

Embrace
S C I T T

Recruitment Policy & Procedure

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Person(s) Responsible for Review:	Head of SCITT & Operational Leadership Group
Approved by:	Strategic Leadership Group
Adoption date:	02.10.2023
Signed on behalf of the Strategic Leadership Group:	

Ms Angela Holdsworth MBE

CEO & Accounting Officer

Embrace SCITT

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CEO & Accounting Officer Ms A Y Holdsworth MBE

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Embrace SCITT considers robust recruitment process as the first step in ensuring high-calibre teachers enter the profession. This policy is written to reflect statutory frameworks such as the Department for Education ITE compliance criteria, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and the Equality Act (2010).

This policy should be read in conjunction with other internal policies:

- Embrace SCITT's Safeguarding Policy
- Embrace SCITT's Equality & Diversity Policy
- Embrace SCITT's Supporting Trainees with Additional Needs Policy
- Embrace SCITT's Appeals and Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy is intended to provide an overarching framework for admission to Embrace SCITT programmes.

1.2 This policy applies to the admission of all categories of trainees to accredited programmes of postgraduate study. Embrace SCITT is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices.

1.3 Embrace SCITT is committed to equality in training. Candidates are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes in line with the Department for Education's ITT criteria [[link](#)].

1.4 Embrace SCITT aims to increase the diversity of its trainee population: we believe that diversity is educationally as well as socially desirable in a civilised society, enriching the educational experience for all in the northwest of England. We therefore seek to attract a wide range of applicants from different social, cultural and educational backgrounds who can demonstrate the academic ability and the interpersonal skills required to succeed as a teacher.

1.5 Embrace SCITT aims to offer clear advice and guidance to prospective applicants to enable them to make informed choices and to apply to programmes appropriate to their academic qualifications and potential.

1.6 Admission is subject to the availability and suitability of places. Where there are restrictions on the number of places the SCITT can make available, there may be some element of competition and the SCITT reserves the right to close courses without notice.

1.7 We have the option to use an online assessment process that enables effective assessment of the required competencies and values that are important for teachers and meets the current standards for assessing new recruits. Throughout the 2024/25 recruitment cycle, programme leaders may use a combination of online and face-to-face recruitment activity at their discretion, as appropriate at the time, and to ensure efficient recruitment practices that are in a candidate's best interest.

1.8 This policy and associated procedures comply with relevant legislation and meet the expectation of the QAA Code of Practice: Chapter B2. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

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2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Strategic Leadership Group are responsible, on behalf of Embrace SCITT, for approving recruitment policies and procedures.

2.2 The Operational Leadership Group are responsible for devising, implementing, monitoring and reviewing recruitment and assessment activity in line with the adopted policy.

2.3 All Leaders are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures regarding trainee recruitment and admissions are operated fairly and consistently, and in line with the SCITT's strategic aims, objectives and relevant legislation.

2.4 The Department for Education is responsible for setting entry requirements to initial teacher training programmes and the SCITT must ensure that all activity remains compliant with the ITE criteria.

2.5 Embrace SCITT Administrators are responsible for the administration and logistical arrangements of the policy and procedures.

2.6 Recruitment Teams are responsible for conducting transparent, fair and robust recruitment and assessment activity in line with the policy and procedures outlined.

2.7 Admissions decisions are made by programme leaders in collaboration with expert staff from partner organisations both at the point of application and during the assessment process, in line with safer recruitment legislation.

3. Safeguarding


3.1 Embrace SCITT's robust recruitment and assessment procedures are essential to Safeguarding excellence.

3.2 All applications will be scrutinised to ensure there are no 'red flags' for potential safeguarding risks the applicant may constitute to future children they teach.

3.3 Recruitment and assessment activity will be conducted by suitably trained and experienced staff, including one who **must** have completed appropriate Safer Recruitment training.

3.4 Shortlisted Applicants will be advised that Embrace SCITT will complete a brief internet check using their name and essential information they have provided as part of their application, e.g. (applicant current/past names) + 'convicted', 'crown court' 'magistrates court', 'guilty', 'investigation'. Embrace SCITT may also use words associated with previous towns, cities or work places. The purpose of this is to review whether the applicant is suitable to work with children.

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- 3.4.1** Internet checks will be conducted by somebody who is not on the recruitment panel in order to avoid finding any irrelevant information, e.g. gender, sexuality, religious views etc.
- 3.4.2** If information is discovered, this should be compared with the applicant's application, employment history and criminal / suitability self-disclosure and then discussed with the applicant at interview – the questions asked and responses provided by the applicant should be recorded on the interview notes.
- 3.4.3** Information found as a result of an online search on an unsuccessful applicant should be retained for twelve months after the appointment has been made. This will enable the panel to justify their decisions in the event that a challenge is made in relation to the selection process via an appeal or complaint.
- 3.5** Once the recruitment panel are satisfied that information found on a successful applicant does not rule them out of an offer to train to teach, they should record that decision and the reasoning behind such a decision on the applicant's file and retain copies of any information considered. The purpose of the record is to assist in justifying the appointment and to help prevent unnecessary re-investigation if such information resurfaces after a period time.

4. Selection for assessment day

The Department for Education's ITT entry criteria states:

- **C1.1 That all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and that all who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3-11 additionally have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examination in a science subject.**
- **C1.2 That, in the case of graduate programmes of ITT, all entrants hold a first degree of a United Kingdom higher education institution or equivalent qualification**
- **C1.3 That all entrants, as part of the provider's selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to teach.**

In addition, for all programmes, the selection process will consider:

- Achieved and pending academic qualifications
- The academic context in which qualifications have been achieved
- An applicant's stated interest, commitment and motivation for training to teach in relation to the SCITT's mission statement and core values.
 - Where relevant, work/school or other non-academic experience
 - Academic and/or professional references, including most recent employer
 - An applicant's English language proficiency.

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- 4.1** Once received, each application will be considered on an individual basis by at least two members of appropriately trained and qualified staff working to the DfE's updated ITT criteria and within safer recruitment legislation.
- 4.2** When they apply, a candidate will give details of people who can give references for them. These people will be prompted to provide their reference upon the applicant's acceptance of an offer on an Embrace SCITT programme via the DfE Apply online service. All referees are subsequently contacted to confirm their reference. Our admissions team will use the candidate's references to check that it's safe for them to work with children.
- 4.3** If references, vetting, disclosure and barring checks reveal concerns about a candidate's history, Embrace SCITT will assess whether or not the candidate is suitable to work with children and young people and reserves the right to reject an application prior to assessment and to remove the offer of a place prior to course commencement.
- 4.4** Embrace SCITT will not consider information about unsubstantiated concerns or allegations that have been proven to be false when deciding whether to invite a candidate to assessment.
- 4.5** The decision as to whether a candidate is invited to the assessment will be made as quickly as possible. However, due to the large volume of applications, and to operate a fair admissions process, in some cases it may take longer for decisions to be reached [especially during school holidays].
- 4.6** The outcome of the decision will be communicated to applicants in an appropriate and timely manner both via email and via the online platform.
- 4.7** If a candidate is unsuccessful at the point of application, they can reapply in the future and will be provided with feedback and advice upon request.
- 4.8** If a candidate is invited to the assessment, they will be provided with detailed instructions in relation to the process in order for them to plan accordingly. Should a candidate require any special arrangements at any stage in the process to assist them they should advise the admissions team and any reasonable adjustments will be made.

5. Assessment

- 5.1** Where possible, all recruitment and assessment activity will occur face-to-face at one of our Training Centres or Partnership Schools.
 - 5.1.1** At the discretion of the Recruitment Panel and the Operational Leadership Group, some recruitment and assessment activity may be completed online, for example, an interview. This process will enable rapid recruitment and flexibility to maximise efficiency during the cycle whilst also ensuring consistency, high expectations and safety of the recruitment panel and the applicant. It will also

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enable secure online assessment to be part of an efficient, rigorous and user-friendly candidate journey in the future.

5.2 Recruitment and assessment activity will be arranged at a convenient time for the recruitment team, the partner school and the applicant. Embrace SCITT will use their best endeavours to ensure flexibility in the recruitment and assessment activity date(s).

5.2.1 Embrace SCITT is committed to working with applicants to ensure an excellent experience and will work with applicants to attempt to find a convenient time for them. However, as our partner schools are busy, we may be unable to rearrange recruitment and assessment activity if this is not requested in good time. If an applicant *repeatedly* cancels or requests rearranged recruitment and assessment activity, their application may be rejected as this is likely to become unreasonable for our partner schools and the recruitment teams.

5.2.2 Where an applicant does not attend an arranged recruitment or assessment activity date without prior notice, Embrace SCITT will contact the applicant to check on their wellbeing and discuss whether they still wish to be considered for the programme they have applied for. Embrace SCITT reserves the right to reject an application if they do not have an appropriate reason for not attending the assessment.

5.3 Entry assessments are likely to involve:

- Literacy and numeracy tests
- We may ask candidates to meet with a pupil panel
- Formal interview questions

A summary of our recruitment and assessment activity can be found in Appendix A.

5.4 Embrace SCITT is committed to giving all candidates a fair and consistent assessment experience and to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

5.5 Candidates are expected to read all guidance provided in advance of the assessment and to prepare accordingly. Additional information or clarification is available upon request prior to the assessment and throughout the process itself. Candidates are expected to seek guidance if anything is unclear.

5.6 On the day candidates reserve the right to withdraw at any point.

5.7 Embrace SCITT reserves the right to withdraw candidates at any point in the assessment if programme leaders do not have the evidence that the applicant has the appropriate intellectual and academic capabilities and personal qualities, attitudes, ethics and values to meet the standards for QTS.

5.8 Any conditions attached to an offer of a place will be clear and specific.

5.9 In some cases where the SCITT is unable to make an offer for an applicant's programme choice, an offer for an alternative programme may be made.

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5.10 Candidates who are not successful after the assessment process can request additional feedback and are eligible to reapply in the future. Embrace SCITT is committed to providing all applicants with advice and guidance on how to better prepare for future assessments.

5.11 Embrace SCITT has devised a robust scoring system to ensure parity of expectation throughout the recruitment activity. All activity is scored on a scale of 0-3.

5.11.1 Applicants must achieve a minimum of 1/3 on the Pupil Panel and Functional Literacy and Numeracy tests.

5.11.2 Applicants must achieve an average of 1.6/3 on the formal interview.

5.11.3 Where Applicants do not score an average of 1.6/3 on the formal interview due to a lack of understanding in Safeguarding, the Recruitment Panel can use their discretion in offering the Applicant a place (as long as the other elements of recruitment activity are fulfilled).

6. Fraud & Plagiarism

6.1 Embrace SCITT will not admit applicants on the strength of information considered to be either fraudulent or plagiarised.

6.2 Where an applicant is suspected of having provided a fraudulent or plagiarised application the application will be assessed in the first instance based on the DfE ITT criteria.

6.3 If it is recommended that an offer be made, an investigation into the alleged fraud or plagiarism will be carried-out before the final decision is made.

6.4 Embrace SCITT reserves the right to reject an application or withdraw an offer under these circumstances.

7. Quality Assurance

7.1 As part of Embrace SCITT's ongoing programme quality assurance, Leaders will moderate and sample a small number of recruitment and assessment activity, including formal interviews. In this case, Leaders are moderating the conduct and decisions of the Recruitment Panel. Applicants will typically be informed if their activity is to be moderated, but Embrace SCITT reserves the right to conduct its quality assurance processes without prior warning.

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8. Disclosure of criminal convictions

8.1 Embrace SCITT has a duty to ensure the safety of all students and staff across the SCITT partnership.

8.2 The application process requires applicants to disclosure relevant unspent convictions. As our teacher training programmes involve interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults, applicants must disclose all convictions, including cautions, reprimands, final warnings, bind-over orders and spent convictions.

8.3 Applications from applicants with declared criminal convictions will be assessed in the first instance on the basis of the DfE entry criteria. If it is recommended that an offer be made, further investigation of the relevance of the criminal conviction(s) will be carried-out before the final decision is made by the SCITT's Strategic Leadership Group.

9. Equality and diversity

9.1 Applications from students covered by the Equality Act 2010 will be assessed against the DfE's ITT entry requirements on the same basis as any other application, and will be subject to the same selection process. Applicants should discuss any potential adjustments they may require with admissions staff.

9.2 Any support needs or adjustments which are required during the course will be discussed and the SCITT may liaise with an external service in order to conduct DSA assessments as required.

9.3 If there are overriding health and safety concerns or barriers relating to fitness to train requirements, the applicant will be involved in discussions to explore options and, if necessary, to find a suitable alternative programme or career path.

10. Interaction between the admissions team and the applicant

10.1 Embrace SCITT is committed to ensuring that any interaction with an applicant is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and it expects that any communication from an applicant is conducted in the same way.

10.2 Applicants should note that Embrace SCITT will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees or members of the wider school community during the recruitment process. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, and excessive levels of contact, will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint.

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10.3 The programme leaders will normally warn an applicant that his or her 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 the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

11. Complaints and appeals

- 11.1** Should an applicant wish to raise concerns about decisions made by Embrace SCITT or the way in which an application has been handled, they should contact the programme leader for feedback in the first instance.
- 11.2** Applicants have a right to appeal decisions regarding rejections or offers if they have evidence to suggest that the SCITT has not followed its Recruitment Policy and Procedure. Should an applicant wish to appeal against a recruitment decision, they should put their appeal in writing within 20 days of the decision to James Findlay-Pidcock, Head of Embrace SCITT. Appeals will be discussed with the relevant recruitment team and Programme Leaders.
- 11.3** If it is considered that there may be grounds for appeal, an appeal panel will be convened of the SCITT Strategic Leadership Group. If additional information is required, the applicant will be informed in writing and provided with an appropriate deadline by which to submit the information.
- 11.4** The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal and given an explanation for the decision which has been reached. The decision of the appeals panel is final and there is no further right of appeal.
- 11.5** If it is judged that there are no grounds for appeal, the applicant will be informed of this in writing. The decision of the appeals panel is final and there is no further right of appeal.
- 11.6** A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with an action or lack of action taken by the SCITT, or with the standard of service provided.
- 11.7** Should an applicant wish to make a complaint about the recruitment process, they should request a copy of the SCITT complaints policy from scitt@embrace-education.co.uk and further information is available on our website.

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Appendix A: Summary of Recruitment and Assessment Activity

Format of Recruitment & Assessment Activity	Function	
Application via Department for Education's Apply platform.	<p>Assessing compliance of national ITE compliance criterion.</p> <p>Assessing written communication.</p> <p>Assessing evidence of Embrace SCITT's values, ethics and Personal Statement etc.</p>	<p><i>Qualifications, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GCSE's (or equivalent):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maths & English</i> • <i>A Science subject*</i> • <i>Level 3 qualifications or equivalent.</i> • <i>First degrees (undergraduate)</i> <p><i>*Primary applicants only.</i></p>
Literacy and Numeracy Skills Tests	Baseline assessment of functional literacy and numeracy skills.	<i>Applicants must achieve 1/3 as a minimum score on these elements.</i>
Pupil Panel	Reviewing pupil-applicant engagement and interaction.	<p><i>N.B. The applicant's ability to teach is not assessed at this point.</i></p> <p><i>Applicants must achieve 1/3 as a minimum score on this element.</i></p>
Formal Interview	<p>Monitoring Applicant's demonstration of SCITT values, ethics etc.</p> <p>Understanding Applicant's motivation and fitness to teach.</p> <p>Assessing verbal communication.</p> <p>Assessing and reviewing applicant's ability to engage in research.</p>	<p><i>All applicants will be asked the same standard questions which centre around key drivers of the ITT curriculum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expert Teachers, Expert Learners</i> • <i>Leading Professional Partnerships</i> • <i>Ensuring Achievement for All</i> • <i>Teachers of the World</i> <p><i>The applicant may be interviewed face-to-face or remotely. For face-to-face interviews, a minimum of two people will conduct the interview with the applicant – 1 of whom must be Safer Recruitment trained. Remote interviews will be conducted online by a minimum of one interviewer. This will be recorded for quality assurance purposes.</i></p> <p><i>Applicants must achieve and average of 1.6/3 as a minimum score on this element.</i></p>
Conditions of offer (if successful)	Ensuring compliance with statutory frameworks, including KCSiE and the ITE Compliance Criteria.	<p><i>All applicants will have a minimum of three conditions as part of their offer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriate references received via the DfE Apply platform.</i> • <i>Receiving an appropriate Disclosure & Barring Service check (this will typically be applied for around June/July time).</i> • <i>Fitness to Train to Teach Health Check.</i> <p><i>The Recruitment Panel may also impose additional conditions in order to ensure compliance and provide applicants with the greatest opportunity of success during their initial teacher training programme.</i></p>

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Appendix B: Trainee Person Specification

Criterion	Desirable	Essential
Qualifications & Experience		
GCSE Grade 4 (C) or above in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English; Maths; A Science subject (Primary applicants only) <i>We'll consider candidates with pending GCSEs or appropriate equivalencies.</i>		✓
Level 3 (A-Level equivalent) or higher in the subject in which they wish to train to teach (Secondary only).		✓
First degree in a National Curriculum subject (or linked subject e.g. Accountancy) including Education.	2.2 or greater	3 rd or greater
Experience of working in a school setting	✓	
Experience of working in a professional environment	✓	
Personal qualities		
• commitment to protect and safeguard children and young-people;		✓
• passion to deliver the highest quality of educational standards;		✓
• high standards of personal and professional conduct;		✓
• an ability to be an independent and autonomous learner;		✓
• commitment to continual personal and professional development.		✓
Our trainees will have the following competencies:		
• Humility, respect and empathy.		✓
• Respect and value the different experiences, ideas and backgrounds of others.		✓
• Excellent communication skills.		✓
• Work collaboratively and supportively with colleagues.		✓
• Manage time effectively.		✓
• Find solutions to complex situations or issues.		✓
• Adapt to new situations.		✓
• Be reflective.		✓

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Appendix C: Assessment Activity Rubric

Functional Skills	Literacy	Numeracy	Pupil Panel	Interview																
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5												
<p>0</p> <p>Applicant does not complete task, the task is illegible or does not fulfil any of the given criteria.</p> <p>Applicant scores 0-2</p> <p>Applicant is unprepared for the pupil-centred activity. Their interactions and relationships with pupils lack engagement.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Applicant fulfils some of the criteria, there are some simple spelling and grammatical errors.</p> <p>Applicant scores 3-5</p> <p>Applicant is somewhat prepared for the pupil-centred activity. Relationships are appropriate but interactions occasionally lack the expected formality.</p> <p>Applicant identifies some motivators, but these are typically extrinsic. There has been little research into Embrace SCITT as an ITT provider to make decisions.</p> <p>Applicant identifies developmental feedback but gets impeded by barrier emotions e.g. sadness, therefore inhibiting a positive impact on development.</p> <p>Applicant may recognise the importance of subject knowledge but is unaware as to how to develop this.</p> <p>Applicant lacks clarity on what is meant by 'safeguarding' but is able to identify the importance of working with other people to support pupils, e.g. Parents/Carers.</p> <p>Applicant refers to the importance of diversity in schools but may not recognise approaches to support diversity and encourage progress.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Applicant fulfils all of the criteria, there are some complex spelling and grammatical errors (or vice versa).</p> <p>Applicant scores 6-8</p> <p>Applicant is well prepared for the pupil-centred activity. Relationships and interactions are largely appropriate.</p> <p>Applicant discusses some intrinsic motivators e.g. being good at working with CYP / subject. Good explanation given to phase / subject. Some consideration as to why Embrace SCITT is the most appropriate provider for them.</p> <p>Applicant identifies developmental feedback, can recognise perspectives (even if disagreeing) and uses the feedback to make some short-term changes.</p> <p>Applicant recognises the importance of subject knowledge and identifies 1-3 strategies to ensure subject knowledge is appropriate for the programme and beyond.</p> <p>Applicant has an awareness of the principles of Safeguarding, including Child Protection but does not understand the difference. Applicant is able to talk about a range of ways stakeholders collaborate to support pupils, e.g. Teachers & TAs.</p> <p>Applicant refers to a range of diverse groups and strategies which celebrate diversity such as assemblies, visitors and visits.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Applicant fulfils all of the criteria, there are no spelling or grammatical errors.</p> <p>Applicant scores 9-10</p> <p>Applicant is very well prepared for the pupil-centred activity. Relationships and interactions are always appropriate. Interactions consider pupils age and stage.</p> <p>Applicant is highly motivated by intrinsic factors e.g. pupil's learning. Excellent explanation given to phase/subject. Clear and detailed consideration as to why Embrace SCITT is the most appropriate provider for them.</p> <p>Applicant actively seeks feedback from others, recognises the emotions this causes and uses the feedback to make sustained changes and improvements.</p> <p>Applicant is committed to improving their subject knowledge, recognising the importance of this and identifying 4+ strategies to ensure their subject knowledge is appropriate for the programme and beyond.</p> <p>Applicant fully understands Safeguarding and Child Protection. Applicant is able to talk about a range of ways stakeholders collaborate to support pupils, e.g. Teachers & TAs.</p> <p>Applicant refers to collaboration with others. Additionally, opportunities to integrate diversity in to the curriculum, celebrating sameness in addition to diversity.</p>	<p>Teachers of the World</p>																
					<p>Functional Skills</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>Q3</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>Q5</p>										
											<p>Q1</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>Q3</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>Q5</p>					
																<p>Q1</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>Q3</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>Q5</p>