

UCET Summer 2020

ITT delivery for 2020/21: provider approaches and examples

This document has been developed by the sector for the sector, and is intended to act as a helpful guide for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers by setting out some ideas about how to approach delivery in the current context, together with examples of what some providers are doing already.

Background

The Department for Education has removed the following expectations from the ITT criteria, to ensure providers can use flexibility and creativity to deliver training to next year's cohort:

- that trainees train to teach in at least two schools; (C2.4)
 - impact: some trainees have entered their NQT without the normal breadth of experience that their complementary placement gives. This may limit reflexiveness in adapting to new school cultures (i.e. the employing school) as they have not had opportunity to experience this in a supported environment
- that they have met the standards across the full age and ability range of training; (C2.1)
 - impact: some NQTs need further support to achieve success across the full age or ability range
- and that training programmes cover no fewer than four school years. (C2.2)
 - impact: some NQTs have no experience of some of the school years they are now employed to teach, which include, particularly years 6, 11 and 13 where experience is often later in the training year.

The Department has also confirmed that criterion C2.3 is a programme design requirement. Providers will not be found non-compliant if trainees spend fewer than the typical amounts specified for school-based training, as long as programmes are designed to provide trainees with enough training time to demonstrate that they have achieved all the Teachers' Standards.

All trainees have had less than the usual amount of time to develop their practice in a face to face setting and experiences in schools are very varied. Some were engaged in online teaching throughout the summer term, others partially, others had no experience of this. Some worked voluntarily in schools to support the teaching of key workers' and vulnerable children, others had no further on-site contact throughout the summer. The picture is very varied. It is notable that the usual period during which trainees develop more autonomy and learn to adapt teaching based on their own evaluation of learning might be missing.

The DFE has confirmed that the ITT core content framework (CCF) will be mandatory from September 2020, and on 24 June 2020, Ofsted published their ITE inspection framework and handbook, which includes a transition statement for ITT2020.

The need to adapt training provision with no notice has used up capacity for developing ITT to align with new guidance. UCET representations to delay the implementation of the CCF and new inspection framework were not heeded. This creates significant challenge in trying to structure provision to meet the new frameworks whilst maintaining the flexibility that schools will need to continue to support training. There is an additional risk to providers inspected under the new framework in 2021.

On 23 June 2020, the Minister for Schools contacted ITT providers to thank them for their work in responding to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

This document is intended to support providers to utilise the relaxations to the ITT criteria and give providers the opportunity to do things differently whilst ensuring all trainees have a great teacher training experience despite the current challenging context.

This is welcome and has helped schools to see that in partnering with ITT providers they are helping to ensure the supply of teachers throughout the pandemic, as below. It has also helped providers to implement the new and prescriptive ITT Core Content Framework.

Conversations and relationships with schools

On 2 July 2020, the DfE guidance for schools opening in September strongly encouraged schools to consider hosting ITT trainees, and set out how they could play a significant role in supporting schools.

ITT providers have outlined that they are doing the following:

- holding regular discussions with partners, schools, and MATs about the changing context to better understand school concerns, pick up local intelligence and reach agreement on approaches to placements, training, and partnership agreements
- reassuring schools that trainees can support school recovery plans, a year group, subject or classroom bubble approach and provide additional support for pupils with 'catch up' activities
- talking to schools about ways in which trainees may support school improvement priorities whilst also experiencing quality training opportunities
- remaining flexible and responding to changing circumstances to meet trainees' needs for example using 'rolling placements' (placements that start, stop, and restart in response to sudden and temporary school closures) for trainees in line with local lockdown periods and school re-opening plans.

"Flexibility" is the watch-word for 2020/21 but providers also need to keep a very close eye on the quality of training provision available in schools that are struggling to maintain appropriate staffing levels.

Example 1: Maintaining regular communications
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Providers regularly update their website with up to date advice on placements for schools, mentors, and trainees. The text offers reassurance, answers frequently asked questions and is informed by the latest available guidance from the DfE, Public Health England and relevant local authorities.

Example 2: Reassuring schools that their involvement in ITT can develop trainees' expertise and support school improvement

Providers develop tasks and activities with individual school partners focussed on school needs as well as trainees' learning and progression, for example:

- trainee tasks with foci drawn from school improvement priorities are designed to enhance trainees' subject or curriculum expertise, enabling them to research a curriculum area, create a sequence of lesson plans, explain how this sequence fits into the overall curriculum to support progression. In addition, they can identify the research strategies employed and how these may be applied to other topics or curriculum areas
- trainees' existing specialist subject or curriculum expertise is used to create resources and/or online activities in areas where existing school expertise or resources are limited
- primary trainees work with primary curriculum co-ordinators/subject leaders on curriculum planning and resourcing that will increase trainees' knowledge of the foundation subjects and support the co-ordinator's/subject leader's work.

Example 3: Refreshing contact with partner schools who have withdrawn temporarily from ITT and initiating work with new partner school.

Providers work supportively with past partners and new schools to explain the benefits of involvement in ITT and to design bespoke provider support that enables them to gradually build their engagement in ITT. In secondary schools, departments and staff may be identified whose individual strengths permit strong training provision to be offered in their subject areas; in primary schools, year groups or individual staff with good ITT training capacity may be identified to work with new mentors and to support trainees outside their own class or year group. Trainees can gain rich and broad training opportunities and the schools can benefit from the strengths of trainees and develop their familiarity with ITT training and mentoring.

Placement timing and requirements

ITT providers have outlined that they are doing the following:

- extending school placements into July 2021 to maximise use of the full school year,
- utilising rolling placements and flexibility in placement patterns and timings, whilst recognising that the use of flexible rolling placements may lead to a later training finish for some trainees in 2020-21
- delaying the start of school placements until late September or after October half term

- making greater use of a more incremental approach to trainees' leading learning and teaching at the start of their training
- reducing the number of expected hours of independent or formal observed teaching that trainees are required to complete early in their training year and delaying the use of formal lesson observations for individual trainees
- supporting mentor capacity and workload issues by delivering mentor training online, minimising points of contact that allow infection to spread by making use of online platforms for regular discussion and feedback and allocating provider staff resource to support mentors.
- considering 'virtual placements' where trainees are 'in school', supporting learning, but not physically on the premises.

Example 1: Creating more fluid and flexible placements

Providers re-shape customary placement patterns to support fewer or a greater number of placements, or to enable placements to stop and restart, be delayed or be re-scheduled at later periods in the training year. Providers monitor trainees' placement experiences remotely to ensure trainees' needs are met.

Example 2: Grouping trainees for collaborative learning and teaching

Providers place trainees in pairs, trios, or small groups in a classroom. Here they can collaborate as a team to co-plan, teach and assess learning with each other and their class or subject teacher or mentor, enhancing professional learning and reducing individual workloads of teachers and mentors.

Example 3: Utilising the opportunities available for trainees to develop their wider professional learning

Providers encourage trainees to develop a deeper understanding and practical experience of educational disadvantage, vulnerability, mental health and the families and local communities their school serves, for example by:

- undertaking research for instance utilising the school dashboard, or school records
- working with specialist teachers, such as a SEND lead
- gaining practical experience of a teacher's professional role by taking wider responsibilities including, for example, those related to safeguarding and hygiene requirements.

Example 4: Attaching trainees to a school

Providers attach trainees to a school for longer than an assessed placement or base trainees in a school for the whole of a training year by:

- placing trainees in a lead primary or secondary school enabling them to work within year groups, subject departments and classroom team bubbles where they can take on progressive responsibility for teaching and learning
- making use of 'virtual placements' (where trainees are 'in school' but not on the premises) to meet trainees' needs and create greater flexibility in terms of time spent in school .This approach can be used to support trainees in

applying their theoretical knowledge, developing their teaching skills and gaining an enriched experience of a school's life.

Adapting course design and assessment

ITT providers have outlined that they are doing the following:

- making greater use of intensive centre-based training at the start of the year to develop trainees' skills in planning and delivering adaptive teaching to support pupils' learning and their secondary subject and primary curriculum knowledge
 - Methodologies for delivering these more intensive sessions at the start of the year, via distance learning, vary. Some schools are keen to keep trainees on site as much as possible to help with severe shortages of staff.
 - Effective ITT integrates centre-based input and placement, adaptive teaching is learned through the intersection of centre-based training and teaching experience. This is limited by intensive early input at the expense of later reflection on practice.
- developing alternative school-based tasks and assessments, for example, tasks that may be completed remotely in cases of school closure, local lockdown or when self-isolating
- using suitable venues for face-to-face events where social distancing requirements can be adhered to and/or using online communication platforms for induction and training sessions supported by regular interaction with personal/liaison/link tutors
- increasing the use of blended learning so training can become seamless and switched easily from face to face to online delivery as the need arises
 - impact: many ITT providers have spent the summer developing these resources to enable a seamless switch. This has reduced the opportunities to take annual leave during the more usual summer period, postponing it to a possible bottle neck later in the year.
- using virtual monitoring strategies for observations, weekly meeting records, target setting and the completion of e-portfolios to reduce potential COVID transmission issues.
 - Impact: cost and safeguarding implications of implementing new video monitoring systems across hundreds of school placement providers.

Example 1: Making greater use of micro-teaching

Providers make greater use of micro-teaching (online and/or face to face). Small scale observation and peer teaching techniques are used to prepare trainees for classroom settings. This approach enables trainees to develop their skills in planning, teaching, assessing, and evaluating other trainees' learning and then reflecting on their own and their peers' teaching and professional development, and applying what they have learned to the classroom context.

One to one micro teaching is not feasible, but small peer group tutorials can be used productively to enable trainees to develop their teaching.

Perhaps there is some value in online 'micro-teaching' but only in developing presentational and explanatory skills

Example 2: Enhancing trainees' understanding of planning and using online teaching and learning for pupils

Providers support trainees to plan and deliver effective blended and online learning for pupils so that if year groups are sent home because of a COVID-19 outbreak effective learning can continue online and trainees know how to support pupils well through on-line learning and on-line teaching.

Pedagogy for online teaching is different to face to face so much of this is being learnt at a meta-level.

Example 3: Extending the use of online learning in training

Providers extend their flexible use of on-line platforms in training provision, for example using the break-out facility provided for small group discussions; interspersing provider-led video sessions with set tasks for trainees to complete which may then be reviewed together.

Providers have flipped, in varying degrees, to an effective form of this mode of delivery, but it is not a proxy for the face to face experience.

Example 4: Employing alternative forms of trainee assessment

Providers assess practical teaching remotely or employ remote *vivas* to probe knowledge and skills at final assessment.

Impact: evaluation of methodology and robustness of assessment via remote means is not available.

Remote assessment / coaching of teaching is possible but problematic and time consuming to establish with wider partnerships to ensure compliance with individual school policies.

Sector bodies are also working together on a set of exemplifications for some of the ITT Core Content Framework. This will follow over the summer.