Promoting Quality in Teacher Education

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Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers



UCET WINTER NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER 2018

As we move into 2019 the time has come to start thinking about the development of a new strategic plan for UCET. The current strategy, which will take us up until September 2020, was intended to coincide with the length of the 2020 Parliament. If only we had known! Despite that, the strategy, with its focus on constructive engagement, the development of strong partnerships and emphasis upon the importance of the distinct contribution of universities, has served us well. The influence of UCET on aspects of government thinking on things such as ITE recruitment and the Early Career Framework are clear, and the strength of our collaborations with organisations such as UUK, Guild HE, NASBTT, the Chartered College, ETF, BERA, TEAN, NAPTEC and the Teaching Schools Council have helped us to maximise our influence. Times do however change and we need to consider reviewing the way we work in the light of new emerging realities and challenges. It does appear that, while we might be operating in a more benign political environment (and we take some credit for that) we also face new challenges and opportunities in relation to ITE recruitment, the Early Career Framework (ECF), the REF, the new OFSTED inspection framework and the position of education departments within universities. We will be consulting with UCET forums and committees over the course of the next 18 months about the direction we should take. The process began with discussions at Management Forum on 4 December, the slides for which can be accessed at https://www.ucet.ac.uk/information-guidance-advice/ and a background paper on the current policy landscape written by JNR which can be found at https://www.ucet.ac.uk/information-guidance-advice/ A new group to consider the intellectual underpinnings of teacher education has also been convened and will meet for the first time in January and will be chaired by Trevor Mutton.

The new strategy will be informed by a new UCET paper produced by members of the Research & International and CPD forums, 'Building Research Informed Teacher Education Communities', which sets out the importance of research in the context of ITE and CPD, and provides valuable advice for teacher educators and teacher education institutions. We are very grateful to Linda La Velle and other members of the group for contributing so much time to this. A copy of the paper can be found at: https://www.ucet.ac.uk/information-guidance-advice/ . Also on research, the R&I forum held a morning symposium in October on the grading of REF outputs, and at its next two meetings will run sessions on identifying and evidencing research impact. There will also be a special symposium in May to be led by REF Education sub-panel Chair, David James.

Much attention over the course of the term was of course devoted to ongoing issues relating to ITE recruitment, where the government again missed its targets, with recruitment to postgraduate secondary programmes in 2018 at just 83% of target. UCET has, with others such as the Chartered College, NASBTT and the Teaching Schools Council, been making constructive suggestions about how to address the crisis and we are pleased that some of our ideas have been taken seriously. We have also been

feeding back to government about applications, drop-out rates (which are a particular cause for concern, partly because of changes made by DFE to the ITE requirements) and other relevant issues. The situation in 2018 was not helped by yet another debacle relating to the availability of places at skills test centres, something which UCET was in almost daily contact with the DFE about. Recruitment in 2019 is already off to a worrying start, not helped by IT issues to do with the new recruitment and search portals. UCET is actively engaging with the DFE over the development of a new recruitment and retention strategy, and has been involved in and hosted a number of discussions and meetings. Details of the new strategy are expected to be published soon.

Recruitment to the postgraduate QTS apprenticeship in 2018/29 was just 90. The apprenticeship is a lot more fit for purpose because of the involvement of UCET and NASBTT on the Trailblazer group, and we will continue to press for systemic problems such as the 'hanging EPA/fourth term' to be resolved. We will also monitor the possible introduction of an undergraduate apprenticeship. We are also staying closely involved with discussions about apprenticeships for schools leaders, although here again the imposition of inflexible EFA and EFSA rules are hindering a creative and innovative approach.

The main CPD related issue on the horizon in England is of course the Early Career Framework, which I if properly handled and funded could potentially make good NQTs even better, and help attract and retain quality teachers into the profession, particularly if the transition from ITE into the ECF is as seamless as possible and has the potential to link to Master's level credits. UCET has been pressing for: all ITE providers to be able to deliver the ECF; flexibility to allow the ECF to be delivered in a way that meets the particular development needs of the NQTs concerned in the context of their employment settings; and the scope to deliver the ECF with Master's level credits. The ECF will be piloted in the North East of England in September 2020 and rolled out nationally one year later. We will keep UCET members informed of developments.

In Wales, JNR, Jackie Moses and members of USCET, including the new USCET Chair Malcolm Thomas, are meeting with senior Welsh Government officials in December to discuss the implementation of the teacher education reforms, including new accreditations, the Professional Learning Passport, new teacher standards and post-compulsory issues. A further meeting has been arranged for January with Estyn to discuss the new inspection framework. In Northern Ireland, work on the UCET NI research projects funded by the Department for Education is ongoing, and an event to showcase the contribution that universities make to teacher education and supply in Northern Ireland is being arranged for May 2019. In Scotland, Jackie Moses represents UCET as an observer at meetings of the Scottish Deans of Education group.

On PCET, UCET has been in discussions with DFE about the need for teachers in the sector to have appropriate teaching qualifications, for there to be a level playing field in regards to ITE inspections and for more attention to be given to the recruitment and retention of teachers in the sector. We are pleased that this is an issue that DFE seems to be taking more seriously than it was when policy responsibility rested in BIS, and we are grateful for DFE and ETF engagement with the Post 16 forum.

Morning symposia this term covered: the current policy landscape and its implications for the new UCET strategy (MF); assessing students against part two of the teacher standards (ITE secondary); the learning sciences in teacher education (ITE primary & early years); the Wellcome Trust's work on CPD in science subjects (CPD); and the recruitment and retention of teachers in the post-compulsory sector (Post 16).



Real Diamond

The main event of the term was of course the annual UCET conference in Stratford upon Avon, which included excellent keynotes from Clare Brooks (UCL), Cathleen Kraal (USA), David James (Cardiff, and education REF sub-panel Chair); Ian Mearns MP (member of the Education Select Committee); and Andrew Warren (Teaching Schools Council chair). We are very grateful to them and to colleagues who led the wide range of workshops for making the event such a success. Details of all the keynotes can be found at: https://www.ucet.ac.uk/conference/ucet-annual-conference-2018-6th-7th-november/ . Our thanks also go to Real Diamond for a performance that had delegates performing a conga along the corridors of the Crowne Plaza hotel, and who transformed himself into Tom Jones without even changing his wig!

Key events and meetings attended by UCET representatives over the course of the term include: JNR speaking at Inside Government and NAPTEC conferences; Jackie Moses speaking at an event for senior overseas education officials; and UCET attendance at meetings of ITTAG, the Wellcome Trust, the DFE recruitment & retention team; DFE ECF colleagues; the apprenticeship Trailblazer group; the DFE Teacher Supply Model expert group, DFE teacher training advisors, and Teach First. JNR was also pleased to visit colleagues at Keele and King's College. Both JNR and Jackie Moses, UCET's Policy and Liaison Officer, would be pleased to receive invitations from other UCET members.

Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Remember, it's a wonderful life!.



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