

5.2 Teacher Education

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Rules: Teacher Education

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General Rules

- School leavers graduating from senior secondary school with a WASSCE (West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination) with the required marks are eligible to apply for enrolment in a TTC or university for courses which qualify for a teaching position.
- Applicants to teacher education courses should have an aptitude for teaching and be motivated to teach in primary and/or secondary schools. The applicant's attitude is tested at an admission interview.
- The TSC shall inform the MTHE/TTCs annually of the forecasted demand for teachers for the following year and for the next five years to enable MTHE/TTCs to plan the intake of students, costs and other factors.
- The curriculum taught at the teacher training colleges must be regularly adapted to the curriculum taught in schools. The MBSSE, TSC, and MTHE/TTCs cooperate on curriculum development.
- Teaching at TTCs must equip graduates with effective learner-orientated teaching methods, IT skills, and competencies to work as a professional teacher in a school.
- TSC's *professional standards for teachers and school leaders* serves TTCs as a guideline for excellence in teaching.

School Practice

- Every student on a TTC teacher training course must complete two periods of teaching practice at a school with which the TTC has practice arrangements.
- Each practice period covers one TTC term of 4 months.
- The first practice takes place during the second term of the second year.

The second practice takes place during the first term of the last year of the course.

- The student is assigned a mentor during the practice period both at the TTC and at the school, who are suitable in terms of subject speciality, experience and mentoring skills.
- The school practice of a student is managed by TTCs in close cooperation with the school leader and the assigned mentors.
- The student is evaluated after each practice period and is expected to demonstrate improvement in the second period based on their evaluation of the first.

For further details see *Teacher Education processes*.

Distance Learning

- TTCs offer part-time distance learning programmes for acquisition of TC, and HTC-Primary and -Secondary for unqualified teachers.
- Applicants are admitted for distance learning courses subject to the criteria specified at the time of admission.
- Admission criteria include an admission exam in the English language and a letter from the school authorities.

Process: How to enrol at a teacher training college

Admission criteria is specific for each course. The applicant should complete their application on the college's website and, if it meets the criteria of WASSCE credits, the TTC will follow up with an admission interview. Criteria are the following.

Teacher Certificate (TC)

- Aptitude test
- 2 credits in any two subjects at WASSCE

Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC)-Primary

- TC + 3 years teaching experience
- 3 credits at WASSCE

HTC-Secondary

- Teaching experience
- 4 credits at WASSCE

Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)

- HTC plus 4 WASSCE credits
- 5 credits including English language

Post-graduate Diploma

- Degree in a relevant subject

Process: How to enrol in a part-time distance teacher education course

Part-time distance teacher education courses are offered by TTCs and the SLTU.

To enrol in a distance part-time teacher education course at a TTC, the applicant must: apply online to the respective institution; be a serving teacher; attach a letter from the school leader; pass an admission exam in English; and attend an admission interview.

Best Practice: How to arrange and supervise student practice

For further details and instruction please refer to Teacher Mentoring: An Intensive Course for School-based Teacher Mentors TSC, 2019.

The TTC sends a letter asking the school to accept the student for their practice period, stating the requirements of practice.

The school selects a mentor to supervise and guide the student during the practice period

The TTC selects a mentor (supervisor) amongst the lecturers at the school to supervise the process and ensure the learning targets are met.

The supervisor, the school head, the mentor and the student prepare a plan for the practice to ensure all learning and observation needs are covered.

Following the first practice, the students' mentor and supervisor record their comments on the student's performance. The student is expected to improve during their second practice period.

Once each practice is complete, the TTC and school assess the student's learning and achievements, which may also include a test.

Focus areas and procedures for student practice are given in the Manual for Mentoring. School practice.

In general, school practice should cover:

- Subject and curriculum knowledge

- Acquaintance with the subjects taught at the school
- Planning and managing the calendar and timetable of teaching and events
- Preparation of lesson notes and compiling of learning materials
- How to convey the curriculum to pupils effectively, i.e. how to speak, use the whiteboard, involve the learners, etc.
- Application of learner-orientated and participatory teaching methodologies
- Use of the labs (if any)
- Application of IT, internet and educational technology in teaching
- Giving and correcting assignments and homework
- Paying attention to and meeting the requirements of pupils with physical and learning disabilities
- Managing conflict in the classroom
- Assessment of internal tests
- Teamwork with teachers.

Further Reading:

Introduction to teacher education

Pre-service teacher education, which is offered by Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), provides the foundation for a teacher's professional competencies and performance in the classroom. The quality of teaching in schools directly reflects the quality of pre-service teacher education.

It is essential that teaching at the TTCs is of a very high standard and forward looking. TTC curriculums must reflect the latest curriculum taught in schools and TTCs must equip students with effective learner-orientated teaching methods. Furthermore, TTCs must provide students with a good grasp of IT and internet technologies so they can apply these in teaching and equip pupils for the contemporary labour market.

It is government policy that all teachers in primary and secondary schools must be qualified. Therefore, current teachers without a recognised certificate or degree should avail themselves of opportunities for distance and in-service training offered by TTCs to acquire the necessary qualifications.

Teacher education is offered at TTCs in all regions of Sierra Leone. Degree courses for subject specialisation are offered at universities.

Institutions responsible for teacher education

Ministry of Technical and Higher Education

The Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE) has the overall responsibility for all tertiary education in the country and for the education of teachers and school leaders. Amongst its duties, the Ministry certifies and registers tertiary education institutions, prepares education statistics and reports, conducts supervision of institutions, resources and facilities, and ensures the quality and relevance of education.

Teacher Training Colleges

- Teacher Training Colleges (TTC) offer courses in education and teaching leading to TC, HTC primary/secondary, B.Ed., M.Ed., Ph.D. Ed., Diploma Ed.
- Offer part-time online courses leading to TC and HTC primary/secondary.
- Conduct research programmes in education.

Teacher Education is offered at the following Teacher Training Colleges:

Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone (FBC-USL), Freetown

- Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed.)
- Bachelor's and Graduate Degrees in Education

Njala University (NU), Bo

- TC, HTC Primary and HTC Secondary courses

Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science & Technology (EBKUST), Makeni

- TC, HTC Primary and HTC Secondary courses

Eastern Polytechnic (EP), Kenema

- TC, HTC Primary and HTC Secondary courses

Milton Margai College of Education and Technology (MMCET), Freetown

- HTC Secondary and B.Ed. courses

Freetown Teachers' College (FTC)

- TC, HTC Primary and HTC Secondary courses

- Distance learning programme for untrained teachers

Universities

- Offer courses leading to BSc, BA, MSc, MA, and PhD degrees. Accompanied by a Post-graduate Diploma in Education, this qualifies graduates for teaching in schools, particularly secondary school, which require teachers with subject-specialisation in 2-3 subjects.

Awarding & accreditation bodies

- West African Examinations Council (sets the criteria for admission to tertiary education)
- For HTC and below: the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA)
- For Degree courses: The Universities are awarding bodies.

TSC

The Teacher Professional Development and Performance Department in the TSC is an important partner in the education of teachers. The quality of education in schools reflects the quality of education at TTCs so coordination between TSC and the TTCs is essential.