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Guidance

# Initial teacher training (ITT): provider closure and withdrawal of ITT accreditation


Updated 30 March 2022

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## Summary

### Who this publication is for

This guidance is intended to help accredited providers of initial teacher training (ITT) and their partnerships who:

- are voluntarily ceasing to offer ITT provision
- have their accreditation withdrawn by the Secretary of State (SoS) in one of the circumstances listed below
- have decided not to apply for ITT accreditation from the academic year 2024 to 2025

Accredited ITT providers who are unsuccessful following the recent ITT accreditation process (launched 1 December 2021) will be issued with guidance as part of the outcome notification stage.

### Closure arrangements

This document sets out closure arrangements including the:

- requirements Department for Education (DfE) expects the ITT provider to meet during the closure process
- process for ITT providers and DfE to follow when a provider ceases to offer ITT provision

## Accreditation withdrawal

This document sets out:

- the circumstances in which the SoS may withdraw accreditation
- the provision for review of a decision to withdraw accreditation
- the expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed before July 2024.

## Voluntary closure

Accredited ITT providers intending to voluntarily cease to offer ITT provision, whether permanently or temporarily, must inform DfE.

Accredited providers choosing not to apply for accreditation for the academic year 2024 to 2025 will be treated as voluntarily closing and will have to withdraw from delivering ITT leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) during the academic year of 2023 to 2024. Requests for temporary pause in provision or closure:

- must be agreed by DfE
- would typically be for a maximum of 12 months (after which time the SoS reserves the right to withdraw accreditation if the provider fails to resume its ITT provision)

## Closing provider actions and responsibilities

This table summarises the responsibilities of the ITT provider and DfE, during the closure of ITT provision.

### Provider responsibilities

Formally notify DfE by email of intention to close provision to [ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto:ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk)

### DfE responsibilities

Assign a DfE associate to meet and discuss with ITT provider the optimum date for closure. The DfE associate will act as a key contact for the provider during the closure.

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: <a href="mailto:ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk">ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk</a>	DfE associate provide support to complete the ITTPCD.
Comply with the ITT criteria throughout the closure process and maintain high quality training provision.	Ongoing engagement and support from assigned DfE associate.
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.	Ongoing engagement and support from assigned DfE associate.
Responsibility for any School Direct places remains with the lead school.	Assigned DfE 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 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 ECTs 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 initial teacher training (EYITT) providers.
Communicate with all affected applicants holding offers on DfE Apply for teacher training service, informing them of decision to close and setting out options.	Where appropriate, remove provider 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. This particularly applies to the location and appropriateness of any school placements. 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 Apply for teacher training service 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 DfE.

Providers must continue to supply information on trainee data to DfE throughout the closure process and ensure that trainee information on the [Register trainee teacher service](#) is up to date by closure.

Before the final closure of provision, an alternative provider must ensure any deferred trainees are listed with their trainees on the [Register trainee teacher service](#).

The provider must confirm to [becomingateacher@digital.education.gov.uk](mailto:becomingateacher@digital.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 DfE of the provider's intention to cease to offer ITT provision, by emailing [itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto: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 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, DfE will assign a DfE associate to meet and discuss with the ITT provider the optimum date for closure. The DfE associate will act as a key contact for the provider during the closure.

## The ITT provider closure document

An ITT provider closure document template (ITTPCD) will be developed and must be completed and returned ahead of formal closure.

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.

## Closure

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 2 working days from the date of receipt.

DfE will issue confirmation of the withdrawal of accreditation by email at least 2 weeks prior to the agreed closure date.

## Finance and Funding

Once a closure date is agreed between the ITT provider and 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
- 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 DfE at [itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto: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, DfE 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 circumstances that may lead to the withdrawal of accreditation, and the

requirements of ITT providers during this process.

DfE may withdraw accreditation, where the provider:

- demonstrates impropriety or inadequate controls in its financial management, or does not comply with relevant financial reporting or governance requirements
- fails to comply with DfE data and reporting requirements
- fails to adhere to any DfE guidance relating to ITT
- fails to regulate their volume of trainees in accordance with the current DfE allocation methodology
- QTS provision is repeatedly of 'requires improvement' or lower quality, as judged by Ofsted's ITE inspection framework
- provision is non-compliant with one or more of the specified ITT criteria
- ceases to offer provision

In all but the most serious cases, cases in which provision is repeatedly of 'requires improvement' or lower quality, 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.

## **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 initial teacher training (EYITT) will lead to the removal of allocations for the route.

## **Procedures for withdrawal**

Where DfE intends to withdraw accreditation in one of the circumstances above, the provider will be given notice of the proposed withdrawal of accreditation setting out DfE's concerns and afforded an opportunity to respond.

Within 10 working days of 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 5 working days.

If the provider intends to request a 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 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

Where DfE withdraws accreditation in one of the circumstances listed above, DfE will review a decision to withdraw accreditation on request.

To request a review of decision to withdraw, the provider should send an email containing the reasons for the request. The email should:

- have the heading 'Withdrawal of accreditation – Request for review'
- be sent to 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
- be sent to DfE ITT at [ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto:ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk)

Any queries about this process should be sent to [ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto:ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk).

\*[EYITT] early years initial teacher training

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