Department for Education

Initial Teacher Training (ITT): Mentor Training Times

November 2024

Announcement

The 2024/25 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) criteria currently states that ITT providers should provide a minimum of 20 hours of initial general mentor training and 6 hours of annual refresher training; and that ITT providers should take into consideration relevant prior learning that a mentor has completed, which may reduce the total number of training hours they would need to complete.

Having listened to feedback from ITT providers and schools, we recognise that further flexibilities regarding the quantification of the initial mentor training times would be beneficial, particularly for mentors supporting trainees in second school placements.

Therefore, we have removed the 20-hour general mentor training and the 6-hour refresher training minimum time requirements, with immediate effect.

While there is no longer a minimum training time requirement, accredited ITT providers should ensure that all mentors receive sufficient high-quality training to ensure they can effectively support a trainee teacher to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to successfully complete their ITT school placement. Mentor training (and relevant prior learning) should provide mentors with the knowledge and skills they need to undertake the role, including knowledge and understanding of the ITT core content framework and its underpinning evidence, and of the ITT curriculum which the trainee will be following.

There is strong evidence that effective mentoring is critical to teacher training and ensuring high quality mentor training and support for trainees remains an important part of ITT and the other requirements for mentoring set out in the ITT criteria continue to apply. Ofsted will continue to review the quality of mentor training as part of their inspections.

This change is effective immediately and we will update the ITT criteria and other relevant guidance shortly to reflect these changes. Schools will still be able to claim up to 20 hours of funding per mentor for this academic year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is my ITT provider still saying I should do 20 hours/ a considerable amount of training despite the change in requirements?

While the minimum time requirements have been removed, ITT providers must still ensure that mentors receive sufficient training to ensure that they can effectively support a trainee teacher to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to successfully complete their ITT school placement.

Mentor training (and relevant prior learning) should provide mentors with the knowledge and skills they need to undertake the role, including knowledge and understanding of the ITT core content framework and its underpinning evidence, and of the ITT curriculum which the trainee will be following. It is up to the individual provider to design and deliver mentor training appropriate to their ITT courses and ITT providers will be happy to discuss their mentor training programme with you. High quality mentor training can provide excellent CPD for teachers with learning which is valuable beyond their role as a mentor to trainees.

What about the impact on the quality of mentors?

Accredited ITT providers should ensure that all mentors receive sufficient training to ensure they can effectively support a trainee teacher to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to successfully complete their ITT school placement. All mentors should be trained on what the mentor role involves, and the skills needed; the ITT core content framework and its underpinning evidence; and the ITT curriculum which the trainee will be following.

ITT providers should consider prior learning and avoid duplication of mentor training, and the removal of the 20 hours minimum requirement will facilitate this.

Ofsted will continue to review the quality of mentor training and compliance with the ITT criteria.

Does the change apply to lead mentors as well?

The announcement only applies to general mentors, with minimum time requirements for lead mentors remaining unchanged.

A lead mentor or mentor leadership team remains a critical, overarching role in ensuring that trainees receive high quality mentoring and support across placement schools. They play a crucial part in the design and delivery of training and the support and supervision of in-school mentors to ensure that in-school experiences are seamlessly coherent with the training curriculum, with planned and purposeful trainee engagement with key concepts.

Unlike the general mentor funding grant, which is for training hours only, providers can access £9,514 of funding per lead mentor or mentor leadership team to support them to both train and carry out their role. This is based on a 1:25 lead mentor/ mentor leadership team to trainee ratio, with no upper limit if the number of trainees exceeds 25.

Lead mentor and mentor leadership team training should take into consideration relevant prior learning which could result in a reduction of overall training times, to ensure that repetition is avoided. Examples of prior learning could include:

- Relevant learning from mentoring roles for Early Career Teachers, or from the NPQ for Leading Teacher Development.
- If a lead mentor/mentor leadership team works with multiple providers, synergies can be found across different mentor training curricula to avoid repetition.
- Where a course leader assumes the role of lead mentor/mentor leadership team we would expect that they are consolidating their own understanding as they design and deliver their mentor training curricula, and this would be considered part of their lead mentor training.

While prior learning should be considered, providers must be able to demonstrate that all mentors have been trained in all areas of the mentor training curriculum.

Why hasn’t the 1.5 hours minimum time requirement for mentoring been removed as well?

With trainees spending up to two thirds of their teacher training in a school environment, we know that having an effective mentor is critical to the trainee experience, and therefore, it is important that they receive a fair minimum entitlement each week.

We have removed the 20-hour general mentor training and the 6-hour refresher training minimum time requirements, with the understanding that high quality mentor training and support for trainees remains of utmost importance. There are existing flexibilities in the ITT criteria to support schools with timetabling, enabling trainees to receive at least 1 hour of mentoring per week, and across a two-week period, receive their full entitlement.

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