

Initial teacher training (ITT) market review report

July 2021

Contents

Foreword and Introduction	3
Why undertake a review of ITT?	7
The challenges	8
1. Towards new quality requirements for ITT	11
The centrality of the trainee curriculum	11
Intensifying the impact of practice placements	15
Effective professional and subject support	18
Lead mentors	19
Mentoring specific to subject and phase	20
Assessment	20
Quality assurance	22
Qualified teacher status and the PGCE	22
Routes into teaching	23
How long should postgraduate teacher training courses last?	24
2. Towards a new market: delivering the Quality Requirements	26
Teaching school hubs	27
The new accreditation process	28
Transition to the new market	30
ITT as a system-wide responsibility	31
Conclusion	34
Annex A: Recommendations of the ITT Market Review	36
Annex B: Draft Quality Requirements for ITT providers	38
Curriculum	40
Mentoring and guidance	45
Assessment	48
Quality assurance	50
Structures and partnerships	52
Annex C: The configuration of the current ITT market	54

Foreword from Ian Bauckham

I was extremely pleased to be asked to be Chair of the initial teacher training (ITT) review. I have had a close interest in this area over a number of years and there are few things so vital for the success of our schools. I am very grateful for the unstinting support that I have received throughout the review from the expert advisory group, which comprised:

- John Blake, Head of Public Affairs and Engagement and former Curriculum Research and Design Lead – Ark
- Richard Gill, Chair of the Teaching Schools Council, CEO of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership
- Reuben Moore, Executive Director of Programme Development – Teach First
- Professor Sam Twiselton, Director of Sheffield Institute of Education – Sheffield Hallam University

Our aspiration is to create a truly world-class system of initial teacher preparation that is grounded in robust and up-to-date evidence, which equips teachers with the professional knowledge and expertise that they need to begin their careers and prepares them for their early career induction, once qualified.

Introduction

1. The importance of education for our nation's future is clearer now than ever. One of the most powerful ways to improve the quality of education, raise educational outcomes, close achievement gaps and level up opportunity for all children and young people is to invest in the expertise of teachers. We must ensure that teachers receive high-quality training and professional development at every stage of their career, and fundamental to this is initial teacher training (ITT). This means ensuring that all teacher professional development, from initial training through to advanced leadership development, systematically and consistently draws on the knowledge we now have about teaching from up-to-date and high-quality research.

2. The Department for Education (DfE) already has in place a range of ambitious reforms to teacher training and development based on the new ITT core content framework (CCF)¹ and early career framework (ECF),² both published in 2019, and the 6 new national professional qualification (NPQ) frameworks, published in 2020.³ These

¹ [ITT core content framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

² [Early career framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

³ [National professional qualifications frameworks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

reforms are aimed at ensuring that all teachers are trained, inducted, and receive professional development in a way which is closely informed by evidence, and that, in turn, teacher expertise is placed at the centre of our approach to further narrowing attainment gaps (including those arising from the COVID-19 disruption to schooling) and improving outcomes for children and young people.

3. The ITT CCF sets out an ambitious minimum entitlement for the training curriculums of all ITT courses leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) from September 2020. Combined with the new 2-year induction from September 2021, based on the ECF, the CCF will ensure that new trainee teachers will be entitled to at least 3 years of evidence-based professional development and support.

4. To build on and maximise the impact of these reforms, DfE appointed us as a group of national experts in teacher training and development to undertake a review of the ITT market for all courses that lead to QTS. The central aim of the review and our recommendations is to enable the provision of consistently high-quality training, in line with the CCF, in a more efficient and effective market.

5. In undertaking this review, we have focused first on the features and characteristics of best quality initial teacher training, which we discuss in this report. We took this approach because we believed that reform of the market must be driven first and foremost by what is required for high-quality evidence-based teacher training. With the support of DfE analysts, the expert group have reviewed a range of national and international evidence on good practice in ITT; this included evidence on curriculum, course structure, sequencing, and delivery (including partnership working, mentoring and school placements).

6. We then considered the capacity that providers in the market will need in order to deliver the quality, consistency and coherence that we believe are necessary. We have concluded that significant reform in the ITT market is essential if the quality reforms are to be delivered successfully.

7. Our central recommendation is that a new set of Quality Requirements should be implemented by all ITT providers of courses that lead to QTS, and that a robust accreditation process should take place to ensure that all providers have the capacity to meet the exacting Quality Requirements in full, both at the point of accreditation and on a continuing basis. The Requirements cover:

- The design of the training curriculum, fully incorporating all aspects of the CCF, closely and explicitly based on evidence and the latest pertinent research, carefully sequenced, with detailed content specific to subject and phase, and clarity about how, where and by whom the curriculum will be delivered.
- The identification of placement schools, with a strong emphasis on ensuring that trainees' experiences on placement are fully aligned with the training curriculum;

provision for a new, compulsory, intensive placement designed to embed pivotal curriculum content through a blend of input, observation and practice.

- The identification and training of mentors, with new minimum training expectations for mentors, emphasising the importance of mentors' deep knowledge of the training curriculum, the evidence behind it, and support for trainees' progress through it; the identification of expert 'lead mentors' with an advanced level of ITT knowledge and expertise who will play a lead role in curriculum design and implementation, mentor training and intensive practice design and support.
- The design and use of a detailed assessment framework, based closely on the training curriculum, which will ensure that trainees are frequently assessed on their progress through the curriculum and receive precise, helpful feedback and support to improve and refine what they have been taught. The assessment framework must also cover end-of-course assessment against the teachers' standards for the recommendation of QTS award in a way which is objective, reliable and valid.
- A quality assurance requirement for all accredited providers covering the quality of training delivery at every level and in every context in the partnership through which they work. We recommend that, alongside more frequent inspection of the quality of ITT provision by Ofsted, inspectors continue to test the robustness of providers' quality assurance arrangements.
- Structures and partnerships which will need the capacity to deliver the quality of training we believe is required. We propose that accredited providers should be accountable for the quality of training at all times and in all contexts in their partnerships; that most accredited providers will work with and through lead partners across the geographical areas in which they operate, and that lead partners should include teaching school hubs or other strong schools or multi-academy trusts, or providers with a proven track record in ITT provision. Considering the demands of the Quality Requirements, the accreditation process should be used as an opportunity for providers to consider their role in the new market to ensure that newly-accredited providers have the capacity to deliver the Quality Requirements.

8. Alongside the recommended adoption of the Quality Requirements and the accreditation of all providers against them, we make a number of other recommendations, in particular concerning the time spent training and the importance of all schools and trusts engaging in and deriving benefit from ITT (not least as an important opportunity for schools to have a stake in the training of their own future teachers). Furthermore, the principles which underpin great ITT as envisaged in this report are fully aligned with the career-long, evidence-based professional development offer for all teachers through the ECF and reformed NPQs. There is mutual benefit to be derived from schools, trusts and ITT providers working closely together on the same principles, to

ensure that all professional development for teachers is seamless and effective right from the start.

9. The direction of policy reform in ITT that leads to QTS since 2010 has been to increase school involvement in trainee recruitment and training delivery. Since 2010, the government has encouraged schools to lead ITT through becoming an accredited provider as a school-centred initial teacher training partnership (SCITT), or as a delivery partner of an accredited provider through a School Direct partnership. In some areas, higher education institutions (HEIs) and SCITTs have formed partnerships which have worked well to extend the availability of ITT locally. This has led to a strong local presence of ITT providers across England,⁴ which has been shown to be an important factor for those considering training as a teacher.⁵ It has also given schools and trusts greater involvement in the training of their future teachers. The changes that we propose build firmly on these earlier reforms. School-based ITT has paved the way for the close integration of theory and practice under the guidance of tutors and mentors who know the school, the training curriculum, and the evidence base for the curriculum well. This is firmly built into the Quality Requirements proposed in this report so that the best of school-based training is at the heart of all initial teacher training. It is important that existing strong SCITTs and School Direct lead schools become part of the reshaped market.

⁴ As of 2017. DfE (2017) section 2 in 'Analysis of school and teacher level factors relating to teacher supply', available at: [Geographical school workforce trends \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).

⁵ Williams *et al.* (2016) 'The customer journey to initial teacher training', available at: [The customer journey to initial teacher training \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).

Why undertake a review of ITT?

10. The expert advisory group recognises the disruption that COVID-19 has caused and the immense challenge that this has presented throughout 2019/20 and 2020/21 to both ITT partnerships and trainees. The support for trainees that partnerships have put in place, and the innovative approach that partnerships have taken, have ensured that, throughout this period, trainee teachers have continued to gain the experience they need to be awarded QTS. This is a significant achievement which has been possible due to the commitment of all involved.

11. The review of ITT reflected in this report is part of a broader arc of wide-ranging and profound reform to teacher training and teacher and school leader development that has been underway for several years, starting with the Carter Review of ITT (2015)⁶ and flowing from DfE's teacher recruitment and retention strategy (2019).⁷ It is well-known that investing in teachers is vital to the outcomes that pupils achieve, and it is imperative that we make sure that the best available evidence is being deployed in the training and development of our teachers.

12. The evidence for the characteristics of effective teaching that underpins both the CCF and the ECF has been independently assessed and endorsed by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). These frameworks set out the core areas of expertise that teachers need to learn during their training and induction phase. To fulfil its potential, the CCF needs to be delivered as the core of an ITT curriculum which has itself been designed in light of the evidence we have for effective training. The CCF will go some way to addressing the areas for improvement and 'considerable variability' in course content and quality identified by the Carter Review, but we believe that much more can be done to improve the content and quality of training across providers. The Review also provides an opportunity to align ITT with the ECF and the new NPQs, and to build on the capacity and expertise afforded by the new teaching school hubs, thereby creating a coherent national architecture for the delivery of teacher training and development.

13. We have also paid close attention to the evidence provided by Ofsted inspection of ITT. Ofsted have revised their initial teacher education (ITE) inspection framework and handbook, and regular inspections of ITT partnerships commenced from May 2021 following a pause to ITT inspection since summer 2019. Some ITT providers have not therefore been inspected by Ofsted for over 6 years.

14. The new Ofsted framework has a particular focus on the quality of the training curriculum at its heart, and a less direct focus on trainees' outcomes compared with the previous framework that was in use for regular inspections up until summer 2019. We

⁶ [Carter review of initial teacher training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/carter-review-of-initial-teacher-training.pdf).

⁷ [Teacher recruitment and retention strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-strategy.pdf).

have been careful to take this into account when reviewing previous inspection outcomes from the legacy inspection model.

15. In developing its new framework for ITT partnership inspections, Ofsted undertook important research into what makes high-quality ITT curriculums.⁸ We have taken the findings of this research into account in arriving at our recommendations.

16. Between January and March 2021, Ofsted carried out remote research visits to 75 ITT partnerships, to explore how providers have responded to COVID-19 and how their curriculums have been developed.⁹ In their report, Ofsted recognise the disruptive impact of COVID-19 on ITT, but also acknowledge that the move to remote training and remote teaching has “in some cases [...] stimulated deeper and more connected thinking about the ITE curriculum.” The report highlights some significant areas where further development is needed; for example, it found that too few partnerships had a sufficiently ambitious curriculum, including on subject-specific content, and some instances where partnerships did not work closely enough to ensure effective and integrated curriculum delivery. Ofsted also found that too often, curriculums were underpinned by outdated or discredited theories of education and not well enough informed by the most pertinent research and concluded that “the ITE sector must now develop stronger and more ambitious ITE curriculums. This means developing curriculums that are better designed around subject and phase, more integrated across the partnership, and more informed by up-to-date and pertinent research.”

17. The review’s remit covered only ITT that leads to QTS, which consists of primary and secondary phases of ITT. Early years ITT that leads to early years teacher status (EYTS), and further education ITE, form the other phases of ITT. Quality in those areas is likewise critical to improving educational opportunity and outcomes overall.

The challenges

18. ITT is a complex activity in both design and execution, and as such, has many elements which need to be in place to achieve best quality. In reviewing the evidence and engaging with stakeholders, we have identified the following important features which are often challenging to achieve:

- **Consistency across partnerships and between providers in the content and quality of the training curriculum**, for example, in areas such as subject knowledge development, subject-specific pedagogies (including the teaching of early reading using systematic synthetic phonics) and effective behaviour management.

⁸ Ofsted (2020) ‘Building great teachers?’, available at: [Building great teachers? Initial teacher education curriculum research: phase 2 – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524212/building-great-teachers-report-2020.pdf).

⁹ Ofsted (2021) ‘Teaching teachers during COVID-19’, available at: [Teaching teachers during COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/944212/teaching-teachers-during-covid-19-report-2021.pdf).

- **Rigorous sequencing of the training curriculum** so that trainees' knowledge and expertise are built systematically across the course. It is important that components of the curriculum for trainees can be identified and taught in sensible sequence, so that as the knowledge and expertise of trainees develop and the demands become more complex, any gaps or shortfalls can be easily identified and addressed. This is discussed in the Deans for Impact paper (2016) *Practice with Purpose*, in which the authors argue for the importance of carefully sequencing, and increasing the complexity, of goals as teacher education progresses.¹⁰
- **Alignment between the taught curriculum and training environments, in particular teaching placement schools.** If this is not secure, trainees may be exposed to a confusing array of practices without the knowledge they need to identify the genuinely evidence-based approaches which lead to strong practice. As they then rely on working things out for themselves, this has the potential for leading to trainees developing 'survival strategies' which are unlikely to be effective but can quickly become embedded in their practice. Recent qualitative research with providers and schools involved in ITT delivery (Cooper Gibson Research, 2019)¹¹ suggests that the overall quality of the ITT training experience for the trainee relies on effective partnership working and careful alignment between delivery partners. Effective communication between partnership and placement schools is essential. Ofsted's recent research (2021) highlights that in many partnerships there are now regular, focused discussions between mentors, trainees, and professional tutors on how to apply the explicitly taught elements of the curriculum to teaching. However, where ITT course providers do not share their planned curriculum with placement schools, it is highly unlikely that mentors and subject leads will be able to teach or support trainees sufficiently well.¹²
- **Sufficient opportunities for trainees to benefit from highly focused practice of, and feedback on, essential components of the curriculum.** This kind of practice, which isolates essential components for intensive practice, can enable trainees to consolidate and hone their expertise in these pivotal areas. It can be hard to guarantee across the large number of teaching practice schools with which many providers need to work, because many schools cannot offer the conditions to make this possible, nor the mentor expertise to provide this kind of feedback.
- **High-quality mentoring to ensure that mentors both know and understand the training curriculum and have a sufficient level of influence over the**

¹⁰ Deans for Impact (2016), available at: [Practice-with-Purpose deansforimpact.org](https://deansforimpact.org).

¹¹ Cooper Gibson Research (2019) 'Schools' Experiences of Hosting Trainees and Employing Newly Qualified Teachers', available at: [Schools' Experiences of Hosting Trainees and Employing Newly Qualified Teachers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).

¹² Ofsted (2021) 'Teaching teachers during COVID-19', available at: [Teaching teachers during COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk).

progress of trainees. There is strong evidence that effective mentoring is critical to the teacher trainee experience.¹³ High-quality and well-informed mentoring is essential for effective expertise development, and this requires focused and evidence-informed training for mentors, as well as ongoing support for them. Without this, aspects of the training curriculum which rely on teaching practice environments for delivery or consolidation are at risk. Recent Ofsted research (2021) found that although most mentors appeared to understand and know the partnership's ITT curriculum and how the placement helps trainees progress through it, some mentors rely on trainees to let them know what they have learned and would like to work on.¹⁴ Where partnerships establish a detailed and rigorous approach to the training of mentors and the quality assurance of their work, they are able to improve the quality, consistency and impact of mentoring.

- **A supply of enough high-quality placements** with the capacity to fully support the delivery of the trainee curriculum. During the Review, many providers told us that securing sufficient school placements was often very challenging, and that it was sometimes difficult to ensure that schools used for placements had suitable mentor capacity and could provide a suitable environment for trainees.
- **Clarity about the way in which the market operates for potential trainees.** Research into the ITT customer journey¹⁵ found that the volume and spread of information about teaching careers could be 'confusing, contradictory and overwhelming' to potential trainees.¹⁶ Efforts have since been made to simplify ITT at its point of access, and it is important that, through the Review, we maximise the opportunity to ensure the market's navigability for trainees.

¹³ See, for example, Ginnis *et al.* (2018) [Newly qualified teachers: annual survey 2017 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#); and Cooper Gibson, 2019, both of which found that mentors were critical to the overall ITT experience for trainees.

¹⁴ Ofsted (2021) 'Teaching teachers during COVID-19', available at: [Teaching teachers during COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

¹⁵ Williams *et al.* (2016) 'The customer journey to initial teacher training', available at: [The customer journey to initial teacher training \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).

¹⁶ New *Get into Teaching* and *Apply* services should address this issue at least in part, but until these services are fully rolled out, we cannot measure the benefits.

1. Towards new quality requirements for ITT

The centrality of the trainee curriculum

19. It is essential that all ITT courses are centred on an evidence-based trainee curriculum, delivering, as a minimum, all aspects of the ITT CCF. ITT must ensure trainees are ready to enter the profession and for the next stage in their professional development, the ECF.

20. The CCF sets out the body of professional knowledge to which trainees should have access, and the opportunities they should have to practise and apply this knowledge. However, the CCF is not in itself a curriculum nor indeed a fully developed model for ITT. A central responsibility for providers in determining the shape and quality of their course is in the design of the training curriculum. In designing their training curriculum, accredited providers will need to ensure that the entirety of the content set out in the CCF is fully integrated, alongside further content which they deem appropriate to include.

21. An effective training curriculum requires close and careful design. It sets out how the knowledge and expertise teachers should acquire are to be delivered through training. It orders and connects the elements of content so that expertise is built cumulatively and logically, at a manageable pace, and mental models for trainees are systematically strengthened, so that they become fluent and confident at using this expertise in the classroom. Core knowledge and competencies need to be pinpointed and sequenced, so that trainees can be guided through the curriculum from component elements towards the complex and composite in a logical order.¹⁷ DfE's new National Professional Qualification in Leading Teacher Development (NPQLTD) sets out important evidence-supported principles for effective training design, and all accredited providers' ITT curriculums must reflect these principles. This is important because of the role described elsewhere in this report for lead mentors, who will often have gained the NPQLTD and who will have a key role in supporting curriculum delivery and wider mentor oversight.

22. Trainees need to be taught the curriculum that has been planned for them, and to practise and apply content in a controlled and integrated way, so that theoretical concepts at each stage can be readily applied in classroom contexts. Strong professional support and subject-specific guidance from knowledgeable and well-prepared mentors needs to be provided throughout.

¹⁷ See, for example, Deans for Impact (2017) 'Building Blocks Framework', available at: [Building-Blocks Framework.pdf \(deansforimpact.org\)](https://deansforimpact.org/Building-Blocks-Framework.pdf).

23. Expert teachers need to be able to understand and respond to good quality evidence as they move through their careers.¹⁸ While the ITT period is likely to focus on teaching trainees practice which is informed by existing high-quality evidence, they should be equipped to understand the evidence base that supports this practice, to challenge practice which is not aligned with evidence, and to continue to deepen their understanding of research and its implications for teaching as they gain experience (and, indeed, as research and evidence develop).

24. We know there are those who fear that a strong emphasis on evidence in teacher training and professional development will reduce teacher autonomy by dictating a set of narrowly prescribed or mechanistic teaching behaviours which will be expected of all teachers. We do not share this perspective. On the contrary, our view is that while teaching is without doubt a highly skilled activity, training which is based on evidence, including relevant aspects of cognitive science, or the science of learning, will enable teachers to be more critically reflective and more, rather than less, professionally autonomous and self-efficacious; it will equip them to understand and evaluate, in light of research, the very many approaches they will encounter in different contexts once they start teaching. As Howard-Jones and others (2020) note: “In addition to dissipating neuromyths, the sciences of mind and brain have the potential to inform the processes by which teachers critically reflect upon and develop an understanding of their day-to-day decisions.”¹⁹

25. Addressing educational disadvantage, gaps in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, and gaps which have been caused by the disruption to education during the pandemic, are important priorities. Evidence tells us that expert teaching can have a disproportionately strong impact on those who are disadvantaged or have fallen behind.²⁰ The more aligned the expertise of our teaching workforce is with robust research and evidence for effectiveness, the better placed it is to address these challenges. That is a further reason why reforms proposed in this report are designed to ensure that at the critical phase of their initial training, all teachers will follow a strong and evidence-informed training curriculum.

26. It is also important that trainees are enabled to see, in a meaningful and concrete fashion, the way in which the general research and evidence about teaching contained, for example, in the CCF, is applied to the teaching of specific subjects. For example, while cognitive load theory is referenced in the CCF, a trainee will need to learn what this

¹⁸ See, for example, the findings from the BERA-RSA review of the role of research in teacher education (2014), available at: [bera-rsa-research-teaching-profession-full-report_thersa.org](https://www.bera-rsa.org.uk/bera-rsa-research-teaching-profession-full-report_thersa.org).

¹⁹ [Professional Development on the Science of Learning and teachers' Performative Thinking—A Pilot Study - Howard-Jones - 2020 - Mind, Brain, and Education - Wiley Online Library](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118447111.ch10).

²⁰ See, for example, Sutton Trust (2011)'s research, available at: [Improving the impact of teachers on pupil achievement in the UK – interim findings - Sutton Trust](https://www.suttontrust.com/research/improving-the-impact-of-teachers-on-pupil-achievement-in-the-uk-interim-findings); and Slater, Davies and Burgess (2012) 'Do teachers matter? Measuring the variation in teacher effectiveness in England' *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 74 (5), pp.629-645.

means in, for instance, the teaching of new geographical concepts such as plate tectonics, or meteorology for pupils at a particular stage. This will include addressing questions such as which and in what order new definitions and technical vocabulary items should be introduced, and how these can be applied and practised so that this new knowledge is transferred from pupils' working memory to their long-term memory.

27. By way of a further example, the CCF highlights the importance of pupils mastering foundational concepts and knowledge before moving on, and of teachers anticipating common misconceptions in a subject. For the subject-specific dimension of ITT, these general principles from research will need to be translated into the specifics of subject(s). For example, what are foundational knowledge and concepts in modern foreign languages at each stage, or what are pupils' common misconceptions in the teaching of forces in physics or the conservation of mass within a secondary science curriculum? The answers to these and many similar questions are not self-evident to a trainee teacher and so need to be carefully and explicitly planned into detailed subject-specific training curriculums.

28. The CCF sets out requirements which teachers need to meet, regardless of the subject or phase in which they are teaching. For example, all trainees who teach early reading must be taught about systematic synthetic phonics (SSP). Because learning to read is so foundational and indispensable for future success, it is essential that every teacher who works in the primary phase is fully equipped to teach reading using SSP, regardless of the specific age group they initially hope to teach. It is also important that trainees are familiarised with the evidence for the effectiveness of SSP and that time is not used teaching them alternative approaches. Learning to teach reading using SSP cannot be left to chance in the design of primary ITT programmes.

29. Adaptive teaching is an important area in the CCF. Alongside important content relating to the most effective approaches to adapting teaching in response to pupil needs, it sets out some specific content relating to knowledge and experience that all trainees must acquire relating specifically to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It is critical that all teachers begin their teaching career with adequate basic knowledge and expertise in this area, and all ITT curriculums, whatever the context, must set out specific content relating to SEND which trainees will learn and put into practice during training. As with all areas of the trainee curriculum, learning about SEND must be planned and specific, and there must be an assurance that all trainees have covered and learnt what has been planned.

30. Following engagement with a range of stakeholders, we have reached the view that, alongside the universal SEND knowledge and expertise which all trainees should possess, there is scope for those preparing to specialise in SEND, either in specialist provision or in mainstream schools, to be able to access a specialist training curriculum that focuses in more depth on SEND-relevant knowledge and expertise. Such a training curriculum, which must be rigorously evidence based, should equally meet the expectations for detailed and specific planning, as should the expectations for school

placement and mentoring, to ensure that the curriculum is delivered to trainees with the same standard of quality and consistency that we envisage elsewhere.

31. The CCF also sets out requirements for the teaching of good pupil behaviour. This is an area which needs to be actively taught to all trainees, regardless of the phase or subject for which they are training. All ITT programmes must have well-planned and sequenced content for enacting these requirements, structured in such a way that trainees are expected to practise elements of effective behaviour management regularly and receive feedback to help them improve in expertise and confidence in this critical area. In their curriculum research (2020), Ofsted found that “in the best partnerships, the focus on behaviour was initiated at the start of the programme and reinforced regularly, particularly by mentors”.²¹

32. It is important that all teachers learn the expectations and behaviours which are appropriate to the profession. The CCF requires that teachers should be taught specifically the responsibilities and duties set out in Part 2 of the Teachers’ Standards, which relate to personal and professional conduct. This important element of training must not be left to chance and so must also be explicitly planned in the curriculum that accredited providers design and must ensure that trainees know, understand and can put into practice those responsibilities and duties, and that they are aware of relevant wider legal obligations on schools and teachers which relate to how teachers must behave in their professional lives.

33. Teachers need to be confident in the subject they are teaching. We know that this, as well as the subject-specific pedagogical knowledge described above, correlates with teacher effectiveness. ITT needs to identify where trainee teachers need further subject knowledge enhancement. This is important for those training to teach in the primary phase, where teachers frequently do not have degree-level qualifications in the subjects they are training to teach and are usually expected to teach the full spectrum of national curriculum subjects. Currently, DfE funds subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) programmes to meet some of these needs for secondary trainees. Accredited providers should be clear on how they are supporting trainees to develop the subject knowledge needed to teach across the national curriculum. In addition, separately to this review, DfE should consider if SKE could support some primary trainees to develop the knowledge needed to teach across the core national curriculum subjects.

Recommendation 1: providers of ITT should develop an evidence-based training curriculum as a condition of accreditation which allows trainees to understand and apply the principles of the CCF in a controlled, cumulative and logical manner, as set out in the Quality Requirements

²¹ Ofsted (2020) ‘Building great teachers?’, available at: [Building great teachers? Initial teacher education curriculum research: phase 2 – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864223/Building_great_teachers_-_Initial_teacher_education_curriculum_research_phase_2_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf).

Intensifying the impact of practice placements

34. The training curriculum, while central to high-quality ITT, must be seamlessly translated into structured and sequenced practice environments. Indeed, the integration of theory and practice through school experience is a strong theme in the literature on effective ITT.²² In their work on research-informed ITT, Burn and Mutton (2015) point to a robust, large-scale study of ITT programmes in the Netherlands.²³ This study showed the value of certain features of ITT, including the “tight integration and careful graduation of tasks”; in these specific courses (termed ‘realistic’ teacher education), university and school experiences are tightly integrated, so that trainees can directly see and experience the link between theory and practice, and there is a gradual increase in complexity and responsibility of tasks.

35. While it is of critical importance that trainees become familiar with the research evidence underpinning the approaches which they are being taught, it is also essential that translation into practice from research, and reflection on practice in the light of research, are closely linked. In designing programmes, selecting placements, and training tutors and mentors, the most effective providers ensure that their curriculum is taught with precision, intentionally put into practice, and that trainees receive well-informed feedback, thereby ensuring that theory and practice are integrated and interleaved at every stage.

36. The necessary integration of the planned curriculum and its delivery in the context of school practice is a central challenge for ITT providers in programme design. As Hobbiss and others (2021) observe, “professional development programs that target increased teacher knowledge of certain pedagogical techniques are unlikely to be sufficient for improved practice. Unless environmental changes which serve to weaken the contextual cues for pre-existing habitual behaviour are also enacted in parallel, increasing teachers’ knowledge is unlikely to disrupt established cue-response associations.”²⁴ Although they are writing about more experienced teachers, a similar point is in our view likely to apply to trainee teachers, in so far as they bring to their training pre-existing mental models about teaching and classrooms, if only from their own experiences from school.

37. This point further emphasises the need for the training curriculum and its application and practice in schools and classrooms to be planned in close conjunction. Trainees should begin with opportunities to practise selected, sequenced components of their training curriculum, and receive highly targeted feedback, before advancing to more

²² See, for example, Perry *et al.* (2019)’s literature review of ITT curriculums, available at:

[Literature Review of Initial Teacher Education Curriculum - final.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).

²³ Burn and Mutton (2015) ‘A review of ‘research-informed clinical practice’ in Initial Teacher Education’ *Oxford Review of Education*, 41 (2), pp.217-233.

²⁴ Hobbiss, Sims and Allen (2021) ‘Habit formation limits growth in teacher effectiveness: A review of converging evidence from neuroscience and social science’ *Review of Education*, 9 (1), pp.3-23.

complex or immersive environments. This should be coupled with ongoing iteration between taught input and practice activities. This is most likely to lead to strong acquisition of expertise, not least because it reflects human cognitive architecture, which is as important a consideration for training teachers as it is for teaching pupils. It also helps to ensure that the demands on trainees can be well managed and helps them to maintain the focus on developing the intended approaches to teaching, rather than defaulting under pressure to alternative and often less effective models.

38. Our recommendation is that all accredited providers should be required to ensure close alignment between the intention and details of the curriculum and the way in which they are delivered and practised in school. This applies to all dimensions of training programmes. It should not be acceptable for the effective delivery of any part of the planned curriculum to be left to chance. This means that high-quality school placements are also an essential part of ITT design.

39. We recognise that the recommendations of this report place significant demands on providers to ensure school placements receive appropriate investment, for example, in the form of mentor training and supervision. Many ITT providers work with a large number of schools to place their trainees, and, inevitably, many schools will have the capacity to work with only small numbers of trainees at any given time, though others often host much larger numbers. It is important that there is sufficient alignment between those schools and the intent of the training curriculum to allow smooth progress of trainees. However, it is recognised that it is often not possible for providers to secure the level of very close control over the experiences trainees have in school, which is needed to intensify the focus on pivotal concepts in their training curriculum and embed them through practice sufficiently securely.

40. We are therefore recommending that all ITT courses that lead to QTS include an intensive practice placement of at least 4 weeks (20 days) in single-year courses, and 6 weeks (30 days) for undergraduate courses. The accredited provider's curriculum should specify key pivotal elements of the content which will be covered in the intensive practice placement. Schools identified as intensive practice placement schools must be closely supported by the provider to create placement experiences characterised by relevant curricular input, focused observation, deconstruction and analysis in the light of the input and evidence, trainee practice and feedback. The experiences should be intensive, suitably demanding and designed to be moments of step change in understanding, competence, and confidence.

41. Intensive placements should be organised as group activities for trainees. While they must include substantial elements of practical classroom exposure, they may be designed to make good use of other effective delivery methods, such as the use of video recorded teaching. Good use can also be made of techniques such as 'decomposition of

teaching’, which isolates a specific element of classroom practice for a trainee teacher to practise, or ‘approximations of teaching’, which imitate a classroom situation and provide opportunities for practice similar to actual teaching experiences, but with lower stakes.²⁵ Intensive teaching practice is distinct from general teaching practice placements, during which trainees spend significant time working with specified classes or teachers.

42. A central aim of intensive practice placements is the consolidation of trainees’ understanding of how research and evidence inform and shape practice. Crucial to the effectiveness of intensive placement periods will be the input of experts with deep knowledge and experience of the specifics of the curriculum dimension which is in focus.

43. In designing intensive placements within their overall curriculum, providers will need to explain and justify their choice of focus areas. The key criterion is that such chosen focus areas are pivotal for success as an evidence-informed practitioner. An example of this might be behaviour management, which would allow trainees to learn not just about high-quality behaviour management (as set out alongside the CCF in the trainee teacher behavioural toolkit (2019) by Tom Bennett),²⁶ but also give them the opportunity to put it into practice in classrooms and get rapid, expert feedback early on in their training. This would help to provide a strong foundation for when they enter other practice environments for their main teaching practice placements.

44. The outcomes of intensive placements are intended to be a very strong grasp of the evidence base for the curriculum area concerned, which trainees can articulate, justify, and exemplify, the ability to identify strong classroom delivery, and experience of preparing and delivering those aspects of teaching in a range of circumstances.

45. While the minimum period for intensive teaching practice is 4 weeks (20 days) across the training year, accredited providers may distribute the intensive practice at pivotal points across the school year (including close to the start of the course) for example in one-week units, or deliver it in a single block, to ensure that maximum advantage is gained for trainees’ growth in knowledge and expertise. Providers should select a minimum of 4 focus areas, which should normally be drawn from different areas of the CCF.

46. In selecting schools for the delivery of intensive practice placements, providers will need to ensure that it will be possible to create the capacity in that school to deliver the kind of quality, intensive experiences envisaged. In many cases, providers will identify and work with a smaller number of schools or multi-academy trusts who may become key ‘lead partners’ for their programmes, making a substantial contribution to programme development and delivery. These are likely to include for example, teaching school hubs with whom they work (on which more below from paragraph 82), or schools or trusts with

²⁵ Deans for Impact (2016), available at: [Practice-with-Purpose_deansforimpact.org](https://www.deansforimpact.org).

²⁶ [The trainee teacher behavioural toolkit: a summary - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk).

substantial experience in school-based ITT already, for example, SCITTs. Often these schools will be suitable for development as intensive practice schools.

47. We have also considered the importance of trainees being well prepared to teach in schools serving disadvantaged communities. The priority during training is to ensure that all trainees access strongly evidenced approaches to effective teaching as set out in the CCF and the training curriculum, and that they are able to put these approaches into practice, with expert guidance, in environments which are aligned with the intent, content and sequence of the training curriculum. Accredited providers must select and support schools on that basis. However, it is also important that in so doing, trainees become familiar with some of the particular challenges which disadvantaged communities and schools face and understand how the best evidence-informed teaching can close gaps in achievement for those pupils.

Recommendation 2: providers should design and deliver an intensive placement experience of at least 4 weeks (20 days) for single-year courses and 6 weeks (30 days) for undergraduate over the duration of their course, as a condition of accreditation, that allows opportunities for groups of trainees to practise selected, sequenced components of their training curriculum, and receive highly targeted feedback, as set out in the Quality Requirements

Effective professional and subject support

48. There is strong evidence that effective mentoring is critical to high-quality ITT.²⁷ As set out in the CCF, trainees need to work with expert colleagues to:

- Interrogate what makes a particular approach successful or unsuccessful in the light of the planned curriculum and of evidence, reflecting on how this approach might be integrated into the trainee's own practice. This is vital to safeguard against 'folk pedagogies' being presented as good practice.
- Observe, deconstruct, and critique examples of teaching, whether using in-class observation, modelling, or analysis of video, to understand what might make them successful or unsuccessful in the light of trainees' growing knowledge of evidence-based practice.

49. Mentors, tutors and other experts should provide informed, targeted, consistent and actionable input and feedback, aligned with the training curriculum. Excellent practice needs to be modelled and exemplified in a way which is matched to the sequenced curriculum.

²⁷ See, for example, Ginnis *et al.* (2018) [Newly qualified teachers: annual survey 2017](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741111/newly-qualified-teachers-annual-survey-2017.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)); and CooperGibson, 2019, both of which found that mentors were critical to the overall ITT experience for trainees.

50. High-quality and well-informed mentoring is essential for good expertise development, and this requires focused and evidence-informed training for mentors, as well as on-going support for them. There is significant scope for improving providers' investment in the quality of mentoring and for ensuring that mentors know and understand the training curriculum and have a sufficient level of influence over the progress of trainees.

Lead mentors

51. We propose the introduction of a requirement for all accredited providers to identify, train and deploy mentors to undertake important roles in the training of teachers, alongside mentors who work in school with individual trainees. These mentors, known as 'lead mentors', will receive intensive training so that they have a deep knowledge of the curriculum, the evidence base which underpins it, and the organisation and delivery of the curriculum across the accredited provider's network.

52. Their overarching role will be to ensure that trainees receive mentoring and support across placement schools which is aligned with the curriculum and informed by practice at all times. Therefore, lead mentors should play a key role in the training, support and supervision of in-school mentors. The deep level of understanding lead mentors will have of the curriculum, its evidence base, and its link to practice mean they should take a lead role in the design and delivery of intensive practice placements, to ensure that these are of the highest possible quality.

53. This reform should be tied in with the introduction of the national professional qualification in leading teacher development (NPQLTD). The evidence-based content set out in the NPQLTD on the design and delivery of professional development is of central relevance for ITT. The framework for this NPQ includes important content on expert-led conversations about classroom practice, including mentoring and coaching. Accredited providers must ensure that training for lead mentors relating to mentoring and coaching, as well as to other content in the NPQLTD, builds on these approaches, which are supported by evidence.

54. We recommend, as part of the work for increasing the range and number of schools which participate in the provision of ITT, that every school which commits to participate in ITT receives a fully-funded training place on the NPQLTD programme, and that every school identified as an intensive practice school receives two such places. Moreover, we recommend that, as part of its accreditation process, DfE ensures providers demonstrate that lead mentors will take one of: the NPQLTD; one of the other two specialist NPQs ('leading behaviour and culture', or 'leading teaching'); or training with the equivalent content and quality. However, intensive placements should be overseen by a lead mentor with the NPQLTD. These steps will help to create essential consistency for teachers and trainees across the system.

Recommendation 3: providers should identify, as a condition of accreditation, sufficient ‘lead mentors’ who will ensure that trainees receive mentoring and support across placement schools which is aligned with the curriculum and informed by practice at all times, as set out in the Quality Requirements

Recommendation 4: providers should ensure that lead mentors take one of: the NPQLTD, one of the other 2 specialist NPQs, or training with the equivalent content and quality, as a condition of accreditation; and every school which hosts a trainee has at least one member of staff who is undertaking or has completed the course

Mentoring specific to subject and phase

55. Trainees must also have access to mentors who have specific expertise in the evidence-based approaches set out in the training curriculum, so that trainees receive strong and consistent input on the best-evidenced ways of teaching their subject and phase. While it is helpful for mentors to be confident in well-evidenced generic approaches to mentoring, it is of critical importance that they also have a deep enough knowledge of the training curriculum to target support and feedback on areas which are currently in focus, including subject-specific, or phase-specific elements. Also critical is that mentors are able to reflect the sequential and cumulative features of the curriculum in their work with trainees.

56. For these reasons, we are recommending that a detailed training curriculum for mentors at all levels should feature in the new Quality Requirements for accreditation of providers, and that minimum annual time allocations should be required for the delivery of this mentor training.

Recommendation 5: providers should develop a detailed training curriculum for mentors at all levels, as a condition of accreditation, including elements specific to subject and phase, and minimum time allocations for delivering this should be required, as set out in the Quality Requirements

Assessment

57. In this section we consider the role of assessment in ITT courses. We identify and discuss in-course assessment as well as terminal, or end-of-course, assessment. We have deliberately avoided use of the terms ‘formative’ and ‘summative’ because of the confusion that is sometimes associated with them.

58. In-course assessment is an essential element of all training. Experts who work with trainees to deliver aspects of the curriculum or supervise and support practice will question and observe trainees and feedback, explain, model or recapitulate theory and

practice throughout the course.²⁸ This kind of constant interaction is essential for all effective training, as indeed it is for effective classroom teaching.

59. As with effective classroom teaching, in-course assessment is at its most effective when informed by and aligned with the curriculum. If the curriculum has been designed sequentially to build trainees' knowledge and expertise, it is important that progress through it is supported by high-quality feedback and guidance. While this kind of assessment may not have as its key purpose the reaching of grades or judgements, it is nonetheless important that it is done in a structured and organised way, so that records can be maintained and so that the results of these assessments can inform adaptations needed to address areas requiring further input, support or practice. The principles of good quality assessment set out in the CCF, ECF, and NPQ frameworks for the assessment of pupils apply equally to the design of assessment for teacher trainees.

60. It is important that trainees successfully cover the whole curriculum, which will include all of the content in the CCF, by the end of the course. It is therefore also necessary for the assessment framework to have the mechanisms to identify any trainees who are failing to master the curriculum as set out and whose success is therefore at risk. However, this should not be done by a premature application of the terminal (end of course) standards required for 'passing' the ITT programme, but rather by reaching a judgement on the extent to which the knowledge and expertise set out for each key area of the course in the training curriculum are being adequately acquired and demonstrated.

61. Clearly, it is of prime importance that by the end of their ITT course trainees are equipped to take on a teaching role and engage with the ECF induction process. Therefore, terminal judgements will need to be made with this in mind and will need to reflect trainees' observed practical capability in classrooms. However, there is likely to be a substantial body of content which the training curriculum will have covered which trainees may not yet be able to apply consistently with full confidence and fluency in observed classroom teaching. It is important that this is not regarded as 'wasted' knowledge. The end of ITT is only one early stage in the training and induction of teachers who, with the support of the new, two-year induction, will continue to learn and develop as teachers, and in due course grow in fluency and confidence in the application of content covered in their initial training. It is therefore desirable that the assessment framework also formally assesses, alongside observed classroom practice, the knowledge trainees have of relevant evidence-based theory, as set out in the CCF and the accredited provider's curriculum.

²⁸ See, for example, the evidence underlying the framework for the Leading Teacher Development NPQ, available at: [National Professional Qualification \(NPQ\): Leading Teacher Development Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671127/npq-leading-teacher-development-framework-evidence.pdf).

Recommendation 6: providers should demonstrate the capacity to develop an assessment framework reflecting the priorities as set out in the Quality Requirements for assessment, as a condition of accreditation

Quality assurance

62. Accredited providers of ITT courses that lead to QTS are accountable for adhering to DfE's ITT criteria as a condition of their ongoing accreditation. They are also independently inspected by Ofsted under their revised ITE inspection framework and handbook (2020). Ofsted should continue to perform the important role of inspecting ITT providers and reporting findings, thereby putting reliable information about provider quality into the public domain. A full ITT inspection cycle, the period in which all partnerships are inspected at least once, currently stands at 6 years. We consider this interval between inspections to be too long, given the critical assurance provided to the public and to trainees from independent inspections of ITT. We would like DfE to give this further due consideration.

63. It is critical also that newly-accredited providers take full responsibility for the quality assurance of the ITT that they provide at every level in their partnerships, and that at the point of inspection these internal quality assurance arrangements are checked for effectiveness, along with other important quality indicators of effective ITT, in particular the quality of the training curriculum. For this reason, the Quality Requirements, against which new accreditations will be made, include clear expectations for quality assurance arrangements which accredited providers must implement.

Recommendation 7: providers should design and implement rigorous quality assurance arrangements as set out in the Quality Requirements, as a condition of accreditation

Qualified teacher status and the PGCE

64. Qualified teacher status (QTS) is the accreditation which enables teachers to carry out unsupervised teaching activity in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools. A large proportion of postgraduate trainee teachers gain QTS by following a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course which, providing that its content meets the government requirements in force at the time, allows QTS to be recommended. PGCE courses also meet further university conditions for recognition as postgraduate qualifications at level 7.

65. Most HEI ITT providers offer only the PGCE route, whereas some school-based providers offer a choice of programmes leading either to the award of QTS only (which some providers tell us they are sometimes able to offer to trainees at a lower cost) or to a PGCE, by working with, and paying a fee to an HEI in order to gain the recognition required for a postgraduate programme. While many SCITTs have told us that they are happy with their arrangements with HEIs for PGCE awarding, other SCITT providers

have told us that they feel that trainees do not receive value for money from the fee paid to the HEI, or that the HEI stipulates additional content which does not complement the content of the curriculum they have put in place to meet the requirements of the CCF.

66. The majority of ITT providers choose to offer the PGCE as it continues to be in demand from potential teacher trainees, partly because, as a recognised postgraduate teaching qualification, it might have currency internationally.

67. We have reached the conclusion that in a reformed market all accredited providers should be able to offer teacher training leading to QTS within a recognised postgraduate academic course at a regulated and manageable cost, and with any additional training content aligned with and complementary to the content required for a curriculum which meets the requirements for the award of QTS. We recommend that DfE enables accredited providers who are unable to offer their own postgraduate academic awards to partner with a relevant institution, such as the Institute of Teaching, which we understand will eventually provide such a function to those providers who wish to make use of it.

Recommendation 8: DfE should facilitate any accredited providers which wish to do so, to partner with an institution, such as the Institute of Teaching when it is ready, to offer their postgraduate award

Routes into teaching

68. There are 3 core ITT routes which trainees can follow to obtain QTS: undergraduate, postgraduate fee-funded (both PGCE and QTS-only) and postgraduate employment-based. These routes offer choice to trainees so that they can train in the way that works best for them, and all of these routes should continue to be available in the future. We want to ensure that all ITT is of the highest possible quality, so the new Quality Requirements (set out at Annex B) should apply to all of these routes. We believe that our recommendations are sufficiently flexible to allow them to be implemented across all routes into teaching.

69. Undergraduate ITT forms 14% of provision, the majority of which (94%) is Primary ITT.²⁹ These types of course are usually longer and have more time for trainees to build expertise. We are clear that undergraduate ITT is in scope of this Review. However, we recognise that there may be necessary differences in the implementation of the Quality Requirements between multiple-year undergraduate courses and single-year postgraduate routes. Differences in the minimum time allocations set out in the Quality Requirements reflect this difference (see Annex B, page 43).

²⁹ Based on new entrants to ITT for 2020/21, full data available at: [Initial Teacher Training Census, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk).

70. Employment-based routes, including School Direct (salaried), the high potential initial teacher training programme (HPITT) and postgraduate teaching apprenticeships (PGTA) together form around 10% of provision.³⁰ Trainees are employed by schools as they train and qualify. We recommend that DfE engages with providers of employment-based and undergraduate routes as part of its planned consultation, so we can ensure that the Review recommendations are deliverable and will benefit all trainees no matter through which route they train.

71. We consider the intensive placement as of equal importance for trainees on salaried routes but recognise that this could be logistically complex for employers. For those on salaried routes only, providers should design intensive placements which meet the overall time minimums set out in this report in innovative ways, or consider how any second placements could be replaced with an intensive placement.

72. We know that candidates and schools find the perceived complexity of the various routes into ITT off-putting.³¹ The recommendations we are making provide the opportunity to define all ITT that leads to QTS within the 3 core routes, granting the opportunity for accredited providers to strengthen their brands.

How long should postgraduate teacher training courses last?

73. Currently, there is some variation in the duration of postgraduate teacher training courses. The current ITT criteria, which all providers must follow, stipulate that “all accredited ITT providers must ensure that training programmes are designed to provide trainee teachers with sufficient time being trained in schools...” and that this would typically include at least 24 weeks for graduate primary and secondary QTS programmes. Beyond that, providers have freedom to determine aspects of course structure themselves, which includes the overall length of the course. During this review, many providers have told us that there is significant pressure on time in many postgraduate ITT courses, and that in some cases this has intensified since the introduction of the CCF, because additional content has had to be covered.

74. The academic year for the vast majority of state-funded schools is 39 weeks, which equates to the 195-day working year for teachers in maintained schools as required by the school teachers’ pay and conditions document. Of those, 190 days, i.e. the equivalent of 38 weeks, are required to be teaching days. Given that this is the working pattern of the vast majority of schools and teachers, and taking into account the pressures on course time identified by many stakeholders, our view is that all ITT courses should be required to be of 38 weeks in duration.

³⁰ Based on new entrants to ITT for 2020/21, full data available at: [Initial Teacher Training Census, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-census-academic-year-2020-21).

³¹ See, for example, Williams *et al.* (2016) available at: [The customer journey to initial teacher training \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-customer-journey-to-initial-teacher-training).

75. Because of the centrality of school placements (including the new intensive placement) for the structured delivery and practice of the curriculum content, we are also recommending an increase to the minimum number of weeks which must be spent in school to 28. This means that the intensive placement can be delivered without shortening the current minimum time trainees must spend in school, whilst still leaving a maximum 10 weeks for non-school based delivery.

76. Within these minima, accredited providers should, in our view, continue to have freedom on how precisely to structure the training year. There are a variety of options available which may work well in different contexts. However, given the desirability of bringing together theoretical input and school and classroom practice, providers should design courses which recognise the benefits of doing so, rather than opting for lengthy blocks of time away from school or the classroom.

Recommendation 9: single-year ITT courses that lead to QTS should be required to be of 38 weeks' duration, as a condition of accreditation, of which the minimum spent in schools should be 28 weeks

2. Towards a new market: delivering the Quality Requirements

77. In this section, we consider how the ITT market will need to adapt if it is to deliver the Quality Requirements we recommend, and how DfE can support the emergence of the reconfigured and reinvigorated market which we believe is necessary to deliver the Requirements successfully for all courses leading to QTS.

78. The Quality Requirements we recommend deliberately set a very high level of expectation for ITT providers and their partnerships. We believe that delivering the Requirements in full would place providers at the cutting edge of evidence-based practice, both in this country and internationally, leading to the best-trained generation of new teachers that we have ever had.

79. In our view, delivering the Quality Requirements successfully and in full is unlikely to be able to be achieved efficiently within the current market configuration. The recommendations of this Review notably raise the expectations we have of ITT providers in terms of curriculum design and planning, school placement quality and consistency, the introduction of the intensive placement, mentoring and lead mentors, and the investment that providers should make into mentor training. In the light of this, it is likely that many providers, to meet the demands of accreditation, will need to come together to have the capacity to deliver these raised expectations, expanding their partnerships or joining or establishing new ones. The vast majority of ITT providers are already composite in structure, often comprising schools, trusts, HEIs or SCITTs working together, and so we are confident that this market reconfiguration is achievable.

80. We do not consider that there is likely to be a 'one size fits all' partnership structure which is optimal to cover every type of provider. We expect to see differing structures, for example a 'single organisation' provider potentially delivering all of those roles, a consortium of several current ITT providers who have come together to create the capacity to deliver training and meet the demands of the new Quality Requirements, or a new market entrant which is building an ITT-purposed partnership for the first time. However, there are some key roles and responsibilities that will need to exist within each ITT partnership. The details will vary by partnership, but the accredited provider will need to ensure that these roles are clearly defined and assigned, and that they have the ability to hold any partners to account for their delivery:

- **The accredited provider:** the new accreditation process is predicated on the lead accredited body at the centre of any partnership being fully accountable for all aspects of training design, delivery, and quality right across the partnership. Although these providers may delegate responsibilities or roles to different partners or levels within their partnership, accountability must remain firmly with the accredited provider.

- **ITT lead partners:** it is likely that many accredited providers will wish to design their partnerships so that those partners, be they schools, trusts or other types of partner organisation, which have the capacity to play more significant operational or strategic roles, are able to take on enhanced responsibilities. Such lead partners might contribute to curriculum design, host or supply lead mentors, run intensive practice placements, or take a lead role in recruitment in the local area. They might also have a role in quality assurance, for example of mentoring. teaching school hubs, or the trusts of which they are part, should have the capacity to play this kind of role, (unless they are themselves are operating at accredited provider level).
- **Placement schools:** these schools have a critical role to play. Mentors, other than some lead mentors, will continue to be based in them. These schools would still provide the majority of placement time and some can offer a more immersive experience which would be supported by the more structured and focused elements described in the Quality Requirements.

81. At all levels, but particularly for ITT lead partners and placement schools, local recognition and relationships are critical for securing and maintaining the confidence of potential trainees. Accredited providers will need to consider this carefully in the make-up of their partnerships, to ensure that at a local level, schools and other partners are well-placed to recruit trainees, in the way that School Direct currently achieves this, for example.

Teaching school hubs

82. In February this year, a new national network of 87 teaching school hubs was created by DfE, ensuring that every school in the country will have access to a centre of excellence for teacher professional development. The vast majority of these teaching school hubs are part of multi-academy trusts, and in many cases derive part of their capacity from their trust.

83. In a reformed ITT market, we would require teaching school hubs, or the trusts of which they are part, to partner with an accredited provider for ITT delivery (unless they are operating at accredited provider level). As an ITT lead partner, teaching school hubs must be prepared to play a full role in delivering ITT in collaboration with their accredited provider, for example by hosting intensive placements and lead mentors, and by supporting accredited providers with the design and delivery of the training and mentor curriculums. Teaching school hubs can play an important role in ensuring that this aligns with local ECF and NPQ delivery, in which they will also be involved.

84. We would also require accredited providers to demonstrate how they have considered the existing teacher development architecture, including teaching school hubs, but also other specialist hubs (such as maths hubs) when forming their delivery networks.

85. In addition to their role with accredited ITT providers, teaching school hubs will be an advocate for high-quality ITT in their respective areas and should have responsibilities on behalf of DfE relating to ITT delivery in their areas. DfE should therefore require teaching school hubs to undertake specified strategic roles as part of their core work, grant-funded by DfE. These may vary from area to area, and year to year, depending on needs and priorities. For example, they could include building school capacity for ITT by building an active mentor network in the local area, providing specific support for schools serving disadvantaged communities to enable them to engage with ITT, or modelling high-quality intensive practice placements for other schools undertaking this aspect of ITT for the first time.

Recommendation 10: teaching school hubs should partner with an accredited provider to play a role in the delivery of ITT (unless they are operating at accredited provider level). DfE should place a requirement on teaching school hubs to support local ITT delivery in specific strategic ways as required, for example through building school capacity for ITT by building an active mentor network in the local area, providing specific support for schools serving disadvantaged communities to enable them to engage with ITT, or modelling high-quality intensive practice placements for other schools undertaking this aspect of ITT for the first time.

The new accreditation process

86. The Quality Requirements set out in this report mark a step-change in the delivery of initial teacher training. As has been set out above, providers will have to consider very carefully how they are going to successfully deliver these Requirements, and we anticipate that significant market reconfiguration and the development of new capacity will be necessary. DfE will need to be assured that prospective accredited providers and their partnerships are capable of delivering the Quality Requirements in full, and so the expert advisory group recommends that all ITT providers should be required to go through a new accreditation process, regardless of whether they are currently offering initial teacher training or are new to ITT provision.

87. Providers seeking accreditation or re-accreditation should be mindful of the significance and weight of the new Quality Requirements when evaluating their own capacity to deliver against them as accredited providers. As we have mentioned above, we consider it likely that many providers will wish or need to create formal partnerships, either with organisations of similar type to themselves, or with different kinds of organisations or existing providers, in order to create the wide range of capacity which will be needed. Many prototypes for such partnerships across organisations exist already, for example where groups of School Direct providers, SCITTs and HEIs work together effectively delivering a similar programme across a region.

88. To meet the requirements of new accreditation, formal arrangements will need to be in place to ensure that lines of accountability for high training standards are evident

across the provider's partnership. There may also be some existing or new providers who are able to meet the Quality Requirements at relatively small scale because they have significant existing capacity or because they propose a specialised offer.

89. The expert advisory group believes that the accreditation process must be sufficiently robust to ensure that the full import of the Quality Requirements has been understood and that providers have the capacity to deliver to the standard and at the level of detail needed. Therefore, an accreditation process should include assessment of the following:

- the development of a selection of detailed curriculum planning, including at subject or phase-specific level,
- the development of at least part of the mentor training curriculum,
- demonstration that the provider has in place the fundamentals of a workable delivery chain, including key ITT lead partners or other key parts of the delivery structure,
- a sample of the curriculum-aligned assessment framework to be used, and
- sufficient detail on quality assurance arrangements to provide assurance that the approach will meet the demands of the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 11: prospective accredited providers of ITT should go through a new, rigorous accreditation process to ensure that they are able to fully deliver the Quality Requirements

90. Once accredited, it is important that there are ways to ensure that all providers continue to meet conditions for accreditation. All providers will be inspected by Ofsted using their revised ITE inspection framework. Negative inspection judgements should, as currently, trigger a reassessment of a provider's suitability to continue providing ITT courses, and powers to withdraw accreditation following negative inspection judgements should be retained and used as appropriate to ensure high quality in the market at all times. In some such cases, we judge that it would be of benefit for DfE to broker support, where appropriate, for a weak provider from another, strong provider, as a condition of continuing accreditation. Where a provider is unable to deliver high-quality ITT, DfE should broker transfer of trainees to another provider to ensure that all trainees receive high-quality training.

91. We also consider it to be of critical importance that DfE retains robust monitoring powers to identify cases where accredited ITT providers fail to continue to meet the conditions of accreditation but are not yet in the window for Ofsted inspection. This should include the power either to mandate a formal support arrangement with another strong provider, or to withdraw accreditation, where rapid improvement cannot be secured. DfE should also have, and where appropriate use, powers to limit numbers of

trainees which providers causing concern may recruit, either by subject or phase, or in total, until shortcomings are addressed. DfE should also consider introducing a formal, published, 'notification of concern' process where accreditation conditions are not being met, and keep this in place, likewise, until the issues are resolved. These monitoring arrangements should include the ability for DfE to signal to Ofsted when it has concerns around the quality of an accredited provider's delivery, and for Ofsted to consider bringing forward a planned inspection of the provider in these circumstances.

Recommendation 12: DfE formally notifies providers who do not meet aspects of the Quality Requirements, as set out in the ITT criteria. Where this is the case, DfE should mandate support between providers to ensure improvement as a condition of continued accreditation. Where a provider is unable or unwilling to improve, DfE should broker transfer of trainees to another provider

Transition to the new market

92. Around 30,000 trainees are awarded QTS each year. We would like trainees to have access to training under the new Quality Requirements as quickly as possible, so that the expected benefits for all trainees, the profession and ultimately children, can be realised rapidly. DfE should therefore seek to implement these proposals as soon as practicable, having thoroughly tested deliverability. This should include considering the capacity of the sector, and of prospective new entrants to ITT provision, to prepare for and engage with the recommended accreditation process. DfE should welcome views on this point in their planned consultation.

93. While implementing the Quality Requirements in a reformed market will undoubtedly be a significant undertaking, we are not starting from scratch. As we have set out above, providers are already familiar with the CCF, and also very familiar with delivering ITT across a partnership. The introduction of teaching school hubs gives a significant boost to both delivery capacity and the ability to draw on local networks and source expertise. We recommend DfE undertake some intensive engagement and market-warming at a regional level, to ascertain the likely partnership arrangements and delivery capacity available around the country.

94. A priority during the transition period will be ensuring that the capacity continues to exist, in all parts of the country, to offer enough training places to meet the continuing teacher supply needs across the whole education system. Alongside monitoring the capacity of ITT that leads to QTS, DfE should continue to assess any impacts on early years ITT and further education ITE, where government also has an interest in the capacity and quality of provision. At each stage, risks will need to be assessed and mitigations put in place, including considering any disruption to EY and FE teacher training (particularly where delivered alongside QTS programmes), whilst ensuring that the reform programme moves on.

95. The funding of ITT is strictly speaking not within the scope of this review, and the premise is that the reforms would largely be delivered within the current funding arrangements, whilst recognising that some economies of scale may be required. DfE will want to consider this further as part of its deliverability testing.

96. We do think there is a need for DfE to look at the current funding arrangements within ITT partnerships. To us, there appears to be a large amount of variation in how much funding is allocated by providers to different partners in the system for example, and it may be that a clearer set of arrangements could be specified. This will be important as the new market will require a more formal distribution of responsibilities between accredited providers, lead partners and schools.

97. There is also a question around whether additional funding from DfE should be made available to accredited providers as they prepare to deliver against the new Quality Requirements, as part of any transition arrangements. The expert advisory group believes that this is an issue for DfE to decide, but we would make several points here. The first is that providers and partnerships may incur additional costs as they seek to implement the Quality Requirements, including in the form of staff time to work on the new curriculum and training requirements and in the arrangements for the intensive placements. Some existing providers have also told us that they face significant cost pressures, though we have not been able systematically to verify this. We would also point out that as funding generally comes from loans that cover fees, there is a time lag in providers receiving funding.

98. As a result, it would seem to us that some additional grant funding may be needed to 'pump prime' the extra work that will need to be undertaken to meet the Quality Requirements. The emergence of a more dynamic ITT market is considered a desirable outcome, which is likely to include the entry of new accredited providers. New entrants to the market would not have current fees to draw on in developing their curriculums, programmes, networks and systems.

ITT as a system-wide responsibility

99. Teacher training is not possible without the involvement of schools. For the proposed future model of ITT to work effectively, there will need to be sufficient capacity within schools to provide the mentoring and support envisaged. However, schools often find the market contradictory and confusing.

100. During our stakeholder discussions, we heard about a wide range of provider experiences relating to the recruitment of schools to provide placements. Some told us that they have strong networks of schools who work with them in the delivery of training, generally by accepting trainees for placements, but also by contributing more actively to the work of the ITT provider. Others reported challenges in placing all of their students. Some said that meeting the demand for placements was very challenging because they could not find enough schools willing to be engaged, and they sometimes had to place

trainees in schools where the support that they would receive would not be as strong or aligned with the provider's approach as they would want. Some said that schools were reluctant to accept trainees because they did not see the benefits of doing so, did not regard it as part of their core responsibilities to participate in ITT, or were concerned that working with trainees would compromise the quality of education they provided.

101. In their inspection of schools and trusts, Ofsted already consider whether “continuing professional development for teachers and staff is aligned with the curriculum, and the extent to which this develops teachers’ content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time.”³² In our view, as noted elsewhere in this report, professional development should be based on the same principles at all stages of a teacher’s professional journey. Active collaboration between schools and trusts on the one hand, and ITT providers on the other, should support that alignment, so that schools and trusts, in developing their approach to professional development, benefit from the work of ITT providers, and vice versa. Our strongest schools and trusts are already, for the most part, involved in ITT. They frequently, rightly, regard it as a core part of their role in the system, a way to have a stake in the training of the next generation of teachers, and a way to contribute their expertise and experience. We recommend that ways of reflecting the benefits of engagement with ITT in the inspection of schools by Ofsted are explored further.

Recommendation 13: DfE and Ofsted should explore how involvement in ITT might be included in the education inspection framework (EIF)

102. Training future teachers for our schools is a responsibility which all schools and trusts should share. Moreover, participation in ITT brings many potential benefits for schools, in particular through the training and professional development which those staff supporting trainees in schools receive as part of this work. The recommendations of this review include a significant strengthening of the expectations on accredited providers to provide a minimum entitlement of high-quality mentor training to all school-based ITT mentors, and the content of this training should be primarily focused on the training curriculum and how to support it. The training curriculum must itself include the CCF, which in turn is closely related to the ECF, as both reflect the evidence for effective teaching and are organised around the teachers’ standards.

103. Participating in ITT and benefiting from mentor training should not therefore be seen as ‘detached’ from the core responsibilities of schools; in fact, ITT and the commitment all schools need to the evidence-aligned professional development of their teachers are closely connected. Because this report also recommends the significant strengthening of the dimensions of the training curriculum that are specific to subject and phase, and the concomitant training of mentors in these areas, ITT will become an important opportunity to draw subject-specific and phase-specific evidence-based

³² [School inspection handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook).

expertise into schools and trusts. This will strengthen the capacity of schools and trusts to provide appropriate, curriculum-aligned professional development; and more specifically this can be an opportunity to strengthen mentoring expertise and capacity and link it with the work of induction mentors.

104. DfE has recently restated the commitment to growing strong and sustainable trusts across the country.³³ They will be central to the system architecture of the future. Trusts exist to provide education for the public good. We consider that the definition of 'education for the public good' should be understood to include playing a role in training teachers, without a secure supply of whom public education would be at risk. Moreover, there are significant benefits for trusts in increasing their capacity in mentoring, including in connection with ITT and ECF mentoring and NPQLTD. The government has already signalled its intentions to encourage trusts to take a stronger role in ITT. The clear expectation that trusts contribute to the system by engaging actively in ITT now needs to be made more concrete. ITT involvement should be considered as an important condition of growth for multi-academy trusts (MATs), and as a condition of academy funding streams.

Recommendation 14: as trusts grow, there should be an expectation that they actively meet their responsibilities for ITT involvement in the areas they serve. regional school commissioners should therefore consider involvement in ITT as a condition of growth for trusts. DfE should also make ITT involvement part of the eligibility for academy funding streams, such as the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) or sponsor grants

³³ [Education Secretary speech to the Confederation of School Trusts - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretary-speech-to-the-confederation-of-school-trusts).

Conclusion

105. The recommendations in this report are bold and would lead to far-reaching changes in the ITT market. However, they build on the work already in train in ITT with the introduction of the CCF, and the reforms to NPQs and the introduction of a new ECF. The expert advisory group believes that what is set out here are the logical next steps for ITT to complete the reform journey set in train through the Carter Review in 2015 and continued in DfE's 2019 teacher recruitment and retention strategy.

106. The stated aim of this review was to identify how the ITT sector can provide consistently high-quality training, in line with the CCF, in a more efficient and effective market. In meeting this objective, we have always had the trainee at the centre of our thinking. The successful delivery of these reforms would revolutionise the quality of trainees' experience, and they would place England at the cutting edge of evidence-based practice around the world. We understand that providers have had a great deal to cope with in recent times, given the COVID-19 pandemic. To give all our nation's children and young people the best opportunities to do well, we believe that this is absolutely the right time to be embarking on a transformative change. We need the best generation of new teachers ever if we are to enable pupils to catch up on lost learning and to level up educational outcomes across the country.

107. We are in no doubt that these reforms are necessary and that they will bring many benefits to children and young people, trainees and trainers, and schools. These include:

- a strong focus on the training curriculum, ensuring it is evidence-based and designed to enable new teachers to teach effectively from the start of their career, as well as equipping them with the knowledge they need to be discerning and professionally autonomous as they gain experience,
- a strong focus on subject and phase knowledge and expertise which is fundamental to teachers being able to apply evidence and research in their teaching,
- a clearer link between ITT and early career induction for teachers and the new NPQ programmes,
- ITT courses which are guaranteed to be designed explicitly on the basis of the accepted evidence for effective training and skill development,
- assessment of trainees which squarely focuses on what they have been taught and which gives targeted and usable feedback which is relevant to the training curriculum they are following,
- a logical next step in the development of ITT which builds on the school-based reforms of the past decade by bringing the best of school-based ITT to all trainees,

- strong and stable partnerships which are consistent and navigable for schools, where no aspect of the delivery of the ITT curriculum is left to chance, where roles are clear and accountability is strong,
- an ITT landscape which is also more easily navigable for potential trainees who will continue to benefit from the trusted local presence of schools which are connected into larger accredited providers where quality is assured,
- an ITT market where expectations are rigorous and powers to address any quality issues are robust, including the ability for strong providers to support those in difficulty, which is more dynamic and open to new, high-quality providers with a track record in training and development.

108. Taken together, these recommendations will build on our strengths to ensure that the training our teachers receive at the start of their professional life is truly world-class.

Annex A: Recommendations of the ITT market review

Recommendation 1: providers of ITT should develop an evidence-based training curriculum as a condition of accreditation which allows trainees to understand and apply the principles of the CCF in a controlled, cumulative and logical manner, as set out in the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 2: providers should design and deliver an intensive placement experience of at least 4 weeks (20 days) for single-year courses and 6 weeks (30 days) for undergraduate, over the duration of their course, as a condition of accreditation, that allows opportunities for groups of trainees to practise selected, sequenced components of their training curriculum, and receive highly targeted feedback, as set out in the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 3: providers should identify, as a condition of accreditation, sufficient ‘lead mentors’ who will ensure that trainees receive mentoring and support across placement schools which is aligned with the curriculum and informed by practice at all times, as set out in the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 4: providers should ensure that lead mentors take one of: the NPQLTD, one of the other 2 specialist NPQs, or training with the equivalent content and quality, as a condition of accreditation; and every school which hosts a trainee has at least one member of staff who is undertaking or has completed the course.

Recommendation 5: providers should develop a detailed training curriculum for mentors at all levels, as a condition of accreditation, including elements specific to subject and phase, and minimum time allocations for delivering this should be required, as set out in the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 6: providers should demonstrate the capacity to develop an assessment framework reflecting the priorities as set out in the Quality Requirements for assessment, as a condition of accreditation.

Recommendation 7: providers should design and implement rigorous quality assurance arrangements as set out in the Quality Requirements, as a condition of accreditation.

Recommendation 8: DfE should facilitate any accredited providers which wish to do so, to partner with an institution, such as the Institute of Teaching when it is ready, to offer their postgraduate award.

Recommendation 9: single-year ITT courses that lead to QTS should be required to be of 38 weeks’ duration, as a condition of accreditation, of which the minimum spent in schools should be 28 weeks.

Recommendation 10: teaching school hubs should partner with an accredited provider to play a role in the delivery of ITT (unless they are operating at accredited provider level). DfE should place a requirement on teaching school hubs to support local ITT delivery in specific strategic ways as required, for example through building school capacity for ITT by building an active mentor network in the local area, providing specific support for schools serving disadvantaged communities to enable them to engage with ITT, or modelling high-quality intensive practice placements for other schools undertaking this aspect of ITT for the first time.

Recommendation 11: prospective accredited providers of ITT should go through a new, rigorous accreditation process to ensure that they are able to fully deliver the Quality Requirements.

Recommendation 12: DfE formally notifies providers who do not meet aspects of the Quality Requirements, as set out in the ITT criteria. Where this is the case, DfE should mandate support between providers to ensure improvement as a condition of continued accreditation. Where a provider is unable or unwilling to improve, DfE should broker transfer of trainees to another provider.

Recommendation 13: DfE and Ofsted should explore how involvement in ITT might be included in the education inspection framework (EIF).

Recommendation 14: as trusts grow, there should be an expectation that they actively meet their responsibilities for ITT involvement in the areas they serve. regional school commissioners should therefore consider involvement in ITT as a condition of growth for trusts. DfE should also make ITT involvement part of the eligibility for academy funding streams, such as the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) or sponsor grants.

Annex B: Draft Quality Requirements for ITT providers



Department
for Education

Initial teacher training (ITT) review – draft Quality Requirements for ITT providers

July 2021

Introduction

The review recommends that in a reformed ITT market, all providers should be accredited against a new set of Quality Requirements which, drawing on evidence, set a detailed standard for high-quality training provision. The Quality Requirements set a high bar and will require significant capacity for accredited providers to meet and maintain, which, as the report sets out, in many cases is likely to require new configurations of providers and networks. The report sets out how the accreditation process will ensure that providers seeking accreditation to deliver ITT leading to QTS have the necessary capacity, and assessments will be made in line with the Requirements. This applies to providers currently operating in the market, or to new providers seeking entry to the ITT market in the reformed landscape.

The report sets out the importance of the key areas of

- Curriculum
- Mentoring
- Assessment
- Quality Assurance

and the Quality Requirements are grouped in this way to reflect the commentary the Report. The Report makes clear the central importance of the training curriculum, and the detail in this area of the Quality Requirements reflects that priority.

A further Requirement for accredited providers relates to structures and partnerships, including governance, finance and recruitment, and these are covered in the fifth section of this document:

- Structures and partnerships

1. Curriculum

Overarching requirements

Providers must have a fully-developed, evidence-based curriculum which explicitly delivers all aspects of the ITT Core Content Framework (CCF) and ensures that trainees are prepared for the next stage in their professional development as teachers, the Early Career Framework (ECF) induction. The curriculum must be designed in the light of the best evidence for effective teacher training and development (as reflected in the NPQ for leading teacher development). Programmes must be designed to reflect how children learn most effectively, and wherever appropriate reflecting cognitive architecture in curriculum design.

Those responsible for teaching, tutoring and mentoring trainees should have a deep understanding of the provider's planned curriculum and its basis in evidence, to ensure that trainees experience consistent training and support at all stages.

Providers must identify how all components of the planned curriculum will be taught, applied to practice in a range of contexts and assimilated. The curriculum should encompass a variety of approaches, including direct explanation, deconstruction, structured and focused observation and targeted practice with systematic analysis, feedback and mentoring. At all times, the planned and sequenced curriculum must closely inform taught components, independent learning, practice and feedback. When trainees move on to delivering longer sequences of teaching which draw on a range of knowledge, skills and behaviours, they should do so in the confidence that fundamental components of knowledge, understanding and practice have first been properly consolidated.

Component elements of the planned curriculum must be closely integrated at each stage with appropriate opportunities to ensure that trainees have sufficient support to understand, apply, practise and embed new approaches. As trainees move from focusing mainly on the practice of components of effective teaching towards more complex, composite sequences and scenarios, they must have sufficient opportunity to identify and isolate areas where consolidation or more practice are required.

Providers must identify curriculum components which will benefit from specific expertise or specialised training techniques (which may include, where appropriate, 'approximations of teaching') to ensure effective delivery, understanding and practice. To support this, providers must demonstrate how specialist intensive practice schools and specialist or lead mentors, alongside the wider range of teaching placement schools, will ensure that the requirement is met.

Specific requirements

Providers must design a sequenced curriculum which:

- 1.1 Explicitly delivers the requirements and principles of the Core Content Framework in full, includes further content to be taught, and prepares trainees for the Early Career Framework and the broader demands of their early career.
- 1.2 Demonstrates explicitly how all components of content are taught in a sequenced way which incrementally builds the expertise and confidence of trainees across the year, beginning with a focus on the fundamental component elements and moving towards complex or composite practice.
- 1.3 Demonstrates in what setting the content of each part of the curriculum will be delivered and how delivery and practice are integrated or interleaved at each stage to build systematically towards trainees' fluency in classroom practice.
- 1.4 Specifies a range of methods, carefully and intentionally orchestrated across the curriculum, including training undertaken with a range of experts, training undertaken with peers and supported independent study.
- 1.5 Identifies the range of settings in which trainees will undertake each part of their training, including the minimum 2 placement schools and intensive practice (as described in Box 1).

Box 1 – Intensive practice

Intensive practice is designed to give trainees feedback on foundational aspects of the curriculum where close attention to and control of content, application and feedback are required. It provides an opportunity to 'intensify the focus' on specific, pivotal areas. Intensive practice should also build powerfully the link between evidence-based theory and practice. This means that intensive practice will need to be led and supported by an appropriate range of experts. Because the main aim is to strengthen the link between evidence and classroom practice, intensive practice should take place in a school environment, but may also include the use of 'approximations of practice', where helpful or necessary.

Schools selected for intensive teaching practice should offer a sufficient range of strengths to support the delivery of strongly curriculum-aligned practice. In many cases they will be among the provider's lead partners.

Intensive teaching practice is different from general teaching practice placements, during which trainees spend significant time working with specified classes or teachers.

As a minimum, intensive practice placements will consist of:

- Delivery of carefully selected pivotal or foundational aspects of the planned training curriculum. These will be identified in the overall design of the curriculum, and most are likely to relate to the CCF,
- Structured observation of selected teaching sequences with those aspects under focus,
- Critical analysis of observed teaching, guided by an expert, with a focus on identifying the links between theory and practice, and
- Preparation and practice delivery of the identified aspects of the training curriculum, with expert feedback and opportunities to repeat and vary the preparation and delivery for different circumstances.

The design of intensive teaching practice placements will reflect how trainees learn effectively, for example ensuring high-quality interleaving of different elements, immediate and targeted feedback focused on improvement, and appropriate questioning to ensure trainees remember and understand the content.

The outcomes of intensive placements for trainees should include a strong grasp of the evidence base for the area concerned, which they can articulate, justify and exemplify, and the ability to identify effective classroom delivery and to prepare and apply those aspects of teaching confidently in a range of contexts.

While the minimum period for intensive teaching practice is 4 weeks (20 days) across the training year, providers may locate such practice at suitable pivotal points to ensure maximum advantage is gained for trainees' growth in knowledge and expertise.³⁴

Providers should select a minimum of 4 focus areas which are considered foundational, and which should normally be drawn from different areas of the CCF. Providers whose trainees' geographical distribution makes group intensive placements logistically difficult must propose ways of delivering the intensive placement entitlement, for example by using a combination of virtual and face to face experiences.

- 1.6 Identifies those parts of the curriculum which will be delivered in 'intensive practice' schools, with the necessary detail on how this will be achieved and how high-quality delivery, practice and feedback will be assured.
- 1.7 Includes detailed curriculum planning for teaching trainees evidence-based approaches to teaching that are specific to subject and phase, including the use of

³⁴ We consider that the intensive placement is of equal importance for trainees on salaried routes, but recognise that this could be logistically difficult for employers. For those on salaried routes only, providers should design intensive placements which meet the overall time minima for intensive placements set out in this report in innovative ways, and/or consider how any second placements could be replaced with an intensive placement in another school equipped to offer such placements.

systematic synthetic phonics for all primary trainees. Subject-specific approaches must be delivered by suitably qualified experts and take full account of the evidence available for subject-specific teaching, for example Ofsted subject research reviews. This part of the training curriculum must adequately cover all national curriculum subjects for primary trainees, and the relevant teaching subject(s) for secondary trainees and must enable trainees to understand the application of general research-based principles, including all content set out in the CCF, to the specifics of teaching the subjects in question.

- 1.8 Includes a comprehensive suite of high-quality materials for trainees and those responsible for curriculum delivery to support all aspects of the training, including evidence-based subject-specific training.
- 1.9 Meets the minimum time expectations for specified elements of any course, as set out in table 1 below.

Box 2 – Minimum time expectations

Accredited providers must design training programmes within the parameters set out in this document. In doing so, they must also reflect the minimum time allocations for pivotal aspects of ITT programmes set out in Table 1 below³⁵. These refer to trainees, mentors and lead mentors.

By the end of the course, all trainees must have experienced at least 6 weeks of 80% contact ratio teaching.

³⁵ Providers should note that these indicative times refer to course design and provision. It is accepted that at times and for exceptional reasons some trainees may not meet full attendance. Providers should continue to exercise appropriate judgement in individual cases where that happens.

Table 1 – ITT minimum time allocations

ITT minimum time allocations	Postgraduate	Undergraduate
Total weeks of course	38	n/a
Minimum weeks in school placements (including general and intensive placements)	28	40
Minimum weeks in intensive placements (not necessarily consecutive)	4	6
Minimum hours in classrooms (including observing, teaching, co-teaching, etc.) each week during general school placements	15	15
Minimum hours mentoring each week during general school placements	2	2
Minimum planned and supported hours per week during intensive placement	25	25
Minimum hours of expert support per trainee per week during intensive placement	5	4
Minimum hours initial training time for general mentors	24	24
Minimum hours initial training time for lead mentors ³⁶	36	36
Minimum hours annual refresher training for mentors	6	6
Minimum hours annual refresher training for lead mentors	12	12
Minimum ratio of lead mentors:trainees (Full Time Equivalent)	1:50	1:50

³⁶ The training curriculum for lead mentors may include relevant aspects of the NPQLTD where appropriate, and may include alongside appropriately-sequenced training content the opportunity to work on the design of training curriculums relevant to the trainee lead mentor's expertise.

2. Mentoring and guidance

Overarching requirements

Providers must establish a professional network of well-trained and expert mentors³⁷ who have a deep understanding of the curriculum, the relevant research base which informs it, and their role in supporting its delivery and practice. Mentors must ensure in-school experiences are seamlessly coherent with the training curriculum, with opportunities for purposeful practice of the key concepts and high-quality feedback. Trainees must also have access to mentors who have expertise in the subject- and phase-specific approaches set out in the planned curriculum, so that trainees are able to learn the best-evidenced ways of teaching their subject or phase and are enabled to apply the general principles set out in the CCF.

Providers must ensure observation, deconstruction and feedback take place throughout the year and are fully aligned with all components of the curriculum. Providers need to ensure that mentors have the time, resources and the support of their school to discharge the requirements of their role.

Specific requirements

Providers must:

- 2.1 Demonstrate how they will recruit and train sufficient mentors to ensure that every trainee receives their entitlement of 2 hours per week of mentor support.
- 2.2 Demonstrate how they will ensure that mentors have expertise in evidence-based subject-specific approaches to teaching and that they are allocated to trainees as appropriate to their subject needs.
- 2.3 Create a fully resourced mentor curriculum that aligns with the trainee curriculum. This will equip mentors with an understanding of the curriculum content trainees will cover and an approach to mentoring based on the best available evidence.
- 2.4 Put in place a training programme for all mentors covering the minima set out in this document.
- 2.5 Ensure that mentoring fully reflects in practice the intent and content of the training curriculum.

³⁷ Mentoring is defined here as in the ITT core content framework: "Receiving structured feedback from expert colleagues on a particular approach – using the best available evidence – to provide a structured process for improving the trainee's practice."

- 2.6 Demonstrate how the requirements for intensive teaching practice will be delivered.
- 2.7 Ensure that mentors receive enough time to attend the required training and discharge the mentoring entitlements according to the minima set out in these Requirements.

Box 3 – Lead mentors

All mentors must undergo minimum training requirements which must focus on building their knowledge of the training curriculum, the relevant research which underpins it, and their role in guiding and supporting trainees through that curriculum. Minimum training times are set out in this document, as are minimum allocations for trainee time with mentors. Beyond this basic requirement, providers must also give trainees access to lead mentors. Lead mentors must have particular expertise in the evidence base for effective initial teacher training, including programme design and content selection. A suitable qualification for lead mentors is the NPQ leading teacher development (NPQLTD) and training for lead mentors should build on or complement the content of the NPQLTD. Minimum training times for lead mentors are set out above, along with allocations for the time trainees should spend with them.

Roles of lead mentors include:

- oversight, supervision and quality assurance of other mentors,
- design and delivery of training for other mentors,
- close working with trainees during intensive practice placements, and design of such placements,
- oversight of trainee progress through the year and identification of interventions or modifications where required,
- in addition, providers may delegate other appropriate functions to lead mentors.

Box 4 – Training specific to subject and phase

Subject specificity goes beyond subject knowledge. It is critically important not only that teacher trainees learn about the evidence underpinning effective teaching at a general level, but that they are also given a secure grounding in how this evidence applies in the specifics of teaching subjects in the relevant phases. The CCF makes this clear when it emphasises the need for training to be subject and phase specific. The curriculum designed by providers must therefore set out in detail approaches for each subject, and be clear about how subject-specific approaches will be taught to trainees. This will mean:

- Setting out the evidence base used for each subject (Ofsted’s subject research overviews are a useful resource for this),
- Ensuring that trainees have sufficient knowledge of the content of the school curriculum in each subject, including at the level required by relevant examination courses, and, in primary, ensuring that all national curriculum subjects are covered,
- Translating the evidence-informed principles of the CCF into a subject-specific context, ensuring fidelity, with sufficient subject-specific exemplifications to enable alignment of practice at all levels for tutors, mentors and trainees, and ensuring that trainees understand how subject-specific approaches to curriculum and pedagogy are based on both general and subject-specific research and evidence,
- Ensuring that tutors, lead mentors and mentors, including those supporting intensive practice placements, have the relevant subject knowledge and subject-specific curricular expertise, and close knowledge of the provider’s planned curriculum for teaching subject-specific approaches, to guide and support trainees effectively,
- Setting out clearly how the subject-specific elements of the planned curriculum will be taught to trainees, by whom, and when, and how fidelity to the intention and content of the planned curriculum in this respect will be assured,
- Introducing trainees to relevant subject-specific communities of practice and equipping them to contribute in an informed way to relevant debates affecting the teaching of their subject(s).

3. Assessment

Overarching requirements

Providers must set out an assessment and progression framework which is aligned to the planned and sequenced curriculum. It should draw on overarching evidence-based principles for good quality assessment, including those set out in the CCF, ECF and NPQs relating to the assessment of pupils. The assessment framework should, as such, assess trainees with appropriate frequency both on their knowledge of the content of the curriculum, and their ability to apply it in classroom practice. Because ongoing assessment is an important part of the training process, it should include focused feedback designed to enable trainees to improve. Feedback should draw on the content of the training curriculum and should at each stage support trainees in understanding how practice is informed and helpfully shaped by research and evidence.

Ongoing, in-course assessment should be against content delivered by that point in the course, rather than against the level of expertise or standard required by the end of the course. During the course, assessment should feed into the identification of aspects of the curriculum which trainees are finding challenging, and be used to adapt approaches to delivery or reshape practice accordingly. Providers must demonstrate the ways in which this will happen.

Providers must ensure that all mentors and others involved in assessment of trainees have received sufficient training to enable them to understand and use the provider's assessment framework accurately and appropriately.

Assessment specifically against the Teachers' Standards should be reserved for end-of-course assessment to meet the requirements for the award of Qualified Teacher Status. Providers should also ensure at the end of the course that trainees have good knowledge of those aspects of cognitive science which are contained in the CCF. Providers must demonstrate that end-of-course assessments are objective, valid and reliable.

Specific requirements

Providers must design an assessment framework which reflects evidence-based principles for good assessment, is straightforward to use and which:

- 3.1 Ensures that curriculum-based assessment and formative feedback take place throughout the course.
- 3.2 Is centred on the assessment of the component elements of the planned curriculum as they are delivered and practised.

- 3.3 Recognises the need for trainees to be assessed and receive feedback on the evidence-based, subject- and phase-specific approaches set out in the curriculum.
- 3.4 Clearly defines roles and responsibilities for those conducting assessment and providing feedback at all levels within the provider's network, including arrangements for the robust quality assurance of assessment.
- 3.5 Assesses trainees' knowledge of the content of the training curriculum, and their ability to apply it in classroom practice.
- 3.6 Requires those conducting assessment and providing feedback to gain a rich and developed knowledge of trainees' performance over time and to draw on a range of sources to ensure conclusions are secure and balanced.
- 3.7 Requires those conducting assessment to provide feedback to trainees which they can use, and are supported to use, for improvement, and which supports trainees' understanding of how practice can be improved in the light of research evidence.
- 3.8 Enables insights from assessment to feed into programme delivery so that those responsible for training and mentoring can adapt in response to trainee needs.
- 3.9 Includes arrangements for objective, valid, and reliable end-of-course assessment against the Teachers' Standards prior to the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

All those responsible for assessment and feedback must receive thorough training on the assessment framework and the ways in which it is intended to be used, to ensure that approaches are of consistently high quality for all trainees.

4. Quality Assurance

Overarching requirements

Providers must develop quality assurance processes to ensure that all aspects of the delivery of the course meet the high expectations to which all trainees are entitled.

Specifically, providers must demonstrate robust arrangements for monitoring:

- the quality and fidelity of all aspects of curriculum delivery to trainees,
- the training and expertise of those involved in curriculum delivery,
- the training and expertise of mentors and lead mentors,
- the quality of mentoring work of all types and levels, including ensuring that time allocations for mentors and trainees are met,
- the quality of regular in-course assessment and feedback and their impact on trainee knowledge and expertise,
- the quality, reliability, and validity of end-of-course summative assessment.

There must be clear systems in place for reporting and taking action to address any shortfalls in quality in a prompt way, to protect the entitlement of trainees to world-class training.

They must also have clear identification of responsibilities and accountability for quality assurance at all levels, including for accurate record-keeping of quality assurance work.

Clear mechanisms must be in place for trainees to raise concerns or make complaints about the quality of training/mentoring, and for investigating and where necessary addressing, such concerns or complaints in a timely fashion.

Specific requirements

Providers must set out a framework for quality assurance which:

- 4.1 Monitors and assures quality in all required areas of the programme and at all levels.
- 4.2 Sets out suitable monitoring methods.
- 4.3 Sets out clearly the range of specific roles and responsibilities for quality assurance.
- 4.4 Demonstrates how concerns identified by quality assurance will be addressed, including the range of intervention options which will be used.
- 4.5 Specifies how records relating to quality assurance will be kept.

- 4.6 Sets out robust arrangements which enable trainees to raise concerns or make complaints.
- 4.7 Sets out how quality assurance information will be used to improve the quality of training across the provider's partnership and make the programme and all aspects of the partnership more resilient.
- 4.8 Put in place an effective system for supervising and quality assuring the initial and ongoing training of mentors, the quality of their work, including their approach to subject-specific mentoring, and systems for securing specific improvements where necessary.

5. Structures and partnerships

Requirements

Providers must set out the essential features of their structures and partnerships which will enable them to deliver teacher training in the way described in the preceding sections. They must specifically set out:

- 5.1 At what scale they will operate, and, recognising the quality level set out in this document, demonstrate that they have sufficient capacity to be able to meet the requirements for training in all subjects and phases offered.
- 5.2 How they will secure and retain schools and other partners to enable them to deliver their programme in line with the Requirements and to meet the needs of all trainees, and how they will develop the training and delivery capacity of ITT lead partners and schools in their partnership.
- 5.3 Which courses will be run and what target recruitment numbers and minimum and maximum numbers will be in place.
- 5.4 How they will identify and retain lead partners, what role teaching school hubs will play, how they plan to involve other relevant specialist hubs, and what responsibilities will be delegated to lead partners.
- 5.5 The structure of their partnership, what governance arrangements they will put in place, including formal arrangements between lead partners and accredited providers, and between teaching practice schools and providers, and how governance will be exercised effectively, recognising that accountability for all aspects of the operation of the partnership rests with the accredited provider.
- 5.6 How they will market the course offer and recruit trainees and how they will help potential trainees to navigate the market.
- 5.7 Budgetary arrangements, including how funds will be distributed across accredited providers, lead partners and schools, how funding will be distributed within the partnership in a way which adequately reflects the distribution of delegated responsibilities, how they will ensure funding is used for intended purposes at all levels in the provider's partnership, and how these arrangements contribute both to quality provision for trainees and to the retention of partners.
- 5.8 How trainees will be prepared to teach pupils in schools across a full range of contexts found in the geographical area in which they are training, including areas of high disadvantage. For example, trainees' placements could include time in schools serving disadvantaged communities, or a focused period teaching pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- 5.9 How to ensure that at a local level, schools and other lead partners are well-placed to recruit trainees, in the way that School Direct currently achieves this, for example, given the fact that local recognition and relationships are critical for securing and maintaining the confidence of potential trainees.
- 5.10 What arrangements will be in place for secure and compliant data handling across composite organisations and partnerships.

Annex C: The configuration of the current ITT market

The work of the review included securing a detailed overview of the current market. The results of this overview informed the considerations of the expert advisory group and were important background for the recommendations made in this report. A summary overview of the current market is presented in this annex.

There are currently 240 ITT providers accredited by DfE (sources: internal accreditation data, 2021; ITT census 2020):

Provision type:	HEI	SCITT ³⁸	Total
No. of accredited ITT providers (current):	70	170	240
No. of trainees total	31027 (75%) ³⁹	10154 (25%)	41181
No. of trainees through central programme non-SD	24257	4844	29101
No. of trainees through SD partnerships (fee-funded and salaried)	6770	5310	12080

In addition, there are 918 School Direct lead schools with an allocation in 2020/21, which includes some SCITTs who deliver their own School Direct provision.

The distribution of trainees across the system is uneven; of the 234 providers delivering ITT in 2020/21, the largest 53 providers accounts for 70% of the total number of undergraduate and postgraduate trainees, consistent with previous years (source DfE ITT census 2020⁴⁰):

	Largest 53 providers	Other 181 providers
Share of undergraduate and postgraduate trainees 2020/21	70%	30%
No. of trainees	28,772	12,409

It is worth noting that, while most postgraduate ITT trainees pay a fee of around £9,250, the vast majority do this via a student loan. More than half the total value of undergraduate student loans (which is the available loan option for postgraduate ITT

³⁸ As of June 2021, SCITT numbers include one employment-based ITT provider (EBITT).

³⁹ N.B. excluding undergraduates HEI to SCITT share is 71% to 29% (ITT census 2020).

⁴⁰ Note that there is a small discrepancy between internal accreditation data and the ITT census data, due to a minority of SCITTs that only deliver School Direct, and no provider-led places.

training) is not expected to be repaid, meaning that, indirectly, a far larger proportion of ITT costs are met by the government than seems to be the case at first sight.⁴¹

⁴¹ Student loan forecasts for England 2020/21, available at: [Student loan forecasts for England, financial year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk).

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