



Department
for Education

FE teacher initial teacher training and development: call for evidence

Government consultation

Launch date 17 October 2025

Respond by 12 December 2025

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Introduction

In recent years, the Department for Education (DfE) has placed a renewed focus on the role that high quality training and development plays in enabling teachers to deliver the best possible outcomes for learners across the Further Education (FE) sector, at all stages of their teaching career.

Effective initial training and ongoing professional development (PD) enables teachers to deliver high-quality education and to retain the currency of their teaching and their subject knowledge, including technical and vocational competence for dual professionals.

This call for evidence is part of a process to establish a more secure evidence base for professional development for those teaching in the FE sector. It focuses on initial teacher education (ITE) and early professional development phases.

ITE refers to training specifically designed to enable someone to become occupationally competent as an FE teacher, that is qualifications and apprenticeships that meet the level 5 Learning and Skills Teacher occupational standard. Qualifications include the Diploma in Teaching (FE and skills) and similar qualifications validated by universities at levels 5, 6 and 7.

"Early career" refers to the transitional period that an individual takes to become a confident and competent teacher. It may include a period of ITE. This is generally considered to be the first three years of a teacher's career but may be longer in some circumstances.

We know that teachers in the FE sector may have different experiences in their early career, and not all will access an ITE programme before they take up employment. That is why it is essential that, to be effective, the initial training of FE teachers – whether delivered as a qualification, as an apprenticeship, or through more informal work-based training – provides robust knowledge content (the "what"), procedural pedagogical content (the "how"), and conditional pedagogical content (the "when") for new teachers.

Evidence from Ofsted inspections of FE ITE provision shows significant variability in the content of ITE programmes, particularly with respect to pedagogical content, where there can be an uncritical acceptance of a range of contested or outdated theories. Through this call for evidence, we want to establish a baseline of appropriate, evidence-based pedagogical content that can underpin ITE programmes and effective early career PD for FE teachers. We expect responses to be wide ranging, reflecting different approaches to preparing teachers effectively in different parts of the sector, and we encourage responses from a range of practitioners in different roles and provider types, not just those responsible for delivering ITE programmes in colleges.

We are using an early career focus to capture the processes by which new FE teachers acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be effective in their subject(s) and context(s). We believe that by getting this element right, we can establish a shared understanding of the foundations required for all new teachers as they start their journey into the profession – this in turn will have a positive impact on establishing new teachers' expectations for a career-long commitment to ongoing professional development and improvement that is based on clear evidence and quality standards.

We recognise that the range of subjects and specialisms delivered across FE is broad, complex and evolving. We want to test the extent to which subject-specific pedagogy has been developed for ITE and early career PD in a manageable way, so we have chosen to focus on two specific subject areas where this exercise will aim to elicit more narrowly focused evidence:

- Construction
- Health and Social Care

Both of the above are aligned with the government's priorities for skills development and play an important role creating opportunity for individuals and communities.

To be clear, the call for evidence is not restricted to these subjects – but we are particularly keen to receive submissions which highlight how teachers of these particular subjects are being trained on the basis of evidence-informed, subject-specific pedagogy. Evidence and examples relating to other subjects, sectors and specialisms are also welcome.

This call for evidence seeks to gather appropriate, recent, relevant, and high-quality research and related knowledge to inform updates to the knowledge content that supports FE ITE programmes. The aim is to ensure that trainee teachers in FE are equipped with the most current and effective practices for teaching diverse learners in a wide range of post-16 settings.

The final question asks respondents to consider the links between early career preparation and continuing professional development. This is intended to provide us with an insight into the relationship between these phases of a teacher's professional development.

We expect that, for most providers, the evidence that is produced will confirm that their current curricula include appropriate evidence-based teaching and assessment content reflecting up to date knowledge and research. For a small number it may highlight a need to refresh their content and provide a foundation on which they can build a more effective FE ITE curriculum.

The results of this call for evidence will be considered by an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) convened by the department. The assessment and recommendations of the EAG

will form the basis of new statutory guidance for the content and delivery of FE ITE programmes, and a useful resource for those delivering early career PD programmes.

Who this is for

We want to collect evidence from individuals and organisations with a range of knowledge and expertise. Because teachers enter the FE sector through a variety of routes, we expect that responses will reflect this and may include early career PD as well as ITE.

Many respondents will have experience of training or supporting new and early career teachers in the FE sector. We also encourage those whose expertise lies in education, pedagogy and knowledge of research to engage. We anticipate that this will include:

- Individuals and organisations delivering ITE qualifications for FE teachers
- Those delivering the Learning and Skills Teacher Apprenticeship
- Providers of PD programmes for new and early career teachers. Specifically, people that focus on the knowledge and pedagogical requirements of teachers joining the FE sector who have not undertaken an ITE programme
- Organisations responsible for developing ITE qualifications for themselves and other providers to deliver (e.g. commercial Awarding Organisations)
- Individuals who have a quality assurance role or responsibility within an FE provider and who have oversight of ITE and new teacher support programmes
- Representative bodies who may wish to aggregate evidence from their members to provide a broader view of current practice
- Academic researchers who are active in this area
- Pedagogy and education experts
- Research organisations such as universities, FE colleges and other sector bodies
- Education charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research
- SEND charities, private organisations, and public bodies that commission and/or review education research

Issue date

The consultation was issued on 17 October 2025

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team by email at FEITE@education.gov.uk

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by

email: coordinator.consultations@education.gov.uk, telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

The response

The results of the consultation and the department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in 2026.

We will publish statutory guidance for ITE providers within a reasonable time following the end of the call for evidence, and no later than July 2026. This will give the EAG sufficient time to consider all of the relevant submissions and reach agreement on the value of the information provided; it will also allow guidance to be published with sufficient lead time for providers to consider any changes that they might need to make to their current or planned programme delivery.

The statutory guidance will provide a snapshot of the evidence considered and is intended to assist ITE providers to ensure that they have a well thought through, evidence-informed curriculum. We expect that statutory guidance will be updated from time to time, to ensure that it remains current and sets out the most recent robust evidence of good practice.

About this consultation

All evidence submitted will be considered by an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) appointed by DfE. The EAG's remit is to assess whether the current knowledge content of teacher development programmes is relevant, robust and effective enough for it to form a part of new statutory guidance on curriculum and content for providers of FE ITE. Given the close relationship between ITE and early career PD, this process will also provide a key resource for those developing early-career support programmes for new teachers.

Decisions about the final content of the published statutory guidance document will be made by Ministers who will take into consideration the advice of the expert panel. We will ask the panel to consider:

- Elements of universal foundational knowledge, pedagogy and theory that can be utilised by all teachers regardless of their subject area
- Aspects of the call for evidence response that are context-specific (e.g. workshop, laboratory, classroom, simulation) and may be of use to teachers teaching a different subject in a similar environment
- Subject-specific theory and knowledge that relates solely to the subject under consideration – we are particularly keen to receive and assess evidence related to the teaching of construction and health and social care.

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [DfE consultations on GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/consultations) to submit your response.

Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may request an alternative format of the form.

By email

FEITE.CALLFOREVIDENCE@education.gov.uk

- By post

Further Education Workforce Division

Department for Education

2 St Paul's Place

125 Norfolk Street

Sheffield, S1 2FJ

Deadline

The consultation closes on 12 December 2025

Section 1- Respondent information

About you

1. What is your name?

(Open text box)

2. Do you consent to the Department for Education contacting you via email about your response? If yes, please provide your email address.

(Open text box)

3. Would you like us to keep your response confidential?

☐Yes ☐No

Information provided in response to calls for evidence, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department for Education will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Evidence submitted will be shared with the EAG, but personal information will not.

4. If you would like us to keep your response confidential, please explain your reason for confidentiality:

(Open text box)

5. What is your role?

(Open text box)

6. What is the name of the organisation that you work for? (if applicable)

(Open text box)

7. What type of organisation is this?

☐ A university or similar higher education organisation with degree awarding powers

☐ A general further education college

☐ A sixth form college

☐ A specialist college or provider

☐ A 16 to 19 Academy

☐ An independent training provider

☐ A third sector organisation

☐ A local authority provider

☐ A representative or specialist body

☐ Other

8. If you answered 'other', please specify your organisation type.

(Open text box)

9. Are you answering on behalf of your organisation or in a personal capacity?

☐ on behalf of organisation

☐ personal response

10. What kind of teacher training and development are you involved in?

(option to choose more than one)

☐ University delivered qualification(s)

☐ Qualification(s) franchised from a university and delivered by my organisation

- ☐ Qualification(s) validated by a university and delivered by my organisation
- ☐ An Ofqual regulated qualification, e.g. The Diploma in Teaching (FE and Skills)
- ☐ Learning and Skills Teacher (LST) apprenticeship
- ☐ Early career PD for new teachers in the FE sector
- ☐ Continuing Professional Development programmes for FE teachers
- ☐ Other

11. If other please give details

(Open text box)

Your evidence

We are seeking evidence of high quality and relevant pedagogical knowledge and research that underpins the delivery of ITE and PD for early career teachers in the Further Education sector.

We are interested in the various approaches that providers use to enable individuals to be effective teachers, particularly where high-quality pedagogical knowledge helps trainees and early career teachers discern how and when to use different approaches and techniques to enable their students to achieve the best outcomes. We expect this to focus on the elements of pedagogy that enable a teacher to know how and when to use various approaches for their learners.

We are also interested in the links between early career preparation and continuing professional development for FE teachers.

Whilst this call for evidence is considering the foundational knowledge that is effective for all teachers, we are also interested in developing a more detailed understanding of the pedagogical underpinnings of the curriculum used to prepare those training for careers in construction and health and social care teaching. We anticipate that there will be three types of evidence provided:

- a. Elements of **universal foundational knowledge**, pedagogy and theory that can be utilised by all teachers regardless of their subject area.
- b. **Context-specific** pedagogical theory and knowledge (e.g. workshop, laboratory, classroom, simulation) that may be of use to teachers teaching a range of different subjects but in a similar environment.

- c. **Subject-specific** pedagogical theory and knowledge that relates solely to the subject area under consideration, in this case construction or health and social care

The evidence will be assessed by the department and an Expert Advisory Group and will inform the development of new statutory guidance on FE ITE course content and curriculum to be issued by DfE. The statutory guidance will focus on the first two elements above (i.e. universal and context-specific pedagogy) to provide all those organisations delivering FE ITE with a clear foundation on which to build their qualifications and apprenticeship provision. It will also be a helpful reference point for those developing and delivering early career PD.

Depending on the quality and relevance of evidence received, DfE may also publish additional, illustrative information about the curriculum for training construction and health and social care teachers at the same time. This will not form part of any statutory guidance.

Responses to this call for evidence must answer questions 12 and 13.

12. Please provide detail of the pedagogical evidence that you use in the universal foundational elements of your ITE or early career PD programme. Please provide full references and, where applicable, links to the relevant publication(s).

(open text box)

13. Please provide detail of context-specific pedagogical theories and knowledge that you use in your ITE or early career PD programme. Please state which context(s) they are suitable for. Please provide full references and, where applicable, links to relevant publication(s). You may wish answer with reference to multiple contexts.

(open text box)

Question 14 is intended to gather insight into the links between early career preparation and on broader professional development delivered in the FE sector.

14. Please provide any insights into the needs of the FE sector in terms of professional development. What are the barriers to, and what are the opportunities for, ensuring that all FE teachers have access to high-quality professional development? Please provide specific examples of effective practice where known, along with references to any relevant publication(s).

(open text box)

Questions 15 and 16 are optional. They are specifically intended for organisations that prepare teachers of construction and health and social care. We want to know which

theories underpin these teacher preparation programmes. This information could form the basis of an information summary shared with the FE ITE sector.

15. Where relevant please provide details of the subject-specific pedagogy that underpins your construction teacher training or PD programme(s). Please provide full references and, where applicable, links to any relevant publication(s).

(open text box)

16. Where relevant please provide details of the subject-specific pedagogy that underpins your health and social care teacher training or PD programme(s). Please provide full references and, where applicable, links to any relevant publication(s).

(open text box)

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