



The National Association of
School-Based Teacher Trainers

Release date: 25th March 2020

Coronavirus: Special considerations for ITT providers “protect the flow of new entrants into the profession”

NASBTT Executive Director Emma Hollis said:

“In a period of our lives such as this, our first thought must be about the immediate public health consequences of the coronavirus. This is an unprecedented time, and last week saw the unprecedented government announcement that all schools will be closed to almost all children.

We have been working closely with the Department for Education to develop further guidance for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers in the light of potential prolonged school closures and what this may mean for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and programme requirements such as second school placements.

Our advice on this matter to government has been that special considerations should be made in this highly unusual instance and that they empower providers to make sensible professional judgments about the award of QTS, even where this may result in typical processes (such as second school placements) being waived or adapted.

The Minister of State for Schools, The Rt Hon Nick Gibb, and his team have listened carefully to our advice and recommendations. We are therefore pleased, and for the sake of future teacher recruitment, relieved, to finally receive official confirmation today that ITT providers will be able to award QTS at the end of a programme in the normal way, based on the trainee’s trajectory at the point their programme was interrupted. This is the most pragmatic and sensible way forward, recognising the hard work and progress already made by the trainees, whilst simultaneously protecting the flow of new entrants into the profession for September.

We recommend that trainees are offered alternative activities which will further their professional development, such as subject knowledge development, academic reading and research, access to online professional development modules, planning and assessment tasks. Trainees may also have opportunities to support virtual learning platforms for their placement schools.

In many cases, trainee teachers are helping to support a system under immense pressure. Their community spirit and willingness to face adversity head-on is just one indicator of the value of initial teacher training to the schools’ sector. There can be no doubt that the coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated, if there was indeed any doubt, the value of schools to our wider society. We applaud the teachers, trainees professional and support staff, who are responding so diligently to the crisis.

Whilst we are completely supportive of the government in these difficult times, there is a need for some form of intervention to help schools in local areas work together to maximise effectiveness in supporting the key worker and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

children. At the moment it seems to be left up to schools which may be inefficient – a strategic, coherent plan to make sure that the needs of all children are met would be welcomed.

Additionally, we must recognise the knock-on financial impact on ITT. Some providers are concerned about being able to recruit sufficient numbers for the new academic year. We have seen how grants and loans have been made available to businesses, and we now call for similar financial support to be given to ITT providers to help them survive, should this become necessary.

I would also stress the opportunity and importance of applying to become a teacher for September 2020 – never have they been more needed.”

-ENDS-

NASBTT is a registered charity committed to promoting high-quality schools-led programmes of training, education and professional development of teachers.

NASBTT represents the interests of schools-led teacher training provision in relation to the development and implementation of national policy developments. Our members include SCITT providers, School Direct Lead Schools, Teaching Schools, HEIs as well as a range of other organisations involved in the education and professional development of teachers. We have over 200 members representing more than 10,000 individual trainees.

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