



COBIS Training Schools – Spring 2026

In 2019, COBIS introduced COBIS Training Schools – a badging and quality assurance scheme to enable schools to demonstrate the breadth and quality of their commitment to professional development, with an emphasis on Initial Teacher Training (ITT), career progression routes and workforce development. COBIS Training Schools serve as regional hubs, hosting professional learning and networking events (virtual or face-to-face) and delivering ITT, as well as sharing and modelling best practice. COBIS is now accepting applications from schools wishing to become COBIS Training Schools from 2026/27.

Background

COBIS recognises that the best British international schools are committed to professional learning across the whole school workforce. COBIS Training School status is designed to recognise this commitment. COBIS Training Schools design, implement, facilitate and encourage high-quality learning experiences across the school. COBIS Training Schools embody a learning culture for all members of the school community. This includes students, but also teaching and support staff, Governors, parents, and the wider community. Through this provision, COBIS Training Schools play an important role in the growth, development and professionalisation of the current and future global school workforce, benefitting both COBIS schools and the wider British education sector.

COBIS Training Schools also play an important role within the COBIS network, connecting with and supporting other schools through sharing best practice and expertise, hosting ConnectED sessions, informal school-to-school support, and contributing to COBIS conferences, webinars, blogs, etc.

The COBIS Training School scheme includes a focus on Initial Teacher Training. The international school sector is experiencing considerable growth, and a significant number of additional teachers are required to meet the staffing needs of schools. The 2022 COBIS report on *Teacher Supply in British International Schools* highlighted the fact that 91% of British International Leaders find recruiting quality teachers 'somewhat or 'very challenging'. International schools can play a greater role in training teachers to support this challenge. Recruitment and retention remains a challenge, with the 2025 ISC Research report citing teacher turnover as a critical concern. By engaging with overseas Initial Teacher Training routes, including the new iQTS, COBIS Schools can make a positive contribution to the growth of the global teacher workforce.

What are COBIS Training Schools / Why should my school become a COBIS Training School:

- An international kitemark to demonstrate the breadth and quality of the commitment to professional development, with emphasis on Initial Teacher Training (ITT), career progression routes and workforce development.
- COBIS Training Schools serve as regional hubs, hosting professional learning and networking events and delivering ITT, as well as sharing and modelling best practice.
- COBIS Training School status can support schools with attracting and retaining high-quality staff – adding value for prospective teachers and other staff.
- CPD Leaders from COBIS Training Schools have the opportunity to be part of a select network to share best practice, collaborate, and contribute to the assessment of Training School applications.

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- The application and quality assurance processes help schools to identify and address any gaps in their provision as well as encouraging schools to reflect on the impact and evaluation of their existing provision.
- The scheme encourages schools to work alongside other schools in the network in professional partner groups to share best practice, collaborate, and develop staff.
- In the current teacher recruitment climate, with increasing concerns about teacher shortages, COBIS Training Schools encourage more schools to engage with Initial Teacher Training routes to support the growth of the global teacher workforce.
- The kitemark supports recruitment of students – prospective families recognise the school is committed to developing staff who, in turn, work to get the best outcomes for students.
- COBIS Training School status provides external validation to demonstrate commitment to CPD to host country ministries of education, regulators, investors, etc.

ITT Providers:

COBIS has signed Memoranda of Understanding with high-quality Higher Education and commercial ITT providers who are committed to supporting expansion of training opportunities in our schools. COBIS Training Schools have access to this network, and to its competitive terms, to extend existing relationships, develop new ones, and enable new partnerships.

How to Apply:

COBIS is inviting applications from schools who wish to join the COBIS Training School scheme for the 2026/27 academic year. In order to apply, schools are asked to complete an application and provide supporting materials by the deadline of **13 March 2026**. Applications will be reviewed by CPD Leaders from the current cohort of Training Schools. The new COBIS Training Schools will be announced at the COBIS Annual Conference in London (9-11 May 2026).

Eligibility and Validity:

All COBIS Schools (excluding Applicant and Provisional schools) are eligible to apply. Once approved, schools retain status subject to successful completion of an annual Quality Assurance exercise.

Quality Assurance and Self-Reflection:

Training Schools are asked to participate in an annual, light-touch Quality Assurance exercise. The aim of this process is to support the schools' own reflection on professional learning, as well as ensuring engagement with the Training Schools scheme. The self-reflection rubric was developed in consultation with Training Schools.

The process is as follows:

- The self-reflection rubric is shared with Training Schools in the autumn term
- In the summer term, Professional Partner groups to meet to discuss their own school's progress against the rubric, share particular successes and consider next steps
- Following the discussion, a simple one-page form (included with the self-reflection rubric) is submitted to COBIS highlighting ways in which the school has engaged with/met the Training School minimum expectations in 26/27; particular CPD/Professional Learning successes in 26/27; and brief details of 3-5 CPD/Professional Learning activities or events from the past year that have had the greatest impact

Minimum Expectations:

All COBIS Training Schools are unique and will have different priorities for professional learning and development within their school community. The COBIS Training Schools scheme

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is designed to support these priorities and provide flexibility for Training Schools. The application form will ask schools to provide details of involvement in Initial Teacher Training as well as evidence of how career progression routes and workforce development are supported.

Once approved, Training Schools will be expected to meet the following minimum requirements:

Host at least 2 CPD events a year which are open to external participants, for example:

- Training days or conferences (virtual or f2f)
- Hosting cohorts of courses such as CPML or CPAH that are open to external candidates
- Facilitating COBIS ConnectED sessions
- Delivering a COBIS webinar

Support at least 2 trainee teachers/year, for example:

- iPGCE, AO QTS, iQTS, ECT induction
- Hosting placements for trainee teachers

Engage in at least 2 examples a year of school-to-school support (formal or informal) or sharing best practice, for example:

- Facilitating COBIS ConnectED sessions
- Delivering/facilitating sessions at COBIS conferences
- COBIS blogs or webinars
- Hosting job alike sessions or meetings with other schools
- Hosting informal visits (virtual or f2f) with colleagues from other schools
- Involvement in multi-school projects (research, etc.)

Engage with wider Training Schools project, including:

- Attendance at Training Schools ConnectED sessions
- Meet informally with Training School professional partners
- Complete annual QA exercises/self-reflection with Training School professional partners
- Provide details of forthcoming events (open to external participants) to COBIS for inclusion on the COBIS website
- Use #COBISTrainingSchool hashtag on relevant social media posts
- Include the COBIS Training School logo on the school webpage
- Contribute to review of new Training School applications

COBIS will:

- Maintain a Training Schools page on the COBIS website to promote work of Training Schools
- Circulate opportunities for Training Schools to contribute to COBIS platforms, consultations, events, etc.
- Showcase the work of Training Schools through a range of platforms
- Facilitate networking opportunities for Training School colleagues to enable collaboration
- Divide Training Schools into groups of Professional Partners to facilitate cross-group working, collaboration and sharing best practice, as well as for the QA process
- Provide ad hoc support to Training Schools as needed

Professional Partners:

All Training Schools will be divided into groups of three or four Professional Partners to enable more opportunities for collaboration and networking between schools. These introductions will be facilitated by COBIS, and schools will be encouraged to arrange informal meetings. COBIS will nominate an individual from each group to facilitate the first meeting.

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Cost to Schools:

Non-refundable administrative fee to apply: £325 plus VAT.

More Information:

If you would like to have an informal discussion about COBIS Training Schools, and whether this process is suitable for your school, please contact James Kendall, CPD Operations Officer, james.kendall@cobis.org.uk

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