



## **FURTHER EDUCATION INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION (FE ITE): BURSARY ELIGIBILITY, AY2023/24**

The Department for Education has confirmed the availability of FE ITE bursaries for AY23/24. Following conversations with providers, we are issuing this guidance note to clarify the position on bursary eligibility and Ofsted grading of providers.

We intend to amend the funding manual published on gov.uk as soon as possible; this note is issued as an interim measure in the interest of providing clarity to providers as they consider submitting bursary applications on behalf of their trainees.

This relates exclusively to bursaries for Further Education ITE and has **no impact whatsoever** on separate arrangements for bursaries relating to QTS programmes.

It must also be understood that this relates only to eligibility for FE ITE **bursaries** – there is no change to the eligibility rules for student finance in relation to FE ITE programmes.

### **1. FES and ITE inspection judgements**

A provider's eligibility to make FE bursary applications for AY23/24 is dependent on that provider's most recent published Ofsted grade for overall effectiveness following an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) inspection. Providers (e.g. FE Colleges) may also have been inspected by Ofsted under the Further Education and Skills (FES) framework – **the grade received for such an inspection is irrelevant when considering bursary eligibility and will not be taken into account.**

A provider inspected under the ITE framework may offer one or more phases of ITE – i.e., early years, primary, secondary and/or further education. Separate grades are published by Ofsted for each phase of provision offered. For the purposes of assessing FE ITE bursary eligibility, **only the further education judgement will be taken into account.**

**Example:** Provider A delivers ITE in the primary, secondary and FE phases. In its most recent inspection, the provider was judged Requires Improvement for its FE phase provision, and Good for its primary and secondary phase (QTS) provision. In this example, the provider is **ineligible** to submit FE bursary applications.

**Example:** Provider B has a judgement of Requires Improvement for its secondary (QTS) provision and is graded Good for its FE phase provision. Provider B is therefore **eligible** to submit FE bursary applications.

### **2. "Most recent" inspection grade**

In line with usual practice, when assessing eligibility to make FE ITE bursary applications, we will consider only a provider's **most recent published Ofsted grade**, regardless of the date of the inspection.

### **3. Changes to Ofsted grade following bursary application**

A provider's eligibility to submit FE ITE bursary applications is considered **on the day that the application(s) is/are submitted to DfE**. If a bursary application is successfully made by an eligible provider and confirmed by DfE, and an Ofsted inspection subsequently awards a judgement of Requires Improvement or Inadequate to that provider for their FE ITE provision (whether before or after the relevant trainee's course has commenced), we will honour the bursary in full. However, the provider becomes ineligible to submit further applications as soon as the judgement of Requires Improvement or Inadequate is published.

### **4. Validation and Franchising arrangements**

The terms **validation** and **franchising** are applied as set out in the QAA UK Quality Code<sup>1</sup>, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator<sup>2</sup> and Office for Students Regulatory Framework<sup>3</sup> and Ofsted's ITE inspection framework<sup>4</sup>.

Where an FE ITE programme is delivered through a **franchise** arrangement, this is inspected as a single entity by Ofsted, and the resulting grade will be the only one that is relevant when we assess eligibility for FE ITE bursaries.

Where FE ITE programmes are delivered through **validation** arrangements, each individual provider delivering programmes will be inspected by Ofsted and will receive a separate grade. It is the grade received by the individual provider (and not the validating partner) that determines whether the provider is eligible to submit FE ITE bursary applications.

**Example:** University A works with Colleges B, C and D via a franchise arrangement. A single Ofsted grade is awarded to the partnership, which determines whether the provider is eligible for FE ITE bursaries. Bursary applications should be submitted via the franchise owner (here University A).

**Example:** University P validates an FE ITE course delivered by Colleges Q and R. Colleges Q and R are inspected separately by Ofsted. College Q receives a judgement of Good for its FE ITE provision; College R is judged Inadequate. College Q is eligible to apply for FE ITE bursaries; College R is not.

Queries relating to this note, or to FE ITE bursaries more generally, should be addressed to [FE.WORKFORCEINCENTIVES@education.gov.uk](mailto:FE.WORKFORCEINCENTIVES@education.gov.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> [Partnerships \(qaa.ac.uk\)](http://qaa.ac.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [Section Glossary - OIAHE](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England - Office for Students](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Initial teacher education \(ITE\) inspection framework and handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)