Institution (HEI) (before joining the Register).
5. Pay your annual registration fee before being added to the Register.

Accessing the Student Portal

The Student Portal is where you will complete your provisional registration application. In November, we will email you with your login details for the portal. From 4 November 2026, you can start your application. You also use the portal to log your preferred local authorities if you are applying to the Teacher Induction Scheme and to pay your

registration fee. We will contact you in the summer when it is time to pay your fee. This is usually from late June onwards. On the portal you will complete and submit your ITE profile in conjunction with your HEI tutor.

From 4 November 2026, when you log in you will find an application has been created for you. You can find more information on how to fill out the student application form on our website.

Whilst your username details for the Application Portal will be your HEI email address, we encourage you to list a personal email address as your preferred email address with us. This is because you will lose access to your HEI email account once you have left the HEI.

Professionalism and conduct

Before student teachers can join the Register, we always check they are fit to teach. As a student teacher, GTC Scotland expects you to conduct yourself professionally.

The Student Teacher Code has been prepared to provide you with guidance on what this means and is designed to complement the code of conduct in place at your HEI. You should read it in conjunction with the Code of Professionalism and Conduct (COPAC).

Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme application

To be provisionally registered, you must be a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme as you'll be working with children who are included in this category. The PVG membership scheme is managed and administered by Disclosure Scotland. It helps safeguard children and/or protected adults by conducting background checks to assess the suitability of professionals who work with them. If PVG scheme membership is refused by Disclosure Scotland, GTC Scotland cannot register you.

You will make this Disclosure Scotland PVG application in addition to the ones you completed for your ITE programme and prospective employer. The cost of this is currently £18. It cannot be delayed to the next year if a deferral is made. After you submit your application for provisional registration on our portal, Disclosure Scotland

will send you a link for the PVG process before April 2027 to the contact email address you set on the portal. Please be patient in waiting for your link. Together with Disclosure Scotland, we complete this process in stages to manage the large number of applications. If you have not received a link by 12 March 2027, contact us at gtcs@gtcs.org.uk.

The PVG application link expires after 14 days. Please prioritise the application because of this narrow time period and advise us of any expired links as soon as possible. Re-issuing links slows down the registration process. On the portal, we ask you to upload identification documents which we check before asking Disclosure Scotland to send you a link. Disclosure Scotland scrutinise the information you have supplied us on the portal as part of their PVG checks. If the address on your identification documents does not match the information you give directly to Disclosure Scotland, this will delay your check.

There are certain convictions that you must disclose in your GTC Scotland application. There is a guide on this in the student portal application form. Disclose convictions regardless of whether you consider them to be small or large. It is better to be open and honest from the outset. It reflects unfavourably on your professionalism if you fail to declare something that is later shown in vetting information from Disclosure Scotland. If in doubt, disclose it and have it checked out.

Please be aware that Disclosure Scotland services were changed on 1 April 2025 as they implement a new law: Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020. You can read more about these changes on the Disclosure Scotland website.

Overseas police check

We require a criminal record check from applicants who have spent 6 months or more (in a single period) in a non-UK country in the last 5 years. This is called an Overseas Police Check (OSPC). On the portal, we will ask you to indicate whether you need one of these. If you need an OSPC, we strongly advise you start the process of seeking one as soon as possible. Please continue the application even if you cannot yet evidence your OSPC. You have until 15 January 2027 to submit this via the portal. If this is not possible, you would then need to email us at gtcs@gtcs.org.uk to provide it.

Not all countries provide an OSPC. In this case you should contact us. Further information about self-certification and on overseas criminal checks from each country is available on the GOV.UK website.

Please note: the application form advises that you require a criminal record check if you have spent more than 3 months in a non-UK country in the last 10 years. This information is out of date and we are working to have this changed. Please ignore this instruction; **we only require a criminal record check from applicants who have spent 6 months or more (in a single period) in a non-UK country in the last 5 years**.

All OSPCs must be in English. If required, please have your OSPC translated before submission.

Your path to Full Registration: Teacher Induction Scheme or Flexible Route?

There are 2 routes open to you for demonstrating that you have reached the Standard for Full Registration. These are the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) or the Flexible Route (FR). Some teachers are not eligible for the TIS and will automatically follow the FR. Your HEI will advise you on whether you are eligible for the TIS. Other teachers may choose the FR if it better meets their personal circumstances. Either way, both routes lead towards Full Registration as a teacher, and you are expected to achieve Full Registration in a timeframe of up to 3 years.

The Teacher Induction Scheme

The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) is a Scottish Government scheme which guarantees a 1-year induction placement in a local authority. GTC Scotland is contracted by Scottish Government to administer some aspects of the TIS, including the allocation to local authorities. It takes around 190 days to complete: 1 continuous school year in the same school. It is only available on a full-time basis. Class contact time is 80% of a standard full timetable to allow non-contact time for professional learning. During the TIS year, schools and local authorities provide support to enable you to demonstrate that you have achieved the Standard for Full Registration, which typically 96% of provisionally registered teachers on the TIS successfully do in their first year. The TIS does not guarantee future employment upon gaining Full

Registration. After the TIS year, you are required to apply for posts that are advertised by employers across Scotland.

Teacher Induction Scheme – where will you be placed?

If you follow the TIS you will either select five local authorities in order of preference or choose the Preference Waiver Payment (PWP) option whereby you agree to complete your placement in any local authority in Scotland.

Important: by selecting five local authorities you are guaranteed any one of your preferences. By signing up to the Teacher Induction Scheme, you agree to accept your first choice, your fifth choice, or any of your choices in between. Therefore, you should very carefully consider which five local authorities you prefer.

Once you have been allocated a local authority, it is fixed and **cannot be changed**. We try to allocate you to preferences as high up as possible on your list. However, every year around 6% of students are unavoidably allocated to their fourth or fifth preference. Please be aware that this could be you, and you will be required to explore ways of making the allocation work. Talking to the local authority about school placement can help if travel is an issue.

Where your allocation is untenable and you have explored alternatives, your option is to withdraw from the TIS and follow the FR. With the exception of students with a registered disability and/or exceptional circumstances (which you should record in your application form) recognised by a GTC Scotland panel, allocations are made automatically using an algorithm. Individuals are placed in their highest possible preference given the availability of placements remaining at that point of the process. When GTC Scotland has allocated you to a local authority, it will be the local authority who assigns you to a school. As this is decided entirely by the local authority, you should speak to your local authority regarding school allocation; GTC Scotland cannot advise you on this.

There are 32 local authorities, and you must choose 5. You cannot duplicate choices or leave choices blank unless you have chosen the PWP or are a sponsored student (who is funded by a local authority and will return there for their TIS placement). Look at the map of local authorities to see their location.

If your home address is in an island local authority, you can ask to stay there for your TIS placement by putting that local authority as your first preference. The island local authorities are the Orkney Islands, the Shetland Islands or The Western Isles (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar). Follow the selection with your other four preferences on the application.

Think carefully about your location and circumstances. You may wish to take this opportunity to relocate for your TIS placement to see more of Scotland. Look at the facilities on offer in an area. If you like climbing or walking, then you might choose to select local authorities that include mountain regions. Think through practicalities like transport links and commuting times. For example, if you live in Edinburgh, and would prefer not to relocate, choose the five local authorities closest to Edinburgh.

Discussing your preferences and the implications with friends and family can help, as you may need their support during your TIS placement.

The Preference Waiver Payment option

If you select the Preference Waiver Payment (PWP) option, **you can be placed anywhere in Scotland**, and this is likely to be in a rural area. The PWP is particularly suitable for students who have fewer personal commitments or are ready to move anywhere. Around 6% of students currently select the PWP option. This flexibility is financially rewarded, with provisionally registered primary teachers receiving £6000 and provisionally registered secondary teachers receiving £8000 over three instalments during their TIS year. The payments are taxable and made by the relevant local authority.

Additional TIS options: Gaelic medium, sponsored students, denominational schools, dual qualification

If you are eligible for the TIS, your HEI will inform us, and this information is automatically pre-populated in the portal. This is also the case if you are a sponsored student. You have further options regarding working in denominational or Gaelic medium schools, and whether you wish to dual qualify in more than one subject. If you are eligible for dual qualification but wish to do your induction period in only one of

your subjects, inform us at gtcs@gtcs.org.uk before 15 January 2027. You can find more information about all these additional options in the portal, and in our step-by-step guide: how to fill out the student application form.

If you wish to teach in a Catholic school, approval is required from the Catholic Church. Please check the Scottish Catholic Education Service website for the requirements of different local authorities.

You should indicate whether you have, or are in the process of gaining, a Catholic Teacher Certificate.

Disabilities and exceptional circumstances

The provisional registration application allows you to detail important information such as a disability or an exceptional circumstance which makes it important that you be allocated to your first or second preference, where possible. Step 6 on the portal provides information in respect of disability and exceptional circumstances. Declaring a disability gives a local authority the opportunity to make reasonable adjustments to your TIS placement, if required. **Please inform us of any disabilities or exceptional circumstances in your application and detail the impact they would have on your ability to undertake your TIS placement in another local authority.**

The portal explains what is and what is not considered an exceptional circumstance. Please note that ticking this box does not guarantee allocation to your first or second choice. GTC Scotland will consider your exceptional circumstance(s) and make a decision based on the information you provide. Please upload any supporting evidence. For exceptional circumstances to be considered for allocation, please provide this information on application. Once an allocation has been made to a TIS placement, it is too late.

Deferrals and withdrawals

There may be circumstances whereby you cannot take up your TIS placement starting in August 2027. In this case, you can request for the start of your TIS placement to be deferred by 1 year. You can read about the deferral process on our website.

If you have already been allocated a local authority, and wish to defer, you must discuss this with GTC Scotland before telling your local authority you will not be taking up the offer of a placement with them. If the reason for your deferral involves a medical condition, please provide any evidence. Make your deferral request as early as possible, and no later than 14 days before your TIS placement is due to start.

Deferral requests made following the commencement of the TIS should be submitted to GTC Scotland before 30 November 2027. Deferrals submitted after this date will not be considered.

All requests to defer are considered by GTC Scotland. A request for a deferral is not guaranteed to be granted. Subject to appeal, GTC Scotland decisions are final.

Alternatively, you may decide to turn down your TIS placement, meaning you are withdrawing from the TIS. You cannot return to the TIS if you withdraw and must follow the Flexible Route. It is extremely important that you inform us before you withdraw from your allocation so we can advise you of your options.

If you are considering opting out of the TIS or deferring for a year, **we still advise you to make a registration application now**: you can opt out or defer later in the process. You can only defer for a year after first submitting your provisional registration and then being granted a deferral. A delay in submitting your application could result in you missing out on a TIS placement, as you cannot be added to the scheme after the deadline has passed.

The Flexible Route

The Flexible Route offers the benefit of being able to work part-time and to look for vacancies within councils and independent schools close to where you live. **Important: on the Flexible Route, you are responsible for finding your own employment.** It is a way of completing a period of teaching service and working towards the Standard for Full Registration if the TIS does not suit your individual circumstances, or if you are not eligible for the TIS.

If you have no previous experience as a teacher then the minimum and maximum length of time in which you can demonstrate that you have met the Standard for Full Registration and submit a recommendation for full registration from a GTC Scotland

registered head teacher or school leader, is the same for both the Flexible Route and the TIS - a full school year (approximately 190 days). You have 3 years in which to achieve Full Registration.

You can complete your teaching service outside Scotland, but still require to be recommended as having met the Standard for Full Registration by a GTC Scotland registered head teacher.

If you choose to work in an independent school for your induction year, you will follow the Flexible Route and must be provisionally registered before starting work.

You may find further guidance to support you on the Flexible Route through schools and local authorities, and on the Flexible Route section of our website.

Key dates in 2026/2027

Below is a list of key dates for applying for provisional registration. You are responsible for setting up your student portal account and completing the application form for provisional registration.

4 November 2026	Student portal and applications open. We advise you to complete the application in one go. It will take around 15 minutes. Have your documents for uploading ready and in the correct format. If you need an overseas police check (OSPC), we advise you to seek this straight away.
18 December 2026	Applications close. If you have not submitted your application by this date, we will assume that you do not wish to be registered with GTC Scotland or included in the Teacher Induction Scheme.
15 January 2027	Access to the student application form on the student portal closes.

	Up until this date, you can change your local authority preference choices. If you are eligible for dual qualification but only wish to complete induction in a single subject, inform us at gtcs@gtcs.org.uk by this date.
12 March 2027	If you have not received your PVG application link, please contact gtcs@gtcs.org.uk.
June 2027	If you are joining the Teacher Induction Scheme, we advise you of the local authority you have been allocated
June 2027	HEIs advise us of which students have passed their ITE programme
July 2027	We will send those of you who have passed your ITE programme an email asking you to pay your annual registration fee.

When to contact GTC Scotland

You can find the answer to most questions you have on our website, but if not, please get in touch with us at gtcs@gtcs.org.uk. Please contact us if:

- you want to request a change to your provisional application after the deadline of 15 January 2027
- you have not received a PVG link by 12 March 2027, or did not access this within the required 14 days and it expired;
- you are withdrawing from your ITE programme;
- you wish to withdraw from or defer your place on the TIS;
- your application form incorrectly says you are not eligible for the TIS;
- you are dual qualified but only want to complete probation in one subject; and/or

- you need to submit an overseas police check (OSPC) after the 15 January 2027 deadline, or the country you resided in does not provide OSPCs.