February 2012/**02**

Guidance

This document gives guidance to institutions on how to include initial teacher training (ITT) students in 2012-13 access agreements.

All institutions that wish to charge ITT students fees above the basic level of £6,000 must submit an amended 2012-13 access agreement by 30 March 2012.

> How to include ITT students in your 2012-13 access agreement



Alternative formats

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How to include ITT students in your 2012-13 access agreement

OFFA guidance for HEIs and FECs

То

Of interest to those responsible for

Reference Publication date Enquiries to Heads of higher education institutions in England that provide initial teacher training Heads of further education colleges in England that provide initial teacher training

Producing access agreements, widening participation, Heads of Finance

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Introduction

1. This document tells you how to include initial teacher training (ITT) students in your 2012-13 access agreement. If you have full-time ITT places for which you intend to charge over £6,000, you will need to submit a revised access agreement which covers these students, your fees, financial support and other access/retention measures for such students. This follows the Department for Education's publication on 8 November 2011 of its implementation plan for 'Training our next generation of outstanding teachers'. Following this, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) wrote in December to all ITT providers setting ITT recruitment targets and place allocations for the 2012-13 academic year.

Action required

2. If you intend to charge your ITT students fees of over £6,000, you will need to amend your access agreement so that it includes ITT. You may do this either by submitting an addendum to your current access agreement, or by completing the Word template at Annex A. You will also need to submit a revised Excel template (Annex B). As with your original access agreement for 2012-13, we will be using the HEFCE extranet to enable you to download the Excel template and submit your revised access agreement. Extranet keys and instructions on how to access the extranet will be issued shortly.

3. If your institution does not offer initial teacher training, or has already included ITT within its existing 2012-13 agreement and financial template, you do not need to submit an amended agreement now. You simply need to e-mail us at **accessagreements@offa.org.uk** to confirm that you fall into one of these categories and will not be submitting an amended agreement.

4. Access agreements can be submitted at any time from the date of this guidance but no later than **30 March 2012**. We will aim to issue decisions no later than 27 April 2012. However, we will issue approvals on a first come, first served basis, so if you submit your agreement before this date, we may be in a position to give you an earlier decision.

Our approach

5. We did not ask you to include undergraduate and postgraduate ITT courses in your original 2012-13 access agreements because the funding for these courses was under review at the time. However, for 2013-14 onwards, we will ask you to include ITT courses within your main access agreement.

6. With this in mind, we have looked to minimise administrative burdens on you as much as possible when designing this guidance. For example, in asking for this separate submission, we have developed an optional Word template (Annex A) which sets out details of the information you need to give us.

7. In addition, wherever possible, the template enables you to state where your arrangements for ITT are the same as your existing access agreement, cross-referring to your main document wherever possible, but also allows you to demonstrate where they differ. The extent to which you demonstrate this may also depend on your ITT numbers and the proportion of your overall student body that this represents.

8. We hope to publish our guidance for 2013-14 access agreements in April 2012, with a submission date in late May. We will issue further details shortly.

Do we need to submit a revised access agreement?

9. You will need to submit a revised access agreement approved by the Director of Fair Access for Higher Education if you:

- provide full-time accredited mainstream (undergraduate or postgraduate) ITT courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- receive funding directly from the Training and Development Agency for Schools¹, and
- wish to charge tuition fees for home/European Union trainees on these courses above the basic level of £6,000 in 2012-13.

10. We ask that you do this by submitting an additional annex to your existing 2012-13 agreement, or by completing the template at Annex A.

11. As set out in paragraph 3 above, if your institution does not offer initial teacher training, or has already included ITT within its existing 2012-13 agreement and financial template, you do not need to submit an amended agreement now. You simply need to e-mail us at

accessagreements@offa.org.uk to confirm this.

Do we need to include part-time courses in our return?

12. The Government has confirmed that fee caps will be introduced for the first time for part-time students studying at least 25 per cent of a full-time course, for courses starting on or after 1 September 2012. The basic and higher amounts for these courses for the 2012-13 academic year will be £4,500 and £6,750 respectively. These will be specified in amendments to the Higher Education (Basic Amount) (England) Regulations 2010 and the Higher Education (Higher Amount) (England) Regulations 2010.

13. Once these regulations are in place, institutions wishing to charge fees above the £4,500 basic level for any regulated part-time course (whether HEFCEor TDA-funded) will require an access agreement and their students will have access to fee loans. In the meantime, if you offer part-time provision, you may wish to bear in mind future arrangements for part-time trainees when drawing up your 2012-13 access agreements for full-time trainees.

¹ Subject to Parliamentary approval, the Training and Development Agency for Schools will close in March 2012 and will be replaced by the Teaching Agency from April 2012.

Content of access agreements

14. As stated above, you can amend your existing 2012-13 access agreement either by submitting an addendum or by completing the template at Annex A. You will also need to complete the Excel return at Annex B.

15. If you are submitting an addendum, this should *briefly* set out the following:

- A your current position in relation to access and retention for ITT trainees
- **B** the fees you are proposing to charge for your ITT courses
- **C** your proposed financial support for ITT trainees from under-represented groups including bursaries, in-kind support and fee waivers, where appropriate
- D outreach and retention work, where appropriate
- **E** any changes to your institutional monitoring arrangements, due to the inclusion of initial teacher training
- **F** a commitment to provide clear, accessible and timely information about your ITT courses, including through Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) and the Student Loans Company (SLC) as required.

16. Annex B is an Excel return which requests updated information on:

- your estimated amounts of fee income over £6,000 per full-time fee
- the amount of fee income over £6,000 per full-time fee that you intend to spend on access measures relating to ITT
- any additional targets/milestones you wish to include in your access agreement around ITT.

17. These elements are discussed in more detail below.

A. Your current position in relation to access and retention for ITT trainees

18. Please use this section to set out any specific issues or aims for your access agreement work in respect of ITT that aren't already set out in your existing agreement for 2012-13. This section doesn't have to be long; however, it will help us to

understand what your access agreement is setting out to achieve in terms of ITT. You may wish to consider whether there are separate issues for undergraduate and postgraduate ITT. You may also wish to cross-refer to the issues and aims stated in your main agreement, if appropriate.

19. Our original guidance on how to produce an access agreement for 2012-13 (OFFA 2011/01) stated that access agreements should be targeted at learners with the potential to benefit from higher education who come from under-represented communities. Overwhelmingly these learners are from lower socio-economic groups (groups 4-8 in the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification, NS-SEC), and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who live in areas of relative deprivation where participation in HE is low.

20. As well as the groups set out in our original guidance, the TDA has produced a briefing paper (see Annex C) which identifies the key strategic priorities for ITT in terms of removing barriers to teacher training for the best quality candidates from under-represented groups. In light of this, you may choose to focus the ITT section of your agreement on the following groups:

- teachers from black and minority ethnic groups or sub-groups
- male primary school teaching applicants
- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where HE participation is low
- people from low income backgrounds (in 2012-13, this can include family incomes up to a maximum of £42,600 – the threshold for partial state grant)
- people with disabilities
- people who have been in care
- any other under-represented groups that you have identified specific to your area.

21. We recognise that not all of these groups will be equally applicable to undergraduate and postgraduate study. For example, indicators around the percentage of students from state schools or colleges, or which are based on parental background, may be more relevant to undergraduate study than postgraduate study. You should base your assessment on your own understanding of the measures and indicators that you think most accurately reflect your access and retention performance.

B. Fees you are proposing to charge for your ITT courses

22. Your access agreement should set out the tuition fees you intend to charge new entrants to a) undergraduate and b) postgraduate ITT in 2012-13.

- 23. As with your existing access agreement:
- The basic limit in 2012-13, up to which no access agreement is required, is £6,000 per year. The fee cap beyond which no institution can charge is £9,000 per year. (These levels may rise each year to maintain their value in real terms. The Government will set out any permitted rises each year in line with the regulations.)
- The fee you set for 2012-13 entrants will apply for the duration of these students' studies. Unless your agreement is clear that you will, or may, apply annual increases in line with the amount set by the Government each year, we will assume that you intend your fees to remain flat.
- You can set the same tuition fee for all your ITT courses, or vary it by course. If the latter, you need to make it clear what you will be charging, either in course groupings or on a course by course basis. There is no requirement or expectation that your fee for undergraduate or postgraduate ITT should be the same as for your other courses this is a matter for you to decide.
- You need to set out clearly the fees you intend to charge and make this information publicly accessible. Applicants must be told the cost of their tuition for the whole duration of their course before they accept a place.

• You should not charge the new higher fees to trainees starting their courses before 1 September 2012.

24. If you have bid to HEFCE for some of the 20,000 flexible margin places for 2012-13, note that HEFCE has confirmed that institutions' average fees for the purposes of core and margin are based only on provision fundable by HEFCE². In other words, TDA-funded courses are outside of how the average fee of £7,500 will be calculated.

C. Amounts of fee income over £6,000 per fee to be spent on access measures

25. Taking into account any new access agreement investment relating to ITT, as well as your existing agreement, please set out your estimated spend on access measures as a proportion of your income over £6,000 per fee. You will need to provide further detail on this in the Excel return (Annex B).

26. As a broad guideline:

- For undergraduate ITT, our starting expectation is the same as that set out in our original guidance on how to produce an access agreement for 2012-13 (see OFFA 2011/01, paragraph 39). This reflects the fact that undergraduate ITT trainees receive the same package of Government support as other undergraduate courses, in that they will be subject to fees of up to £9,000, and will receive the same system of state support (although it should be noted that TDA-funded trainees are not eligible for financial support under the National Scholarship Programme³).
- For postgraduate ITT, we would expect you to recycle a minimum of around 10 per cent of your fee income over £6,000 on access or retention measures. By definition, postgraduate ITT trainees already have an experience of higher education, and many postgraduate trainees will be entitled to training bursaries⁴, so we have agreed a lower level of spend with the TDA for postgraduate provision.

² For more information on how the average fee is calculated, see www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/funding/201213/faq.htm#q17

³ For more information on the National Scholarship Programme, see www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/nsp

⁴ For more information on training bursaries, see

http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/t/training%20our%20next%20generation%20of%20outstanding%20teachers%20nov%202011.pdf

27. Please note that we will be taking a holistic view when considering whether your proposed spend is in line with our expectations. In other words there is no requirement to ring-fence set amounts for undergraduate or postgraduate initial teacher training, nor do we require you to demonstrate how much you are investing in each area. You simply need to make sure that your overall levels of spend (including ITT) are in line with our expectations.

28. As with your access agreement more generally, access measures in respect of ITT can include:

- outreach
- entry and retention work (including student success and employability)
- other policies or activities that are likely to support widened participation such as the development and use of contextual data in admissions processes, targeting outreach, or the improvement of school and college links to support widening participation objectives, and
- financial support targeted at students from low income backgrounds or other disadvantaged students.

29. As set out in our main guidance, in deciding the balance of your expenditure between financial support and non-financial measures, you will want to consider the available evidence, including evaluation of your experience under the current system. It is then for you to determine the detail of your agreement as you are best placed to understand your circumstances and match your approach to your targets.

D. Financial support for ITT trainees from under-represented groups – including bursaries, in-kind support and fee waivers

30. Your access agreement should include:

- what you plan to spend, where appropriate, on targeted fee waivers, bursaries and in-kind awards for a) undergraduate and
 b) postgraduate ITT trainees in 2012-13
- the amount of financial support on offer, and the eligibility criteria for new entrants.

31. You may also choose to describe how your financial support will be administered – for example, by your institution, or through subscription to the Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme (HEBSS) operated through the Student Loans Company.

32. It is for you to decide whether financial support is required and if so, what form it should take and which trainees will be eligible. For example, you may choose to provide greater support to trainees in receipt of a full grant (those with residual household incomes up to £25,000), or a wider range of financial support to trainees in receipt of partial state support (those with a residual household income up to £42,600) as well. You may also wish to offer different levels of support for undergraduate and postgraduate trainees.

33. There is no requirement or expectation that financial support for undergraduate or postgraduate ITT should be the same as for your other courses. We recognise that there are differences in how ITT students are funded compared to other students, but the level of financial support you offer is a matter for you to decide. In particular, you will be aware that:

- many postgraduate trainees will be entitled to the new training bursaries from 2012-13, so you will need to consider whether or not these should be taken into account in determining what, if any, financial support you offer; and, where appropriate, in determining residual household income
- students funded by the TDA (whether undergraduate or postgraduate) are not eligible for the National Scholarship Programme.

E. Outreach and retention work

34. If you are proposing to introduce additional outreach or retention work in respect of ITT, over and above the outreach/retention work you have committed to in your existing 2012-13 access agreement, please include details in your addendum.

35. Alternatively, please indicate where your outreach or retention work in respect of ITT is already covered by your main agreement. Where your existing 2012-13 access agreement includes

programmes or activities which will have benefits for initial teacher training, you may also wish to draw out these elements in your addendum.

36. For the purposes of an access agreement, outreach work includes any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encouraging them to apply to higher education. This includes outreach directed at young or mature students aspiring to full or part-time study. We particularly encourage sustained, co-ordinated activities that work with pupils and other potential applicants over a number of years.

37. By retention, we mean the additional (new) retention measures you commit to put in place to improve student retention and success (ensuring that trainees from under-represented groups access the full benefits of higher education).

38. In our original guidance for 2012-13 access agreements (OFFA 2011/01), we asked institutions to consider targeting outreach and retention at groups that are under-represented in HE as a whole. This may also be appropriate for undergraduate ITT; however, we recognise that this may be less appropriate for postgraduate ITT as this concerns applicants that are in, or have already been through HE. You may therefore wish to consider whether your cohort represents the undergraduate population from which you recruit.

39. If, in this context, you identify underrepresented groups, you may wish to address this by implementing measures that encourage applications from such groups and aid the retention of successful applicants. This may include targeting outreach at these groups to raise aspirations to teach.

40. Such outreach could include investment in collaborative work with local HEIs and FECs, where appropriate. You may also wish to consider whether your new cohort of trainees meets the TDA's priorities around trainees from minority ethnic groups, or men into primary – see Annex C for further details. See also paragraph 16 for a broader list of under-represented groups.

41. Where you decide to fund additiona⁵ outreach and retention activities you should provide, in broad terms:

- a description of the type and extent of activities
- the target groups.

42. You should also make it clear whether activities listed are new or extensions of existing schemes.

F. Targets and milestones

43. In our original guidance on producing access agreements for 2012-13 (OFFA 2011/01), we stated that your access agreement should include stretching targets, setting out the desired outcomes of your access measures.

44. We specified that these targets must:

- include statistical targets based on how representative your entrants are and, where appropriate, your retention performance
- be measurable on a consistent basis, with baseline data where possible
- be set over five years and include annual or interim milestones to help you monitor whether you are making progress.

45. You now need to consider whether you wish to develop additional targets and milestones relating to ITT.

46. Where ITT trainees make up a significant proportion of your overall student body, you may wish to develop additional targets and milestones which assess your performance in this area over time. Where you choose to set targets, these should be based on your assessment of where you need to improve on access and, where appropriate, on retention in relation to ITT. You may also wish to consider the TDA guidance at Annex C which gives information on specific groups that are underrepresented in the teaching profession.

47. You may also have targets and milestones in your existing 2012-13 access agreement which you now wish to extend to apply to ITT trainees. If this is the case, you should make clear whether this includes undergraduate, postgraduate or both.

⁵ By 'additional', we mean measures from your 2011-12 access agreement that you will continue to deliver in 2012-13, plus any new measures that are delivered from 2012-13. This may include measures that you will fund from 2012-13 which were previously funded through other means – for example, collaborative working previously funded by Aimhigher. See 'What we will count as expenditure' (OFFA 2011/01, paragraphs 37-38).

48. Where you have new or amended milestones and targets, you should set these out in your Excel template (Annex B) at Table 6. For further guidance on developing targets and milestones, please see OFFA 2011/01, paragraphs 81-96.

G. Your monitoring arrangements

49. In your existing 2012-13 access agreement, you set out how you intended to monitor your fulfilment of your agreement. If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so in this section. You may wish to cross-refer to your main agreement where appropriate.

H. Provision of information to trainees

50. In our initial guidance for 2012-13 (OFFA 2011/01), we said you must publish clear, accessible and timely information for applicants and trainees on the fees you will charge and any financial support you will offer. This information should make it clear exactly what level of financial support you are offering trainees in each year of their studies.

51. As well as providing clear and up-to-date information through your own information channels (websites, prospectuses etc), we also required an explicit commitment from you to provide such timely information to UCAS and SLC as they reasonably require to populate their applicant-facing web services. For the purposes of your ITT provision, we will assume that this commitment extends to GTTR, where appropriate.

52. If you wish to add anything further, following the inclusion of ITT in your agreement, you may do so in this section. You may wish to cross-refer to your main agreement where appropriate.

How to submit your access agreement

53. You will need to submit your draft access agreement and Excel template (see Annex B) by **Friday 30 March 2012** using the HEFCE extranet. You can also download the Excel template from this site. To enable you to do this, we will send extranet keys and instructions by post to all of our registered OFFA contacts shortly.

54. If you submit your agreement to us by 30 March with all the required information and there is no need for negotiation or discussion, we aim to issue decisions no later than 27 April 2012. However, we will issue approvals on a first come, first served basis, so if you submit your agreement before this date, we may be able to give you an earlier decision.

55. Once you have submitted your agreement, we will be happy for you to promote your proposed fees and financial support package in advance of receiving a decision. However, you must make it clear that this package is subject to OFFA approval.

How to contact us if you have a query

56. We welcome early discussions with you about the development of your access agreement and are happy to comment on draft proposals. Please contact Richard Shiner on 0117 931 7467 or email richard.shiner@offa.org.uk.

Access agreements for future years

57. The higher education sector is entering a transitional period and we have been asked by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills to renew access agreements on an annual basis. We will therefore review our guidance on access agreements regularly in the first few years of the new arrangements. This will give OFFA and providers the opportunity to adjust agreements in the light of experience and any policy changes.

58. Precise timetables for submission of agreements for 2013-14 have not yet been finalised. However, we anticipate issuing guidance to HEIs and FECs in April 2012, with a submission date in late May. We will issue further details shortly.

59. If you have any queries about the process for amending agreements please contact Richard Shiner, 0117 931 7467 or email richard.shiner@offa.org.uk.

Annex C

TDA guidance on the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in the teaching profession: information for access agreements

The Training and Development Agency for schools (TDA) is committed to removing barriers to teacher training for the best quality candidates from underrepresented groups.

Black and minority ethnic teachers (BME)

The latest schools workforce figures from the Department for Education show that six per cent of teachers working in maintained sector schools are of ethnic minority origin. Given that 12 per cent of people from BME backgrounds are in the wider workforce, 18 per cent in the graduate population and 24 per cent in the school pupil population, people from BME backgrounds are therefore underrepresented in England's school teaching workforce.

Over the last three years the popularity of teaching amongst BME graduates and career changers has increased and the number of applications to ITT from BME candidates has risen. This success has been the result of a national campaign to attract more people into the profession and of providers' work to promote ITT specifically amongst diverse communities. But despite increased applications to ITT, the proportion of BME trainees securing a place and entering teacher training has remained around 12 per cent since 2006. One of the causes of this stagnation is that not enough high quality BME candidates, with the appropriate gualifications and skills to compete successfully for a teacher training place, apply to ITT. It is not that too few BME candidates apply to ITT, but that the quality of those candidates is not sufficient to secure places. Furthermore, the quality of trainees impacts on the proportion of those gaining QTS. BME trainees are less likely than their peers to achieve QTS, particularly if they have lower degree classifications; this makes attracting quality candidates central to increasing the proportion of qualified BME teachers.

Teaching is not, currently, perceived as a high status profession. The TDA is implementing a new national recruitment campaign to attract the very best graduates into teaching. The campaign will focus on raising the bar in terms of the skills and academic rigour required to become a teacher and will promote the benefits of teacher training to high performing graduates with a 2:1 or above, and to career changers as a valuable development opportunity. Alongside the national campaign providers should consider what more can be done locally to attract the very best graduates into the profession.

Quality is a key concern, but systemic barriers are also present. Recruitment data reveal that BME applicants are consistently less likely to secure a place on ITT than their white peers, even if they hold similar degree qualifications. The clustering of applications from BME candidates around a handful of institutions accounts for some of the rejections of good quality candidates, but there remains an unexplained gap in the success rate of BME candidates with a 2:1 or above compared to their white peers. Providers have an important role to play in exploring and challenging anomalies in recruitment data to ensure that recruitment processes are not deterring or disadvantaging good quality candidates from all ethnic backgrounds.

As part of their access agreement, ITT providers should consider whether BME students are underrepresented on ITT courses at their institution and if so consider setting out how they plan to:

- Incorporate activity to attract more high quality BME applicants into a local communications plan and recruitment strategy. The TDA has published a communications tool that can be accessed at www.tda.gov.uk/resourcebank
- 2. Promote staff awareness of the diversity agenda including cultural awareness, particularly for staff involved in trainee recruitment.
- 3. **Use data to review performance.** Providers should regularly review local recruitment data on ethnicity and degree classifications. This will enable providers to see if they are attracting

high quality candidates and if these candidates are securing places. Setting an appropriate benchmark for local recruitment will help providers identify realistic but stretching targets which can inform recruitment discussions with TDA Regional Leads.

4. Implement strategies to improve the retention of BME trainees where there is evidence to suggest that dropout rates are higher amongst this group.

To help providers develop strategies to attract and retain more high performing BME graduates, the TDA will publish a good practice guide by spring 2012.

Male primary teachers

The latest schools workforce figures from the Department for Education show that 13 per cent of teachers working in maintained sector primary schools are male. The proportion of male entrants to primary ITT has risen from 14 per cent in 2006-07 to 18 per cent in 2010-11. The TDA will continue to work with providers to ensure that there are no barriers which prevent high quality male graduates and career changers from applying to primary ITT.

As part of their access agreement providers should consider whether male primary teaching applicants are under-represented on ITT courses at their institution. If such applicants are under-represented, providers should consider setting out what they can do to encourage more applications from high quality male primary applicants and to remove barriers which prevent good candidates securing a place on ITT. Suggested activities include:

- targeting local marketing activity at high performing male graduates including career changers
- where possible, including male tutors on interview panels and ensuring men are present at recruitment events
- enabling male primary trainees to link up with other male trainees to create support networks
- placing male trainees on school placements in pairs to prevent isolation.

Recruitment data suggest that male primary applicants tend to apply later in the recruitment cycle than their female peers. As primary places fill up quickly, submitting a late application could result in a good quality applicant missing out on a place. Providers need to consider ways in which they can encourage early applications from men and accommodate the tendency of some male (and BME) applicants to apply later in the recruitment cycle.

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