



Department
for Education

Further education (FE) initial teacher education (ITE) bursaries funding manual

2020 to 2021 academic year

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What is an ITE bursary?

An ITE bursary is a financial incentive to attract high-quality individuals into the teaching profession in the further education (FE) sector. The bursary amount varies according to the subject in which they train to teach. These bursaries are distinct from the [school teacher training bursaries](#) also available.

The bursaries, available for the 2020 to 2021 academic year, are awarded to trainees based on their relevant qualifications or professional experience, and their intention to teach a designated priority subject in the FE sector.

Bursary awards are fixed for the duration of the trainee's ITE programme, and are for programmes starting in or after September 2020, and finishing no later than August 2021 (for full-time courses) or August 2022 (for part-time courses), only. Awards will be made from a finite funding pot on a first-come-first-served basis, as detailed in the [bursary allocations](#) section.

Bursaries available

ITE bursaries are available in the below subjects for courses starting in the 2020 to 2021 academic year. See the [bursaries eligibility](#) section for details of trainee requirements.

Subject	Bursary
Mathematics	£26,000
Science, including Biology, Chemistry, and/or Physics	£26,000
Engineering (and/or manufacturing)	£26,000
Computing	£26,000
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	£15,000
English	£12,000

Funding will not be provided for any subjects that are not included in this list.

You must not make assumptions about the continuation, value or scope of ITE bursary awards in future years based on the information provided in this document.

We will publish information regarding the availability of any future training bursaries (beyond the 2020 to 2021 academic year) at the appropriate time.

Bursary eligibility

For a trainee to be eligible to receive a bursary, you must make sure that, from the first day of training and throughout the course, the trainee meets the criteria set out below. These points should be read in conjunction with the corresponding sections below, which give further guidance.

To be eligible, a trainee must:

- be eligible to receive student support
- hold minimum Level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics, and at least a Level 3 qualification in their subject of training (or have appropriate professional experience)
- be taking a qualifying pre-service ITE course in England
- not already be in possession of a diploma in education and training (DET), DET-compliant qualification or equivalent
- not already hold, or be eligible to receive, early years teacher status (EYTS), qualified teacher status (QTS) or qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS) status
- not be undertaking paid teaching work which contributes to their training when in receipt of the bursary
- not be simultaneously undertaking any other ITE course, training scheme or programme that leads to a DET or DET-compliant qualification
- meet other related expectations, including intending to seek an FE teaching post in England after qualification

Eligibility for UK student support

To receive an ITE bursary the trainee must meet one or more of the definitions for being an 'eligible' student to receive grants and loans towards tuition fees or living costs as set out in the [Education \(Student Support\) Regulations 2011](#), part two (eligibility).

This includes meeting the requirement to be 'Home or EU status' for the purpose of assessment of fees. For further information on this requirement you should contact the [Student Loans Company](#).

Trainees from the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey may not meet one of the definitions above. However, they may still be eligible for support from their respective home education departments and, where this is the case, they will still be eligible for an ITE bursary on the basis that they meet all other criteria.

EU students starting a higher education course in England during the 2020 to 2021 academic year may continue to apply for [financial support and home fee status for the](#)

[duration of their course](#). They will remain eligible to apply for undergraduate and postgraduate support during the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

International students may be eligible to receive bursaries or grants providing they meet the eligibility criteria, including being eligible to receive student finance. International students can contact the [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](#) for advice on student support and other issues around studying in the UK.

Qualifications

To be eligible to receive a bursary, a trainee must hold qualifications in English and mathematics at Level 2 as a minimum. Where a trainee is otherwise suitable but has not successfully achieved Level 2, you may wish to give them an opportunity to show that they can meet the required standard either by taking an equivalence test or by offering other evidence of attainment, which should demonstrate a similar level and breadth. You should consider making similar arrangements for candidates who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.

You should be confident that a trainee's subject qualification has the same level of breadth and depth that would be expected of a UK Level 3 qualification. If the trainee does not hold a relevant Level 3 qualification, you can use your discretion when considering the trainee's skills, knowledge and experience – including relevant professional experience – to determine whether their subject knowledge is sufficiently robust to allow them to complete an ITE programme successfully.

An ITE bursary award is dependent on the subject that a trainee trains to teach – not the subject of any other qualifications they hold.

Example

If a trainee with a degree in English and relevant sector experience trains to teach physics, they will be eligible for a £26,000 physics bursary. If they train to teach English, they will be eligible for a £12,000 English bursary.

This should not change your selection or recruitment process, including making judgements about the suitability of qualifications or professional experience to the subject of training.

Further information on making and recording qualification decisions is available from [annex B: assessing UK academic qualifications](#).

Qualifying ITE courses

To be eligible to receive a bursary, the trainee must be recruited to a qualifying pre-service ITE course in England, beginning in or after September 2020 and finishing no later than August 2021 (for full-time courses) or August 2022 (for part-time courses).

A qualifying course must lead, upon successful completion, to the award of a Level 5 DET or DET-compliant qualification, with a specialisation in one of the subjects identified in [annex A: list of subjects eligible for a bursary](#).

Courses that enable a trainee to be recommended for the award of EYTS or QTS, or a non-DET-compliant qualification, are not eligible for ITE bursary funding.

Combination courses

The course content must be at least 50% of the bursary subject awarded.

Example

A course with content of 50% or more in English and the remainder in drama would receive the English bursary.

A course with content of more than 50% drama would not be eligible for a bursary as there is no bursary award for this subject.

Courses with equal content of two subjects will be awarded the bursary for the subject which attracts the highest bursary rate.

Possession of a DET, DET-compliant qualification, or equivalent

Individuals who hold a DET or DET-compliant qualification on the first day of their ITE course are not eligible for a training bursary. Separate continuing professional development (CPD) may be appropriate for those who already hold these qualifications.

Information on qualifications which may be considered 'DET-compliant' is available from the [Student Finance England eligibility guidance](#).

Possession of, or eligibility for EYTS, QTS or QTLS status

Individuals who hold, or are eligible to receive, EYTS, QTS or QTLS status are not eligible for an ITE bursary.

Paid teaching work

Trainees receiving bursary payments must not receive a salary or other payment for any type of teaching work which contributes to their training whilst undertaking their ITE course.

Undertaking other ITE courses, training schemes or programmes that lead to a DET or DET-compliant qualification

To be eligible for an ITE bursary, trainees must not simultaneously undertake any other:

- teacher training course, including teaching apprenticeships
- programme leading to a DET or DET-compliant qualification

Trainee expectations

We expect that trainees who accept a place with you and are eligible to receive a bursary will:

- inform you of any changes in their bank account details and address
- promptly inform you if they intend to withdraw from the course
- sign a declaration of understanding with you to the effect that they expect to seek an FE teaching post in England on successful completion of their course

You should also make it clear how you intend to pay the bursary to the trainee. The [bursary payments](#) section contains more details on payment patterns.

Bursary allocations

General process

Bursaries are funded from a pre-defined pot of money, and the number that can be awarded will therefore be limited. It is possible that not every candidate who meets the eligibility criteria will be able to receive a bursary; this will depend on the total number of eligible applications received.

For the academic year 2020 to 2021, we will make available funding for at least 300 pre-service bursaries. These will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, regardless of the trainee's choice of eligible subject specialism.

Alongside ITE bursaries, in academic year 2020 to 2021 we are also funding training grants to support in-service training of teachers in maths, English and SEND ([further information available](#)). We will make available funding for at least 150 such grants.

Once 300 pre-service bursaries or 150 training grants have been awarded, any remaining funding will be allocated – on a first-come-first-served basis, and regardless of subject – to those on the relevant waiting list. If 300 bursaries are awarded and remaining funding made available for further bursary awards, we will ensure distinct funding remains available for up to 150 grants until the end of 2020, at which point we will consider whether to release this for further bursaries – and vice versa.

Once the available funding has been exhausted, we will retain details of anyone remaining on a waiting list in case any trainee withdraws before their course starts, and their bursary can be reallocated.

If a trainee who has been deemed eligible for a bursary withdraws before the start of the programme, you must notify us immediately, so we can consider reassigning the funding to another trainee. You must not assume that such funding can be retained or will be allocated to another trainee in your institution, unless and until you have received explicit confirmation from us.

Confirming bursary awards

You must determine whether a trainee is eligible for a bursary, and contact us to seek confirmation of whether a bursary can be awarded, before informing them in writing.

You can seek confirmation of bursary availability for trainees at any time, either on a case-by-case basis or in batches, ahead of a course starting, by emailing FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk. You will need to provide details of:

- trainee name(s)
- when individual trainees applied

- intended ITE course
- level 2 qualifications held
- level 3 qualification held, or equivalence

You should make sure that trainees are informed of whether they are eligible for a bursary in good time before the start of their ITE course. We cannot provide written confirmation to trainees.

Bursary payments

You're responsible for the management and administration of bursary payments, including:

- assessment of eligibility
- awarding the bursary to the trainee
- notifying us in a timely manner if a trainee withdraws from their course

To be able to receive bursary funding for your trainees, you must complete and return a grant funding agreement (GFA). When you first request confirmation of bursary availability for specific trainees we will issue a GFA for your signature, which you must return as soon as possible. If you are not already registered with us as a grant recipient it is particularly important to return the signed GFA quickly as there is a lead-in time to process these. Failure to do this promptly may mean we are unable to release funding until after trainees have started their courses. You will be issued with a single GFA, regardless of the number of bursary applications made; no funding can be released for any applicant until we have received and accepted the signed GFA.

If you are a new ITE provider in the academic year 2020 to 2021 and have not previously received grant funding you will need to set up a DfE supply record to receive payments. You can do this using the [standing provider form](#).

Details of other requirements, including around maintaining necessary evidence and audit trails, are set out in the [monitoring, assurance and data requirements](#) section.

Trainee payments

You should make bursary payments to trainees throughout the academic year as detailed in [annex D: value and timing for ITE bursary payments](#).

These payments are not taxable. However, as with student maintenance loans, they may be treated as capital income for the purposes of assessing income for trainees in receipt of state benefits. We advise you to refer trainees to their local benefits office to determine their eligibility for state benefits.

If a trainee is found to be ineligible for the bursary, we'll recover any bursary payments made by you to them. You must make all reasonable efforts to recover bursary payments from your trainee.

Payment eligibility

Trainees will typically be entitled to receive the first bursary payment if they are actively engaged on the ITE programme on the first day of the month following their start date.

Example

A trainee commencing their course in September 2020 will be entitled to their first payment if they are actively undertaking the programme on 1 October. They'll be entitled to the second payment if they are on the programme on 1 November, and so on. This is regardless of your individual payment date.

Where a trainee successfully completes their course before the end of the academic year, you can choose to pay them the full balance of the bursary early at your discretion, but we will continue to make payments to you on the existing monthly cycle.

Training bursary funding must not be paid:

- as part of maternity or paternity pay arrangements
- during a period of unauthorised absence

In the event that a trainee is absent through sickness you may only make one further payment following the first day of absence. After this, if the absence will continue into the next payment period, the absence should be treated as a period of deferral from the course, and so withdrawal from the bursary scheme, and payments must stop with immediate effect. See the [withdrawals and deferrals](#) section for more information

These principles also apply for trainees who start their courses later in the academic year – subject to their still completing no later than August 2021 (for full-time courses) or August 2022 (for part-time courses). For example, if a trainee commences their course in January 2021, they will be entitled to their first payment (subject to bursaries still being available) if they are actively completing the programme on 1 February.

Payments must not start before the trainee commences the course.

You must maintain an audit trail of all payments made to trainees and any decisions around payment structures.

We maintain the right to request this information at any time for assurance purposes.

Withdrawals and deferrals

Eligible trainees who withdraw from a course will be entitled to payment for each month up to, and including, the month in which they formally withdraw. Trainees are not typically able to defer their study where this would mean they complete the course after the 2021 to 2022 academic year and continue to receive an ITE bursary on return, so must be treated as withdrawals for the purposes of bursary management. Please contact us immediately if exceptional circumstances may apply.

Example

If a trainee starts their programme in September 2020 and withdraws (directly or by deferring) in January 2021, they'll be entitled to 5 payments in total as they were active on the course on:

- 1 September 2020
- 1 October 2020
- 1 November 2020
- 1 December 2020
- 1 January 2021

Withdrawal information should reflect the dates given to Student Finance England for student support purposes.

In the event of withdrawal, you must:

- suspend all bursary payments to the trainee immediately
- make sure that their records are updated, detailing the formal withdrawal date, by notifying us at FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk

We'll recover any overpayments made to you after the trainee has withdrawn, and will not reimburse you for any payments made to trainees in error.

We expect you to recover any bursary overpayments from trainees.

Suspended trainees

Trainees who are suspended from their course pending investigation may continue to receive their bursary payments. If a decision is reached to terminate the trainee's programme, you must notify us immediately so we can stop payments straightaway. If you make any payments in error, these should be recovered from the trainee.

Monitoring, assurance and data requirements

Monitoring and assurance

We have a responsibility to make sure that public funds and assets generated from applicable ITE places are properly managed in line with your grant funding agreement.

You'll be required to demonstrate that you have administered all bursary funding in accordance with your grant funding agreements, including:

- selecting and recruiting the highest-quality candidates to programmes of ITE
- designing and delivering high-quality programmes of ITE
- rigorously assessing trainees against all of the relevant [FE professional standards](#)
- assuring the quality of trainee placements undertaken and mentoring received
- demonstrating propriety and adequate controls in your financial management and comply with relevant financial reporting or governance requirements
- complying with our data requirements and requests as stipulated in all our guidance
- passing on 100% of the training bursary funding issued to you under your grant funding agreement to the trainee

You must hold full records of all trainees in receipt of bursaries, including evidence of trainees' academic qualifications achieved (or other evidence of attainment) prior to starting their ITE.

Trainees must hold the highest eligible qualification on which their assessment was based, prior to starting the course. We reserve the right to request this evidence at any point during the academic year from you, for the purpose of quality monitoring and funding assurance. This may include copies of original documentation provided by trainees, including qualification certificates.

We also expect to see evidence of:

- payments you've made to trainees
- evidence of trainee attendance

It's advisable that you keep records for three years after the cohort has finished.

We require rigorous assurance of all bursary payments, including your accounting officer verifying the data sets. A sample "Annex G" will be included in your GFA which demonstrates the breadth of this requirement, with more detailed guidance regarding the Annex G process to be provided at the end of the academic year 2020 to 2021 (annual certification of expenditure arrangements).

We will also review the allocated ITE bursary funding that you receive and reconcile this amount with the trainee records submitted. Funding will be adjusted to meet the actual amount required. Where funding that you have received is more than the amount that you were entitled to we will recover the excess by invoicing you or offsetting this amount against any future payments.

Remember to make sure that all trainee records submitted to us are complete. This includes amending the records of trainees who:

- withdraw (directly or by deferring) from their ITE course
- start later in academic year 2020 to 2021

We reserve the right to delay or withhold payments if data is inaccurate or incomplete.

We'll carry out a reconciliation exercise between the bursaries allocated and the actual trainee records as confirmed by our data collection exercises during and after the period of training. In the event of any variances, we reserve the right to ask you for explanations of the variances and to seek further information. We won't reimburse you for any bursaries paid to ineligible trainees.

You'll be asked to complete an Annex G in accordance with published guidance, containing: income, expenditure and trainee data. This has to be independently audited and countersigned by the accounting officer (see [annex F: assurance and audit process](#)).

We'll use this information to reconcile the funding that you have received with your declared expenditure, taking into account the effect of withdrawn trainees. Prior to the Annex G we'll request an interim return to provide an indicative training bursary expenditure figure so that we know what is likely to be spent on the programme.

We'll write to you regarding the interim indicative return and we will issue more detailed guidance regarding the Annex G at the end of academic year 2020 to 2021 so that you're able to comply with the grant funding agreement requirements.

Data requirements and reporting

You must submit relevant trainee-level data to us, at specific times before, during and after the course, including:

- individual and course data
- applications
- recruitment and employment outcomes

[Annex E: ITE provider bursary funding cycle](#) sets out the key timeline, and we will provide further details of requirements if you receive confirmation of bursary availability for your trainees.

Failure to comply with requests for data may be taken into account when we consider further requests for any future funding.

Any queries regarding the submission of trainee-level data should be directed to us at:
FE.workforceincentives@education.gov.uk.

Annex A: list of subjects eligible for a bursary

We'll provide bursaries for the following ITE programmes:

- computing
- engineering (and/or manufacturing)
- English
- mathematics
- science (including biology, chemistry, and/or physics)
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Funding will not be provided for any subjects that are not included in this list.

Annex B: assessing UK academic qualifications

You must make sure that those responsible for making decisions on bursary eligibility are familiar with, or have access to, advice on the range of qualifications generally regarded as equivalent to Levels 2 and 3 in the UK. This may include:

- overseas qualifications
- professional or vocational qualifications
- qualifications no longer available but held by mature applicants

You should be aware of the range of qualifications awarded by UK institutions. In all cases, you're responsible for deciding whether an individual's highest relevant qualification meets the bursary eligibility criteria. This includes determining whether a particular qualification demonstrates the breadth and type of academic engagement that would be expected.

Where the trainee does not hold a formal qualification in the subject to be taught, you will need to assess whether the skills, knowledge and experience that they possess in the relevant subject/specialism is sufficient for them to meet the requirements of the training programme.

You must keep an audit trail of how you assess equivalency. In determining equivalency you may:

- use internal colleagues, such as those in the relevant subject department
- consult external organisations, such as the awarding body of the equivalent qualification or the professional body representing a particular professional domain
- conduct a review of the course content or transcripts of the other qualification

We reserve the right to request this information for assurance purposes and to ensure the robustness of your processes.

Where providers lack the institutional experience to assess the validity of academic qualifications they should refer to the [Framework for Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#).

Annex C: assessing overseas qualifications

Overseas qualification equivalency

When selecting trainees with overseas qualifications you should make sure that they comply with the ITE bursary requirements. A Statement of Comparability can be obtained from the [National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom](#) (UK NARIC) which confirms whether or not the trainee's qualification is comparable to a UK qualification.

You must hold full records of all trainees in receipt of bursaries, including any qualifications or training they referenced in their application which was achieved before starting their ITE.

Decisions on eligibility must be based solely on the content of the qualification itself and must not include any unrelated additional qualifications. Where an individual does not hold at least a Level 3 qualification in the subject of training, you must make a professional assessment to determine eligibility. This should include taking into account the skills, knowledge and experience that an applicant has and the extent to which these will stand the applicant in good stead in order to meet the requirements of the ITE programme.

We reserve the right to request these details from you at any point during the academic year for the purpose of monitoring the robustness of your processes.

This may include:

- copies of original documentation provided by trainees, including qualification certificates
- correspondence related to the decision making process, for example, advice from internal colleagues or external organisations such as awarding bodies

Annex D: value and timing of trainee bursary payments

Payments for full-time courses

Bursary awards should typically be paid in a minimum of 10 equal monthly instalments over the duration of the course, as shown below. However, you may choose to amend the payment profile, at your discretion, for example to make an enhanced final payment, to help with retention.

Bursary award	Value of monthly instalments (for 10 month payment structure)
£12,000	£1,200
£15,000	£1,500
£26,000	£2,600

Payments for part-time courses

You will receive the same payments for part-time trainees, in academic year 2020 to 2021, as for full-time trainees. You must make sure that the bursary payments broadly reflect the proportion of the course that the trainee has completed at any point, even where a trainee on a part-time course has agreed with you a specific monthly payment plan over the course to avoid financial hardship.

Annex E: ITE provider bursary funding cycle

Key dates in the bursary funding cycle

From March 2020

You will need to submit trainee and course data when seeking confirmation of bursary availability, ahead of receiving any confirmation. After this you will receive your grant funding agreement (GFA), which you should sign and return to us as soon as possible after receipt, to allow for prompt processing. GFAs must be received before July 2020 to ensure payments can be made from September.

You must notify us immediately if any trainee subsequently withdraws from their course. We will incorporate this into our bursary model and confirm the process for recovering unallocated funding.

August 2020

We'll write to you about funding amounts for September to November 2020 based on your trainee data.

September 2020

The first payment will be made if you have a GFA in place, based on your trainee data.

October 2020

The second payment will be made if you have a GFA in place, based on your trainee data.

You will need to provide any updated trainee records, by exception, using the form which will be provided, before 16 October, so we can incorporate this into our bursary model.

November 2020

The third payment will be made if you have a GFA in place, based on your trainee data.

We'll write to you about funding amounts from December 2020 based on your trainee data.

December 2020

The fourth payment will be made if you have a GFA in place, based on your trainee data.

You will need to provide any updated trainee records, by exception, using the form which will be provided, before 11 December, so we can incorporate this into our bursary model.

January to July 2021

The remaining payments will be made each month if you have a GFA in place, based on your trainee data.

You will need to provide any updated trainee records, by exception, using the form which will be provided, before 19 March and 9 July, so we can incorporate this into our bursary model.

December 2021

You will need to provide retention-related data on former trainees alongside your Annex G return.

Part-time trainees

The above timescale for the academic year 2020 to 2021 applies equally to part-time trainees, but you will also need to provide updated trainee records to the same schedule for the academic year 2021 to 2022, and in December 2022.

Annex F: assurance and audit process

Key events in the bursary funding cycle

June to July 2021

We'll send indicative Annex G documents to you in June 2021.

These should be returned by 31 July 2021.

September to December 2021

We'll send final Annex G documents to you at the end of the academic year. We'll pre-populate this with the amount of funding you have received. The completed document will help you to provide us with the necessary assurance for both the amount received and the purpose for which it was used. Further guidance on this process will be sent to you at the same time.

These should be returned by 31 December 2021.

January to March 2022

Recoveries and reimbursements will be completed through appropriate methods, such as invoices.



Department
for Education

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