



EWC Withdrawal of Accredited Status of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programmes

January 2024

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1. Glossary of terms

Accreditation – Accreditation of ITE programmes is a type of quality assurance process assessing compliance against the Criteria. The way ITE is accredited is an essential factor in ensuring an improvement in educational performance in schools. Accreditation of ITE programmes can be granted for up to a maximum period of five years.

Accreditation committee – A committee of up to five members, drawn from the ITE Accreditation Board, who undertake an initial accreditation assessment visit.

Accreditation Criteria “the Criteria” – the Welsh Government *Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales*.

Cause for concern – EWC has a separate cause for concern process in place, which will be triggered immediately in the event that a monitoring committee determines there are significant issues of non-compliance with the Accreditation Criteria at programme level. EWC will send the partnership a letter confirming the outcome of the monitoring process and outlining the specific areas that the partnership must address.

Compliance – Relates to a programme of ITE and how it meets the Welsh Government *Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales*.

Conditions monitoring – When a programme of ITE is accredited subject to conditions, the accreditation committee must monitor the partnership’s approach to the conditions prior to the commencement of the programme.

EWC – The Education Workforce Council. The Education Workforce Council (EWC) is the independent, professional regulator for the education workforce in Wales, covering teachers and learning support staff in school and further education settings, qualified youth/youth support workers and work-based learning practitioners. The EWC was established by the Education (Wales) Act 2014. Under the Act, the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) was reconfigured and renamed to become the Education Workforce Council (EWC). The EWC came into being on 1 April 2015. Registration categories are outlined on the [EWC website](#).

Inspection – Estyn undertake the inspection of education and training in Wales. Inspection should be a positive experience for providers and their communities. Estyn inspection helps to:

- ensure the best for all learners
- offer leaders, teachers and support staff the chance to contribute professionally and constructively
- share experiences from across Wales to support improvement

ITE – Initial Teacher Education

ITE Accreditation Board “the Board” – The EWC delegates responsibility for accrediting ITE programmes to its ITE Accreditation Board (the Board). The Board consists of up to twelve members, including the Chairperson and two deputies, all drawn from different fields of education.

Monitoring – In accordance with the Education Workforce Council (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) (Additional Functions) (Wales) Order 2017 (“the 2017 Order”), the EWC has the statutory responsibility for:

- monitoring compliance of accredited courses or programmes of study of Initial Teacher Education with the Accreditation Criteria.

The purpose of EWC's monitoring is to ensure that accredited ITE programmes remain compliant with the Accreditation Criteria throughout the period of accreditation.

Monitoring committee – A committee consists, typically, of three members, drawn from the ITE Accreditation Board, who undertake a monitoring assessment visit.

Partnership – A provider of a programme (or programmes) of ITE in Wales, comprising a University, lead and partner schools.

Programme – An academic programme of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Wales. These include undergraduate BA (Hons) programmes, and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programmes.

Reaccreditation – Accreditation for a programme of ITE can be granted for up to a maximum period of five years. If a partnership intends to offer the programme beyond the initial accreditation period, it will need to submit the programme for a further period of accreditation. This process is known as reaccreditation. Reaccreditation will be informed by accreditation, monitoring and inspection of documentation gathered throughout the previous period of accreditation.

2. Purpose of this document

This document outlines the actions required from Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships and the Education Workforce Council, in instances where:

- (a) [the accredited status of a programme\(s\) is withdrawn by the EWC in accordance with the circumstances outlined in this guidance](#), **or**
- (b) [the EWC has rejected an application for reaccreditation at the end of an existing period of accreditation](#), **or**
- (c) [a partnership has made the decision to no longer offer a programme of ITE, and are thereby voluntarily closing an accredited programme](#), **or**
- (d) [a partnership has decided not to reapply for ITE accreditation at the end of a period of accreditation](#)

This has been published for the attention of ITE partnerships, student teachers and other interested stakeholders.

3. Legislative framework

In accordance with the Education Workforce Council (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) (Additional Functions) (Wales) Order 2017 (“the 2017 Order”), the EWC has the statutory responsibility for:

- Withdrawing the accreditation of courses or programmes of Initial Teacher Education.

The withdrawal of the accredited status of the provision must be made in accordance with the [Accreditation Criteria](#). Specifically, the responsibilities of a committee of the independent Teacher Education Accreditation Board (TEAB) are:

- The committee may only determine to withdraw the accreditation of a course or programme of study of initial school teacher training in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria specified by the Welsh Ministers from time to time.
- The committee must give notice in writing to the provider of its determination within 15 working days of that determination being made.
- The notice must contain the following information
 - the reasons for the determination and in particular the Accreditation Criteria the provider no longer satisfies
 - the fact of the provider’s right to appeal against the determination
 - the person to whom the provider must give any notice of appeal
 - the fact that any notice of appeal must contain the grounds of appeal, and
 - the last date on which an appeal may be made

Any notice will ordinarily be provided to the partnership via electronic mail to an email address already provided to the EWC. The correspondence may include copies sent to other interested parties at the discretion of EWC. These may include Welsh Government, Estyn, the Higher Education Funding Council Wales (HEFCW) (to 31 March 2024), and (from 1 April 2024) the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER).

4. Instances leading to withdrawal of accreditation

4.1 The accredited status of a programme(s) is withdrawn by the EWC in accordance with the circumstances outlined in this guidance

This section sets out circumstances that may lead to the withdrawal of accreditation, and the responsibility of both the EWC and the partnership in this instance. The withdrawal of accreditation of a programme will always follow the implementation of the EWC “Cause for concern following monitoring” process. This process will be implemented in the event of one (or both) of the following scenarios:

- (a) Non-compliance identified through an EWC monitoring visit
- (b) Non-compliance arising during (or following) an Estyn inspection

The cause for concern process will enable partnerships to respond to the issues of non-compliance identified. Following agreement on an action plan to address those issues, a further visit will be arranged with the partnership to determine whether the non-compliance issue/s has/have been addressed. The timeframes associated with the non-compliance process will be discussed and agreed with the partnership.

In the event that those matters have not been sufficiently addressed, EWC may withdraw the accredited status of a programme, where the programme continues to be non-compliant with one or more of the Criteria.

4.1.1 Notification of withdrawal of accredited status

The EWC will provide the partnership with written notification of the intention to withdraw the accredited status of a programme within 15 working days of the determination being made. Partnerships should note that this is 15 working days of the determination and is not necessarily the date of the return visit as part of the cause for concern process.

The notification will be provided, via email, to the partnership representative identified during the original monitoring visit (or later identified through the cause for concern process, if the non-compliance arose through inspection), or other named representative identified by the partnership. The letter will also copy in:

- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- HEFCW/ CTER
- the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor’s Office) of the University involved in the partnership

The notification of withdrawal will include:

- the reasons for the determination and in particular the accreditation Criteria the provider no longer satisfies
- the fact of the provider’s right to appeal against the determination
- the person to whom the provider must give any notice of appeal
- the fact that any notice of appeal must contain the grounds of appeal, and
- the last date on which an appeal may be made

4.1.2 Appealing the withdrawal of accredited status

The partnership shall have the right of appeal, within 15 working days of the written notification of the decision. Appeals will need to be made in writing, setting out the grounds for the appeal and any necessary documentary evidence. Further details of the appeals process will be set out in the decision letter.

A newly constituted committee, selected from the pool of ITE Accreditation Board members (containing no member involved in making the withdrawal decision or the initial accreditation) will consider the appeal. The appeals committee will meet in private to consider any appeal and the partnership will be informed in writing of the appeal outcome within 15 working days.

4.1.3 Existing provision, recruitment and future intake

If an appeal is not made or the original decision is upheld, the partnership should work to ensure that the wellbeing and educational experience of student teachers is protected through the process of withdrawal. It should be noted that:

- Ongoing recruitment to the programme(s) concerned should cease immediately. No further recruitment to the programmes will be permitted – including for those students to whom offers have already been made. ITE partnerships must ensure that processes are in place to support applicants who may wish to transfer to other ITE programmes, potentially provided by another ITE Partnership, should the accredited status of a programme be withdrawn.
- For one-year postgraduate programmes, the programme will be expected to finish in the academic year in which the decision to withdraw accreditation is made. For deferring or returning students, the partnership should continue to operate the programme.
- For undergraduate programmes, the programme will ordinarily be allowed to “teach out” the current cohort.

Partnership responsibilities	EWC responsibilities	Welsh Government responsibilities	Timeframes
	Inform the partnership and relevant bodies of the decision to withdraw accredited status of a programme(s)		15 working days of the determination being made
Inform all current, deferred and future student teachers/applicants of the intention to withdraw the accredited status of the programme(s)		Support the partnership in the drafting of the letter, including implications for existing student teachers, applicants and identifying appropriate next steps	25 working days of the determination being made

Inform all partner schools of the intention to withdraw the accredited status of the programme(s)		Support the partnership in the drafting of the letter, including implications for the continued involvement of those schools in ITE	25 working days of the determination being made
Update websites and marketing materials to reflect the closure of the programme	Update the EWC website to reflect the closure of the programme		25 working days of the determination being made
Support student teachers who have applied to the programme and those who have suspended or deferred studies		Work with alternative partnerships to identify opportunities for applicants and for student teachers who have deferred study	By the end of the academic year of withdrawal
Ensure that the highest standards of quality are provided through the remaining period of provision, including an action plan to achieve this	Support from EWC officers and the committee of TEAB		Throughout all remaining provision, including remaining undergraduate provision, where applicable
Ensure QTS award information is provided to EWC, prior to closure (where applicable)	Ensure the award of QTS is made to student teachers from the programme (where applicable)		Throughout all remaining provision, including remaining undergraduate provision, where applicable

4.1.4 Maintaining quality through the withdrawal period

As outlined in the table shown in 4.1.3, the partnership is expected to work towards achieving compliance with the Criteria, during the period of closure. Partnerships will be required to produce an action plan which will demonstrate:

- specific actions made to achieve compliance
- mitigations for impacts on quality of the closure of programmes (e.g. staff losses, reputational impacts, student dissatisfaction)

4.2 The EWC has rejected an application for reaccreditation at the end of an existing period of accreditation

4.2.1 Reaccreditation policy and timeframes

Submitting a programme of Initial Teacher Education to EWC for reaccreditation (for existing programmes whose initial accreditation expires from September 2024) states that:

“In the event that a programme is deemed to be non-compliant, either through monitoring or inspection activity, they will enter into either EWC cause for concern and/or Estyn follow-up processes. If that partnership is either (a) not making sufficient progress towards achieving compliance, or (b) is unable to evidence this within timeframes required for the submission of reaccredited status, the partnership will not be able to meet the requirements for accreditation outlined within the Criteria, and therefore would not be able to submit those programme(s) for reaccreditation.”

Ordinarily, partnerships are required to present their submissions to EWC by March 31 of the year before the accredited period of the programme(s) end. In the event that a partnership is under the EWC cause for concern process during this period, an assessment of the progress made by the partnership will be made, ahead of the submission deadline. At this stage, the committee will make a determination of non-compliance, and in the event that a programme remains non-compliant, will advise the partnership on the likely success of any accreditation submission. Should the partnership proceed with a reaccreditation submission, the guidance for Submitting a programme of Initial Teacher Education to EWC for Reaccreditation (for existing programmes whose initial accreditation expires from September 2024) will apply.

In the event of the rejection of a submission for reaccreditation, the guidance under sections 4.1.1, 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 will apply. The appeals policy will follow that outlined under the submission guidance.

4.3 A partnership has made the decision to no longer offer a programme of ITE, and are thereby voluntarily closing an accredited programme

4.3.1 Notification to the EWC

The director of the ITE partnership should inform the EWC of the intention to cease offering a programme of ITE. If this decision is made during an accredited period, the partnership should be mindful of their legal obligations in relation to the marketing of ITE programmes. Whilst all programmes are subject to accreditation and the withdrawal processes outlined in this guidance, a voluntary decision by the partnerships may (for example) have implications for ongoing recruitment and student teacher offers.

The decision should be sent in writing to ITEAccreditation@ewc.wales.

The decision should include:

- confirmation that the decision to withdraw the programme(s) has been made in conjunction with the appropriate governance arrangements both from within the university and the wider partnership
- confirmation that lead partner schools are in agreement with the decision
- the date by which recruitment will cease
- the date by which any postgraduate programme(s) will cease

- the date by which any undergraduate programme(s) will cease
- the numbers of applicants who may need to be offered a place by another provider
- the number of deferred (or returning) students which this closure may impact

4.3.2 Notification to other bodies

The EWC will provide the partnership with written receipt of the notification within 15 working days of receipt of the decision to withdraw. The response, via email, will include the original notification from the partnership and identify the next steps required. The letter will also copy in:

- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- HEFCW/CTER
- the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor's Office) of the university involved in the partnership

In the event of a voluntary closure of a programme, the guidance under sections 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 will apply.

4.4 A partnership has decided not to reapply for reaccreditation at the end of a period of accreditation.

In the academic year of the submission deadline associated with reaccreditation, partnerships are emailed by ITEAccreditation@ewc.wales to outline their intent to submit a programme for reaccreditation. Partnerships will be provided with a deadline by which to respond, in advance of the submission deadline.

In the event that a partnership does not wish to seek reaccreditation, the partnership should use the same deadline to provide the notification outlined in 4.4.1.

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- confirmation that the decision to withdraw has been made in conjunction with the appropriate governance arrangements both from within the university and the wider partnership
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- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- HEFCW/ CTER
- the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor's Office) of the university involved in the partnership

In the event of a voluntary closure of a programme, the guidance under sections 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 will apply.

5. Closure Report

Within two calendar months of the closure of a programme, the EWC shall compile a report on the closure process. This will include:

- an overview of the timeframes associated with the closure of a programme or programmes, including notification from the partnership
- an explanation of the reasons for withdrawal or closure
- comments on the provision and mitigations put in place by the partnership during the closure period
- an assessment of the impact on student teachers, including those currently deferred from study or those returning to study
- an assessment of the impact on applicants

The closure report will be shared with the partnership, and will also be sent to:

- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- HEFCW/CTER
- the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor's Office) of the university involved in the partnership