

Frequently asked questions for mentor funding

Q1: When can we expect the updated guidance to be released?

The full guidance will be published in Spring 2024.

Q2: What happens to the funding for main mentor training if a trainee withdraws mid-year? Can the mentor still continue with their training to complete the 20 hours if they choose to even if they don't have a trainee anymore? (for example – what if they have completed 18 of the 20 hours? Or 15? Or 10?)

Yes, the school, accredited provider and the mentor can decide on whether the mentor completes the training. If the mentor does continue to train, we would expect they should be intending to mentor in consequent years, but this will not be a requirement to receive funding.

Q3: Can second school mentors access the DfE funding for the 20 hours of training even if they are only hosting a second placement (6 weeks)?

All educational settings which hosted an ITT trainee or had arranged to host an ITT trainee (for any length of time) on an ITT course leading to QTS, will be eligible for this funding.

Q4: What will be the funding arrangement if a trainee withdraws *before they start second placement*.

Funding can still be claimed, as a trainee had intended to train.

Q5: As above, are they able to complete the training (funded) if they no longer have a trainee due to withdrawal?

Yes, the school, accredited provider and the mentor can decide whether the mentor completes the training.

Q6: What happens if a mentor has a long-term absence or leaves mid-year? Do mentors who take over from there need the full 20 hours training entitlement? – at what point is that considered not a feasible option given that much of our training is front-loaded and linked to the trainee curriculum and assessment at each stage? (e.g. what if the main mentor leaves/is sick in May? June? Early July??)

If a mentor cannot continue mentoring, schools can replace and claim training time for new mentors. The accredited provider, school and the new mentor will need to assess the number of hours of training that is appropriate and feasible for the new mentor. More information on mentoring for schools has been published here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/offer-a-trainee-teacher-placement>.

Q7: For how many years is the mentor training valid for? Can refresher training be done e.g. 2 or 3 years later if they don't have a trainee in 2025, or does it have to be the following year?

Information on refresher training is subject to cross-government approvals. It is hoped that this will be provided when the full guidance is updated this Spring, however it may be communicated later if the position has not been agreed.

Q8 Can schools in Wales access this funding?

This will be confirmed when the guidance is published in Spring 2024.

Q9: Will guidance be generated to support planning beyond 2025?

The guidance will only cover AY24/25. This is because funding beyond 2024/25 is contingent on approvals from across government and will take place as part of the next Spending Review process which will take place in 2024. To maximise the likelihood of securing future funding, the Department will require significant evidence to demonstrate the grant's value for money. We will work with the sector to produce this evidence this academic year. As soon as we can share further information on this, we will.

Q10: Can guidance be shared with ITT providers in advance of circulation with schools? As providers can then prepare support materials for schools within their partnership in advance of this

Guidance will be shared with sector representative bodies in advance of publication for their input. We will work closely with them to evaluate whether additional guidance specifically for schools will also be required. New guidance for schools has recently been published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/offer-a-trainee-teacher-placement>

Q11: Funding for Mentors is causing concern as it will be paid to schools. How will DfE monitor whether the Mentor is capable, engaged and performing well and therefore should be paid funding for that job? If funding were to be paid to the provider – they could monitor performance and then make payments. How will provider opinion be factored into payment? Also, if schools are receiving grant, they will be expected to submit Annex G (accounting review), and this will incur a cost – is it cost-effective to have so many schools undertaking this process when funding can go to providers?

Placement schools will be able claim for the training undertaken by their general mentors as this funding is designed to help schools with the cost of teachers being away from the classroom while they train. The funding will be dispersed after a claim has been made at the end of the academic year and is therefore discrete.

The digital service to facilitate the payment of general mentor claims will be designed to validate the information that the school provides against data the Department currently holds. Where the information is validated across our services (Register, Publish, Get information about Schools), no evidence will need to be provided at the point of claim. If information cannot be verified, for instance where a mentor doesn't have a TRN, then evidence may need to be supplied at the point of claim.

As part of assurance sampling 10% of the claims will require the production of evidence and may require an Annex G, depending on the total value of the claim. Where evidence is required, the Department will work collaboratively with both the placement schools and providers to review the necessary documentation.

Schools will be able claim for the training undertaken by their general mentors. This funding will help with the cost of teachers being away from the classroom while they train.

Accredited providers can claim funding to help with the costs associated with introducing the new lead mentor role. This funding is designed to help providers with the cost of lead mentors taking the time they need to train and carry out their role. The role of the lead mentors includes oversight, supervision and quality assurance of other mentors, including general mentors.

Q12: I had a query today about whether a job-share pair of mentors, both working with the same trainee, could both claim the full 20 hours of funding. Do you know the answer to this?

Schools must ensure a trainee has one dedicated mentor during their placement. Other teachers may support elements of the trainee's placement, but schools can only claim funding for the training time of the trainee's dedicated mentor. However, if the mentor role is taken on by staff on a job-share, then the school can claim the full 20 hours for both.

Q13: Can schools in Wales access this funding?

This will be confirmed when the guidance is published in Spring 2024.

Q14: Can further education settings access this funding?

Yes, if they meet the criteria detailed in this guidance - [Initial teacher training reform funding guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Q15: Can early years settings access this funding?

Yes, if they meet the criteria detailed in this guidance - [Initial teacher training reform funding guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/initial-teacher-training-reform-funding-guidance)

Q16: Is there a minimum duration for placements?

There is no minimum placement duration for an organisation to submit a claim for general mentor funding.

Q17: What happens to the funding for main mentor training if a trainee withdraws mid-year? Can the mentor still continue with their training to complete the 20 hours if they choose to even if they don't have a trainee anymore? (for example – what if they have completed 18 of the 20 hours? Or 15? Or 10?)

Yes, the school and the mentor can decide on whether the mentor completes the training. If the mentor does continue to train, we would expect they should be intending to mentor in consequent years but this will not be a requirement to receive funding.

Q18a: Can second school mentors access the DfE funding for the 20 hours of training even if they are only hosting a second placement (6 weeks)?

Yes, all educational setting which hosted an ITT trainee or had arranged to host an ITT (for any length of time) on an ITT course leading to QTS, as a placement school should be eligible for this funding

If yes to above:

Q18b: What will be the funding arrangement if a trainee withdraws before they start second placement (our training is fairly front-loaded into Autumn term so they would have attended most of the hours before the second placement)?

Funding can still be claimed, as a trainee had intended to train.

Q19: As above, are they able to complete the training (funded) if they no longer have a trainee due to withdrawal?

Yes, the school and the mentor can decide whether the mentor completes the training.

Q20: What happens if a mentor has a long-term absence or leaves mid-year? Do mentors who take over from there need the full 20 hours training entitlement? – at what point is that considered not a feasible option given that much of our training is front-loaded and linked to the trainee curriculum and assessment at each stage? (e.g. what if the main mentor leaves/is sick in May? June? Early July??)

If a mentor cannot continue mentoring, schools can replace and claim training time for new mentors. The accredited provider, school and the new mentor will need to assess the number of hours of training that is appropriate and feasible for the new mentor. More information on mentoring for schools has been published here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/offer-a-trainee-teacher-placement>.

Q21: For how many years is the mentor training valid for? Can refresher training be done e.g. 2 or 3 years later if they don't have a trainee in 2025, or does it have to be the following year?

Information on refresher training is subject to cross-government approvals. It is hoped that this will be provided when the full guidance is updated this Spring, however it may be communicated later if the position has not been agreed.

Q22: I had an additional query today about whether a job-share pair of mentors, both working with the same trainee, could both claim the full 20 hours of funding. Do you know the answer to this?

Schools must ensure a trainee has one dedicated mentor during their placement. Other teachers may support elements of the trainee's placement, but schools can only claim funding for the training time of the trainee's dedicated mentor.

However, if the mentor role is taken on by staff on a job-share, then the school can claim the full 20 hours for both.

Q23: What information / evidence will be needed? What assurance is there around the delivery grant? Need clarity needed on evidence, audits and process for grants. Felt there is a lack of clarity around the 20 hours. Who verifies this? What is needed for an audit? Process is felt to be clunky and unclear.

For the Lead Mentor and Intensive Training and Practice Grants providers will need to complete the relevant Annex G to demonstrate what they have spent the funding on.

If providers are selected as part of the 10% post payment sample then they will need to provide evidence of how the money was spent. The evidence will vary, but could include contracts, registers, invoices and receipts.

For the General Mentor Grant, schools will not need to submit evidence initially as part of the claim (where information can be verified across our service line, e.g. Publish, Register and Get Information about Schools) but schools will be expected to ensure there is evidence to support the funding claim, as the Department reserves to the right to request this. The claim will be processed using a new gov.uk digital service.

If schools are selected as part of the 10% post payment sample then we will ask the accredited providers who were responsible for delivering the training to submit evidence that the general mentor received the number of hours of training that have been claimed. We would expect accredited providers and lead mentors to keep a clear record of the amount of their training undertaken by each mentor.

Q24: Refresher training. What is happening with this, what commitment do we have?

Refresher training funding is contingent on approvals from across government. Bidding for this funding will take place as part of the next Spending Review process, which is likely to take place later in 2024, although the exact date has not yet been determined.

To maximise the likelihood of securing future funding, the Department will require significant evidence to demonstrate the delivery grants' value for money. We will work with the sector to produce this evidence this academic year. As soon as we can share further information on this, we will.

Q25: Does initial training has to be completed by the end of the 2024/25 academic year?

Training needs to be completed by the end of the 31 May 2025. Providers and schools are able to incur costs ahead of the start of the academic year, as long it is not incurred before the start of the 2024-25 financial year.

Funding for the 2025/26 academic year and beyond is subject to the Spending Review process and has not been confirmed.

Q26: Are there any mitigations for General mentor training with regard to mentors for undergraduates that aren't specified in the quality requirements? My understanding is that a mentor of a Year 1 student needs to undertake the same training as PG mentor, even though the student may only be on placement for a short period of time.

The minimum hours of initial training for mentors supporting both postgraduate and undergraduate trainees is 20. However, this is a course design requirement for accredited providers, rather than a minimum delivery amount for placement schools.

Mentor training must be designed in line with the minimum time requirements set out in the ITT criteria. However, the full mentor or lead mentor training curriculum does not have to be completed before mentors or lead mentors can begin to support trainees.

Providers must ensure that mentor/lead mentor training is aligned to the trainees' needs throughout their ITT course. This means that mentors/lead

mentors must have completed sufficient training to give them the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the ITT curriculum to support the trainee with the relevant parts of the ITT curriculum at any given time.

Accredited ITT providers should consider the prior learning of their individual mentors in determining the exact emphasis of the mentor training. Accredited ITT providers should not require mentors or lead mentors/mentor leadership teams to repeat training but should adapt the delivery of the mentor training curriculum to meet individual needs. Where specific material has already been covered, this may include a reduction in the total hours of training required. In all cases, accredited ITT providers must be able to demonstrate that all mentors have been trained in all areas of the mentor training curriculum.