

Maths Teacher

Introduction

Maths teachers help students to develop skills and confidence in using maths. They encourage students to recognise that maths is important in everyday life, for example, in personal money management and a wide range of jobs. The work involves planning lessons, marking, writing student reports and going to parents' evenings.

Work Activities

Secondary school maths teachers enable students to develop skills in mathematical areas and methods such as number, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability. They also help students to develop problem-solving skills and to understand the link between mathematics and everyday, real-life situations.

Teaching methods include group and project work, discussions, and using calculators, interactive whiteboard games and websites.

Other activities include:

- Preparing and planning lessons.
- Marking work and giving feedback.
- Writing reports.
- Creating or adapting lesson resources.
- Going to staff meetings and parents' evenings.
- Setting and enforcing standards of behaviour.

Some maths teachers are also form tutors, involving duties such as taking a register, providing general information and giving guidance.

Maths teachers might supervise the work of one or more teaching assistants.

Personal Qualities and Skills

As a maths teacher, you'll need:

- The ability to encourage, motivate and inspire your students.
- Communication skills.
- Patience and tact.
- The ability to maintain discipline and deal with challenging behaviour.
- Organisational and planning skills.
- The ability to work well under pressure.

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

Teachers in the state education sector are paid on a scale according to their qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The highest salaries are available in inner London schools.

The pay rates (per year) below are approximate.

- Unqualified teachers [who have not yet received Qualified Teacher Status] earn in the range of £16,000 - £25,000.
- Qualified teachers earn in the range of £21,500 - £31,500.



- 'Advanced skills teachers' earn in the range of £37,500 - £57,000.
- 'Excellent teachers' earn in the range of £39,500 - £52,000.

In the private sector, salaries are generally higher, though they are sometimes linked to state sector pay scales.

Hours of work

Teachers normally work from 8:30 am or 9 am to 3:30 pm or 4 pm, Monday to Friday. However, most teachers work extra hours - marking work, preparing lessons and going to meetings. They often have to work in the evenings and at weekends to prepare lessons and mark work.

Where could I work?

Employers are state and private schools.

There are also opportunities to teach in other countries.

Some teachers supplement their income by teaching privately, marking national exams or writing textbooks.

In Wales there is demand for Welsh-medium education, so if you plan to teach in Wales, and are a first or second language Welsh speaker, you could improve your prospects of obtaining a teaching post by training to teach through the medium of Welsh.

You could also get financial support through a Welsh-medium incentive scheme. Check with your course provider.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised by local authorities and in the local and national press, including The Guardian and The Times Educational Supplement (TES). There are also job boards, such as eTeach.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

To become a secondary school maths teacher, you usually need to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) through initial teacher training (ITT). There are several routes.

There are a small number of degree courses in secondary maths education, leading to QTS.

Most people follow a relevant degree with a PGCE in maths. Courses are usually one-year full-time; there are a number of two-year part-time courses.

You need to apply for PGCE courses through UCAS Teacher Training.

There is also the employment-based School Direct scheme: you'll train while working in a school. The expectation is that you'd go on to work in the school or group of schools where you trained, although there's no guarantee of employment at the end of your training.

In England you can also train in a school after your degree through school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT). These programmes are delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges and often aim to meet local teaching needs.

In Wales, you can train whilst employed at a maintained school through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) but places are limited.

Teach First is a charity that recruits and supports graduates to teach in challenging schools in a number of UK regions. The programme takes two years to complete.

If you're not very confident about your subject knowledge or don't have the qualifications to begin postgraduate training straight away, you might be able to take a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course first. Your course provider will assess whether you need to increase or refresh your knowledge. SKE courses vary from two weeks up to a year, and can be full-time, part-time or by distance learning. For more information, please see the GOV.UK website.

Training

Once employed, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) must complete a three-term induction period, usually within a single school year, in order to continue teaching in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England and Wales. It can be possible for the induction period to be reduced to one term, if you can demonstrate significant teaching experience.

Progression

There are opportunities for teachers to move into teacher training, advisory work, educational research or schools inspection.

Teachers can become heads of department, heads of year, or co-ordinators of special educational needs or careers guidance.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

This career is an exception to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that you must supply information to an employer about any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, if they ask you to.

This is different from other careers, where you only have to reveal information on unspent convictions if you are asked to.

Qualifications

All candidates for teacher training need GCSEs (or recognised equivalent qualifications) at grade C or above in English Language and Mathematics.

In Wales, all candidates for teacher training need to have Grade B in English Language and Maths. Students training to teach through the medium of Welsh may also need a GCSE grade C or above in Welsh (first language).

In England, if you want to teach at Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14), you must also have a GCSE (or recognised equivalent qualification) at grade C or above in a science subject.

If you don't have the GCSEs that are usually needed, you might be able to sit a pre-entry equivalency test; you should contact individual course providers to discuss your situation before making your application.

Student teachers must pass tests in English and maths to achieve Qualified Teacher Status.

Welsh medium applicants will also need to complete a literacy test in Welsh.

For entry to a PGCE, you'll need a degree in maths or a related subject such as statistics or economics. Universities usually ask that maths content made up at least 50% of your degree.

For entry to a degree in maths, the usual requirements are:

- 2/3 A levels, including Maths
- 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C, including English, or Welsh (first language) if applying to study through the medium of Welsh

Alternatives to A levels include:

- Edexcel (BTEC) level 3 Nationals
- The International Baccalaureate Diploma.

However, course requirements vary, so please check prospectuses carefully.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A-level.

Adult Opportunities

Skills/experience

To enter teacher training courses, you'll usually need to have at least observed some classes in a mainstream secondary school. For some courses, you'll need paid or voluntary work experience in a secondary classroom, or other relevant experience with young people.

Courses

If you don't have the qualifications you need to enter a degree course, you might be able to start one after completing a college or university Access course, such as Access to Mathematics. You don't usually need any qualifications to start an Access course, although you should check this with the course provider.

There are a number of part-time PGCE courses.

If you're not very confident about your subject knowledge or don't have the qualifications to begin postgraduate training straight away, you might be able to take a Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) course first. Your course provider will assess whether you need to increase or refresh your knowledge.

Distance learning

Some PGCE courses are available on a flexible learning basis. For example, you might be able to train by distance learning in combination with classroom-based teaching practice and campus study.

Employment-based training

Instead of going to university to do a PGCE, graduates can follow an employment-based route. This is where you train in a school. Employment-based routes include School Direct, school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) and the scheme offered by Teach First, and in Wales, through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) but places are limited. For more information, please see 'Entry Routes and Training'.

Funding

For funding information, take a look at the GOV.UK website, or Student Finance Wales if living in Wales.

Further Information

Contacts

- **UCAS Teacher Training**
Website: www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training
- **Teach First**
Website: www.teachfirst.org.uk
- **Department of Education Northern Ireland**
Northern Ireland Enquiries
Email: DE.DEWebMail@education-ni.gov.uk
Website: www.deni.gov.uk
- **General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland)**
Scottish enquiries
Email: gtcs@gtcs.org.uk
Website: www.gtcs.org.uk
- **GOV.UK**
UK government services and information
Website: www.gov.uk
- **Teach in Scotland**
Scottish enquiries
Email: teaching@infoscotland.com
Website: www.teachinginscotland.com

- **National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL)**
Website: www.nationalcollege.org.uk
- **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**
Information on Higher Education courses and scholarships through the medium of Welsh
Email: gwybodaeth@colegcymraeg.ac.uk
Website: www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk
- **Welsh Government Education and Skills Department**
Email: customerhelp@gov.wales
Website: www.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en
- **Teacher Training & Education in Wales**
Website: www.teachertrainingcymru.org/

Related Careers

- Nursery Nurse
- NVQ Assessor
- School Lunchtime Supervisor
- History Teacher
- Geography Teacher
- Modern Foreign Languages Teacher
- Teaching Assistant
- Music Teacher
- English Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Playworker
- Special Educational Needs Teacher
- Art and Design Teacher
- Design and Technology Teacher
- Early Years Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Primary Teacher
- Secondary Teacher
- Training Manager
- Higher Education (HE) Lecturer
- School Business Manager
- Teacher of English as a Foreign Language
- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Welsh Teacher
- Nursery Assistant
- Headteacher