

# Effective mentoring and a well-paced curriculum are key to high quality initial teacher education

Today we have [published research](#) designed to develop and test a model that assessed the quality of an ITE programme's curriculum. This will bring ITE inspection closer into line with the education inspection framework launched in September 2019.

The findings of this research are being used to inform the development of the new ITE inspection methodology and framework and followed a first phase of research we published in October 2019.

The latest research found that effective sequencing of the curriculum across the year was vital in preparing trainees for entering the classroom.

In some examples of ITE partnerships we visited, a desire to cover every aspect of teaching in depth resulted in an imbalance in their curriculum. In these cases, more time was spent on one aspect of teaching to the detriment of another equally important aspect.

We also identified some weaker performing partnerships were attempting to capture everything in bite-size chunks in order to ensure coverage of the Teachers' Standards. This often led to trainees having only a surface-level understanding of teaching concepts and being unprepared at the end of their programme.

We also noted that good quality mentoring, backed up by effective quality assurance and communication within ITE partnerships, is vital to creating and delivering a quality curriculum.

In some partnerships, mentors reported that a lack in their own training led to confusion about their goals, which was reflected in the support they offered their mentees. In those that scored well on our research indicators, partnerships had worked to improve the teaching skills of mentors as well as trainees.

In higher-scoring partnerships, course leaders and partner providers worked together to deliver a well-sequenced curriculum that put the trainee's development at its core, rather than prioritising the needs of the partner and settings.

HMCI Amanda Spielman said:

Our research shows that the best initial teacher education programmes teach a well-sequenced curriculum and provide strong mentoring.

As we have done with schools, we want to inspect in a way that looks at the curriculum properly and helps would-be teachers choose the right training course.

For our research we visited 46 ITE partnerships in total, including 24 school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT), 20 higher education institutions (HEI) and 2 Teach First partnerships.

The visits were carried out over two days. The model set out 22 curriculum indicators across eight broader themes that we identified as being potentially related to ITE curriculum quality. These were each marked out of five, five representing best practice.

The ITE framework covers all inspections of initial teacher education partnership programmes that lead to early years teacher status, qualified teacher status and qualified teacher learning status.

During the next phase of development of the new ITE framework, Ofsted will be consulting on a draft handbook. The consultation will be launched later this month.

Further piloting and development is also planned during spring term 2020. It is anticipated that the first set of inspections under a new framework will begin in January 2021.