

A Registered Charity (No 275082)

*Promoting Quality in Teacher Education*

**Minutes of the meeting of the School Reference Group to be held at 11am on Wednesday 31 October 2018 at the UCET offices, 9-11 Endsleigh Gardens, London WC1H 0EH**

**Present:** Jake Capper (Chair for this meeting); Sean Cavan; Debbie Campbell Spencer Hennessey; Beth Hartwell; Jackie Moses; Jill Rawlinson; James Noble-Rogers

**Apologies:** Julie Greer; Jan Linsley; Nicole Lyons; Claire Robins

**Minutes**: The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 were agreed. On matters arising, it was reported that DFE had visited Assessment Only providers to check, amongst other things, compliance with requirements relating to the selection of AO candidates.

**Mental health & well-being**

The group discussed the mental health and well-being of student teachers and the implications it had for ITE. Significant numbers of students were reported as being signed off for mental health reasons. Reasons for this included:

* School cultures & environment
* Students feeling increased pressure because of subject knowledge issues, sometimes because they were attracted to inappropriate subjects to secure higher bursaries
* Students not having had any prior school experience finding it difficult to adjust and not therefore able to ‘hit the ground running’
* Anxiety issues
* Financial pressures, particular for those not receiving bursaries
* More openness and willingness to declare mental health issues
* Workload

Strategies suggested to address the issues included:

* Deferring school experience and other aspects of training later into the programme or into the induction period (although it was also noted that this might only defer rather than reduce pressure)
* Relax the 120 days in school requirement
* Improved nurturing & coaching (not just mentoring)
* Increased access to subject knowledge support

**Updates**

Other issues discussed included:

* Recruitment to ITE, where current indications were that national TSM targets for 2018/19 would again be missed, despite increased levels of overall recruitment. Specific points on recruitment included:
  + Increased drop-outs because of exhortations on providers to take greater risks on recruitment and the prohibition of school experience requirements
  + Reduced capacity to recruit because of loss of partner schools to large scale MATT provision
  + Recruitment for 2019/20 difficult to judge because of timing of half-terms in different parts of the country
  + Many late applications received for 2018/19
  + Poorer quality of applicants (not measured exclusively by degree classification)
* The Early Career framework, where UCET was pressing for: a framework flexible enough to meet the needs of all NQTs working in a variety of contexts; delivery by accredited ITE providers to ensure ITE-ECF synergy; consistency with the teacher standards; full-funding; and robust QA mechanisms. The ECF will be piloted in the North East from September 2020. Further details were expected to be published before Christmas.
* Apprenticeships, recruitment to which had been modest (circa 50 nationally). Links to the ECF had been discussed. SRG members were invited to suggest employer representatives to sit on the Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group.
* Skills tests, which were the subject of a DFE review (UCET would continue to argue for complete abolition)

The group noted for information:

* The UCET paper on the current policy landscape
* OFSTED’s termly letter to partnerships
* OFSTED information on the timing of the introduction of new inspection framework
* The programme for the following week’s UCET conference.

**Date of next meeting**

27 February 2019