

TDA Consultation: Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP)**UCET Response****Proposal 1****Question 1**

Yes.

Question 2

Not applicable.

Question 3

In UCET's view there is a need to create a 'standard expectation', one that must apply across the country, with regard to the time that should be devoted to training. Given the particular circumstances of the GTP, there will always be a temptation for schools to underestimate the time that should be devoted to training, often on the mistaken assumption that the best kind of training is professional practice itself. In the interests of improved training, of fairness to trainees, of establishing broad equivalence with practice on other routes into teaching, there should certainly be a shared understanding of the time to be dedicated to training, and the proposed 60 days is appropriate as a national standard to achieve these purposes.

Question 4

Yes.

Question 5

Of course, it is entirely appropriate that a 'substantial proportion' of the dedicated training time should be devoted to subject knowledge for teaching, planning, assessment and evaluation. The use of that term suggests that providers will be able to exercise some discretion about the content of the training. For example, experienced providers who are committed to the highest standards of training ought to be able to ensure that trainees engage, for example, in the analysis of human learning and motivation and the impact these have on teaching.

Question 6

UCET warmly welcomes the flexibility of the proposed arrangements, allowing trainees to access sources of support that will strengthen their development as teachers. We are particularly pleased to note that the higher education institutions are specifically mentioned as a source of expertise on which trainees should be able to draw, believing as we do that these institutions together constitute an unrivalled repository of expertise and experience to which all those preparing to be teachers should have access. Not the least of the advantages of this extension of the context of training is that it will help to address the professional isolation that is one of the inherent shortcomings of the GTP.

Proposal 2**Question 1**

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Question 2

UCET strongly supports this proposal for three reasons. Firstly, it is not right that those on the GTP should be denied access to professional and academic opportunities that are available to those on other routes into teaching. They are as entitled as others to have their achievements in

training formally recognised and should be able to acquire QTS as well as earn credit towards a master's level or other award. Secondly, the establishment of that opportunity for GTP trainees will encourage these teachers to enhance their professional expertise and qualifications through a programme of CPD leading to a further higher education award. Thirdly, independent assessment of programmes leading to higher education degrees and other awards, conducted by OfSTED and others, testify to their strong impact on professional action and school improvement. Trainees on the GTP have much to gain from engagement on work that is to be formally accredited and on postgraduate study, not least because such work should serve to counteract the professional parochialism that is can occur when training is restricted to one or two schools.

Of the two approaches proposed to extend access to earning credit UCET prefers the first. There are numerous advantages in enabling all employment-based providers to establish a formal relationship with a higher educational institution to offer a postgraduate qualification, with master's level credit, to all trainees. As the consultation paper acknowledges, one advantage of such an arrangement is that all of the activities of the GTP would form part of an integrated and coherent package of accredited training. Another advantage is that this proposal would also encourage higher education institutions, whose activities in this field are already considerable, to extend postgraduate opportunities still further and would reinforce the notion of a profession of which further professional development formed an integral part.

Proposal 3

Question 1

Yes.

Question 2

Where there is a commitment to raise standards it is well understood why there should be a close association between quality ratings and the allocation of places, for it is right that training of high quality should be recognised and rewarded. However, to tie the allocation of training places to quality ratings assumes that consistent and reliable measures of quality are in operation and are applied with complete impartiality. As long as different criteria of quality and different approaches to quality assurance are applied to the GTP there are bound to be suspicions that the allocations of places are not made on qualitative grounds, but in pursuance of another agenda. It has been a matter of concern to note in recent years that, despite its well-publicised shortcomings, the GTP is expanding relative to other routes into teaching. The sooner the same quality criteria are applied to all routes the sooner public and professional confidence can be restored in the allocation process.

Question 3

Yes.

Question 4

Mainstream HE and GTP routes inevitably differ, in terms of content and organisation, and so should be graded separately

Question 5

Yes.

Question 6

The introduction of the proposals by 2008/09 seems reasonable, given that providers will need the school year 2007/08 to design their programmes, and assuming also that the inspection programme has already been determined.

Gordon Kirk, Academic Secretary
27 June 2007