



Teach Physics

Your Guide to Becoming a Physics Teacher

- Training courses when training in England
- How to apply
- Where to find help



Pass on the power to change the world for the better

Could you help pupils learn to explore and understand the world around them? Encourage all pupils including those from underrepresented groups to become the physicists and engineers of tomorrow? Can you communicate complex ideas clearly and inspire others with your passion?

Become a physics teacher and spark new discoveries every day.

You could start out as a newly qualified teacher in England on at least £31,650 and £38,7666, depending on where you teach. Your salary would progress steadily as you develop your skills and gain experience.

The IOP will be there with resources, Continuing Professional Development and support to guide and assist you all the way.

Our resources include IOPSpark at spark.iop.org which has over 2,000 teaching activities so you can find the right approach for teaching in your classroom.

In time, you could have the opportunity to lead a physics department, become a head of year, or focus on special needs or pastoral care.

This guide will help you become a physics teacher. Take your first steps towards an exciting new career today.

“I particularly wanted to give girls from disadvantaged backgrounds the chance to pursue science and physics in general and to help them believe they are ‘good enough’ and ‘smart enough’, just as my professor did for me.”

– **Habibah, IOP Scholar**

Step 1: Choose how you want to train

Whether you are studying or looking to change careers, there is a training course for you. You can study full time or part time. If you have a degree, you can choose between fee-funded courses and salaried courses:

Fee-Funded Courses

- **University-led training:** An Initial Teacher Education (ITE) course at university usually takes a year full time and gets you a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualification. The course includes around 24 weeks of school placements. It focuses on teaching skills and education theory.
- **School-Centred Initial Teacher Training:** School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) gives you practical, hands-on training delivered by experienced teachers across a network of schools.

Salaried Courses

- **School Direct (salaried):** If you are a graduate with three or more years' work experience and want to move into the classroom, you can apply for a paid School Direct course. (Schools may accept applications from candidates with less work experience in hard-to-fill subjects, such as physics.) You are paid a salary as an unqualified teacher, trained on the job and employed by the school once qualified.
- **Apprenticeships:** On a postgraduate teaching apprenticeship you spend 80% of your time on the job and 20% learning outside the classroom to build your skills and knowledge. Once you have QTS, you are assessed within three months of your newly qualified teacher year to complete your apprenticeship.

Other Options

- **Teach First:** A charity that recruits outstanding individuals and matches them with schools in challenging circumstances, where they teach for a minimum of two years. You receive world class teaching and leadership training throughout the course. Find out more at teachfirst.org.uk
- **Now Teach:** Now Teach is a route for people who have a successful career in the public or private sector and are looking to move into teaching. Find out more at nowteach.org.uk

Subject Knowledge Enhancement Courses

If your degree did not include enough physics to get you onto an ITE course, you can take a subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course. You will need some experience of physics though, usually to A-level standard. These courses vary in length, depending on your needs, and are offered by many higher education institutions in England. Find out more at getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/improve-your-subject-knowledge

Become a physics teacher and help the physicists of tomorrow learn to explore and understand the world around them. By communicating complex ideas clearly and inspiring others with your passion, you will spark new discoveries every day.

Step 2: Choose your course

Once you have chosen how you want to train, you will need to choose a course. The teacher training section of [gov.uk/find-postgraduate-teacher-training-courses](https://www.gov.uk/find-postgraduate-teacher-training-courses) tells you which training providers offer the course you want to take.

- **Physics with science:** This is the most common course for physics teachers. It focuses mainly on teaching physics but also includes biology and chemistry.
- **Physics with mathematics:** The biology and chemistry content in a physics with science course is replaced with mathematics.
- **Engineers teach physics:** A course specifically tailored towards those with an engineering background. Find out more at [getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/subjects/engineers-teach-physics](https://www.getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/subjects/engineers-teach-physics)

Step 3: Get school experience

Whichever route you choose, your training provider would like you to have some recent school experience. This shows them you are familiar with the school environment and confident you are making the right career decision.

You can arrange school experience through the following service [schoolexperience.education.gov.uk](https://www.schoolexperience.education.gov.uk)

“It really means a lot that I have been able to choose a career where I am able to support and empower young people to take the next step in their lives!”

– Emily, IOP Scholar

Step 4: Check your funding options

Fees for postgraduate ITE courses are approximately £9,250 per year. However, if you are a UK resident and choose a postgraduate ITE course leading to QTS, you may be eligible for a tax-free bursary of up to £29,000. International trainees can expect to pay an average of £15,000 plus living costs, to train (depending on your immigration status, you may get a reduction in fees and some financial support).

Information on funding eligibility can be found here: [gov.uk/student-finance/who-qualifies](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/who-qualifies) and [getintoteaching.education.gov.uk](https://www.getintoteaching.education.gov.uk)

Institute of Physics (IOP) teacher training scholarships worth £31,000 are also available. Visit [iop.org/scholarships](https://www.iop.org/scholarships) for further information.

Step 5: Apply

Whichever route you choose, your training provider would like you to have some recent school experience. This shows them you are familiar with the school environment and confident you are making the right career decision.

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Need more help?

- **IOP support for early-career teachers:** Our network of teacher supporters across the UK and Ireland offers advice and workshops for physics teachers. Find out more at [iop.org/network](https://www.iop.org/network)
- **IOPSpark:** Visit [spark.iop.org](https://www.spark.iop.org) for unlimited access to more than 2,000 physics teaching resources.
- **Department for Education Teacher Training Adviser:** Register with Get Into Teaching at [getintoteaching.education.gov.uk](https://www.getintoteaching.education.gov.uk), and take advantage of its Teacher Training Adviser service. This includes one-to-one advice on becoming a teacher and support with submitting your application.
- **Teachers' Student Loan Reimbursement:** Find out if you are eligible to claim at [gov.uk/guidance/teachers-claim-back-your-student-loan-repayments](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teachers-claim-back-your-student-loan-repayments)

**This guide will help you become a physics teacher.
Take your first steps towards an exciting new career today.**

The Institute of Physics (IOP) is the professional body and learned society for physics in the UK and Ireland. It seeks to raise public awareness and understanding of physics, inspire people to develop their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of physics and support the development of a diverse and inclusive physics community. As a charity, it has a mission to ensure that physics delivers on its exceptional potential to benefit society.

Useful Websites

- The government's teacher training website:
getintoteaching.education.gov.uk
- The UK National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills:
www.enic.org.uk
- A tailored teacher training course for engineers:
getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/life-as-a-teacher/explore-subjects/engineers-teach-physics
- Train to teach in England as a non-UK citizen:
getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/non-uk-teachers/train-to-teach-in-england-as-an-international-student

Get In Touch

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As you are considering training to teach, you can complete this form to subscribe to our community emails, receive electronic copies of Classroom Physics and access a range of resources: **iop.org/education/sign-up-community-physics-teaching**