



Department
for Education

Early years initial teacher training (EYITT): criteria and supporting advice

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Summary

This document contains guidance and accompanying advice from the Department for Education (DfE).

This means that Early Years Initial Teacher Training (EYITT) providers should have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties relating to EYITT.

Expiry or review date

This guidance is effective for recruitment of candidates for academic year 2025/26.

Who is this publication for?

Where reference is made to partnerships or partners, organisations involved in the delivery of ITT will be classified in one of the following three ways:

- **EYITT provider** - will have full and final accountability for all aspects of training design, delivery and quality across the partnership
- **Lead partner(s)** - will have an operational or strategic role with responsibilities delegated to them by the EYITT provider, such as trainee recruitment, delivering training, involvement in curriculum design, supplying lead mentors, or running Intensive Training and Practice
- **Placement early years settings** - will provide placements and general mentors

In these criteria we set out mandatory requirements and responsibilities for EYITT providers. Where an EYITT provider has delegated a role to a lead partner, these mandatory requirements and responsibilities apply to the lead partner. The EYITT provider is accountable for ensuring this.

EYITT providers must ensure they meet these criteria to remain compliant. EYITT providers who do not comply with these criteria may be subject to removal of permission to recruit to this route.

DfE reserves the right to update criteria and guidance to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

ITT Accreditation

Following the government's response to the 2021 ITT Market Review, all organisations delivering ITT leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) from September 2024 must be accredited against these new criteria, including the new Quality Requirements. Passing this accreditation process is a mandatory requirement to deliver EYITT courses.

At present there are no requirements for EYITT courses to meet the same standards as ITT courses as a result of the reaccreditation process, although providers may want to consider using the [Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework](#) which training providers will deliver from September 2025.

All EYITT courses must enable trainee teachers to meet all of the [Teachers' Standards \(Early Years\)](#) in order to be able to lead to an award of Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS).

As part of our approach to quality assurance, EYITT providers may be subject to an Ofsted inspection every 3 years under the [Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework](#).

Further information on the ITT reaccreditation process can be found in the [Accreditation: How to Apply Guidance](#).

Eligibility

To offer early years ITT, you must:

- be an initial teacher training (ITT) provider¹, delivering at least one ITT course leading to QTS.
- adhere to the Early Years Teacher Standards² when developing courses.
- understand that all EYITT courses are subject to Ofsted inspection.
- have been reaccredited to deliver ITT courses as per the ITT Market Review process set out above

As an accredited ITT provider, if you do not comply with all ITT criteria, DfE will consider withdrawing your allocation of EYITT places.

Fee charging in the 24/25 Academic Year for full-time fee funded courses

The maximum tuition fee that providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) section of the [Office for Students \(OfS\)](#) register can charge students for undergraduate courses in the 24/25 academic year is determined by the Higher Education (Fee Limits and Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2018, made under powers conferred by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. This Act also sets out the requirements for establishing OfS access and participation plans for 24/25.

Approved (fee cap) providers with a Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) award for 24/25 may charge up to £6,165 for a full-time course if they do not have an OfS access and participation plan in place, or up to £9,250 if they have an OfS access and participation plan in place.

Approved (fee cap) providers without a TEF award for 24/25 may charge up to £6,000 for a full-time course if they do not have an OfS access and participation plan in place, or up to £9,000 if they have an OfS access and participation plan in place.

Providers registered in the Approved section of the [OfS register](#) (approved providers) are not subject to maximum fees and are not required to submit an access and participation plan to OfS.

School centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers that have not registered with the OfS are not subject to the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 and are able to set

¹[Initial teacher training \(ITT\): accreditation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

²[Early years teachers' standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

their own tuition fees without reference to OfS. However, as with higher education institutes, DfE requires that these accredited providers must not charge [eligible](#) trainees over £9,250 for full-time programmes of EYITT in 24/25. This means that SCITTs can set and publish their own fees for international trainees for full-time programmes of EYITT starting in 24/25.

Student support in the 24/25 Academic Year for full-time courses

The level of fee loan support available to trainees in 24/25 will, in most cases, be determined by which part of the OfS register the provider is registered in.

Students taking designated courses at Approved (fee cap) providers in 24/25 will qualify for fee loans to meet the full cost of their course subject, up to a maximum full time fee loan limit of £9,250 for [eligible](#) trainees.

Trainees are not eligible for fee loans for the graduate entry routes, because they are grant-funded. Trainees taking full-time EYITT courses with Approved providers will only be able to access loans of up to £6,000 towards their fees, or up to £6,165 where Approved providers have a current Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) award.

Fee charging in the 24/25 Academic Year for part-time fee funded courses

The maximum tuition fee that providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) section of the [Office for Students \(OfS\)](#) register can charge students for the 24/25 academic year is determined by the Higher Education (Fee Limits and Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2018, made under powers conferred by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017.

This Act also sets out the requirements for establishing OfS access and participation plans for 24/25.

Approved (fee cap) providers with a Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) award for 24/25 may charge up to £4,625 for a part-time course if they do not have an OfS access and participation plan in place, or up to £6,935 if they have an OfS access and participation plan in place.

Approved (fee cap) providers without a TEF award for 24/25 may charge up to £4,500 for a part-time course if they do not have an OfS access and participation plan in place, or up to £6,750 if they have an OfS access and participation plan in place.

Providers registered in the Approved section of the OfS register (Approved providers) are not subject to maximum fees and are not required to submit an access and participation plan to OfS.

School centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers that have not registered with the OfS are not subject to the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 and are able to set their own tuition fees without reference to OfS. However, DfE requires that SCITT providers must not charge [eligible](#) trainees over £6,935 for part-time programmes of EYITT in 24/25. This means that SCITTs can set and publish their own fees for international trainees for part-time programmes of EYITT starting in 24/25.

Any SCITT that registers with the OfS should inform the Market Regulation team at itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk.

Student support in the 24/25 Academic Year for part-time courses

The level of fee loan support available to trainees in 24/25 will, in most cases, be determined by which part of the Office for Students (OfS) register the provider has applied to register in.

Students taking designated part-time courses at Approved (fee cap) EYITT providers in 24/25 will qualify for fee loans to meet the full cost of their course subject, up to a maximum part-time fee loan limit of £6,935.

Trainees are not eligible for fee loans for the graduate entry routes, because they are grant-funded.

Trainees taking part-time EYITT courses with Approved providers will only be able to access loans of up to £4,500 towards their fees, or up to £4,625 where approved providers have a current Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) award.

Criteria 1. Entry requirements

C1.1 – All EYITT providers must:

- ensure that all entrants have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4³ in the GCSE examinations in English⁴ and mathematics; and
- ensure that those who intend to train to teach pupils aged 3 to 11 additionally have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade 4 in the GCSE examination in a science subject

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that entrants to EYITT have demonstrated their achievement of a minimum standard of educational attainment. EYITT trainees need also to demonstrate an acceptable level of subject knowledge in the early years foundation stage (applies to teaching children 0-5 years old).

Applicants who are otherwise suitable but have not successfully achieved a GCSE grade 4 may be given an opportunity to show that they can meet the required standard either by taking an equivalence test or by offering other evidence of attainment, which should demonstrate a similar level and breadth. Providers should consider making similar arrangements for candidates who cannot provide original certificates as evidence.

DfE does not provide a list of qualifications that can be considered equivalent to the GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science. When EYITT providers look for evidence that a qualification is of a standard equivalent to GCSE grade 4, they should look at the content not only in terms of its level, but also in terms of its breadth.

Qualifications in key and functional skills at level 2 are not equivalent to GCSEs in terms of content.

EYITT providers must offer every opportunity for trainees to demonstrate the required English, mathematics and science standard through, for example, additional support and training prior to or during their EYITT course.

³ For the equivalent of grades awarded under the new GCSE grading structure, refer to [Your qualification, our regulation: GCSE, AS and A level reforms](#).

⁴ An equivalent to grade 4 in English language or English literature fulfils this criterion

Specific Qualifications

Qualifications in key and functional skills at level 2 are not equivalent to GCSEs in terms of content. EYITT partnerships should look for additional evidence of breadth of knowledge and understanding in applicants who have key and functional skills certificates but do not have GCSEs at grade 4 or above in English and mathematics.

EYITT providers should look for further evidence of a breadth of achievement in English where applicants have achieved a GCSE grade 4 or above in English literature only.

International students

International students can be offered funded EYITT places as long as the applicant meets:

- all the academic entry criteria for the EYITT course
- the relevant immigration permissions

Academic entry criteria

These criteria are:

- They have achieved a standard equivalent to a grade C or 4 in the GCSE examinations in English, Mathematics and a science subject.
- They have achieved a first degree⁵ of a UK higher education institution or equivalent qualification

International students can be awarded EYTS in the usual way on completion.

Immigration permissions

Every international EYITT student must have the right to study or work in the UK and must hold the relevant visa **before they start** their EYITT course. This is in line with the standard process for all international students undertaking any course in an English university.

⁵ A first degree comprises 300 higher education (HE) credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Applicants with a foundation degree will need to supplement this qualification with at least 60 credits at level 6 (HE level 3) in order to attain an equivalent single qualification

EYITT providers can find support on [recruiting international students](#) and the requirements needed on GOV.UK⁶. Please note that the further support section at the bottom of this guidance is not applicable to EYITT.

Potential international students can visit GOV.UK to [check eligibility for a visa](#).⁷

Further Information

The [European Network of Information Centres in the European Region \(ENIC\)](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas qualifications.

⁶ [Recruit trainee teachers from overseas: accredited ITT providers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁷ [Check if you need a UK visa - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Degree Criteria

C1.2 – All EYITT providers must ensure that, in the case of graduate programmes of EYITT, all entrants hold a first degree of a UK higher education institution or equivalent qualification⁸.

All entrants should have attained a qualification that demonstrates the level of knowledge, understanding and transferable intellectual skills associated with graduate status.

All entrants to early years teaching in England are required to have a UK first degree or equivalent qualification. Any equivalent qualification must be one single qualification, not a number of separate qualifications. Those entering graduate EYITT programmes need to have attained a first degree-level qualification before they commence the programme.

EYITT trainees on the undergraduate route will need to meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) to be awarded early years teacher status (EYTS) as they graduate.

EYITT providers should view original certificates to validate an applicant's degree status. However, they should exercise discretion in the case of recent graduates where there is a delay in the applicant receiving the original certificate. In these cases, EYITT providers should obtain written confirmation from the awarding institution that the applicant has achieved graduate status. EYITT providers should view the original certificate as soon as it is available.

In cases where an original certificate is no longer available, EYITT providers must gain assurance of graduate status and must keep an audit trail of the evidence obtained.

Where the awarding of an applicant's degree has been impacted by exceptional delays in the awarding organisation's administrative process (such as a delay to the marking of a final assessment), whereby the applicant cannot be awarded graduate status before entry to the EYITT programme, providers should exercise discretion and review other relevant evidence that would demonstrate confidence from the degree-awarding organisation in the applicant's future graduate status. Due consideration should be given where evidence demonstrates that an applicant is unlikely to be awarded graduate status.

⁸ A first degree comprises 300 higher education (HE) credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Applicants with a foundation degree will need to supplement this qualification with at least 60 credits at level 6 (HE level 3) in order to attain an equivalent single qualification

Where a provider has exercised their discretion to accept a candidate onto a course of EYITT before the candidate has been awarded their degree, the provider must, before confirming to the Department that the candidate has completed that course, and been assessed as meeting the Teachers' Standards (Early Years), confirm that the candidate has now been awarded their degree.

Degree subjects

Legislation does not specify that early years teachers must have a first degree in a particular subject or discipline. It is the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) that specify the subject knowledge required for the award of EYTS. All trainee early years teachers must meet these standards by the time they complete their training.

Trainees can only be recommended for the award of EYTS if they meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#).

Information on degree-level qualifications

EYITT providers will need to make sure those responsible for decisions on entry are familiar with the qualifications generally regarded as equivalent to a (bachelor's) degree in the UK. This includes:

- overseas qualifications
- professional or vocational qualifications
- qualifications no longer available but held by mature applicants

Some master's degrees may provide the necessary breadth and have a similar type of academic engagement (e.g. significant taught content) as would be expected from a first degree.

It is for the provider to decide whether a candidate's qualification meets this criterion. Partnerships that do not include degree-awarding bodies may wish to seek advice from those that do.

Further Information

The [European Network of Information Centres in the European Region \(ENIC\)](#) provides advice on the equivalence of overseas degrees.

The [Higher Education Credit Framework for England \(qaa.ac.uk\)](#) describes the higher education qualifications awarded by UK higher education institutions (HEIs) at 5 levels.

Suitability

C1.3 – EYITT providers must ensure that all entrants, as part of their selection procedures, have taken part in a rigorous selection process designed to assess their suitability to train to teach.

EYITT providers must ensure that, before anyone is admitted to an EYITT programme, they have been deemed suitable to train to teach. This will help to protect children and young people from trainee teachers who might put them at risk of harm because their previous conduct shows they are unsuitable for teaching.

EYITT providers should conduct interviews, run background checks, and assess if an applicant has the potential to meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) by the end of their training programme.

EYITT providers should consider a wide range of evidence to judge applicants' suitability to train to teach, prior to offering them a place on a course, for example:

- information from application forms,
- results of any entry tests or tasks,
- interviews.

Prior experience in a school or early years setting is not required. However, where candidates have been able to gain experience in schools or early years settings, providers might find reports from those schools helpful. Lack of school experience should not be a reason for rejecting an otherwise suitable applicant.

EYITT providers or delegated partners should ensure that candidate selection processes give due regard to relevant aspects of part three of [Keeping children safe in education](#).

Providers should ensure that at least one member of the recruitment panel has undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training.

Interviews

Providers should consider how information from interviews can help to identify and take account of trainees' specific needs during training, including any exemptions from programme requirements on the basis of prior achievement. The interview process might include observation, discussions of professional portfolios and discussions of prior achievement.

There is no requirement for a face-to-face interview. Interviews may take place virtually, providing suitable candidate identity checks have been conducted.

Providers must ensure that applicants are given every opportunity, before and during the interview, to inform the provider of any special requirements that require reasonable adjustment.

Equality

To comply with equality legislation, providers must ensure that interview procedures promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) requires accredited ITT providers to ensure that they are not discriminating against applicants on the basis of any protected characteristic, including disability.

Applicants with disabilities are under no obligation to disclose their disabilities.

EYITT providers must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that their provision does not place applicants with declared disabilities at a disadvantage. EYITT providers must also consider making anticipatory adjustments to promote positively equality of access for disabled applicants, including access to benefits, facilities and services. They should provide as many opportunities as possible for applicants to identify any special arrangements they may require, for example when inviting them for interview or making arrangements for any entrance tests.

Intellectual and academic capabilities

EYITT providers should consider the full range of applicants' knowledge, skills, academic background and prior experience to judge whether they have the capability to meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) in the time planned for their training.

Prior to the award of EYTS, providers must assure that trainees demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- Speaking, listening and communicating are fundamental to a teacher's role. Teachers should use standard English grammar, clear pronunciation and vocabulary relevant to the situation to convey instructions, questions, information, concepts and ideas with clarity. Teachers should read fluently and with good understanding.
- Writing by teachers will be seen by colleagues, pupils and parents and, as such, it is important that a teacher's writing reflects the high standards of accuracy their professional role demands. They should write clearly, accurately, legibly and coherently using correct spelling and punctuation.
- Early years teachers should use data and graphs to interpret information, identify patterns and trends and draw appropriate conclusions. They need to interpret data and understand statistics and graphs in the news, academic reports and relevant papers. Early years teachers should demonstrate competence in using whole

numbers, recognising simple number patterns and solving basic mathematical problems.

Any work to address shortfalls in English and mathematics must be undertaken by the trainee teacher in addition to other aspects of their training. It is the trainee's responsibility to secure fundamental English and mathematics, whereas responsibility for assurance lies with the provider. Fundamental English and mathematics may be implemented, supported and assured in different ways by different EYITT providers.

Health and physical capacity to train to teach

EYITT providers should have regard to the relevant aspects of [Keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\)](#) when assessing trainees' health and physical capacity to train to teach, so that young children are not at risk of harm. The activities that a teacher must be able to perform are set out in the [The Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). EYITT providers are responsible for ensuring that only trainees who have the capacity to train to teach remain on the programme.

People with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have the capacity to train to teach, just as those without disabilities or medical conditions may be unsuitable to train to teach.

Successful applicants may be asked to complete a fitness questionnaire prior to commencing the programme. EYITT providers should not ask all-encompassing health questions but should ensure they only ask targeted and relevant health-related questions which are necessary to ensure that a person can carry out the function of an early years teacher.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

EYITT providers should have regard to [Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance](#) when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare children. They should ensure all trainees have been subject to appropriate pre-selection checks. This will include obtaining and considering enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal records checks and children's barred list information.

Providers should confirm in writing to schools that a non-salaried trainee's enhanced criminal record check, including a check of the children's barred list, has been completed and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. Providers are not required to provide any information to schools in addition to this confirmation. Schools may wish to record this confirmation in their single central record, but they are not required to do so.

When determining an individual's suitability to train to teach, providers and employers should check, by asking the trainee or using any other data or information they have

access to, that a trainee has not previously been removed from a programme because they have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children, or if the previous provider would have removed the trainee had they not left.

Where a school or setting allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure the individual is not left unsupervised with children and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.

In the case of employment-based routes, the responsibility lies with the employer to ensure that checks have been carried out. The employing school or setting should inform the provider that a satisfactory check has been obtained.

EYITT providers should establish clear safeguarding procedures and protocols that are agreed by all partners in the partnership. This should include a common understanding across the partnership of convictions, offences, cautions and warnings that would not pose a barrier to joining a programme of EYITT.

Schools or settings should ensure that all trainee teachers, at the start of their training in each school or setting, are provided with access to the following:

- the child protection policy
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)
- information about the role of the designated safeguarding lead
- the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school based providers
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

EYITT providers may wish to recommend to applicants that are checked early in the recruitment cycle, that they register with the DBS update service.

If an EYITT provider removes a trainee from a programme because the trainee has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, or if the EYITT provider would have removed the trainee had they not left, the EYITT provider is required to make a referral to the DBS.

Any queries about DBS checks should be referred to the DBS at customerservices@dbs.gov.uk 03000 200 190.

Other background checks

Candidates who are unsuited to working with children may not have any previous convictions, and EYITT providers should be vigilant during the selection process. EYITT providers or employing early years settings have a duty to ensure that trainees are properly managed and supervised and that, if they have concerns, information is referred to the police and the DBS.

Candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools and colleges. In addition, further checks should be carried out so that events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. The Home Office has published guidance on [Criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#) and DfE has published [Changes to checks for EU sanctions on EEA teachers](#) and [Recruit teachers from overseas](#). EYITT providers and employers must check that candidates are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

Childcare disqualification

EYITT providers should have regard to the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where trainees are salaried, it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that they comply with the legislation. If a salaried trainee is or becomes disqualified from a childcare role, schools/employers should inform the training provider of this. Where trainees are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the training provider to ensure that the trainee is not disqualified from childcare or that the trainee has obtained a childcare disqualification waiver from Ofsted.

Further advice on the childcare disqualification arrangements can be obtained from the Department for Education at mailbox.disqualification@education.gov.uk or on 01325 340 409.

Links

Statutory guidance:

- [Early Years Foundation Stage](#) statutory framework
- [Regulated Activity \(children\) - supervision of activity which is regulated activity when unsupervised](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Details regarding paediatric first aid (PFA) requirements can be found in the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).

Professional Skills Tests

Candidates who have commenced EYITT programmes since 1 April 2020 are not required to pass the skills tests prior to entry.

EYITT Recruitment practices

C1.5: All EYITT providers must:

- ensure course information is accurate, up to date and provides trainees with the information they need
- provide timely responses to applications and
- provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants to support future applications.

EYITT providers should ensure that applicants are treated fairly throughout the application and recruitment process, including ensuring that applicants are given the opportunity to interview after demonstrating that they have met the entry criteria outlined above, or in cases where places are no longer available, candidates are advised in a timely manner to allow them to make an application elsewhere.

Relevant course information

Providers should include training locations and contact details when publishing course information, and ensure that these are kept up to date.

It should be clear to applicants when a course is full, and they should be made aware at the earliest opportunity when a course becomes full. Alternative courses or providers should be suggested for their consideration.

Providers should also give clear information about specific requirements or expectations they have of candidates applying to salaried courses.

Where a candidate meets the entry criteria for EYITT and have been assessed suitable to teach (as per C1.3), if the provider does not or is unable to make an offer, the provider should suggest alternative providers and courses.

Providers should give details of their complaints procedure on their website, which should be straightforward to follow if an applicant wishes to make a complaint.

Decisions, offers, feedback, and deferrals

EYITT providers should give timely responses to applications. Providers should allow candidates time to consider the outcomes of other applications before accepting or declining offers.

EYITT Providers should ensure applicants are given a deadline to meet any offer conditions that have been set. Applicants apply and interview at different times through the recruitment period, however where possible, applicants should be given the same

amount of time to meet the same conditions. Providers may wish to provide the same deadline to all applicants to meet similar conditions.

Succeeding at an interview should not be an offer condition. Interviews must take place before an offer is made.

If an application is rejected, feedback should explain the reason(s) why to the applicant, including advice on how the application can be improved.

Providers should ensure that courses are closed as soon as they are full. If an application is rejected because a course is full, where possible providers should still provide detailed feedback.

If an offer is deferred, providers should ensure that there are sufficient places on the EYITT course for the following year.

Applicants will provide details of references as part of their application. References should be checked only after an offer has been made to ensure that it is safe for the applicant to work with children (in addition to checks outlined in C1.3 Suitability).

Accessibility

Providers should check the accessibility requirements of applicants and make any reasonable adjustments where required.

Criteria 2. Training Requirements

C2.1– All EYITT providers must ensure:

that the content, structure, delivery and assessment of programmes are designed to:

- a. enable trainee teachers to meet all the Teachers' Standards (Early Years) and
- b. ensure that no trainee teacher is recommended for the award of Early Years Teacher Status until they have met all of the Teachers' Standards (Early Years).

At the outset, EYITT providers should make clear to trainees and to all of those involved in the partnership, the scope and coverage of the programme, including subject and curriculum knowledge and the anticipated outcomes of training.

Programme design underpins all the training requirements and should be flexible enough to meet the needs of every trainee. EYITT providers should look particularly at the extent to which their provision and assessment practices are designed to ensure that trainees meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#).

EYITT providers should offer trainees specialist training to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding and related pedagogy that will enable them to teach across the full age and ability range of training.

Early years settings and schools have a crucial role to play in designing training that provides the range of experiences that trainees need. Not every setting can provide opportunities to teach across the whole 0 to 5 age range, or the full ability range, or a diverse population. Therefore, EYITT providers will need to work across a range of schools and settings to give trainees an experience that is as broad as possible, and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate all of the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#).

Prior to the award of Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS), EYITT providers must assure the trainees' English and mathematics. EYITT providers must assure that trainees demonstrate competence in the areas set out in detail in criterion 1.3.

Trainee assessment procedures should be rigorous and robust, supporting consistent and accurate judgements. Where EYITT providers and employers take significant responsibility for judgements that lead to a recommendation for the award of EYTS, such as during the delivery of School Direct (Early Years) programmes, the ratifying accredited provider should ensure that assessment moderation procedures are robust and that all recommendations for the award are as secure as possible. The accredited provider remains accountable for all assessment judgements and recommendations and should ensure that this is understood across the partnership through the partnership agreement.

Training may be delivered in schools or other settings (subject to 2.3) and is likely to include a combination of unobserved and observed teaching, taught sessions, seminars, workshops, tasks and assignments, and engagement with academic/professional research.

The content of professional programmes might include, for example:

- the role of the early years teacher
- planning and assessment to ensure children's progress
- child development and learning
- priorities, such as managing children's behaviour, early reading, and special educational needs and disability
- assessing and evaluating teaching
- the use of evidence and research to inform teaching.

Age Ranges

C2.2 – All EYITT providers must ensure that their programmes are designed to prepare all trainee teachers to teach across the 0 to 5 age range (the [EYFS](#)). Trainees should engage, where possible, with the educational continuum of expectations, curricula, and teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Training must enable trainees to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to teach within the phase for which they are training.

Teaching across the 0-5 age range is a minimum programme design requirement. EYITT providers may wish to offer programmes with some enhancement, for example training to teach 5 to 7 year olds. In these cases, trainees will be assessed only within the 0-5 age range of training.

Trainees might engage with the expectations of Key Stages 1 and 2 in a variety of ways, such as by visits to different settings and schools, observations of lessons, or working with curriculum documents and plans.

EYITT providers should consider how the programme design will ensure they are fully prepared to teach across the 0-5 age range.

Training in Schools and Settings

C2.3 – All EYITT providers must ensure:

- that training programmes are designed to provide trainee early years teachers with sufficient time being trained in early years settings or schools to enable them to demonstrate that they have met all the Teachers' Standards (Early Years). This means they would typically be structured to include at least the following periods of time to be spent training in schools and/or early years settings:
 - a 4-year undergraduate programme - 160 days (32 weeks)
 - a 1, 2 or 3-year undergraduate programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
 - a secondary graduate (non-employment based) programme - 120 days (24 weeks)
 - a primary graduate (non-employment based) programme – 120 days (24 weeks)
 - employment-based programme – as determined by the training programme

EYITT providers will need to work with a range of settings to ensure a broad range of setting placements are available to their trainees.

Placements should include observation of expert practice, unobserved and observed teaching and feedback.

Time spent in early years settings, either as part of the two setting placements, or other experiences or training in early years settings, should be part of a coherent training programme that is designed to enable trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards (Early Years).

Time spent training in settings other than schools, early years settings or further education colleges can also form a valuable part of programmes but cannot count towards the minimum time requirements for early years setting placements.

EYITT providers should ensure that partner early years settings and schools have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities. Where an early years setting or school is deemed of lower quality via an Ofsted inspection, it may still be possible for EYITT providers to use them, especially if the improvements to be made do not affect the age range in which the trainee is training. EYITT providers will need to be confident that the trainee will not be disadvantaged by the setting or school experience and the situation is kept under close review.

Applicants to EYITT with practitioner or teaching experience might not need as much time training in schools or settings as long as programmes are designed to provide

trainees with enough time during the training programme to demonstrate that they have achieved all the [Teachers' Standards \(Early Years\)](#).

Two early years settings

Trainee early years teachers need a variety of experience in early years settings to enable them to meet all the Teachers' Standards (Early Years). They need to teach children aged 0-5 from different backgrounds, as well as gaining experience of different approaches to teaching and to organisation and management.

Trainees must have worked in 2 early years settings prior to the award of EYTS. It is not sufficient for trainees only to have had non-teaching work experience in these settings. Providers may wish to consider whether a trainee with prior assessed experience of teaching in an early years setting has gained enough relevant teaching experience to allow the provider to confidently count that previous teaching as one of the 2 schools specified. Where this is the case, the placement should offer the trainee a contrasting experience from that they already have, and their course should still be designed in line with the minimum time requirements for placements.

Salaried trainees will often need to be released from their employing settings to spend time teaching in another setting. Providers should ensure the other settings are carefully selected to extend the trainees' knowledge, skills and understanding and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate, through their teaching, how they meet the [Teachers' Standards \(Early Years\)](#).

Practical teaching experience for the purposes of EYITT should take place wholly or mainly in England.

Criteria 3. Management and Quality Assurance Requirements

C3.1 – All EYITT providers must ensure: that their management structure ensures the effective operation of the training programme.

EYITT providers must plan their training programmes to ensure that they comply with this publication and provide the opportunity for trainees to demonstrate that they meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) for the award of EYTS. Training should be of high quality and EYITT providers should seek continuing improvement.

Early years settings and schools should play a significant, and often leading, role in the design and delivery of training provision. The management structure should demonstrate the central role that they play in all aspects of the provision, from selection and recruitment, through delivery and training, to the assessment of trainees for the award of EYTS.

Partnerships should ensure that they address [trainee teacher workload](#), using the [Improve workload and wellbeing for school staff](#) guidance document.

EYITT providers must contact DfE to seek approval for any proposed significant variations to their governance and/or operational structure. This includes, for example, the loss or removal of a partner organisation, or a change in the accounting officer. If an EYITT provider makes significant changes to their governance and/or operational structures, DfE reserves the right to withdraw accreditation, and require the newly configured organisation to seek accreditation as a new EYITT provider.

Details of any proposed changes should be sent to ITT.Accreditation@education.gov.uk

Partnerships

C3.2 – All EYITT providers must ensure that partners establish a partnership agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Provision that is not school or setting-led must assure the significant role of early years settings and schools in recruiting, selecting, training and assessing trainee early years teachers.

The partnership agreement should be a clear, working document that can be used to:

- guide and inform the contributions of each partner
- help to support coherent arrangements across the various contexts in which the training takes place.

The roles and responsibilities of all partners should be clearly defined in the partnership agreement including, for example, well-understood procedures for communication between the partners and agreed arrangements for the co-ordination of training.

Other arrangements should be addressed in the partnership agreement, such as the:

- partnership's quality assurance procedures
- content and delivery of each of the EYITT programmes
- policies for equality of opportunity
- organisation and management of the partnership
- partnership's role in addressing and managing trainee teacher workload
- role of all partners in protecting trainees' mental health and well-being

The partnership agreement may make reference, for example, to the functions of groups and committees in managing the partnership and the ways in which resources are allocated among partners. It will set out the criteria for removing settings or schools from the partnership, particularly where quality issues arise. The agreement and any associated supplementary documentation should be reviewed and revised by members of the partnership at appropriate intervals.

Roles and Responsibilities

All trainers and trainee teachers need to be clear about who is responsible for elements of training and assessment, how provision is managed and how the elements fit together to ensure training addresses all the standards for [Early Years Teacher Status](#).

Partnership agreements should specify the different roles within the partnership including, for example, programme and course leaders, mentors, tutors, training managers, and internal and external moderators. They should also set out how partners contribute towards:

- selecting and interviewing applicants
- moderating assessment judgements of trainees against the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#)
- providing professional development opportunities for colleagues within the partnership
- trainee access to resources
- any course and/or programme committees
- quality assurance including improvement planning and self-evaluation
- the promotion of equality of opportunity
- the safeguarding of children

EYITT providers of graduate employment-based programmes must ensure that all settings or schools where trainees undertake their placements are of high quality,

understand and agree to the partnership roles and responsibilities and have the capacity to provide the necessary training and support.

Non-school or setting-led training programmes

Where provision is not school or setting-led, the partnership agreement should set out clearly the ways in which schools and settings will play a significant role in the recruitment, selection, training and assessment of trainees.

Legislation

C3.3 – All EYITT providers must ensure that they comply with all current legislation relevant to EYITT.

EYITT partnerships must review and update their provision so that it continues to comply with associated legislation. Where there is evidence of non-compliance with these criteria, the DFE will consider withdrawing a provider's permission to recruit to EYITT places.

EYITT providers should make sure that partners are fully aware of their duties under all relevant legislation and have in place arrangements for ensuring these are met when selecting, recruiting, training and assessing trainees. This includes the following legislation:

- [The Education \(Specified Work\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (SI 762) – specify the requirements that must be met by individuals who are not qualified teachers to carry out specified work in maintained schools
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 1998](#) – in relation to holding and processing personal data
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) (the CTSA 2015)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)

From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools, are subject to a duty under section 26 to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015 (the Prevent duty guidance.)

Further information

The following is a sample list of relevant legislation and guidance. This is not intended to be exhaustive and EYITT partnerships will need to ensure they have identified and comply with all legislation relevant to EYITT.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) is the governing legislation for all matters relating to all acts of discrimination. Also relevant are:

- [The Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) (SI 3139)
- [Disabled Students' Allowances \(DSAs\)](#)
- [Disability rights UK education and skills guidance for people with disabilities](#)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides further guidance on the Equality Act for schools and further and higher education institutions. The EHRC also has information on the [Codes of Practice](#) that relate to equal pay, race, disability and sex and gender discrimination.

The work that is reserved to qualified teachers in maintained schools in accordance with section 133 of the Education Act 2002, subject to limited exceptions, is prescribed by the [The Education \(Specified Work\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).

Other relevant documents include:

- The Health and Safety Executive's [Risk assessment: Steps needed to manage risk - HSE](#).
- Guidance for practitioners and managers from HM Government on [Information sharing](#).

Guidance from the [Office for Students \(OFS\)](#) sets out what EYITT providers should do to ensure they promote fair access to higher education.

EYITT providers should familiarise themselves with the Competition and Markets Authority's consumer law advice for undergraduates. Any EYITT provider that does not meet its obligations to students may be in breach of consumer protection law. Find out more about [Higher education: consumer law advice for providers and students](#).

Quality Assurance

C3.4 – All EYITT providers must ensure that they monitor, evaluate and moderate all aspects of their provision rigorously and demonstrate how these contribute to securing improvements in the quality of training and the assessment of trainees.

Trainees can only be recommended for the award of EYTS if they meet all of the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#). Therefore, the assessment of trainees must be accurate and reliable in establishing, consistently over time, whether or not trainees meet these standards.

In order to ensure accuracy and reliability EYITT providers should have clear and robust assessment and moderation arrangements in place, informed by appropriate criteria for the various aspects and stages of the training.

External moderators have an important role to play in ensuring consistency of standards across as well as within EYITT partnerships. EYITT providers will need to ensure that external moderators have relevant expertise and experience to enable them to carry out their roles competently. They will need to ensure that the views of external moderators are taken into account when reaching decisions about trainees' achievement of the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#).

Evaluation

EYITT providers should clearly define the arrangements and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of training provision across all the contexts in which it takes place, and identify areas for improvement.

EYITT providers may wish to collect and analyse a variety of data to inform your understanding of the effectiveness of their training. For example, they may collect and analyse data or other evidence about the following:

- training sessions, in order to establish their fitness for purpose and to identify strengths and weaknesses across the different contributions to the programme
- trainees' evaluations of how their training needs have been met.
- tutors' evaluations of the training programme and how it is administered
- trainees' perceptions of their training
- former trainees, induction tutors and employing schools and settings
- feedback from internal and external moderation about the effectiveness and accuracy of the assessments of trainees against the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#)
- external moderator feedback about the effectiveness of training provision in helping trainees to meet the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#)

- the implementation of equality policies
- DfE and Ofsted feedback

Internal moderation

Internal moderation should provide a system of checks and balances within a partnership to ensure that trainees in different settings are assessed accurately and reliably. EYITT providers should ensure that arrangements for internal moderation are in place and work effectively. The roles and responsibilities of carrying out these arrangements should be contained in the partnership agreement (see requirement 3.2).

Internal moderation procedures may include:

- the involvement of staff with relevant expertise from 2 or more partners when assessing trainees
- detailed scrutiny by a moderating panel of a sample of trainees, including any judged by an assessor as on the pass/fail borderline, or likely to fail
- joint observations of trainees' teaching
- discussions by relevant staff of all the evidence available, including trainees' previous experience and achievements
- arrangements for feeding back information to the partnership about the accuracy and consistency of assessment arrangements and about elements of good practice to support improvements

External moderation

EYITT providers should appoint suitable external moderators who have no direct involvement with the work of the partnership. They must offer an external perspective on the attainment of other EYITT providers' trainees being assessed for the award of Early Years Teacher Status. This should help to verify the accuracy of assessments. EYITT providers should use external moderators to corroborate and standardise assessments of their trainees.

EYITT providers may wish to consider, when appointing external moderators, whether they have appropriate subject, curriculum or age-phase expertise to enable them to provide specialist feedback.

The responsibilities of external moderators might include:

- detailed scrutiny of a sample of trainees, including a representative cross-section of trainees together with all trainees that internal moderators regard as being on the pass/fail borderline, or possible failures

- observation of the teaching of all trainees in a designated sample, such as those assessed as being borderline satisfactory to good, or borderline good to outstanding
- discussion with internal assessors and/or moderators of all the evidence available about individual trainees who have achieved the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#)
- scrutiny of internal moderation arrangements, drawing on the some of the evidence gained from activities above
- producing a report that includes an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision observed including the accuracy of the assessments of trainees, clearly linked to the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#) and these EYITT requirements

In addition, EYITT providers should have procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the management of their programmes including, for example, arrangements for the selection and de-selection of partner settings or schools. They should draw on the kinds of evidence above to inform the work of any committees that serve the partnership.

EYITT providers should have systematic procedures in place to demonstrate that monitoring and evaluation have secured improvements in quality and outcomes for trainees. This may mean keeping comparative data and other evidence over a period of time.

EYITT providers may also wish to examine the procedures and practices for enhancing and improving the subject and pedagogical knowledge of relevant curriculum areas for early years and Key Stages 1 and 2. These should be evaluated against the success of trainees in meeting the [Teachers' Standards \(early years\)](#). The evidence will need to be sufficiently robust to enable EYITT providers to draw conclusions, and act upon them.

All monitoring and evaluation processes and activities should focus on impact and outcomes – particularly in the context of the standards achieved by trainees. Reporting and documenting of such activities should be evaluative rather than descriptive. These activities and processes should feed into improvement plans. EYITT providers should compare their own provision with that of other EYITT providers when monitoring and evaluating programmes.

Criteria 4. Employment-based requirements

C4.1 –EYITT providers of the graduate employment based route must additionally ensure that:

- for the period of training, all trainees undertaking this route must be employed in a setting offering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- no trainee will be required to perform more than 90% of the duties normally required of a full-time early years teacher

Notes

Note 1 – For the equivalent of grades awarded under the new GCSE grading structure, please refer to [Ofqual: GCSE, AS and A level reforms](#)

Note 2 – A first degree comprises 300 HE credit points of which 60 must be at level 6 of the QCF. Applicants with a foundation degree will need to supplement this qualification with at least 60 credits at level 6 (HE level 3) in order to attain an equivalent single qualification.



Department
for Education

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