



Deferral Policy

Version 2

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Introduction

Vantage North Humber Teacher Training (VNHTT) understands that trainees may need to delay their training or withdraw from their training due to various reasons. VNHTT will ensure that trainees are provided with sound advice and are cognisant of any financial implications.

Annex A of this policy outlines the Deferral Guidance procedures.

1. Aims

- to ensure that trainees understand how to defer their training and are aware of financial implications
- to ensure that trainees understand how to withdraw from their training and are aware of financial implications
- to ensure that the process of deferring or withdrawing from a VNHTT ITT training programme is completed in a fair and equitable manner in line with our Equality Policy.

1.1 On-programme Deferrals

Deferrals are for those who have completed part of their ITT course and would like to defer part of the programme until a later date.

Trainees can request a deferral when they believe that they will be unable to continue the programme due to an extenuating circumstance, as defined below (1.2).

To be granted a deferral, trainees must prove with independent evidence (3) that they have been affected by an extenuating circumstance. Deferrals are not guaranteed to all who apply and will be allocated on a case by case basis.

Successful trainees will be permitted to re-engage with the programme at a later date that has been agreed by VNHTT and the trainee.

1.2 Definition

Extenuating circumstances are defined as circumstances that:

- Are unforeseeable and beyond the control of the trainee
- Significantly impact the trainee's ability to complete the programme

- Occur within a relevant time frame
- Can be supported by independent evidence where appropriate. Please note that a deferral can only be considered if the following are met:
 - The deferral occurs within a calendar year unless you have had a medical incident such as major surgery or are on maternity leave
 - You are not requesting an extension to a deferral that has already been granted

2. Scope of extenuating circumstances

In order to qualify for a deferral, at least one extenuating circumstance must be met and evidenced.

2.1 What is considered an extenuating circumstance?

- Whilst it is difficult to provide an exhaustive list of circumstances that meet the above definition, VNHTT considers the following to be valid extenuating circumstances.
- Medical incidents such as major injury, accident, or surgery
- A short-term illness that has resulted in sick leave
- A long-term illness that has worsened or “flared up”
- Pregnancy and maternity/paternity leave
- Clinical mental health issue
- Personal/psychological issues for which counselling is received
- Death/severe illness of an immediate relative
- Unique trainee circumstance/ Other reason (reviewed on a case by case basis)

2.2 Circumstances not considered for deferral

The following circumstances would not normally qualify for a deferral as the ITT team would intervene with a support plan/mental health and well-being plan.

- Poor time management/personal organisation
- Circumstances occurring outside of the relevant time frame
- Medical circumstances without sufficient evidence, e.g. a doctor's note
- Minor illness

- Planned familial obligations and holidays
- Childcare problems that could have been anticipated
- IT issues/failure to back up documents

3. How to apply for a deferral

Trainees wanting to apply for a deferral will need to have a conversation with a relevant phase programme lead. The programme lead might be able to create a bespoke **trainee support pathway** to enable the trainee to remain on the programme. In the event that this is not possible trainees will be asked to make a formal request to VNHTT by filling out the deferral request form.

Trainees should give full details of their extenuating circumstances in the “reason for deferral” section of the form, explaining how these circumstances meet the above definition and have impacted their ability to continue the programme and provide evidence in support of the reasons.

All sensitive and personal data will be treated in accordance with data protection guidelines. Depending on the deferral option, costs may be incurred and our ITT team will discuss this with you.

3.1 Re-engaging following a deferral period

The following considerations apply to an on-programme deferral:

- It may not be possible to return to the same placement school/setting.
- It may be necessary to return at the same point in the programme 12 months later in order to fit in with training days and placement patterns.
- Deferral may not be possible if changes to ITT subject/phase allocations are anticipated or occur in the following year
- There will be implications for finance on fee-funded routes – please refer to the VNHTT ITT Tuition Fee Policy.
- There will be implications for future employment if the trainee has already secured an ECT post for the following year.
- Trainees who are scheduled to return from a deferral will be required to attend an interview with a Lead Tutor at least one month prior to return and will be expected to keep in occasional contact during the deferral period.
- An Occupational Health assessment may be needed before training can recommence
- Trainees will be required to undertake new DBS and online checks prior to restarting the programme.

- Trainees will be required to complete safeguarding training before restarting the programme.

4. Deferral of a place or offer

Successful applicants may request to defer their place on the ITT programme until the following recruitment year. Such requests are at the absolute discretion of VNHTT and places cannot be guaranteed should their chosen course not run the following year. Applicants should understand this risk before deferring their place.

Deferred applicants will be expected to make a firm commitment to taking up their place and meet all conditions of offer in a timely manner during the following recruitment cycle otherwise school placements cannot be guaranteed. We reserve the right to re-interview deferred applicants. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that student finance is in place.

5. Monitoring compliance with and effectiveness of the policy

Effectiveness and compliance of this Policy will be monitored by the VNHTT Strategic Board who report to Directors of SCRCAT Education Committee. Directors of SCRCAT retain full and final accountability for all aspects of ITT as set out in *Initial Teacher Training: Criteria and Supporting Advice. Statutory Guidance for Accredited ITT providers*.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Annex A

Guidance on supporting trainees through the deferral process.

Deferral Support

Supporting a trainee teacher returning from a deferral requires a combination of understanding, guidance, and resources to ensure they can successfully reintegrate into the programme and continue their journey toward becoming a qualified teacher. Here are some steps you can take to support a trainee teacher in this situation:

Open Communication: Begin by having an open and honest conversation with the trainee teacher. Understand the reasons for their deferral and any concerns they may have about returning to the programme. Address any questions or uncertainties they may have about re-joining.

Pre-deferral review: Assess the trainee teacher's progress in the programme before the deferral. Identify any coursework or training they missed during their deferral period and determine the best approach for them to catch up. For trainees following the Hull SCITT programme in 2023/24 and re-joining the VNHTT programme at a later date, a careful mapping exercise of both curricula should be undertaken to ensure full coverage of the programme content pre and post deferral.

Individualised Plan: Work with the trainee teacher to create an individualised plan that outlines the steps they need to take to successfully reintegrate into the programme. This plan may include a timeline for completing missed coursework, additional support resources, and strategies for managing workload and expectations.

Mentorship and Guidance: Assign an advisor to the trainee teacher who can provide ongoing support, guidance, and feedback as they transition back into the programme. The advisor can help address any challenges the trainee teacher may face and provide encouragement along the way.

Access to Resources: Ensure that the trainee teacher has access to all necessary resources, such as course materials, textbooks, and online learning platforms. Provide information about support services available, such as tutoring, counselling, or academic advising. Providing access to theoretical content during the deferral period, prioritised to the substantive knowledge covered prior to deferral will support the trainee when they re-engage in the programme and help activate prior knowledge.

Flexible Support: Recognise that returning from a deferral may be challenging for the trainee teacher, and be flexible in accommodating their needs. Offer flexibility in scheduling, assignment deadlines, and other requirements to help ease their transition back into the programme. Due consideration should be given to prior knowledge, experience and assessments to avoid unnecessary workload for the trainee.

Regular Check-Ins: Schedule regular check-in meetings with the trainee during their deferral period on following their return to monitor their progress, address any concerns or obstacles they may encounter, and provide ongoing support and encouragement.

Celebrate Progress: Recognise and celebrate the trainee teacher's progress and achievements as they work toward completing their training. Positive reinforcement can help boost morale and motivation during this challenging time.

By implementing these strategies and providing comprehensive support, you can help trainee teachers returning from a deferral successfully reintegrate into the programme and continue their journey toward becoming qualified teachers.