



Department
for Education

Further Education (FE) Initial Teacher Training (ITT) reform

Government consultation

Launch date 26 September 2023

Respond by 7 November 2023

Contents

Introduction	3
Scope and definitions	4
Background and context	5
Who this is for	7
Issue date	7
Enquiries	8
Additional copies	8
The response	8
About this consultation	9
Respond online	9
Other ways to respond	10
Deadline	10
Proposals 1 and 2 - amending eligibility for student support for pre-service FE ITT courses	11
Background	11
Proposal and rationale	14
Consultation questions relating to these proposals	15
Proposals 3, 4 and 5 – making regulations to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT	16
Background	16
Proposal and rationale	16
Consultation questions relating to these proposals	18
Public Sector Equality Duty	19
Confidentiality	20
Confidentiality	20
Privacy Notice	20
FAQ	21
Questions relating to proposals 1 and 2 – amending eligibility for student support for pre-service FE ITT courses	21
Questions relating to proposals 3, 4 and 5 – making regulations to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT	26

Introduction

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) is vital to securing a supply of high-quality teachers for the Further Education (FE) sector. Each year, tens of millions of pounds of public money is spent supporting students to undertake FE ITT, and it is right that we should expect high-quality courses to deliver well-trained new teachers who are ready and able to take up teaching roles in the sector, particularly in high-priority subject areas. Since the publication of the [Skills for Jobs white paper](#) in 2021, we have been working collaboratively with the FE sector to reform and further strengthen ITT. That work has already delivered some significant improvements – including a high-quality apprenticeship for Learning and Skills Teachers, and a new core qualification for FE ITT – but there is more that we need to do. There is, of course, some excellent provision of FE teacher training in parts of the system, and our priority is to build on what is already working well. We are now setting out our proposals for the next phase of work to reform and improve FE ITT, helping to ensure that individual trainee teachers and their employers have access to high-quality training supported by public funding.

Recruiting new teachers is currently challenging for many FE providers and is particularly difficult in certain subject areas where skills are in high demand. The recently-published [FE workforce data collection](#) shows that, by the end of the 2021/22 academic year, 5.4 teaching posts per 100 were vacant, with vacancy rates as high as 12.9 posts per 100 in construction, planning and the built environment, and over 10 posts per 100 in subjects as diverse as electronics, agriculture and horticulture, design, engineering and manufacturing, and accounting and finance. The ITT system has a pivotal role to play in helping the sector to address these gaps, and public funding needs to be targeted in ways that ensure we get more trainees into teaching roles, particularly in priority subject areas, reducing the pressure on recruitment faced by our colleges.

Large – and ever increasing – amounts of public money are spent each year on supporting students to undertake pre-service ITT courses. Emerging evidence, including the reports of inspections conducted by Ofsted, gives cause for concern about the quality of some such courses – although it should be emphasised that outstanding provision is also regularly identified. Poor-quality ITT courses, and the money spent on them by government and by individual students, are not helping to address the teacher recruitment challenges faced by the sector, nor are they contributing to raising teaching standards in FE. We want to take quick and decisive action to address this issue.

We propose to remove access to student finance for pre-service FE ITT courses from academic year 2024/25, except where courses are delivered by, or in partnership with, universities (for instance through franchising and validation arrangements). Teacher training for the FE sector that is delivered in-service, or “on-the-job” – where there is a direct correlation between training a new teacher and filling a teaching vacancy – will continue to have access to public money through grant-funded programmes such as

[Taking Teaching Further](#). In-service training will also continue to be funded via the Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship. This proposed change to funding eligibility for some pre-service courses will, we believe, significantly reduce the growth in lower-quality FE ITT courses that has been seen in recent years.

Over the longer term, we want to take a more robust approach to building a sustainable, quality-focused teacher training system for the FE sector. This will increase confidence in the system for current and future trainees, as well as those who employ teachers. We propose that we should use legislative powers to put in place a system of accreditation for providers of FE ITT, to improve the data and evidence we have on the FE ITT system, and to issue statutory guidance to providers of publicly-funded FE ITT. These proposals will be further shaped by responses to this consultation and would take a number of years to implement fully. We would expect to consult further on these proposals in due course, as they are firmed up.

Taken together, our proposals will help to move FE ITT further towards meeting the needs of FE employers and will give trainees a high-quality experience that prepares them for success in an FE teaching role. Ultimately, this will help to strengthen the ladder of opportunity for learners in the FE sector, in line with our vision for a world-class skills system in England.

Scope and definitions

The acronyms ITT (Initial Teacher Training) and ITE (Initial Teacher Education) are both commonly used to describe the early period of professional training and development that new teachers undertake. For the sake of consistency, the term ITT is used throughout this consultation.

“Pre-service” ITT courses are those taken by students prior to securing teaching employment. Pre-service ITT programmes are eligible for student support, as defined in the relevant regulations. “In-service” ITT courses are those undertaken “on-the-job” (including through the apprenticeship route), whilst the individual is employed in a teaching role for which they are being trained; these courses are not usually eligible for student support.

In this consultation, “publicly-funded FE ITT” means courses or qualifications for the initial training of teachers in the FE sector in England that are directly funded, wholly or in part, by the Secretary of State. This includes courses and qualifications eligible for funding through student support (including fee and maintenance loans and grants), as well as those funded via direct grants, such as Taking Teaching Further. It also includes the Level 5 Learning and Skills Teacher (LST) apprenticeship, where this is funded through the apprenticeship levy. It does not include any ITT courses or qualifications that publicly-funded providers (such as FE colleges) may choose to deliver and meet the costs of themselves.

This consultation relates only to teacher training programmes for the FE sector and has no bearing or impact on arrangements for ITT that leads to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS).

Background and context

ITT plays a vital role in securing the supply and quality of teachers for the FE sector. The [Skills for Jobs white paper](#), published in January 2021, set out how we intend to drive reform of the FE ITT sector as part of our wider programme of work to support improvements in the FE teaching workforce. We have taken a collaborative approach, working closely with the FE sector and representative organisations from across the ITT system to introduce reforms focused on quality improvement. These have included:

- working with a Trailblazer Group to re-develop the Level 5 Occupational Standard for Learning and Skills Teachers (LST), setting a clear benchmark for occupational competency in FE and skills teaching, and underpinning the teacher training apprenticeship for the FE sector;
- working with a sector-led group (the ITE Forum) to create the framework for a new FE ITT qualification – the Diploma in Teaching (FE and Skills) – that will replace the current Diploma in Education and Training (DET) from the academic year 2024/25.

Alongside these achievements, we have also made significant changes to the framework through which Government oversees and steers the FE ITT system. We have:

- legislated, through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, to give the Secretary of State new powers to make regulations to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT;
- clarified, through an amendment to regulations, the extent of Ofsted's statutory power to inspect publicly-funded FE ITT, and commissioned Ofsted to carry out a series of additional inspections of new providers;
- published new guidance for providers of publicly-funded FE ITT, setting out the Department for Education's (DfE's) expectations for quality standards.

We have worked with colleges, other FE and HE providers and their representative bodies (including the ITE Forum, UCET, AoC, ETF and SET), as well as respected academics and sector leaders, to build a plan for an ITT system that is led by continuous improvement, addresses current weaknesses, and assures a strong pipeline of new teachers entering the FE sector.

There is still significant work to do if we want FE ITT to have a clear focus on quality and outcomes. It is also important that we secure the best possible value for the large amounts of public money that are expended on the system each year. We are now

seeking views on a series of proposals that will take our reforms of FE ITT further. We will continue to focus on the importance of quality and on securing good value for public money, whilst re-shaping the FE ITT system so that it is more responsive to the needs of the sector, particularly in terms of helping our colleges to meet their workforce needs.

We know that teacher vacancy rates across the FE sector remain persistently high, particularly in subjects and sectors that are vital to the wider success of the economy and the nation's productivity – areas such as engineering, construction, manufacturing and digital. The challenge of recruiting and retaining sufficient high-quality teachers in the sector is leading to some FE providers having to reduce or stop provision in some of these high-skill, high-demand areas. The ITT system has an important role to play in helping to address these challenges and improving the overall supply of FE teachers.

Government is already offering a package of funded support to help FE providers address workforce challenges – this includes our [Teach in FE](#) communications campaign and website, our flagship Taking Teaching Further programme to attract industry professionals into FE teaching, support for the [training of FE teaching mentors](#), and the provision of [training bursaries](#) to attract new FE teachers in priority subjects. In July this year, we also announced investment of £185m million in the 2023 to 2024 financial year and £285 million in the 2024 to 2025 financial year to help colleges and other providers to address key priorities as they see fit, including tackling recruitment and retention issues in high-value technical, vocational, and academic provision. Fundamentally, though, we need to ensure that the FE ITT system has the capacity and capability to deliver a strong supply of well-trained new teachers, in the subjects and locations where they are most needed.

In contrast with schools, the FE sector has typically demonstrated a preference for in-service (“on-the-job”) teacher training, with smaller numbers of new teachers coming through the pre-service model of training before employment. This is due, in large part, to the fact that FE makes greater use of “dual professionals” – teaching staff who bring experience and expertise from industry and business, and who may continue to work in their home sector alongside their teaching. The Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship provides a high-quality training option for such teachers. In less vocational or technical subject areas, however, providers may also want access to a supply of new teachers who have completed pre-service training – often graduates who have completed a traditional university-led PGCE qualification. It is important that our approach to incentivising and funding teacher training reflects the sector's preferences and use of different delivery models.

On-the-job, in-service training provides greater flexibility for providers to bring in new teaching staff with the required sector knowledge/experience, who can develop their teaching practice as they deliver to learners. This approach also allows providers to fill existing vacancies with new trainee teachers, creating a direct link between ITT and

employment in the sector. This is not always guaranteed in pre-service training, where those completing ITT programmes may or may not progress into teaching roles in FE.

New evidence, including inspection outcomes from Ofsted, has highlighted important concerns relating to the quality of some publicly-funded pre-service FE ITT provision, and its effectiveness in supplying new teachers to work in the FE sector. Some organisations delivering large volumes of publicly-funded FE ITT are not securing high-quality outcomes for their trainees, who are unlikely to secure teaching roles in the FE sector. Such provision – the volume and cost of which has grown considerably in recent years – is clearly not delivering good value for money to the public purse or helping to support the FE sector meet its teacher recruitment needs. This is why we are proposing to reduce access to public funding for some pre-service FE ITT programmes from the academic year 2024/25.

We recognise that there is a continued need for a mixed model of pre- and in-service ITT provision to meet the workforce needs of the FE sector. But at present there is an imbalance in the system, with too much pre-service training, funded by public money, that is not making a proportionate contribution to the required supply of new FE teachers. The proposals in this consultation are therefore aimed at ensuring that public funding is prioritised for ITT courses that are of demonstrably good quality, are meeting sector demand, and making a positive contribution to reducing the rate of teacher vacancies in the sector.

Who this is for

- Awarding bodies that develop qualifications used in pre-service initial teacher training (ITT) for further education (FE)
- Higher education providers (HEPs) with degree awarding powers that develop and deliver pre-service courses of initial teacher training (ITT) for further education (FE)
- FE colleges, as a) employers of FE teachers, and b) where they deliver courses of pre-service initial teacher training for further education
- Private organisations that deliver pre-service courses of initial teacher training for further education
- FE teacher trainees
- FE teachers
- Other interested stakeholders

Issue date

The consultation was issued on 26 September 2023.

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team via email on: FEITE.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk.

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

The response

Responses to this consultation will help to inform the next phase of our work to improve the quality of FE ITT. Specifically, we will use the consultation responses to:

- inform the publication of the list of FE ITT courses approved by the Secretary of State for student support in academic year 2024/25. We expect to publish this list no later than the end of January 2024;
- inform the scope and timetable for our plans to make regulations under section 17 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, and identify areas where we need to carry out further consultation with the sector before finalising our proposals.

The results of the consultation and DfE's response will be published on GOV.UK in early 2024.

About this consultation

This consultation document makes five proposals:

We are proposing that, with effect from academic year 2024/25, we should:

1. make student support (fee and maintenance loans and grants) for pre-service FE ITT available only to courses validated and delivered by English higher education providers (HEPs) with degree awarding powers (DAPs), and their partner organisations (including FE colleges);
2. continue to allow other public funding of FE ITT qualifications delivered by providers that are not HEPs with DAPs, but only where this is part of an in-service training programme (such as Taking Teaching Further, which receives direct grant funding). This would not affect the existing arrangements for funding the Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship.

We are also proposing that, over a longer period of time, we should make new regulations under the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by [section 17 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022](#), to:

3. establish a new process of accreditation for providers of FE ITT, similar to the process that providers of teacher training leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) already undergo. Access to public funding for the delivery of FE ITT could, in future, be restricted to providers accredited in this way;
4. require institutions delivering publicly-funded FE ITT to provide the Department for Education with specified data and information on matters relating to (for example) their ITT courses, their ITT students, and the ITT partnerships they work with;
5. create new statutory guidance on quality standards for publicly-funded FE ITT, or place existing non-statutory guidance onto a statutory footing, requiring providers to have regard to that guidance.

We would like to hear your views on our proposals.

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [DfE consultations on GOV.UK](#) to submit your response.

Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may request and complete a word document version of the form.

By email

- FEITE.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk

Deadline

The consultation closes on 7 November 2023.

Proposals 1 and 2 - amending eligibility for student support for pre-service FE ITT courses

Background

[The Education \(Student Support\) Regulations 2011](#), as amended, require the Secretary of State to publish a list of FE ITT courses that are approved for student support. The first such list will be published with reference to academic year 2024/25. We intend to publish the list no later than January 2024.

At present, student support is available for a range of pre-service FE ITT courses and qualifications – some owned by Ofqual-regulated awarding bodies (currently the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training) and delivered in their approved centres, others (such as the Level 7 PGCE, as well as others at Levels 5 to 7) owned and delivered by higher education providers with degree awarding powers, often working in partnership with FE colleges through franchising and validation arrangements.

We propose that, for the academic year 2024/25, the list of FE ITT courses approved for student support should be limited to courses leading to the following qualifications awarded by higher-education providers with degree awarding powers in England:

- At Level 5, the Certificate in Education (CertEd)
- At Level 6, the Professional Graduate Certificate (or Diploma) in Education
- At Level 7, the Post-Graduate Certificate (or Diploma) in Education

This would mean that FE ITT qualifications owned by Ofqual-regulated awarding bodies (ABs), and used to deliver pre-service training, would not be eligible for student support in AY24/25.

We would expect to review these arrangements during and following the academic year 2024/25, and to reflect any required changes in the list of approved FE ITT courses published by the Secretary of State for subsequent years.

In AY24/25, the new Level 5 Diploma in Teaching (FE and Skills) will replace the existing Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training (DET). Awarding bodies are currently working on the development of their new qualifications for delivery from 2024/25, in line with the framework published by the Education and Training Foundation in September 2022. We propose that, when the new qualification is introduced, it should be eligible for public funding only when used for in-service training. This would mean, for example, that the Diploma in Teaching (DiT) can be grant-funded as part of the Taking Teaching Further programme, as the DET currently is. But the qualification would not be eligible for student support (that is, when used for pre-service training).

There would be no additional restrictions on private funding of the qualification by individuals or employers (for example, where an FE college wishes to cover the costs of such a qualification directly on behalf of one of its teachers, or where an individual meets the costs themselves).

Providers such as FE colleges who currently deliver Ofqual-regulated Level 5 qualifications for pre-service ITT, and who wish to continue offering pre-service provision from AY24/25 onwards using student finance, will be able to work in partnership with HE providers with degree awarding powers to offer courses at Level 5, 6 and/or 7 (as listed above), as many already do. These courses will continue to be eligible for student support as they are at present.

Individuals who want to complete FE ITT leading to a Diploma in Teaching, rather than a university-awarded qualification, will be able to do so as part of an in-service training programme that is directly funded by Government (such as Taking Teaching Further), or where they or their employer are able to fund the qualification directly.

The following table outlines the proposed eligibility for different sources of funding for FE ITT qualifications delivered through pre-service and in-service training models from AY24/25:

	Eligible for student support	Eligible for grant funding (Taking Teaching Further, ITT bursaries)	Can be financed privately by individuals/employers etc
Pre-Service L5 Awarding body qualification (Diploma in Teaching)	No	No	Yes
Pre-Service L5/6/7 qualification (CertEd, PGCE etc) delivered by HE provider with DAPs and validated partners	Yes ¹	Yes – ITT bursaries	Yes
In-Service L5 Awarding body qualification (Diploma in Teaching)	No	Yes (Taking Teaching Further)	Yes
In-Service L5/6/7 qualification (CertEd, PGCE etc) delivered by HE provider and validated partners	No	Yes (Taking Teaching Further)	Yes

Our proposal does not impact on the way that the Level 5 Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship is funded. Neither does the proposal have any impact on arrangements for funding teacher training programmes leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

¹ These qualifications will be included in the list of eligible qualifications published by the Secretary of State under the Student Support Regulations.

Proposal and rationale

By making the proposed change to student support eligibility, we will restrict the availability of student support for some pre-service FE ITT programmes. Only programmes delivered by higher education providers with degree awarding powers, and their validated partners, will be able to access student support for pre-service FE ITT courses. There is no evidence to suggest that this limitation of funding will have a significant negative impact on the supply and availability of appropriately trained teachers ready to enter the FE sector. The vast majority of students currently undertaking AB-owned qualifications for pre-service FE ITT do so in organisations outside the statutory FE sector. Only a very small number of trainees complete pre-service FE ITT using AB-owned qualifications in FE colleges. Moreover, there is little evidence to suggest that significant numbers of those completing pre-service FE ITT programmes in private providers are going on to secure teaching roles in the statutory FE sector – and even less so in subject/sector areas with the highest levels of teacher vacancies.

We have concerns about the quality and value for money of some pre-service FE ITT courses being delivered by private training organisations. Issues relating to course quality and delivery have been demonstrated by Ofsted during inspection of pre-service FE ITT provision in some private training providers.² We know that the overall volume of pre-service FE ITT delivered by private training providers – much of which is funded by student finance – has increased significantly in recent years, and continues to grow, whilst pressure on FE teacher recruitment has become increasingly acute. This strongly suggests that there is little or no correlation between the growth of pre-service FE ITT that is publicly funded, and a reduction in the vacancy rates for teachers carried by FE colleges. Furthermore, we have heard from some FE colleges that pre-service DET students who have come to them from private training providers have sometimes been unprepared to teach effectively in the sector and have required significant re-training.

The most effective way of supporting colleges to address their teacher vacancies is through in-service training programmes, where there is a direct relationship between the recruitment of a trainee and the filling of a teacher vacancy. Our Taking Teaching Further programme already provides a fully-funded package of support allowing colleges to train new teachers in-service, and includes appropriate scaffolding of early career support, such as mentoring and remission time. Eligible FE colleges in England who register to the programme are initially pre-allocated three places and, subject to availability, can request additional places if required. As part of the programme, an ITT qualification at Level 5 or above is undertaken. When the DET is replaced with the new

² See [50212239 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50212239) and [50225583 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50225583)

Diploma in Teaching (DiT) from AY24/25, this can also be funded through the Taking Teaching Further programme, and providers will be able to choose to offer AB-owned DiT qualifications as part of the package. Additionally, the Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship provides a high-quality in-service training option for new FE teachers; employers are able to use their levy funding to support the training of new teachers through this route.

Consultation questions relating to these proposals

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements:

Q1: “From AY24/25, access to student support for pre-service FE ITT courses should be limited to higher education providers with degree awarding powers and their validated partners”

Please choose from the following options:

Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Q2: “From AY24/25, the Diploma in Teaching (FE and Skills) should have access to public funding when delivered via in-service training programmes such as Taking Teaching Further”

Please choose from the following options:

Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Q3: For those FE ITT trainees best suited to a pre-service course of study, what further steps could government take to support their progression into teaching employment in the statutory FE sector?

Free text response

Q4: Do you wish to submit any additional evidence to show how the proposals outlined here would impact on the provision of FE ITE courses, and how that could affect potential students seeking employment as FE teachers?

Free text response

Proposals 3, 4 and 5 – making regulations to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT

Background

We are also seeking views on proposals designed to further improve quality in the teacher training sector, and which could be implemented over a longer period of time.

Section 17 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 gives the Secretary of State powers to make regulations “for the purpose of securing or improving the quality of courses of initial teacher training for further education”.

Proposal and rationale

We are proposing that a first set of regulations made under section 17 should cover (but not necessarily be limited to) the following areas, each of which is directly intended to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT:

1. **We should, in future, require providers of publicly-funded FE ITT to be accredited by the Secretary of State.** A similar requirement is already in place for providers of teacher training programmes for schools leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Providers of QTS programmes are accredited by the Secretary of State following assessment against a published set of quality criteria. No such accreditation is currently required for providers of FE ITT, which is delivered through a combination of higher education providers, FE colleges, and private organisations. Although the absence of an accreditation requirement means that there is greater flexibility for FE providers in the provision of ITT, it also means that there is no clearly defined quality bar that providers must meet before accessing public funding. At present, there is also a lack of stability and sustainability in the FE ITT sector, with new providers coming on stream and existing providers ceasing provision in a largely unmanaged way, leading to significant capacity fluctuations in the system that do not necessarily reflect the wider teacher supply needs of the sector.

At this stage we are seeking views on the broad principle of accreditation for FE ITT providers. Details of how an accreditation scheme would work in practice, including the process for providers who are already accredited to deliver QTS programmes, as well as any quality criteria that would be put in place explicitly for FE ITT, will require further development. We would expect to carry out a further consultation on the details of an accreditation regime for FE ITT, including proposed timescales for implementation, before any such scheme were finalised

and introduced. A key consideration would be any additional administrative burden placed on providers by such an accreditation scheme. We would seek to ensure that any such burden is proportionate and necessary to deliver the expected outcomes in terms of quality improvement.

- 2. We should, in future, require organisations delivering publicly-funded FE ITT to provide the Department for Education with prescribed data and information relating to their ITT courses and students.** At present, there is no dedicated collection or analysis of data relating to FE ITT. Some usable data is available from both published and unpublished sources (for example, data from the Student Loans Company, HESA, and the ILR), but this does not allow us to construct a comprehensive and robust picture of the FE ITT system. For teacher training leading to the award of QTS, providers are required to complete an annual census which captures detailed information about their students, including information about outcomes and destinations of those completing QTS programmes.

Going forward, we think it is vital to improve the data and evidence that we are able to draw on to assess the size, performance, quality, and outcomes of the FE ITT sector, particularly where this is funded with public money. We therefore propose to explore options for establishing a more regular and comprehensive collection of data from FE ITT providers delivering publicly-funded courses. Ideally, we would see this as being tied in with an accreditation requirement, so that a condition of accreditation is the provision of specified data and information by FE ITT providers.

- 3. We should put existing, non-statutory guidance for providers of publicly-funded FE ITT onto a statutory footing, requiring providers to have regard to such guidance.** In May 2023 we published DfE's [*Expectations for the delivery of initial teacher education for FE*](#). This non-statutory guidance sets out minimum expectations for the quality of publicly-funded FE ITT across a number of different rubrics, including course content and curriculum, leadership and management of programmes, and recruitment and selection of trainees. This guidance was developed through a process of dialogue with the FE ITT sector and other key stakeholders such as Ofsted. We believe that putting this document onto a statutory footing would give it greater impact; in future it could be used by Ofsted as an explicit point of reference in the conduct of FE ITT inspections. We intend to update and revise the document at appropriate points going forward, building in new evidence of what works and responding to issues identified. We may also, in future, wish to issue new statutory guidance for providers of publicly-funded FE ITT programmes.

Consultation questions relating to these proposals

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Question 5: “Providers of publicly-funded FE ITT should require an accreditation from the Secretary of State”

Please choose from the following options:

Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Question 6: “Providers delivering publicly-funded FE ITT courses should be required to provide specified data relating to their programmes and students to the Department for Education”

Please choose from the following options:

Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Question 7: “Providers of publicly-funded FE ITT should be required to have regard to statutory guidance pertaining to quality standards”

Please choose from the following options:

Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Public Sector Equality Duty

The following two questions are about **equalities**. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Public authorities include the Department for Education, local authorities, and governing bodies. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Question 8: Do you have any comments about the potential impact, both positive and negative, of our proposals on individuals on the basis of their protected characteristics?

Please choose from the following options:

Yes; No

If “yes”, provide a free text response with further information.

Question 9: Where any negative impacts have been identified, do you know how these might be mitigated?

Free text response

Confidentiality

Question 10: Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential please explain why you consider it to be confidential. If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

Privacy Notice

The personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) that you provide in response to this consultation is processed by the Department for Education as a data controller in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, and your personal information will only be used for the purposes of this consultation. The Department for Education relies upon the lawful basis of article 6 (1) (e) of the UK GDPR which process this personal data as part of its public task, which allows us to process personal data when this is necessary for conducting consultations as part of our function. Your information will not be shared with third parties unless the law allows or requires it. The personal information will be retained for a period of 12 months following the closure of the consultation period, after which it will be securely destroyed. You can read more about what the Department for Education does when we ask for and hold your personal information in our personal information charter, which can be found here: [Personal information charter - Department for Education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674242/Personal-information-charter-Department-for-Education-2018.pdf)

FAQ

Questions relating to proposals 1 and 2 – amending eligibility for student support for pre-service FE ITT courses

You use the terms “pre-service” and “in-service” throughout the consultation – what do these mean in practice?

Pre-service ITT is undertaken **before** a trainee enters employment as a teacher.

In-service ITT is undertaken by trainees **while** they are in employment **as a teacher**, often with their employer providing the training.

An ITT trainee who is employed as a teacher cannot train “pre-service” for that teaching role, but they can train “in-service”.

Funding via the student finance system can only be accessed by trainees undertaking “pre-service” FE ITT programmes.

An ITT trainee who is employed will generally train “in-service”. However, if they are employed in a non-teaching role (for example, as learning support, or as a mentor) and have no teaching responsibilities, they can train “pre-service”. Such a trainee would likely need to complete their ITT part-time, to permit sufficient time for training and the role they are employed to complete.

Do these reforms mean that trainees undertaking pre-service ITT courses at private providers can never be eligible for student support funding?

Under these proposals, courses of pre-service ITT would only be eligible for student support where the course is validated by an English higher education provider with degree awarding powers. This is the case for all providers who wish to deliver pre-service ITT. Decisions about validation relationships are at the discretion of providers.

We will continue to keep FE ITT funding regulations under review to ensure that they are effectively contributing to the teacher supply pipeline for the statutory FE sector.

Our FE college delivers pre-service ITT courses which are validated by an Ofqual-regulated awarding body. Will our students be eligible for student support, such as fee and maintenance loans?

No. Under these proposals, from academic year 2024 to 2025 courses of pre-service ITT would only be eligible for student support where the course is validated by a higher education provider with degree awarding powers. This is the case for all providers who

wish to deliver pre-service ITT. Decisions about validation relationships are at the discretion of providers.

In-service ITT courses validated by an awarding body are unaffected by these proposals, and will continue to be eligible for public funding where delivered as part of Taking Teaching Further.

Are pre-service ITT courses offered by higher education with degree awarding powers providers affected by these proposals?

No. Pre-service ITT courses delivered by higher education providers with degree awarding powers are not affected by these proposals.

Are pre-service ITT courses offered by FE colleges in partnership with higher education providers affected by these proposals?

No. Pre-service ITT courses delivered by FE colleges in partnership with higher education providers with degree awarding powers are not affected by these proposals.

Are in-service ITT courses affected by these proposals?

No. Trainees undertaking in-service ITT courses are not eligible for student support and are not therefore affected by these proposals.

Awarding body and higher education provider-validated ITT courses will continue to be eligible for public funding where delivered as part of Taking Teaching Further.

Is the Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship affected by these proposals?

No. There is no change to arrangements for funding the LST apprenticeship resulting from these proposals.

Do these changes affect our trainees' eligibility for FE ITT bursaries?

To be eligible to receive an FE ITT bursary, a trainee must be eligible to receive student support (although they are not required to apply for, or to receive it).

Therefore, trainees undertaking courses deemed ineligible to receive student support as a result of these proposals will not be eligible to receive an FE ITT bursary.

FE teacher recruitment is currently a significant challenge for the sector. How will you manage any impacts on teacher supply arising from this change?

We recognise the challenges that the sector faces in recruiting and retaining sufficient teachers. We are continuing to offer funded programmes that support different models of good-quality teacher training, for example pre-service bursaries and our in-service Taking Teaching Further programme.

Whilst developing these proposals we have spoken to individual FE providers (including those currently delivering pre-service ITT courses) and representative bodies such as the Association of Colleges; on the basis of these discussions, we are confident that our proposals will not have a significant negative impact on the supply of new teachers training for the FE sector.

Will the proposed changes not have a negative impact on take-up of the Taking Teaching Further programme?

Taking Teaching Further is not funded via student support. Under our proposals, the new Diploma in Teaching will be eligible for funding as part of the Taking Teaching Further programme, as the Diploma in Education and Training currently is. Therefore, we do not believe that our proposed changes will have any direct impact on the take-up of this programme.

Why are you making such a sweeping change to funding in response to a fairly limited evidence base?

We know that the total amount of pre-service FE ITT drawing down public funding has increased significantly in recent years. At the same time, it has become increasingly difficult for FE colleges to recruit the teachers they need, and recent data (from the FE Workforce Data Collection) shows that teacher vacancy rates in colleges can be over 10% in some subjects. It is therefore clear that spending more and more public money on pre-service FE ITT is not delivering the outcomes we need in terms of getting more people into FE teaching jobs.

Additionally, we have an early but growing evidence base from Ofsted inspections that some providers of large-scale publicly-funded pre-service FE ITT courses are not delivering good-quality training or securing good employment outcomes for their students. This is clearly not the case across all providers – and indeed there is some outstanding training available as both pre- and in-service FE ITT programmes – but we do not want to encourage further significant growth of the pre-service training market at a time when there are quality concerns in parts of the sector, and when the value of this provision in helping colleges to meet their workforce needs is uncertain.

Some students might be planning to undertake a DET so that they can get QTLS status and then teach in a school as a qualified teacher. Have you not considered the potential impact on schoolteacher supply as a result of your proposals?

The DET qualification, and QTLS professional status, are designed explicitly for teaching in the post-16 sector. There are limited circumstances in which it may be appropriate for a teacher who has trained in the post-16 sector, and who holds QTLS, to seek employment in a school – but this should not be considered a mainstream training route for those seeking to work as teachers in schools. Furthermore, providers should not be advertising DET courses as being appropriate for teaching roles in settings other than post-16 education.

Some of the providers who would be most directly affected by your proposals serve communities in deprived areas of the country. Why are you implementing policy that could prevent learners in these communities from training to become teachers?

We want to encourage a diverse range of people from different backgrounds, cultures, and communities to get into FE teaching – it is vital that the FE teaching profession is representative of the students served by the sector. But it is clearly wrong to suggest that potential teachers from under-represented groups should be expected to make do with training that is less than good, and that does not prepare them to secure teaching roles in the FE sector – especially when these people may struggle most to take on the cost of their training. Potential trainees who have appropriate qualifications, skills, and experience should look to apply for ITT courses with providers who have a proven track record of high-quality delivery and who secure good outcomes for their students. We continue to make funding – such as ITT bursaries – available to support students who want to undertake teacher training via a pre-service programme.

Why are you penalising individual learners by taking away their access to funding, but doing nothing to address the bigger issues around poor-quality ITT provision?

We believe that, at present, large numbers of learners are taking on significant amounts of student debt to undertake pre-service ITT courses that may not in fact give them sufficient preparation to secure a teaching job in FE. For a number of years, the FE ITT system has been largely unregulated, and government therefore has had limited ability to intervene when problems arise. We believe that the proposed change to funding eligibility will protect individual learners, whilst also acting as a brake on the unchecked growth of courses that do not appear to be contributing to overall teaching quality and teacher supply. Students will still be able to access public funding to undertake both pre- and in-service FE ITT programmes.

Why are you implementing these proposals so quickly? Will providers have sufficient notice of the change?

This consultation provides the ITT sector with a full year's notice of the proposed changes that we are intending to bring in from the academic year 2024/25. We will confirm the final arrangements for access to student funding no later than January 2024, which will provide sufficient prior notice for both students and providers considering undertaking an ITT programme from autumn 2024.

Why are you implementing the proposals for AY24/25, when the current Diploma in Education and Training (DET) is already being replaced by a new and improved teacher training qualification? Isn't this too late?

It is important to understand that our proposals are not designed to limit access to a particular qualification. We know that there are providers currently offering high-quality DET programmes; we are confident that awarding bodies will bring forward robust

specifications for the new Diploma in Teaching from 2024/25, and that these will be successfully delivered by many providers. This is why we are committing to continue funding the new Diploma qualification through in-service training programmes such as Taking Teaching Further.

Are you renegeing on the commitment you made to fund the new Diploma in Teaching when it was published in 2022?

No. The Level 5 Diploma in Teaching will have access to public funding when it is used as part of an in-service training programme, such as Taking Teaching Further. Furthermore, qualifications delivered by higher-education providers accessing public funding (including student finance) will need to be fully aligned with the published framework for the Diploma in Teaching from academic year 2024/25.

Does your proposal mean that you no longer have confidence in the new Diploma in Teaching qualification?

Absolutely not. We are confident that awarding bodies will develop high-quality specifications for the new qualification based on the framework published in September 2022. We have been clear that the new Level 5 Diploma in Teaching can be publicly-funded when used as part of an in-service training programme, and also that all publicly-funded FE ITT courses (whether delivered pre- or in-service) will need to be based on the published framework for the DiT from AY24/25.

Why are you continuing to allow all universities – and colleges working with universities – to have access to student support for pre-service FE ITT programmes, when Ofsted have judged several HE providers to be Inadequate or Require Improvement?

The measures that we are proposing in this consultation are intended to improve the quality of FE ITT provision across all provider types. All publicly-funded provision should be expected to adhere to the same rigorous quality standards, which is why we are proposing a new accreditation approach that would hold all providers to account for the quality of their provision.

You say you want to stop public money being wasted on lower-quality FE ITT that does not lead help to fill teaching vacancies. Will you re-invest any money saved through implementing these proposals, so that there is better funding for high-quality FE ITT?

We recognise the need for investment in high-quality FE ITT programmes, which is why we are continuing to offer tax-free bursaries worth up to £29,000 each in the current academic year for trainees undertaking pre-service ITT in priority subjects. Providers whose ITT courses have been judged by Ofsted to be Inadequate or Requires Improvement are not eligible to submit bursary applications for their students.

In July this year, we also announced investment of £185m million in the 2023 to 2024 financial year and £285 million in the 2024 to 2025 financial year to help colleges and other providers to address key priorities as they see fit, including tackling recruitment and retention issues in high-value technical, vocational, and academic provision.

Questions relating to proposals 3, 4 and 5 – making regulations to secure or improve the quality of FE ITT

Our higher education provider is / is not accredited as a QTS ITT provider from 2024. Will we need to be accredited for FE ITT?

No decisions have yet been taken as to any potential FE ITT accreditation criteria, or how accreditation for FE ITT providers would align with any existing accreditations that a provider might hold. Prior to any accreditation framework being put in place, the department intends to consult further with the sector – we would fully intend to minimise administrative burdens on providers by avoiding duplication of processes wherever possible.

What data will you require FE ITT providers to submit as part of the data return?

No decisions have yet been taken regarding potential FE ITT data return requirements. We will want to ensure that any requirements take into account the potential administrative burden on providers, and that we make full use of any existing data before making new requests. Our intention is that any data or evidence gathered should have a clear role in supporting the continuous improvement of FE ITT.

What will the statutory guidance include? Will this be based on the existing Expectations for the delivery of initial teacher education?

No decisions have yet been taken regarding the potential statutory guidance. It is however likely that the existing *Expectations for the delivery of initial teacher education* document will be used as the basis for any statutory guidance in the first instance, although we may wish to issue additional guidance relating to FE ITT in due course.

Will Ofsted ITT inspection grades be used as the basis for determining whether or not a provider should be accredited?

The criteria for accreditation, and the relationship between accreditation and any other quality judgements, would need to be developed as part of the next phase of work, if we decided to proceed with this.



Department
for Education

© Crown copyright 2023

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

About this publication:

enquiries www.gov.uk/contact-dfe

download www.gov.uk/government/consultations



Follow us on Twitter:
[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/educationgovuk