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## **Guidance**

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**This document sets out the information we need from school centred initial teacher training providers (SCITTs) to carry out our monitoring of access agreements.**

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All SCITTs with an access agreement approved in one or more of the academic years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 must submit a monitoring return to us by **Friday 9 November 2012.**

# Monitoring return guidance for SCITTs

**How to complete your access  
agreement monitoring return for  
2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12**

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# Monitoring return guidance for SCITTs

## How to complete your access agreement monitoring return for 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12

<b>To</b>	Heads of School Centred Initial Teacher Training providers in England
<b>Of interest to those responsible for</b>	Producing access agreements
<b>Reference</b>	2012/09
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# Introduction

1. This document sets out what we need from school centred initial teacher training providers (SCITTs) in order to carry out our monitoring of access agreements.
2. SCITTs that had an OFFA-approved access agreement for any of the academic years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 must complete a monitoring return.
3. There is a statutory requirement for all institutions with access agreements, including SCITTs, to tell us about the extent to which they have met the obligations set out in those agreements. We need sufficient information in order to:
  - monitor that you are meeting your commitments to individual trainees
  - provide an annual report to Parliament containing an overview of progress with access agreements.

We therefore ask all institutions with access agreements to complete an annual monitoring return.

4. We realise that SCITTs are very small institutions, so we have looked to minimise the level of information we require from you, compared to higher education institutions (HEIs) and further education colleges (FECs).
5. We have not asked SCITTs to submit an annual monitoring return since our monitoring of 2008-09 access agreements. Therefore, this year's return covers three years of monitoring data in one joint return, to bring SCITTs' monitoring up to date with HEIs and FECs. In future, SCITTs will be monitored annually.

## The information we need

6. You must provide data on:
  - higher fee income
  - number of trainees
  - actual expenditure on bursaries and scholarships for trainees from lower-income and other under-represented groups

- how many trainees from lower-income and other under-represented groups received a bursary or scholarship
- expenditure on any additional outreach activities covered in access agreements.

You must also confirm that the information in your monitoring return has been validated and approved as correct.

## How we will use the information you give us

7. We will use the information you provide to consider the extent to which your institution has broadly met the commitments set out in its access agreement. We will report on the outcomes of the annual monitoring process in spring 2013.
8. In addition, the information will inform our annual report to Parliament.
9. We may also share relevant information with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Teaching Agency, and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.
10. Individual monitoring reports may also be disclosed on request, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (see paragraphs 52-54).

## We will give you data to help you complete the return

11. To help you complete your monitoring return, we will give you income distribution data sourced from the Student Loans Company (SLC). This will break down, by income band, the numbers/proportions of UK-domiciled trainees at your SCITT in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12.
12. It will include 'consent to share' data showing the number of trainees, and their parents/sponsors, within each household income group described in paragraph 25 who consented or did not consent to share their financial information.
13. In addition, if your SCITT subscribes to the full Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme (HEBSS) service, we will ask the SLC to provide you with:

- the number of bursary holders, by assessed household income bands as set out in paragraph 25
  - details of the expenditure your SCITT has paid through HEBSS to home and EU trainees, by household income band.
14. This data will:
- be a snapshot; for 2009-10 provided at 18 October 2010, for 2010-11 provided at 17 October 2011, and for 2011-12 provided at 11 September 2012
  - include all payments made since 1 August 2009 in respect of the 2009-10 academic year, since 1 August 2010 in respect of 2010-11, and 1 August 2011 in respect of 2011-12.
15. Previous monitoring rounds have highlighted that HEBSS and SLC income distribution data may not be directly comparable with SCITTs' own data on bursary payments or eligibility. For example, trainees may have been paid manually based on information supplied outside of HEBSS, or had their income re-assessed since receiving a bursary, or payments may have been made after the 'snapshot' date. For this reason, we do not necessarily expect the figures you provide in your return to reconcile precisely with those provided by the SLC.

## What you need to do next

16. We will email your monitoring return template and SLC data shortly. When you have received these two documents, you should:
- complete the template, checking it carefully against the guidance in this document (if you have queries or need clarification, contact Richard Shiner (email: [richard.shiner@offa.org.uk](mailto:richard.shiner@offa.org.uk), tel: 0117 931 7467)
  - email your completed template to [returns@offa.org.uk](mailto:returns@offa.org.uk) by **Friday 9 November 2012**.

# How to complete your monitoring return – step by step

## You must complete and submit institutional data on:

- higher fee income
- number of trainees
- actual expenditure on bursaries and scholarships to trainees from lower-income and other under-represented groups, by income band
- how many trainees from lower-income and other under-represented groups received a bursary or scholarship, by income band.

## If you did not have an access agreement and/or did not charge above the basic fee

17. If you had an approved access agreement for a particular academic year but did not charge a fee above the basic fee (see table below) in that year, please indicate this on the monitoring return in the drop-down box provided. You do not need to provide any further information for that year.

18. Some SCITTs will not have an access agreement for one or more of the years that we are requesting information for. If this is the case, and you therefore did not charge above the basic fee in a particular year, please also indicate this on the monitoring return in the drop-down box provided. You only need to complete the section of the template for the year(s) in which you had an access agreement.

## Table 1 Higher fee income, by fee amount and cohort

### Action

19. Please indicate the fee you have charged, and how many trainees you have charged this fee – you should only include fees above the basic fee.

### Explanatory notes for Table 1

20. The 'higher fee income' rows in Table 1 are calculated automatically and are equal to the variable fee charged minus the basic fee multiplied by the number of trainees. For example, for a SCITT that charged the maximum fee in 2009-10, the higher fee income would be £1,940 (£3,225 - £1,285) per trainee; a SCITT that charged 20 trainees the maximum fee in 2009-10 would have a higher fee income of £38,800 i.e. 20 x (£3,225 - £1,285).

### List of fee caps and higher fee income

Year	Basic fee	Maximum fee cap	Higher fee income per trainee if charging the maximum
2009-10	£1,285	£3,225	£1,940
2010-11	£1,310	£3,290	£1,980
2011-12	£1,345	£3,375	£2,030

21. The fee charged for some trainees may differ to the fee you received, for example, where a trainee has not completed their course of study and only paid a partial fee. In this case, where your higher fee income is different to the automatically calculated amount, please tell us in the commentary box below Table 1.

22. Part-time ITT provision was only covered under access agreements until 2009-10 so you do not need to provide information relating to part-time trainees in 2010-11 or 2011-12.

23. We recognise that some SCITTs may not be formally audited for 2011-12 until later in 2012. In this case please include unaudited figures and let us know in the in the commentary box below Table 1 that you have done this. Please inform us if your figures change after auditing.

### Checklist for Table 1

- ✓ **include** fees charged and trainee numbers for home/EU trainees in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12
- ✓ **include** fees charged and trainee numbers for part-time home/EU trainees in 2009-10 only
- ✓ **include** all trainees who have paid a fee or received an OFFA-countable bursary in each of the three monitoring years, even if they have subsequently withdrawn from their course or did not complete the full year.

## Table 2 Expenditure on bursaries, scholarships and additional outreach, and number of trainees in receipt of financial support

### Action

24. Please tell us your spend on OFFA-countable bursaries and scholarships and the numbers of trainees that received awards<sup>1</sup>. This will help us monitor that you have met your commitments to individual trainees.

25. Please split your figures by income thresholds as follows:

- trainees in receipt of full state support with household incomes up to £25,000
- trainees in receipt of partial state support, with household residual incomes between £25,001 and £50,020
- trainees from other under-represented groups that are OFFA-countable
- expenditure on additional outreach activity if applicable.

26. If you wish to include outreach expenditure in Table 2, please tell us how much you have spent on additional outreach in each year and include a brief explanation of what this activity was in the commentary box below Table 2. We will report on expenditure on additional outreach activities in our monitoring outcomes report.

### Explanatory notes for Table 2

#### Expenditure on bursaries and scholarships

27. For the purposes of our assessment we will count all expenditure on bursaries and scholarships paid to students from the household income brackets set out in paragraph 25.

28. Where the household income of the trainee is known – whether it relates to a means-tested payment or a non-means tested payment – you should allocate expenditure to the relevant income bracket.

29. In some cases, the information on household income may be known, but within an income band that is inconsistent with the thresholds set out in paragraph 25. In these cases, you may still be able to use the SLC income distribution data to estimate how many bursaries were paid to trainees from each household income group. Where trainees are classified in SLC income distribution data as 'unknown', you should assume that their income is above OFFA-countable levels and they should not be counted.

<sup>1</sup> The majority of ITT courses are for one year, so we expect that your monitoring return will only cover trainees who started their course in each of three monitoring years (2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12). If you have any trainees studying over more than one year, you can tell us in the commentary box in Table 2 of the Excel template.

30. Similarly, if your SCITT provided bursaries or scholarships awarded on other OFFA-countable measures of under-representation, or if you awarded bursaries regardless of a trainee's income, you may still be able to calculate estimated expenditure by using the SLC income distribution data to work out the proportion of trainees who are likely to fall into each income group. For example, if you award bursaries to trainees from low-participation neighbourhoods, you will not necessarily have information on household income, but you may still be able to estimate expenditure for each income group. You may need to apply a weighting if your experience indicates that trainees are unlikely to be evenly distributed across income groups.

31. Expenditure should only be listed under 'trainees from other under-represented groups' where you know that the students are in an OFFA-countable group but household income is unknown and you can't make any estimates with reasonable confidence.

32. Where figures are based on estimates, you should declare this in the monitoring return, in the commentary box below Table 2, with a brief explanation of your calculations.

33. In some cases, residual household income may have been reassessed during the academic year, or a trainee may have withdrawn from their course or not completed a full year or programme of study. In these cases, a trainee may have received a particular bursary package even though their circumstances have subsequently changed. For the purposes of our assessment, we are happy for you to include these trainees in your return based on their household income at the time they were originally assessed for an award.

### Number of trainees in receipt of financial support

34. Where possible, you should tell us how many bursary holders there are in each income band as specified in your monitoring return template. We are interested in the number of beneficiaries rather than the number of awards. Therefore, if you give a trainee more than one bursary, you should only count the trainee once. Where a trainee receives a core bursary based on income and a non-income-related award, you should record them only once based on their income-related bursary.

35. For the purposes of our assessment we will count all trainees in receipt of bursaries and scholarships from the household income brackets set out in paragraph 25. As with expenditure on bursaries and scholarships, you should allocate trainees to household income brackets, using estimates where necessary in the same way as set out in paragraphs 29 to 33. Where figures are based on estimates, you should declare this in the monitoring return, in the commentary box below Table 2, with a brief explanation of your calculations.

### Additional outreach activities

36. The expenditure you report on outreach should only relate to funds committed from higher fee income and other new and additional (post-2006) sources of funding. They should relate to outreach activities that are additional to those that existed before the introduction of variable fees, or a continuation of existing activities where previous funding may have been reduced or discontinued.

37. If your SCITT did not commit itself in its access agreement to spending part of its higher fee income on additional outreach activity, but additional expenditure has been made, you may report on this. To be 'countable' it must be additional to activities or costs that existed before the introduction of variable fees and should meet the definition on page 10. This may include relevant staffing and overhead costs.

### Checklist for Table 2

#### ✓ Include:

- actual expenditure in respect of the 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 academic years on:
  - bursaries and scholarships paid to trainees from the requested household income groups or from other under-represented groups
  - 'in-kind' awards such as discounts on accommodation and provision of laptops
  - additional outreach

- all trainees who have paid a fee or received an OFFA-countable bursary in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12, even if they have subsequently withdrawn from their studies or did not complete the full year or programme of study
- all OFFA-countable expenditure, including that paid through HEBSS.

**X Do not include:**

- expenditure on bursaries and scholarships for trainees above a household income of £50,020 who are not from an under-represented group
- expenditure that is not paid directly to trainees as an award with a financial benefit, for example expenditure on the overall improvement of services for students and broader retention measures
- Access to Learning Fund payments; this funding is received by all institutions from the Government and does not form part of any access agreement
- expenditure on historic bursaries and scholarships that were well established before the introduction of variable fees and which are not funded through higher fee income.

### Table 3 Expenditure on bursaries, scholarships and additional outreach as a proportion of higher fee income, and the proportion of students in receipt of bursaries and scholarships

**Action**

38. Table 3 shows your expenditure on bursaries, scholarships and additional outreach as a proportion of higher fee income, and the proportion of trainees in receipt of bursaries and scholarships. This table calculates automatically, using the data you have provided in Tables 1 and 2. All you need to do is check that the figures shown are in line with your expectations.

### Validating your monitoring return

**Action**

39. Your monitoring return must be validated and signed off by an appropriate senior manager.

**Explanatory notes for validating your monitoring return**

40. The purpose of the sign-off is to provide assurance that the information you provide has been validated independently from the person responsible for compiling the return.

41. It is up to each SCITT to determine its own process for checking the accuracy of the information it provides. This could be through internal audit or a governors' group. All information is subject to audit and you should ensure that the way you validate your information meets your own internal audit requirements.

# How to submit your return

42. Please email your completed monitoring return template to [returns@offa.org.uk](mailto:returns@offa.org.uk) by **Friday 9 November 2012**.

## Late returns

43. Please note that it is important to submit your return by the deadline. If your return is late we cannot guarantee that we will be able to include your data in the monitoring outcomes report we publish. Providing accurate data to report on progress against your access agreement is a statutory requirement, and the Director of Fair Access is able to impose sanctions where these requirements have not been met.

44. If your monitoring return needs to be approved at a meeting of your governing body or other relevant committee after the deadline of 9 November 2012 you may submit a draft electronic copy of your monitoring return with a request for a limited extension to the deadline for your final version.

# What happens once you have submitted your form

45. As soon as we receive your return, we will email you to confirm receipt. We will then start to consider your return.

46. We hope to have analysed all monitoring returns by the end of November 2012 and to let you know the outcome of your assessment in early December 2012.

## How we will consider your monitoring return

47. In considering your monitoring return, we will look to see that you have broadly met your access agreement commitments.

48. Within this context, we may still wish to ask you about your return if we feel that bursary commitments have not been met; or, for example, if some of the information or data:

- is unclear
- does not make sense from our knowledge of your access agreement and SCITT
- is inconsistent with centrally collected data.

## We may audit your monitoring return

49. We reserve the right to audit your monitoring return and the way you are implementing your access agreement. If, before taking this step, we identify significant concerns with delivery, we will invite you to discuss any emerging issues with us and, where necessary, ask you to provide further information.

## We will publish the results of the monitoring process

50. We will publish the outcomes of our monitoring in spring 2013. This report will focus on universities and colleges but will also include aggregate-level data for SCITTs. This will include the proportions of fee income spent on bursaries and scholarships for lower-income students and trainees, and the amount spent on additional outreach.

51. Individual-level data for SCITTs will not be available in the report but will be available on request.

## The Freedom of Information Act and monitoring returns

52. As a public body, OFFA is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which gives the public a right of access to information that we hold. We have a responsibility to decide whether individual monitoring returns should be disclosed on request, or treated as confidential. We can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. This means individual monitoring returns are unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very particular circumstances.

53. Where you consider information in your return to be confidential, please extract the information and insert it into a separate annex, which we will treat as being potentially commercially sensitive. You should still refer to this information elsewhere in the monitoring return. Where we consider it to be appropriate and practicable, we may seek your views before disclosing information in this annex.

54. Further information about the Freedom of Information Act is available at [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk).

# Definitions of terms used in this guidance

**FEC** Further education college

**HEBSS** Higher Education Bursary and Scholarship Scheme

**HEI** Higher education institution

**Higher fee income** Any fee income above the basic fee – see 'List of fee caps and higher fee income' table on page 4 for basic and higher fee caps and fee income where SCITTs have charged the maximum fee.

**Outreach** Any activity that involves raising aspirations and attainment and encouraging trainees from under-represented groups to apply to higher education. This might mean funding specific new activities or enhancing and growing existing programmes. It can include relevant staffing and overhead costs. For the purposes of access agreement monitoring, you should only report on outreach funds committed from higher fee income and other new and additional sources of support.

**SCITT** School centred initial teacher training provider

**SLC** Student Loans Company

## **Under-represented groups/OFFA-countable groups:**

Groups that are currently under-represented in higher education at the national level rather than at a particular institution or course, including:

- people from lower socio-economic groups or from neighbourhoods where HE participation is low
- people from low income backgrounds (for 2009-10 to 2011-12, this includes household incomes up to £50,020 – the upper threshold for state maintenance grants)
- some ethnic groups or sub-groups
- disabled people
- people who have been in care.

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