Dear Colleague,

I am writing to thank you for your work throughout the last initial teacher training (ITT) recruitment cycle, and to share some information on the next cycle.

First, I wanted to thank you for your efforts in responding quickly and decisively to the challenges presented by COVID-19. Many of you went to great lengths to deliver courses in alternative ways, ensuring that the vast majority of your 2019 cohorts have been able to join the teaching workforce. You have also adapted your recruitment practices, which means we have been able to take advantage of increased interest in teaching despite the challenging context. This is a significant achievement.

Looking to the next recruitment cycle (ITT2021), it is essential that we maintain and build upon this progress. We know that teachers are critical to raising standards, and that we will continue to face challenges in recruiting enough strong individuals to some subjects. The current interest in teaching provides a platform for us to maximise the numbers of high quality individuals entering teaching training and I know you will share my enthusiasm to seize this opportunity.

I am pleased to confirm that, for the new cycle, ‘Find Postgraduate Teacher Training Courses’ will open on 6 October, before UCAS Teacher Training and the department’s new ‘Apply for Teacher Training’ service open for applications on 13 October. Our award-winning national marketing campaign ‘Every Lesson Shapes A Life’ will be live again over the autumn to support your recruitment, with TV advertising running in October and into early November.

The Department has worked closely with training providers to ensure that the new ‘Apply for Teacher Training’ service caters for the needs of candidates as well as schools and universities providing teacher training. This means supporting candidates to give the information you need in the format you need it, so that suitable candidates can secure a place on the right course for them.

I am grateful to those schools and universities offering teacher training who have supported the development of Apply for Teacher Training, either by taking part in user research, by joining the 2019/20 pilot, or by partnering with us as an early adopter university during the upcoming cycle. I would ask all other training providers to engage with this new service to ensure you are ready to use ‘Apply for Teacher Training’ by October 2021, when it will be the only route for postgraduate teacher training applications in England.

If you would like to find out more or discuss your options for joining Apply for Teacher Training, you can express your interest by emailing becomingateacher@digital.education.gov.uk.

For ITT2021, I would also recommend that you promote our Teacher Training Adviser (TTA) service to potential ITT applicants. TTAs are a team of experienced former teachers who provide one-to-one support to potential applicants and this year have supported over 22,000 candidates. Advisers will support candidates with a 2:2 degree or above wishing to teach any subject. The adviser service will also support candidates up to two years before applying, including first and second year students, to help them prepare for teacher training in the future.

I should be grateful if you would make your candidates aware of this support; they can contact the team via telephone on **0800 389 2500** or register on the [Get into Teaching website.](https://www.us19.list-manage.com/track/click?u=51a09bc4febb44c520a61d4fc&id=f39ad430fb&e=52bc1b49d5)

I understand you will be keen to know what the Financial Incentive package will be for ITT2021. My officials are working to finalise this at the moment and we will announce the details in due course. The incentive package changes annually, so it should not be assumed that arrangements for ITT2020 will be replicated for ITT2021.

Due to the government’s Spending Review, SKE courses for candidates starting ITT in 2021/22 will not be available at the start of the recruitment cycle from 1 October 2020. Following completion of the Spending Review we will confirm the approach to SKE including when courses will start.

In addition to recruitment, I know you have been working hard to adapt your delivery plans for the 2020 cohort of trainees. To support you to do this, we have updated the ITT criteria and supporting advice, which includes the removal of the expectations that training programmes cover no fewer than four school years, that trainees train to teach in at least two schools, and relaxation of the expectation that trainees demonstrate the Teachers’ Standards across the full age and ability range.

[ITT Criteria and supporting advice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-criteria)

In the meantime, thank you for your continued hard work in recruiting and training our next generation of high-quality teachers.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Gibb MP