



Department
for Education

Arrangements for initial teacher training provider closure and withdrawal of ITT accreditation

**Guidance for providers of Initial Teacher
Training and their partners**

January 2020

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Summary

About this guidance

This publication provides guidance from the Department for Education (DfE). It is designed to help accredited providers of initial teacher training (ITT) who are either voluntarily ceasing to offer ITT provision, or where the Secretary of State (SoS) has decided to withdraw accreditation.

This document replaces the [Closure arrangements for providers ceasing to offer initial teacher training](#) and [Accreditation withdrawal process](#) documents.

This document sets out:

For closure arrangements:

- The requirements DfE expects the ITT provider to meet during the closure process; and
- The process for ITT providers and DfE to follow when a provider ceases to offer ITT Provision.

For accreditation withdrawal:

- The process by which the DfE will consider its response to any evidence of non-compliance with the withdrawal criteria set out below, and the actions it will take; and
- Provision for review of a decision to withdraw accreditation.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for accredited providers of ITT and their partners.

Voluntary closure

Introduction

Accredited ITT providers that intend voluntarily to cease to offer ITT provision, whether permanently or temporarily, must inform the Department for Education (DfE).

This section sets out the requirements of ITT providers during the temporary or permanent closure of provision.

Requests for temporary closure must be agreed by DfE and would typically be for a maximum of 12 months; thereafter DfE reserves the right to withdraw accreditation in the event of the provider failing to resume its ITT provision.

Closing provider actions and responsibilities

The table below summarises the responsibilities of the ITT provider and DfE, during the closure of ITT provision:

Provider responsibilities	DfE responsibilities
Formally notify DfE by email of intention to close provision to ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk	Arrange an initial risk assessment meeting to discuss the closure process and the next steps.
Inform all trainees and partners of proposed closure of provision.	Inform relevant DfE teams of the intended closure of provision.
Complete the ITT Provider Closure Documentation (ITTPCD) and return to: ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk .	Provide support to complete the ITTPCD.
Comply with the ITT criteria throughout the closure process and maintain high quality training provision.	
Identify an alternative provider and ensure that trainees, including those who have deferred or interrupted their training, have confirmed provision to continue and complete their programme within reasonable timescales.	Assign a DfE Associate. Actions will be set during this visit to ensure continuing compliance throughout the closure process. Associates will discuss with ITT Providers optimum date for closure.

Responsibility for any School Direct places remains with the lead school.	Associates will confirm with DfE alternative arrangements for deferred trainees or trainees who have interrupted their training.
Publish closure of teacher training courses, following the guidance here https://www2.publish-teacher-training-courses.service.gov.uk/guidance and update provider website with date of closure.	Remove all provider-led places allocated after the date of closure.
Provide DfE with all required financial data.	Provide financial reporting support and advice.
Make provision for NQTs to request and obtain references for future employment.	Inform Ofsted and other external stakeholders of proposed closure.
Continue to supply trainee data to DfE during closure process.	Where appropriate remove provider from Assessment Only list and list of early years ITT providers.
Communicate with all affected applicants holding offers on the UCAS application system, informing them of decision to close and setting out options.	Where appropriate, remove from Subject Knowledge Enhancement list.

Alternative arrangements

Providers should ensure that the alternative provider's arrangements for completing the programme are comparable to their own. In particular, the location and appropriateness of any school placements. Alternative providers must not be rated less than 'good' according to Ofsted. Undergraduate trainees should be able to complete their degree after the closure is confirmed either with the closing provider or with an alternative academic awarding body.

Any partner lead school should be informed of the decision to close as soon as possible after the decision to close has been made.

Lead schools may either change their ratifying ITT provider, or withdraw from delivery.

Quality assurance

Any applicants holding offers on the UCAS application system for the academic year after closure should be informed of the decision to close and provided with the option of a place at an alternative provider. Alternative arrangements must be approved by the DfE.

Providers must continue to supply information on trainee data to DfE throughout the closure process and ensure that trainee information on the DfE Database of Trainee Teachers and Providers (DTTP) is up to date by closure.

Before the final closure of provision, an alternative provider must have access to the closing provider's DTTP account and any dormant records relating to deferred or undergraduate trainees.

The provider must confirm to ITT.Allocations@education.gov.uk the arrangements that have been agreed with partner schools and other providers before submitting any requests to make changes to their courses, including permission to recruit and allocations.

Notification of decision to cease to offer provision for ITT

The accounting officer must notify the DfE of the provider's intention to cease to offer ITT provision, by emailing the ITT Market Regulation team at itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk

The notification should include:

- confirmation that the closure decision has been ratified in accordance with the provider's governance arrangements
- reasons for the decision
- an anticipated date when training programmes will cease
- details of the designated point of contact who will co-ordinate the closure process (closure manager)
- in the case of temporary closure, the anticipated dates that training programmes will cease and recommence.

Receipt of closure notification

The ITT Market Regulation team at the DfE will acknowledge receipt of the closure notification and assign a named point of contact to provide guidance through the process.

On receipt of this notification, the ITT Market Regulation team will arrange an initial risk assessment meeting to discuss the closure process and the next steps.

The ITT provider closure document

An ITT Provider Closure Document template (ITTPCD) must be completed and returned within 28 days of the risk assessment meeting.

The purpose of the ITTPCD is to ensure:

- compliance with the [ITT criteria and supporting advice](#)
- the interests of trainees are protected
- any financial obligations are met.

The ITTPCD requires the provision of information relating to current and deferred trainees, financial arrangements and closure plans.

All affected trainees should be detailed within the ITTPCD.

Support from DfE

In order to review plans for the closure of provision and provide support during the process, the ITT Market Regulation team will arrange for a DfE Associate to visit the provider. This visit should be attended by the Director of ITT (or equivalent) and the provider's Accounting Officer.

The assigned DfE Associate will review the ITTPCD and offer advice.

Accreditation withdrawal

DfE will agree a final date of closure with the provider. Confirmation will be sent to the designated point of contact identified on the ITTPCD. This should be acknowledged within two working days from the date of receipt.

DfE will issue confirmation of the withdrawal of accreditation by email at least two weeks prior to the agreed closure date.

Finance and Funding

Once a closure date is agreed between the ITT Provider and the DfE, and following cessation of ITT provision, DfE will require an Annual Accounts Return to be completed in the ITTPCD.

The Annual Accounts Return is the same accounts return that ITT providers complete on an annual basis. It contains:

- Audit Grant Return (AGR);
- Income and Expenditure, and;
- Balance Sheet.

All sections within this return need to be completed, signed by the Accounting Officer, and independently audited. An audited copy must be submitted to the ITT Market Regulation Team at itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk by 31 December, following the last academic year of operation.

If there is any unspent DfE funding recorded on the balance sheet that hasn't been committed as part of the closure and is due to be recovered from the closing provider, the ITT Market Regulation Team will inform the ITT Funding Team who will action the recovery by raising an invoice for the required amount.

Any unpaid bursaries for deferred trainees will be recorded on the AGR as part of any unspent balance owing to DfE and will be passed onto the alternative provider once the trainee resumes their training.

Any deferred funding will be made available to the new provider (where applicable) upon receipt of confirmation that the continuing trainees are on the relevant course and remain eligible to receive the funding. This will be recovered by DfE if the trainee subsequently withdraws from the course.

Withdrawal of accreditation

This section sets out the circumstances that may lead to the withdrawal of accreditation, and the requirements of ITT providers during this process.

Accredited providers of initial teacher training (ITT) must comply with the [ITT criteria and supporting advice](#). The DfE may withdraw accreditation, where:

- i. the provider demonstrates impropriety or inadequate controls in its financial management, or does not comply with relevant financial reporting or governance requirements
- ii. the provider fails to comply with DfE data and reporting requirements
- iii. the provider fails to adhere to any DfE guidance relating to ITT
- iv. the provider fails to regulate their volume of trainees in accordance with the current DfE allocation methodology.
- v. QTS provision is repeatedly of 'requires improvement' or lower quality¹
- vi. provision is non-compliant with one or more of the specified ITT criteria
- vii. the provider ceases to offer provision.

Non-compliance

ITT provision will be deemed non-compliant where a provider is in breach of one or more of the above criteria.

Evidence from which non-compliance will be considered might include ;

- Ofsted inspection reports
- DfE visits, financial returns
- Feedback from schools, trainees, newly qualified teachers (NQTs), or providers themselves

In all but the most serious cases of non-compliance, cases in which non-compliance is based on Ofsted inspection findings, and cases in which the provider has ceased to offer provision, the provider will be afforded reasonable opportunity to rectify the problem, preventing consequent consideration of withdrawal of accreditation.

¹ As determined by Ofsted inspection grade criteria.

Ofsted complaint outcome

Where a provider has submitted a complaint to Ofsted regarding a second judgement received of 'requires improvement' or lower, for any one phase of its QTS provision, withdrawal of accreditation will not commence until any complaint about the judgement has been heard and resolved by Ofsted.

Consecutive less than 'good' Ofsted judgements of Early Years Teacher Training (EYTT) will lead to removal of allocations for the route.

Procedures for withdrawal

Where DfE intends to withdraw accreditation, the provider will be given notice of the proposed withdrawal of accreditation setting out DfE's concerns and afforded an opportunity to respond on the issue of compliance and whether there are any other reasons accreditation might continue before a decision is taken on withdrawal.

Within **5 working days** of the DfE's decision to withdraw accreditation, DfE will email the provider concerned to inform it of the decision. The provider should acknowledge receipt of the DfE email within **two working days**.

If the provider intends to request review, it should follow the procedures set out below.

Where the provider does not request review, the request for review is refused, or the decision is upheld on review, they will be required to submit an ITTPCD to the DfE to include arrangements for mitigating risks to current trainees **within 10 working days** of notification of withdrawal of accreditation.

The provider must continue to adhere to their responsibilities set out in the voluntary closure guidance above until their provision has closed.

Review of a decision to withdraw accreditation

DfE will review a decision to withdraw accreditation on request.

Review will be by a DfE official not involved in the decision under review, and of at least equal grade as the official having taken the withdrawal decision.

Review will be on the papers unless it appears to the reviewer that there is a disputed issue of material fact that cannot fairly be resolved without oral representations.

Where the reviewing official is satisfied that the provider ought to have been afforded an opportunity to rectify non-compliance before a decision was taken, or ought to be afforded another opportunity, the provider will be afforded that opportunity.

Where the reviewing official is satisfied either that the evidence relied on by DfE does or did not disclose non-compliance or, where reasonable opportunity to restore compliance was afforded and compliance was restored prior to the decision to withdraw, the decision to withdraw accreditation will be withdrawn.

To request review, the provider should send an email headed 'Withdrawal of accreditation – Request for review' to arrive at the DfE **before the end of the 20th working day starting with the working day after** the day of the DfE's email notifying withdrawal of accreditation, containing the reasons for the request. The email should be sent to the DfE's ITT Market Regulation team at ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk

Any queries about this process should be sent to: ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk

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