

March 2019

Dear colleague

I am writing to you about important changes to Ofsted's Initial Teacher Education (ITE) inspection handbook, which will come into effect from April 2019. These have been made in response to your feedback and are intended to support your vital work in training the next generation of teachers.

Ofsted has removed completion rates from the 'quality of outcomes' judgement. This means they no longer require trainee completion rates to be above national and regional benchmarks for a provider to be judged Good.

For all inspections from April 2019, Ofsted will consider completion rates as part of the leadership and management judgement. Inspectors will consider how well leaders of initial teacher training (ITT) ensure the rigour of the recruitment and selection process by evaluating evidence of trainee completion rates across different subjects and training routes. New wording in the handbook explains, "where trainees have withdrawn, inspectors should explore what lessons have been applied to the recruitment and selection policy, while still allowing as many suitable prospective trainees to be recruited in the future".

This change responds to concerns you have shared with Ofsted and me about the difficulty in maximising recruitment numbers whilst completion rates remained a key Ofsted outcomes measure. It is therefore encouraging that Ofsted has now changed how completion rates are measured, and I hope this will allow you greater flexibility in your recruitment practices. The standard that trainees are expected to attain at the end of their training has of course not changed and should remain as high as ever.

Looking ahead, we will continue to work with Ofsted to ensure that the new ITE inspection handbook (from 2020) reflects these changes and contains no potential disincentives to ITT recruitment.

Thank you for your continued hard work on ITT recruitment. We look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of the recruitment cycle.



**Lorna Howarth**

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