

Consultation on the accreditation of Designated Recommending Bodies and a new approach to accreditation and allocation of training places

Summary report

November 2004

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Introduction

A consultation was carried out between April and June 2004 on how Designated Recommending Bodies (DRBs) can become accredited as providers of initial teacher training (ITT) and the Teacher Training Agency's (TTA) new approach to accreditation and allocation of TTA-funded training places. This report details the outcomes of that consultation. A summary of the responses to individual questions in the report is found at Annex A.

The basis for the consultation was agreed by the TTA Board in January 2004. A consultation paper was sent to all providers of ITT and representative organisations, inviting responses by 30 June 2004. Responses were received in paper form and via the TTA website.

The TTA received 96 responses. Of these, 88 responses came from ITT providers, which represent 37 per cent of the ITT sector. A breakdown of the respondent groups is given in Table 1 below. One respondent requested that their responses to the consultation remain confidential.

A list of respondents is given at Annex B.

The current accreditation criteria set out what is required of any organisation wishing to be recognised by the TTA as a provider of ITT leading towards the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). The TTA's website (www.tta.gov.uk/accreditation) holds all the criteria for accreditation.

When DRBs were created, their designated status was intended to be a transitional stage before accreditation. The intention was to allow DRBs to operate for up to three years, during which they could refine the systems and procedures necessary to operate as accredited providers. The criteria for designation were, therefore, modelled closely on those for accreditation. Ofsted also reflected the transitional nature of DRBs in the arrangements for their inspections. The inspections

would provide 'health checks' of each DRB, providing information on the extent to which they meet the criteria for accreditation.

Table 1: Breakdown of respondents.

Respondent group	Number	% of responses	% of respondent group
Higher education institutions (HEI)	26	27	35
School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT)	16	17	28
DRBs	44	46	40
Representative organisations	4	4	n/a
No information given/requested anonymity	6	6	n/a
Total	96	100	

The TTA considered procedures for the accreditation of DRBs that would, where possible, reduce the burden on providers while ensuring that only those DRBs that meet the criteria for accreditation become accredited.

Consultation outcomes

The TTA Board considered all the responses to the consultation proposals, as set out in Annex A, along with the qualifying statements made, and will adopt all the proposals. Following a review of the comments made, the TTA Board have introduced the following amendments:

Proposal A. The TTA Board propose that, for DRBs that include an accredited institution as a lead partner, the

Proposal

partner's accreditation will be extended to cover the EBR provision only after agreement by the partnership.

Proposal C. The TTA Board acknowledge queries about this proposal and will issue guidance and procedures on how the process for accrediting DRBs will operate.

Accreditation

Subject to agreement by the partnership, where the lead partner in a DRB is an active accredited provider with a satisfactory Ofsted report, the provider's accreditation will be broadened to include the DRB. **[Proposal A]**

An assessment of ITT provision against the accreditation criteria will be undertaken for DRBs with experience of delivering ITT programmes but without an accredited lead partner. DRBs will be advised of additional evidence or action required to become accredited. **[Proposal B]**

The most recent Ofsted report will be used to judge the quality of a DRB and determine its entry point into the accreditation process. **[Proposal C]**

Providers that receive an unsatisfactory Ofsted report can request a re-inspection and an extension of their DRB status for one year so that this can take place. **[Proposal D]**

Ofsted will report grades separately for Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and mainstream provision for at least the first inspection following incorporation. **[Proposal E]**

A DRB without an active accredited provider as a lead partner and which becomes an accredited body will be eligible to offer GTP places. The DRB will, however, be required to provide further evidence if it aspires to provide other undergraduate or graduate routes to QTS. **[Proposal F]**

Existing accredited providers can submit further evidence if they aspire to provide employment-based routes. **[Proposal G]**

Allocations

The TTA will adopt a proactive approach to accreditation. The need for provision will be outlined in an annual prospectus specifying TTA priorities in terms of regional, subject or phase needs. Existing or new providers not meeting these priorities will be required to justify their expansion or creation in terms of unique contributions to the ITT market. **[Proposal H]**

Annex A

Summary of responses to the consultation proposals

Proposal A

Where the lead partner in a DRB is an active accredited provider and has received a satisfactory report from Ofsted, the provider's accreditation will be broadened to include the DRB.

Consultation question 1: Do you agree that a provider's accreditation should be broadened to include the DRB, where the DRB's lead partner is an active accredited provider and which has received a satisfactory report from Ofsted?

The majority of respondents agreed with the proposal (see Table 2, below). These responses tended to come from accredited institutions or DRBs with a clear accredited lead partner, whether HEI or SCITT. The proposal was seen as a clear message for the integration of employment-based routes (EBR) into general ITT. The point was made that within HEIs there would be clear benchmarking against national standards. Several respondents pointed out that some accredited providers may be reluctant to risk their accredited status by encompassing EBR provision where they do not feel they have sufficient control over the provision, especially in terms of quality.

Difficulties were pointed out where there was more than one accredited provider involved in a partnership, but where there was no clear lead provider. In this situation, a provider may have its accreditation extended to cover the DRB, but could have the training delivered by another accredited institution. Where these issues arose in a partnership, respondents suggested that the DRB should be accredited in its own right, as laid out in Proposal B.

Table 2: Summary of responses to consultation question 1.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	72	75
Disagree	18	19
No response	6	6

Proposal B

An assessment of ITT provision against the accreditation criteria will be undertaken for DRBs with experience of delivering ITT programmes but without an accredited lead partner. DRBs will be advised of additional evidence or action required to become accredited.

Consultation question 2: Should use be made of the information contained in the original bid submitted by the DRB?

Most respondents recognised that the original bid submitted for designation would still have some validity (see Table 3). The majority of comments, however, noted that the DRBs should have moved on from the situation laid out in their original bid and that current practice is more important than past plans. One respondent stated:

"The original bid is vital evidence to enable the evaluation against the accreditation criteria to be contextualised, along with the present developments and performance of the DRB. The latter point is important as DRBs have developed and matured since the original bid."

Some respondents were in favour of the original bid being used because of the evidence of local needs listed in it.

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Table 3: Summary of responses to consultation question 2.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	84	88
Disagree	4	4
No response	8	8

Consultation question 3: Should further evidence be provided where necessary to meet the accreditation criteria? If yes, what sort of evidence should be required of DRBs? If no, how should the TTA judge that accreditation criteria have been met?

The majority of respondents were in favour of this proposal (see Table 4 below). Many suggested a range of extra information that would be necessary, but the emphasis was on quality assurance procedures and assessment. Respondents from HEIs were particularly in favour of these, along with sustainability, staff and mentor training and meeting the same standards as mainstream routes. Some responses from DRBs that do not have an accredited body in their partnership also suggested taking into account stakeholder and participant feedback.

Several responses suggested that the evidence required should be determined on a case-by-case basis. One respondent stated:

“The evidence required would depend on the criteria the DRB needed to cover, which were not evident in its original bid. The emphasis should be on a ‘light touch’; only evidence in relation to criteria not yet covered should be expected.”

Table 4: Summary of responses to consultation question 3.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	83	87
Disagree	5	5
No response	8	8

Consultation question 4: Do you agree that DRBs should provide action plans detailing necessary further work in order to meet the accreditation criteria?

The majority of responses to this question agreed with the proposal, noting that all providers, not just DRBs, should be carrying out action planning as part of ongoing good practice in terms of quality assurance processes and course management. Several providers pointed out that the TTA should not require DRBs to provide action plans if they have already demonstrated that they meet all the criteria for accreditation.

Table 5: Summary of responses to consultation question 4

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	88	92
Disagree	3	3
No response	5	5

Proposal C

The most recent Ofsted report will be used to judge the quality of a DRB and determine its entry point into the accreditation process.

Consultation question 5: Should the TTA use the most recent Ofsted report to judge the quality of the DRB and its entry point into the accreditation process?

Annex A

Most respondents agreed that the most recent Ofsted report must be taken into account when considering any DRB for accreditation (see Table 6). Several respondents argued that the Ofsted inspection evidence should be used only if the framework for inspecting DRBs was as rigorous and comprehensive as those used to review the provision of currently accredited providers. Many respondents also suggested that DRBs be given the opportunity, if necessary, to submit supplementary evidence to be reviewed by the TTA alongside their Ofsted inspection report.

Table 6: Summary of responses to consultation question 5.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	86	90
Disagree	6	6
No response	4	4

Consultation question 6: Do you agree that a DRB which has received an unsatisfactory Ofsted report should be entered at the start of the accreditation process?

The majority of responses supported this proposal. A number of respondents, however, qualified their support. A large number of respondents did not agree with this proposal and put forward alternative views. Many respondents made a distinction between minor or procedural issues and more serious quality issues that would lead to a report of non-compliance from Ofsted. One respondent said:

“The TTA should take a view about the extent to which an unsatisfactory Ofsted report will put at risk the quality of future provision. ‘Technical’ or minor non-compliance that may be easily remedied should not result in a DRB starting the accreditation process from scratch.”

Several providers commented further that, where an unsatisfactory Ofsted report had been received, the DRB should be supported by the TTA and have to undertake action planning. The DRB should then be re-inspected before being considered for accreditation.

Table 7: Summary of responses to consultation question 6.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	51	53
Disagree	40	42
No response	5	5

Proposal D

Providers that receive an unsatisfactory report can request a re-inspection and an extension of their DRB status for one year so that this can take place.

Consultation question 7: Do you agree that providers which receive an unsatisfactory Ofsted report should be able to request a re-inspection of their provision?

Consultation question 8: Should DRBs for which the TTA agrees a re-inspection receive an extension of their DRB status for one year?

Consultation questions 7 and 8 related closely to question 6 and many providers chose to answer both questions at the same time. The majority of responses were in favour of both proposals (see Tables 8 and 9).

Many respondents noted that DRBs should be re-inspected between six and twelve months after their initial Ofsted inspection. If it were left any longer than that, trainees would be subject to non-compliant training for a second year, which would not be acceptable.

Annex A

Some providers proposed that if, following re-inspection, Ofsted reported that the DRB was still providing non-compliant provision, the DRB should not be allowed to apply for accreditation and their designated status should be removed so that they are no longer able to provide courses leading to, or recommend trainees for, QTS.

Table 8: Summary of responses to consultation question 7.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	83	87
Disagree	7	7
No response	6	6

Table 9: Summary of responses to consultation question 8.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	83	87
Disagree	6	6
No response	7	7

Proposal E

Ofsted will report grades separately for the GTP and mainstream provision for at least the first inspection following incorporation.

Consultation question 9: Do you agree that for at least the first inspection following incorporation, Ofsted should report grades separately for the GTP and mainstream provision?

This proposal was linked to question 1 by many respondents, who pointed out that DRBs that do not become accredited by the extension of their lead partner's accreditation may seek accreditation in their

own right. In these cases, the EBR provision must be inspected separately as the EBR provider will be classed as an accredited provider in its own right.

Many respondents, of both employment-based and mainstream routes, were in favour of Ofsted producing separate reports for employment-based and mainstream routes for the future, not just for the first year after incorporation.

Other respondents argued that, as EBR have a distinct nature, this should be recognised in continuing separate reporting. Many providers made comments, however, that while they would seek separate reporting of the different routes of provision, the overall criteria for accreditation must be the same and there were no comments to the contrary.

One of the respondents stated that, as an HEI, it did not feel it had sufficient control within its GTP partnership to guarantee quality across the EBR provider and would not wish to jeopardise the quality status of its own mainstream provision.

Table 10: Summary of responses to consultation question 9.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	86	90
Disagree	6	6
No response	4	4

Proposal F

A DRB without an active accredited provider as a lead partner and which becomes an accredited body will be eligible to offer GTP places. The DRB will, however, be required to provide further evidence if it aspires to provide other undergraduate or graduate routes to QTS.

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Consultation question 10: Should DRBs provide further evidence if they aspire to provide other undergraduate or graduate routes?

While more than 80 per cent of responses were in favour of this proposal, many respondents were quite clear in their comments that EBR providers should not be allowed to offer undergraduate or postgraduate qualifications when making recommendations for QTS. In particular, several respondents noted that it would be impossible for an EBR provider to offer undergraduate routes to QTS unless an HEI was in the DRB partnership, as only HEIs can award degrees. One respondent stated:

“The provider must have a strong historical context to support any undergraduate programme. The range of expertise and resources required is significantly different to the GTP route. However, additional evidence may not be required for similar employment-based routes.”

Many respondents also noted that the delivery of EBR was very different to HEI- and school-based ITT and suggested that EBR providers would have to submit comprehensive evidence to show how they would offer mainstream routes.

Table 11: Summary of responses to consultation question 10.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	78	81
Disagree	8	8
No response	10	11

Proposal G

Existing accredited providers can submit further evidence if they aspire to provide EBRs.

Consultation question 11: Should existing accredited providers submit further evidence if they aspire to provide EBRs?

The majority of respondents supported this proposal (see Table 12), with many making similar points as to their responses for question 10, in that HEIs and SCITTs must provide evidence on how they would provide EBR courses. Many respondents suggested that the opportunity for accredited providers to offer EBR had passed and these providers should be steered towards joining an EBR provider that currently does not have accredited partner.

Respondents also raised the issue that if an accredited institution wished to offer EBR, it should have to justify the proposed provision in terms of local need, which was one of the criteria that had to be addressed when partnerships originally bid to become designated.

Table 12: Summary of responses to consultation question 11.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	78	81
Disagree	11	12
No response	7	7

Proposal H

The TTA will adopt a proactive approach to accreditation. The need for provision will be outlined in an annual prospectus specifying TTA priorities in terms of regional, subject and phase needs. Existing or new providers not meeting these priorities will be required to justify their expansion or creation in terms of unique contributions to the ITT market.

Consultation question 12: Do you agree that the TTA should adopt a proactive approach to accreditation?

Annex A

Consultation question 13: Should the TTA specify priorities in terms of regional, phase and subject needs?

The majority of respondents were in favour of this proposal (see Tables 13 and 14), with several providers noting that the TTA had a requirement to manage teacher training to ensure schools' needs for teachers will be met in the future. Most comments relating to these questions stated the TTA must take a proactive approach when accrediting new providers, in order to be able to meet the demand to teacher workforce as it changes, and that this proactive approach must include reference to schools' needs for subject and phase teachers.

Several providers stated the need for reliable data on regional issues and suggested that as schools, providers and LEAs are in an ideal position to gauge local needs, they should be given the opportunity to comment on and influence the drafting of the TTA's priorities. New providers that meet the TTA's priorities should be encouraged, one respondent stated, but the standards for accreditation should not be lowered.

Table 13: Summary of responses to consultation question 12.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	84	88
Disagree	6	6
No response	6	6

Table 14: Summary of responses to consultation question 13.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	83	87
Disagree	8	8
No response	5	5

Consultation question 14: Do you agree that potential new providers not meeting these priorities should be required to justify themselves in terms of unique contributions to the ITT market?

The majority of comments made in response to this question were in favour of the proposal (see Table 15). Several providers stressed again that the quality of the proposed provision must also be taken into account and judgements made as to whether any unique contributions would uphold the quality required by the accredited provider status.

Table 15: Summary of responses to consultation question 14.

Response	Number	% of responses
Agree	80	83
Disagree	5	5
No response	11	12

Annex B

List of respondents

DRBs

2Schools Consortium
Stoke on Trent DRB
Anglia Polytechnic University DRB
Suffolk and Norfolk DRB
Beauchamp Partnership
The East Northamptonshire College DRB
Bourton Meadow DRB
The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead DRB
Bradford College DRB
Bromley Schools' Collegiate
University of Derby
Cambridge Partnership DRB
University of Sussex DRB
Canterbury Christ Church University College DRB
University of Warwick
Doncaster GTP Partnership
University of Wolverhampton
Dorset LEA
West Berkshire Training Partnership (West Berkshire Council)
E M Direct
East Sussex DRB
West London Training Partnership
e-Qualitas DRB
Y&DTP
Essex Advisory & Inspection Service DRB
Forest Independent Primary Collegiate DRB
Hertfordshire Regional Partnership

Hexham and Newcastle Catholic Partnership

SCITTs

London North Consortium
Bromley Schools' Collegiate
Loughborough Encompass Partnership
Forest Independent Primary Collegiate
Luton Teacher Training Partnership
Langdale SCITT
Marches Consortium DRB
Lindisfarne SCITT
Merseyside and Cheshire GTP Consortium
London Diocesan Board for Schools
North East Learning Partnership
Mid-Essex SCITT
Newman DRB
North East Partnership
North Hampshire Primary Partnership DRB
Northumbria DT Partnership
North Lincolnshire DRB
Portsmouth Primary SCITT
Nottingham Trent University DRB
Primary Catholic Partnership
Oxon/Bucks DRB
Shire Foundation SCITT
Saffron Walden and Camberton Training School DRB
Suffolk and Norfolk Primary SCITT
Suffolk and Norfolk Secondary SCITT
Sandown School of Teacher Education (In partnership) DRB
Swindon SCITT

Annex B

West Mercia Primary Schools SCITT
South East Midlands GTP Partnership
West Midlands Consortium
South London Teacher Training
Southfields Community College/ John Paul II School
DRB

HEIs

Representative organisations

Anglia Polytechnic University
Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Chester College of Higher Education
General Teaching Council for England
De Montfort University
National Association of Schoolmasters and the Union
of Women Teachers
Institute of Education, University of London
Leeds Metropolitan University
Universities Council for the Education of Teachers
Manchester Metropolitan University
Middlesex University
Newman College of Higher Education
Northumbria University
Oxford Brookes University
St Martin's College
University College Chichester
University of Brighton
University of Cambridge
University of Central England
University of Durham
University of Exeter

University of Gloucestershire
University of Leicester
University of Leeds
University of Manchester
University of Newcastle upon Tyne
University of Oxford
University of Warwick
University of Wolverhampton
York St John College

There were five responses where the institution/organisation was not identified.

One respondent asked for their responses to be kept confidential and is not listed above.

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