



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

April 2023

1 Introduction and statutory background

The Education Workforce Council (EWC) was established by the Education (Wales) Act 2014.

Under the Education Workforce Council (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) (Additional Functions) (Wales) Order 2017, as amended, EWC has a statutory responsibility to:

- accredit programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)
- monitor compliance of accredited programmes against Welsh Government accreditation criteria
- withdraw accreditation of programmes if it considers it appropriate to do so
- charge fees in connection with providing the service; and, when exercising these functions, to
- have regard to any forecast of demand for newly qualified teachers that is notified to it in writing by the Welsh Ministers

In doing so, EWC seeks to ensure that programmes of ITE are professionally appropriate, demanding and lead to student teachers meeting the qualified teacher status (QTS) standards in Wales.

Any partnership (the applicant) seeking to run an ITE programme that leads to qualified teacher status (QTS) in Wales since September 2019 must first ensure that it has been accredited by EWC, through its **Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Accreditation Board (the Board)**.

2 Purpose of this document

This document sets out, for partnerships seeking to reaccredit existing programmes:

- the procedures and timescales for a partnership to submit a programme for professional reaccreditation
- the process EWC will follow in deciding whether to accredit a programme or not and how/when partnerships will be informed of the decision

It applies to all ITE programmes run in Wales, and programme submissions must be made to EWC in line with the timetable in section 4.

This document should be used in conjunction with:

- Welsh Government Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales; this includes the standards for qualified teacher status (QTS)

- the proforma for submitting programmes for reaccreditation to EWC in Wales
- the Education Workforce (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) Regulations 2017

These documents and other related information are available at:

<https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/accreditation/ite-accreditation/submitting-a-programme>

3 The programme reaccreditation process and differences from accreditation

The EWC defines accreditation as the process of ascertaining the professional acceptability of a programme of ITE leading to a teaching qualification, against the Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales ('the Criteria'). Accreditation will be awarded to programmes, not partnerships, and therefore accreditation **must take place programme by programme**.

The maximum length of an accredited programme is a period of up to five years. After five years (or the length of the accreditation period, if lower), and should the partnership wish to continue to run the programme, that programme must be resubmitted to EWC for reaccreditation. During the period of accreditation, the programme will ordinarily be subject to monitoring by EWC and inspection by Estyn, which will offer the opportunity for the partnership to highlight any developments/enhancements made to the programme and for EWC to offer guidance/direction to the partnership. (See section 10 for further details of the monitoring process).

A separate guidance document for accreditation can be found via

<https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/accreditation/ite-accreditation/submitting-a-programme>

The task of the accreditation committee is to decide whether an existing programme of ITE continues to realise the Welsh Government's 'Vision for ITE', as set out in section A of the Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales ('the Criteria') and addresses every matter referred to in section B of the Criteria document. In doing so, the committee will seek to ensure that any programme is demanding, credible and professionally appropriate.

EWC reserves the right to revisit a programme at any time during the period of accreditation.

Partnerships should note the following key features of reaccreditation, distinct from initial accreditation:

- reaccreditation is permissible for a single period, of up to five years, beyond the original accreditation of a programme; this means that a programme can potentially run for up to ten years before a full accreditation assessment must take place
- reaccreditation will involve
 - the re-submission of the original version of the accredited programme
 - completion of a new template based upon changes to the accredited programme, made in light of the new accreditation criteria, and/or changes made to the programme for any other reasons
- reaccreditation will be informed by monitoring and inspection outcomes
- reaccreditation will not, ordinarily, involve any action planning or conditions monitoring; if there are issues of quality or compliance with the programme by the point of reaccreditation, then further accreditation will not be granted
- reaccreditation visits will be shorter than the original accreditation visits

Monitoring, non-compliance and applying for reaccreditation

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.

The reaccreditation process will involve a number of stages:

3.1 University approval / validation

The partnership must ensure that the programme has continued academic validation **before** it is submitted to EWC for professional accreditation. This will provide EWC with the appropriate assurance that the programme meets the necessary standards of the validating university.

3.2 Reaccreditation

This is where EWC establishes whether the programme remains compliant with the Criteria, and therefore whether the programme is capable of continuing to ensure that a student teacher who completes the programme meets the QTS standards, and is suitable for registration with EWC as a school teacher. EWC aims to determine whether a programme offers relevant professional preparation for teaching. The reaccreditation will focus on key professional

aspects of the programme and on the understanding and perceptions of the staff involved in its delivery. Reaccreditation will seek to establish how the programme has developed in both design and delivery in relation to ITE reform and the Criteria. It takes into account outcomes from both monitoring and inspection activity.

Reaccreditation applies to existing programmes only. In the event that partnerships wish to make significant changes to a programme, EWC reserves the right to apply the initial accreditation process (and appropriate fees), which would reflect the time necessary to make judgements on those changes. Significant changes to underpinning programme design or structures should be discussed with EWC officers before submission.

In reviewing and accrediting programmes, EWC is committed to the following general principles:

- mutual respect and trust as the basis for positive professional relationships between EWC and partnerships
- collaboration with partnerships in the reaccreditation process, informed by evidence as a means of ensuring the high standards of ITE in Wales
- recognition of the diversity of contexts in which programmes are provided
- the importance of the Welsh language and ensuring that the reaccreditation arrangements operate bilingually
- consistency, transparency and fairness throughout the reaccreditation process
- confidentiality of all information provided to EWC
- clear communication of outcomes and decisions to the partnership and wider public

3.3 Reaccreditation outcomes

By the point of reaccreditation, the programme will have been part of:

- an initial accreditation assessment
- action planning and conditions monitoring as part of the original accreditation assessment
- monitoring and (likely) inspection by Estyn

It is therefore anticipated that ordinarily, no further conditions would be placed on programmes (although this option is available to the EWC), and the committee may either:

- reject the submission for accredited status of the programme
- reaccredit the programme with recommendations for continued actions for the programme to further enhance the quality of the provision

4 Timeframes associated with the reaccreditation cycle

No ITE programmes in Wales may run without approval from EWC. The following timetable will apply for all existing programmes with an accreditation expiry date from September 2025:

Action	Date
Partnership to submit programme to EWC for reaccreditation against accreditation criteria	By 31 March of the calendar year prior to expiry of the accredited status
EWC to assess programmes	Ordinarily by 31 July of the calendar year prior to expiry of the accredited status
EWC to inform partnership of decision	Ordinarily by 31 August of the calendar year prior to expiry of the accredited status and within 15 working days of the assessment of the programme
EWC to confirm funded numbers for a programme	December of the calendar year prior to expiry of the accredited status
Partnership to commence delivery of new programme	From 1 September of the year of commencement

Given the implementation of new accreditation criteria in 2023, for partnerships seeking reaccreditation of programmes for those expiring by September 2024, the following timetable applies*

*EWC will endeavour to assess programmes and inform partnerships of the decisions as soon as is reasonably practicable

Action	Date
Partnership to confirm intention to apply for accreditation	29 July 2023
EWC to confirm funded numbers for a programme for 2024/25 (subject to accreditation)	December 2023
Partnership to submit programme to EWC for accreditation against new accreditation criteria	5 January 2024
EWC to assess programme(s)	31 May 2024
EWC to inform partnership of decision	30 June 2024 and within 15 working days of the assessment of the programme
Partnership to commence delivery of new programme	From 1 September 2024

5 How to submit a programme for reaccreditation

In light of the amendments to the Criteria, and the prior implementation of an interim approach to monitoring, there are additional requirements for the proformas associated with reaccreditation. Partnerships must submit programmes to EWC electronically and in accordance with the timeframes outlined in section 4:

- the original proforma for the submission of ITE programmes for professional accreditation
- a copy of the proforma for the submission of ITE programmes for professional reaccreditation by the EWC; this will include:
 - a description of any changes made to the programme subsequent to the commencement of the programme
 - a description of any changes made to the programme in respect of how the programmes will change as a result of the new criteria
- a statement on the financial model associated with the programme; this should take into account recruitment levels during the period of accreditation of the programme, the income generated by the programme and the allocation of resources within the programme; it should be no longer than two sides of A4

The partnership should appoint a person with sufficient authority, who will act as the lead contact for the submission. This person should have designated responsibility for ITE and/or quality assurance within the partnership. EWC will direct all correspondence through this person and may wish to clarify certain aspects of the submission.

Programme reaccreditation assessment fees

A schedule of fees payable by partnerships participating in the accreditation process is available on the EWC's website www.ewc.wales. The fees associated with reaccreditation are lower than those associated with the accreditation process.

6 EWC ITE Accreditation Board (the Board)

EWC delegates responsibility for accrediting ITE programmes to its ITE Accreditation Board, which has delegated powers to decide whether a programme should be accredited or not, and to monitor compliance with the Criteria.

The Board pool is made up of a Chair, two deputies and around 10 others. Members of the Board pool are drawn from a range of backgrounds, including Initial Teacher Education, Estyn, consortia / local authorities / schools, practitioners registered within EWC in the category of school teacher, or having other expertise the EWC considers relevant.

Any programme submission will be considered by a subset of members drawn from the pool, known as the Accreditation of Initial School Teacher Training Committee (the Committee). To ensure consistency, each committee will always include the Chair or one deputy. The quorum, in Welsh Government regulations for an assessment is three members, which is typically the size of a committee.

All members are required to declare any conflicts of interest prior to considering a programme submission. Any conflicts identified either by a Board member or partnership will be considered by the duly authorised EWC officer (taking legal advice if required) and the member may be required to stand down from considering a particular programme if such a conflict or perceived conflict is deemed to exist by the duly authorised officer.

All meetings are serviced by the duly authorised EWC officer and supporting staff who will maintain an overview of the accreditation process.

7 How EWC considers a programme submission for reaccreditation

The reaccreditation assessment will consist of three stages:

- a paper-based review of a programme submission by the committee
- a partnership site visit by the committee, including a separate meeting to explore each programme submission; these will normally be scheduled for a **half-day per programme** and will take place at a mutually agreed venue
- the decision and written confirmation

A letter will be sent to the partnership at least 20 working days before the site visit and programme assessment meeting. This will confirm the composition of the committee for each programme assessment, the format of the site visit and meeting, and give an indication of who the partnership might wish to have in attendance at the site visit and programme meeting(s). The partnership will be asked to respond in writing to confirm attendance and to indicate any perceived committee member conflicts.

Paper-based review

Committee members will be provided with copies of the programme submission at least 10 working days in advance of the site visit and assessment. The committee will review the documentation both individually and collectively, prior to the site visit and meetings. This review will include reviewing prior monitoring and inspection outcomes, as well as data from recruitment and qualification data from EWC.

Programme reaccreditation meeting(s) and site visit

EWC will convene a separate meeting for every programme submitted, as it is programmes that are accredited, not partnerships.

Meetings will take place at a mutually agreed venue. The partnership team will make a presentation to the committee setting out the main aspects of their programme in line with the proforma and Criteria. The committee will raise questions with the partnership team about their programme and there will be an opportunity for discussion.

Meetings are expected to last for approximately half a day per programme. In addition, an overarching 'site visit' will also form part of the accreditation meetings. This will examine themes which cross-over the programmes, including (for example), leadership and management.

The decision and written notification

The partnership will be informed of the decision by letter to the designated person identified on the programme submission. The letter will also be copied to the Welsh Government. Full reasons for the committee's decision will be set out in the letter (in report form).

A right of appeal to partnerships will be set out in the written decision.

Confirmed funded numbers will be provided to partnerships in December each year.

All accredited programmes will be listed on EWC's website.

8 Appeals

Any partnership dissatisfied with the committee's decision shall have a right of appeal within 15 working days of the written notification of the committee's 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 (containing no member involved in making the initial decision) will consider the appeal. The appeals committee will meet to consider any appeal and the partnership will be informed in writing of the appeal outcome within 20 working days.

9 Major changes to a programme

Accreditation is granted on the basis a programme will be implemented, and will continue to be implemented, as indicated in the documentation submitted for accreditation. Where a partnership wishes to make significant changes to an accredited programme, it must notify EWC in writing **before** making these changes.

If a partnership is unsure as to whether its proposed change(s) constitutes a 'major' change, it may wish to discuss informally with EWC prior to formal notification. EWC officers (who are not part of the decision making process) will be able to provide impartial advice to partnerships at any stage of the process.

What is a major change?

A major change is one which significantly impacts on:

- i) the quality of the programme
- ii) the delivery of the programme
- iii) the way the programme meets the Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education programmes in Wales

Examples of major changes may include, but is not limited to, the following types of changes:

- the constitution or management of the partnership
- the title of the programme

- the level of the programme
- validation arrangements
- the length of the programme or its mode of delivery
- structures or delivery models associated with staffing across the partnership
- assessment structures, word counts etc.
- student entry requirements

How to notify EWC of a major change

If a partnership seeks to make a significant change to an accredited programme, it must notify EWC using the proforma 'Notification of major changes to an accredited programme of ITE'. This is available at:

<https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/accreditation/ite-accreditation/submitting-a-programme>

EWC will not accept notifications in any other format. This should be submitted by email to iteaccreditation@ewc.wales.

On receipt of a notification, EWC officers and the committee Chair who led the most recent accreditation assessment will review the proposed change(s) and consider whether or not these are materially relevant to the programme's accreditation status.

Where EWC officers and/or the Chair are content the proposed changes are not materially relevant to the programme's accreditation status, confirmation will be sent to the partnership that the changes to the programme may be made without an interim review.

Where EWC officers and/or the Chair consider such changes to be material to the programme's accreditation status, an interim review will be arranged and the partnership will be informed in writing. Interim reviews may involve:

- the submission of documentation pertinent to the material changes to the programme for the Board's approval
- a meeting between members of the Board and partnership to further explore the changes; if the Chair also considers that a site visit is needed, officers will inform the partnership

10 Monitoring

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

The EWC monitoring process will ensure that accredited programmes of ITE in Wales remain compliant with the Welsh Government Criteria for the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Wales ('the

Criteria'). Monitoring will be undertaken at programme level. Should any revisions be made to the accreditation criteria, partnerships are not normally expected to make changes to programmes to meet any new criteria introduced during the accreditation period. Such changes would usually be addressed at the reaccreditation stage. Programmes will be monitored against the version of the accreditation criteria against which the programme was accredited.

Ordinarily, monitoring visits will take place in year two of a programme being operational. More information on monitoring, including the EWC monitoring guidance, can be found at

<https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/accreditation/ite-accreditation/accredited-ite-programmes-in-wales>

Further information

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*Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.*