



The National Association of  
School-Based Teacher Trainers

31 August 2018

Rt. Hon Sam Gyimah MP  
Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

## **TEACHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS: TUITION FEES**

Dear Mr Gyimah

We are writing on behalf of all accredited HEI and School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) teacher education providers to express our desire to work with you in your remit as Minister of State for Universities to help to address our collective, and ongoing, concerns about teacher shortages and difficulties in recruiting students to programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

UCET, the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, acts as a national forum for the discussion of matters relating to the education of teachers and professional educators and contributes to the formulation of policy in these fields. Its members are primarily universities across the UK that are involved in teacher education and education research.

NASBTT, the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers, is a membership organisation which promotes high quality in programmes of initial training, education and professional development of teachers, which are devised, delivered, managed and assessed by a school or partnership of schools. It currently has 195 members, representing some 90% of the schools-led institutions undertaking postgraduate schools-led ITT.

Our two organisations work closely together on issues relating to teacher education, including the recruitment and retention of new and serving teachers. We acknowledge that the reasons for existing teacher shortages are many and varied. They do, however, include poor levels of retention, negative perceptions of teaching as a profession, demographic pressures, the cost of training and teachers' pay and conditions.

### **NASBTT**

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What is clear is that schools rely on accredited teacher education providers for the vast majority of new recruits to the profession. We are, however, concerned that as part of the current review of tuition fees, government might be tempted to place ITE programmes in a fee band that is below current levels. Such a move would be disastrous for teacher supply. ITE programmes are, by their very nature, expensive to run and HEIs and SCITTs are unlikely to consider them viable if funding is reduced. At a time where recruitment is already a significant cause for concern, any additional pressure on capacity within the system would prove to be extremely problematic for the sector.

If ITE is to continue to be funded through fees, and if programmes are to remain viable, it should be placed in one of the higher fee bands. This can be justified by the economic benefits that come from having a properly trained teacher workforce. We would, however, suggest that alternatives might also be given to how ITE is funded, possibly by exempting postgraduate ITE students from fees altogether while retaining the current unit of resource.

We have been pleased to work closely with the DfE on a number of initiatives, including teacher supply, teaching apprenticeships and the QTS consultation and look forward to continuing to support you and DfE colleagues in the years ahead.

We would be grateful for a meeting with you to clarify further ways in which we feel we can collectively best serve the profession and contribute to solving its current difficulties.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Hollis  
Executive Director  
NASBTT



James Noble-Rogers  
Executive Director  
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