Part of
Education and childcare during coronavirus

Department for Education

Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19) ITT course extensions funding manual: 2019 to 2020 academic year

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The government announced, on 7 April 2020, arrangements for the recommendation of qualified teacher status (QTS) for trainee teachers whose courses have been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. These arrangements set out that trainees making adequate progress towards the teachers' standards and who continue to participate in their initial teacher training (ITT) course should be recommended for QTS at its conclusion. This will enable them to enter the workforce as newly qualified teachers in autumn 2020.

A small minority of trainee teachers will not have been making adequate progress. Schools and ITT providers should take steps to enable these trainees to continue their training in autumn term 2020, with courses to conclude, in most cases, by December 2020. It is for the ITT provider to determine the duration and content of training that takes place in this period.

Course extension funding is available to support these trainees, their ITT provider and employing schools (for employment based routes). This funding is specifically for trainees in this group and should not be claimed or used for any other purpose. Course extension funding will only be paid where the length of the course exceeds its originally planned duration and only for the extension portion of the course.

How to apply

You can only apply for funding by securely submitting a completed trainee information template to christopher.pirks@education.gov.uk.

We expect that schools and providers will request this funding for around 5% of their cohort. We will seek further information where requests are above this level. Payment of this funding will only occur following approval of provider requests. Schools and providers must not confirm to trainees that funding is forthcoming until their request has been approved.

Course extension funding is in 2 separate streams:

- trainee funding of £1,300 per trainee per month - this is to support trainees during the extension period of their courses, up to a maximum of 5 months and £6,500
- provider funding of £750 per trainee per month - this is to address the costs of course extensions, up to a maximum of 4 months and £3,000

We reserve the right to modify any of the terms and conditions relating to this funding, though we will only make modifications where absolutely necessary.

Eligibility

Eligibility for course extension funding applies across both funding streams. This means that for any trainee, either both types of funding will be provided or neither will be.

Trainees who are enrolled and still participating in an ITT course working towards the award of QTS in the 2019 to 2020 academic year may be eligible for course extension funding if their course enters an extension period. For the purposes of this guidance, an extension period is where a trainee's course extends beyond its originally planned end date for a reason related to coronavirus (COVID-19) and because they were not making adequate progress toward the teachers' standards.

Course extension funding is available for all ITT trainees (on routes leading to QTS), except those on Teach First, and is not differentiated by phase, route or subject. Those on the assessment only route are not eligible for this funding.

Course extension funding is separate from any other ITT funding. It is only payable where a trainee's course extends beyond its originally planned end date and the trainee remains on their course. This is to ensure that there is no overlap between funding provided during an extension period and funding for the originally planned duration of the course.

Individuals who hold QTS on the first day of their extension period are not eligible for course extension funding.

To be eligible, trainees must not simultaneously undertake any other:

- ITT course
- training scheme
- programme leading to QTS

Trainees must only remain on their extended ITT course until they can be recommended for QTS and may not remain on the course after successful completion.

We will recover any course extension funding paid to schools or providers for trainees who are subsequently found not to be eligible for it. Should this occur, you must make all reasonable efforts to recover from trainees where appropriate.

Commencement and duration of funding

In most cases, we expect that courses for which an extension period is required will continue uninterrupted from their originally planned end date. For these courses, trainee funding commences from August 2020 and provider funding from September 2020. This is to ensure that trainees whose courses extend receive support for living costs during August.

For some trainees, courses will not have continued uninterrupted - for example, where personal circumstances mean that continuing their course from the start of September is not possible. Schools and providers should record these trainees as deferred, with the deferral period concluding on the date on which their course resumed. On resumption, if the course then extends beyond its originally planned duration, course extension funding may be applied for. Where a deferral includes August 2020, trainee funding will be up to a maximum of 4 months and £5,200.

In most cases, course extension funding will be paid in the autumn term and no later than December 2020.

Deferred trainees

Trainees who deferred during the 2019 to 2020 academic year are not eligible for this funding. On resuming their course, they should draw on the remainder of their original funding entitlement until its expiration.

Deferred trainees from previous years are not eligible for this funding.

Trainees who have withdrawn

Trainees who have withdrawn from their ITT course are not eligible for this funding.

Part-time trainees

Course extension funding for part-time trainees will be pro rata and where appropriate may extend beyond December 2020, up to the maximum amount per trainee. Schools and providers should contact the ITT funding team to discuss arrangements for part-time trainees.

Sickness absence

Trainees who are absent from their course extension period through sickness will be eligible for course extension funding for the remainder of the month in which their absence starts and for the following month (where applicable). If they remain absent, their eligibility will be suspended and they must be recorded as having deferred from the start of the following month. For example, a trainee whose absence begins on 23 September and continues into October is eligible for course extension funding for September and October and should be recorded as a deferral from 1 October.

Withdrawals and deferrals during the extension period

Where a trainee withdraws from their ITT course during an extension period, course extension funding will be paid up to and including the month of their withdrawal date.

In rare cases, a trainee may defer their course during an extension period. In these cases, course extension funding will be payable for each month up to and including the month in which they deferred. A school or provider with a trainee who defers during an extension period and subsequently states their wish to return should contact the ITT funding team to discuss arrangements.

Overpayments

We will recover any course extension funding where an overpayment has been made. In most cases, overpayments will be the result of course completion, deferral or withdrawal having been recorded retrospectively.

We will not provide funding for any payments made to trainees in error.

Trainees whose courses extend beyond the period for which course extension funding is available

Any course that continues beyond the period for which course extension funding is available should be treated as a standard extension. For most trainees, this will apply where courses continue beyond the autumn term 2020. Additional funding will not be provided for these courses.

Trainee funding

Trainee funding of £1,300 per month is available to support eligible trainees during an extension period, up to a maximum of £6,500.

Trainee funding is available for a maximum of 5 months, from August to December inclusive, for full-time courses that have continued uninterrupted from autumn 2019. Trainee funding is only payable where an individual trainee's course extends beyond its originally planned end date and the trainee remains on their course. This is to ensure that there is no overlap between funding paid during an extension period and funding paid over the duration of the originally planned course.

Trainee funding for fee-funded courses

For trainees on fee-funded courses, payment of trainee funding to trainees follows similar rules to bursaries. This includes the requirement that trainee funding is passed on in full to the trainee whose course is being extended.

You are responsible for the management and administration of these payments, including:

- assessment of eligibility
- awarding the payments to the trainee

If you pay the Student Loans Company to administer the payments, you remain responsible and accountable for the management of this funding.

Trainee funding must not be paid:

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

You are required to make trainee funding payments to trainees at the beginning of each month of the course extension period. This is different to the rule for bursaries and is to ensure that trainees receive funding for living expenses from the start of their extension period. Providers will receive funding in advance to enable them to meet this stipulation.

You must make clear to trainees how and when you intend to pay them.

We expect you to recover from trainees any overpayment of trainee funding.

Trainee funding for School Direct (salaried) and postgraduate teaching apprenticeship courses

Trainee funding for trainees on School Direct (salaried) and postgraduate teaching apprenticeship courses is available as a contribution to the cost of employing the trainee borne by the employing school.

Trainees on these routes must remain in employment while they remain on their course. Employment of trainees on these courses is the responsibility of the employer. The employer must inform trainees whose courses extend of their ongoing employment status.

Trainee funding will be paid to School Direct partnerships, which are responsible for its distribution.

Provider funding

Provider funding of £750 per trainee per month is available to address the cost of course extensions, up to a maximum of £3,000.

Provider funding is available for a maximum of 4 months from September to December, for full-time courses that have continued uninterrupted from autumn 2019. Provider funding is only payable where an individual trainee's course extends beyond its originally planned end date and the trainee remains on their course. This is to ensure that there is no overlap between funding paid during an extension period and funding paid or received (for example by charging a tuition fee) during the originally planned course.

Provider funding for fee-funded courses

Provider funding for fee-funded courses will be paid direct to providers and is in lieu of tuition fee loan funding. It is a condition of provider funding that ITT providers do not charge trainees a tuition fee for the additional period of training.

Provider funding for School Direct (salaried) and postgraduate teaching apprenticeship funding course

Provider funding relating to School Direct (salaried) and postgraduate teaching apprenticeship trainees will be paid to lead schools. They will be responsible for the distribution of funding within their partnerships. Provider funding for these routes is a contribution to the cost of delivering training during the course extension period.

Examples of course extension funding

> **Example 1**
> A trainee continues to participate in their fee-funded course, which is extended into the 2020 to 2021 academic year. They are awarded QTS in November. The trainee's provider receives trainee funding of £5,200 in total and makes 4 payments to the trainee of £1,300 each, at the start of August, September, October and November. The provider also receives £2,250 provider funding, which they use to cover training costs incurred for the extension period.

> **Example 2**
> A trainee continues to participate in their School Direct (salaried) course for the remainder of the 2019 to 2020 academic year, then defers. They return in October 2020 and are awarded QTS in December. The lead school in the partnership at which the trainee's course is taking place receives trainee funding of £3,900. The trainee is employed at their school during October, November and December, and the trainee funding is passed to the school as a contribution to the cost of their employment. The lead school also receives £2,250 provider funding, which they use to cover training costs incurred for the extension period.

> **Example 3**
> A trainee deferred at the end of February 2020, having completed 6 months of their course. They return in September 2020 and are awarded QTS in October. They receive their original funding entitlement in full but, because there was no extension to their course, course extension funding is not provided.

Monitoring, assurance and data requirements

We have a responsibility to make sure that public funds and assets generated from applicable ITT places are properly managed in line with the grant funding agreements held by ITT providers.

You'll be required to demonstrate that you have administered all funding in accordance with your grant funding agreements and all agreed variations. We will carry out a reconciliation exercise between the funding allocated and the actual trainee records as part of our usual assurance exercise to assure all funding that we have paid to you.

Failure to fully comply with the monitoring and assurance requirements in ITT allocations and funding may result in non-compliance, which may lead to the withdrawal of your accreditation.

Funding cycle

June 2020

We will write to you in June with further information on the submission of trainee data.

We will send you a trainee information template and letter of variation for you to complete and return to us. Payment of course extension funding will only be made following approval of your request. You must not confirm to trainees that funding will be forthcoming until your request is approved.

July 2020

The first payment will be made to you on the third working day of the month. This will be combined with other financial incentives payments you receive, where applicable. Payment will be based on trainee information that you submit to us using the template and is subject to its approval.

August to December 2020

Any subsequent payments due will be made on the third working day of the month (as part of your usual monthly payment) for any trainees still actively engaged on the course.

June to July 2021

We'll send indicative Annex G documents to you in June 2021. You should return these by 31 July 2021.

September to December 2021

We'll send final Annex G documents to you at the end of the 2020 to 2021 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 this time. You should return these by 31 December 2021.

December 2021 to March 2022

Recoveries and reimbursements will be completed through:

- the payment profile
- other methods, such as invoice

Schools and providers who do not currently receive financial incentives payments

Some schools and providers may not currently receive financial incentives payments - for example, school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers that offer primary fee-funded courses only.

If you are in this position and intend to claim course extension funding, contact the ITT funding team at ITT.FUNDING@education.gov.uk immediately to ensure that we are able to make payments to your school or provider.

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