Department for Education

Initial Teacher Training (ITT): Accreditation Process

Frequently Asked Questions

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Written submission

Is there flexibility with the word count?

A: There is a maximum word count of 1500 words for your written submission statement.

Will our wordcount be checked?

A: Yes. Any words over the 1500 limit in the written submission will not be part of the assessment. This does not apply to the remaining curriculum portfolio materials.

Is there an expectation that the 1500 words directly refer to or signpost to the exemplifications in the ‘curriculum portfolio’?

A: Yes

Is there a stipulated number of documents required as part of the application?

A: The curriculum portfolio should consist of four documents in total: an example trainee curriculum, an example ITAP unit, an example mentor curriculum and a written submission of up to 1500 words. Please see the written submission description in the applicant pack for further information.

Is there a limit to the number of appendices we submit? And do they need to be in a particular format?

A: Submit your written submission of up to 1500 words as a PDF, using the written submission form provided with your applicant pack. The other materials in your curriculum portfolio should be in a Microsoft format to avoid any compatibility issues.

Can we include tables in the written submission, or would you prefer that tables are added to appendices?

A: Applicants are free to choose where content is placed.

Should we be integrating a list of references as underpinning evidence in the Trainee curriculum attachment and in the ITaP attachment?

A: We expect to see references in the written submission. This will most likely be in the ITAP unit example, with reference to success criteria H and I.

Does the 1500 word written submission need to refer to "transition arrangements" (e.g. reference to recruitment) or is this solely explored through the partnership question in the verbal submission?

A: No, partnership questions will be asked during the verbal submission.

Previous submissions focused on providing the subject curriculum in relation to where we anticipated recruiting the most trainees. Your earlier response says to provide the curriculum you feel most comfortable talking and writing about. Could we provide our history curriculum even if we anticipate recruiting more trainees in English?

A: The curriculum choice (subject or phase) is for you to make. Your choice does not need to reflect your most popular recruitment subject.

Are the Partnership questions also graded?

A: No, the partnership questions will not be assessed. The partnerships section is designed to provide assurances that applicants have fully considered the principles and practicalities of phasing out or exiting their existing partnership.

Do you want a detailed example of our ITAP?

A: In the curriculum portfolio, we expect references to ITAPs in the trainee curriculum attachment to be high-level. The ITAP unit attachment should therefore be more detailed. Evaluations of previous ITAPs are not required in the written portfolio.

Do we need to submit our curriculum maps with all of the ITTECF statements mapped onto them?

A: No, whilst we expect the curriculum map to adhere to the ITTECF, it is not necessary to map each statement onto the trainee curriculum map.

Would it be helpful to map each success criteria to the appropriate curriculum portfolio evidence attachment?

A: This is not a requirement for the curriculum portfolio. Applicants can present the content in the curriculum portfolio as they wish.

Can we submit a copy of the checklist with our application?

A: Yes, you can, if you think it will be helpful for the assessors to identify where you have demonstrated or intend to demonstrate the criteria

Do we need to tick every box in each column of the checklist?

A: No, you do not. This is a holistic assessment which gives freedom to you, as the applicant, to determine where and when you wish to show how you demonstrate the criteria. You will want to satisfy yourself that you have demonstrated each criterion at least once across the written statement, supporting documents and presentation. It is also important to remember that the interview questions will focus on any areas where the panel feels you need further evidence.

Are there any consequences if our portfolio is too detailed?

A: There are no consequences for the level of detail provided in the curriculum portfolio. We urge applicants to consider the readability and relevance of submitted documents.

Am I right that the 'example mentor curriculum' in the written submission is our mentor curriculum contextualised for the subject we are submitting?

A: Yes, the curriculum portfolio should focus on one subject and/or phase, as per the applicant pack.

What tense should I use throughout my application?

A: Written applications will be assessed against the accreditation success criteria. The tense that you use in your application should be appropriate to your application and is at your discretion. For example, we know that many applicants have already adopted the ITTECF and therefore will likely use present tense.

Please can you let us know if you are expecting us in our written submission and in our Unit 3 attachment, to provide details of the Lead Mentor curriculum as well as the general Mentor curriculum? If this doesn't appear in the written submission, will this be discussed in the verbal submission?

A: It is not necessary to provide a lead mentor curriculum, an example general mentor curriculum is sufficient. The materials you provide will be marked against the accreditation success criteria which can be found in the applicant pack. If is for applicants to determine the content of their presentation in relation to the descriptor in the applicant pack. For the interview, applicants will be asked questions based on the list of questions in the applicant pack.

How much curriculum detail is required in the ITaP attachment?

A: We expect more a detailed ITaP unit description with a high level curriculum overview. Applicants should consider the relevance of each success criteria when completing their submission.

Do you want us to anonymise the schools participating in ITaP?

A: (Please feel free to choose the level of detail you provide.

With QA in mind, what level of detail is required for each element?

A: Applicants should outline a high level overview of QA in each element but also have regard to the success criteria.

Do you expect examples of resources in the mentor and or trainee curriculum?

A: It is not essential to include example resources, if applicants feel it will be supportive of demonstrating the success criteria, please do so.

Verbal Submission

During the interview within the verbal submission, will the three partnership questions be included as well as the six core questions?

A: Applicants may not be asked all nine questions during the interview, but there will be some dedicated time in the interview for one or more of the partnership questions.

Is there an expectation that we focus on a specific phase for the verbal submission, such as the primary phase?

A: Not necessarily, applicants can choose the content and examples they focus on across the three parts of the assessment.

Will there be someone from our current partner organisation attending the interview?

A: No.

Can we have more people at the interview than the presentation?

A: As per the applicant pack, there is no limit to the number of attendees for the verbal submission.

For the interview, do we need to bring anyone from our quality assurance team to talk about this area?

A: Applicants can choose who is present for the verbal submission stage.

Will the panels be made up of those who have a thorough understanding of ITE?

A: Yes, there will be two ITT Market Quality Associates who are ITT sector experts, as well as a member of the ITT Accreditation team.

Is there a possibility the ITE professional is someone who we are working with already?

A: It is possible that you may have worked with an ITT associate in a previous capacity. We will work with applicants and ITT associates to identify and resolve any potential conflicts of interest ahead of the assessment period.

Is the expectation that we build on the written submission by matching the presentation to the same phase/subject?

A: Applicants can choose the content and examples they focus on across the three parts of the assessment. You may either wish to use the same example in your written and verbal submissions, or multiple examples from different programmes, routes, subjects and phases to help you demonstrate coherence.

Will the same assessors read the written submission and curriculum portfolio alongside each other and conduct the interview?

A: Yes, assessment panels will be consistent throughout the process.

What level of detail providers will be expected to go into if asked how the curriculum maps etc they submit, will be adapted for other subjects & phases?

A: Applicants are asked to submit a curriculum portfolio for one subject and/or phase that exemplifies their approach to initial teacher training. There is a question on coherence across all subjects and phases (where applicable) in the interview part of the verbal submission. Applicants may wish to review the success criteria in relation to the interview questions to help plan for the interview, but the content of the answers are for the applicant to determine.

General

Is it expected that we will offer a PGCE alongside QTS?

A: It is not a requirement of accreditation to offer a PGCE in conjunction with an ITT course leading to QTS.

Can you clarify whether criteria C is referring to the educational principles (and values) we are designing our various curricula around, or if it refers to the principles of curriculum design that run across our various curricula?

A: This criterion refers to any principles that give your provision coherence, focus and consistency. Therefore, you can choose to share either or both perspectives to communicate this.

When will accreditation start?

A: Where successful in this round, applicants will be accredited to deliver and be able award QTS from September 2026.

What happens with undergraduate trainees that have been recruited under a partnership, that are due to start in AY26/27 or are midway through a programme?

A: Applicants should work with their accredited providers and consider the terms of their partnership agreements with specific regard to the phasing out or exiting of partnerships. DfE does not expect providers and partners to cause disruption to candidates and trainees. Providers and partners should familiarise themselves with the Competition and Markets Authority's consumer law advice. Any accredited ITT provider or partner that does not meet its obligations to students may be in breach of consumer protection law.

Where should I attach the curriculum checklist?

A: If you wish to submit this with your portfolio you can do, but it is not a requirement. We expect to see three attachments to the Written Submission: an example trainee curriculum, an example ITAP unit and an example mentor curriculum. If you choose to submit it, the success criteria checklist would be an optional fourth attachment.

Department for Education

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