**Intellectual Basis of Teacher Education meeting**

**Birmingham City University, 17th May 2019**

**In attendance**

Trevor Mutton (Chair); Joanna McIntyre Nottigham); Rick Mllican (Gloucester); Lisa Murtagh (Manchester); Clare Brooks, UCL Institute of Education); Alex Kendal (BCU); Angela (Trinity St David’s); Elaine Sharpling (Trinity St David’s); James Noble-Rogers (UCET); Jackie Moses (UCET)

**Apologies**

Alis Oancea (Oxford); John Thornby (Warwick); Des Hewitt (Warwick); Sean Cavan (SHU); Divya Jindal-Snape (Dundee); Gillian Peiser (Liverpool John Moores); Cathy Gower (Brunel); Linzi McKerr (Worcester)

1. Notes from the previous meeting were approved

2. Values & Principles (V&P)

There was a lengthy discussion around the values and principles document. We need to be specific about the values and principles underpinning university teacher education so that they reflect our distinctiveness.

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a ’pre-amble’, followed by an articulation of the values and principles that we believe should underpin all teacher education. Our distinctiveness is the degree of intellectual contribution that we offer and the intellectual space around teacher education that we provide. Our conceptualisation of research may be different to that of schools.

We should resist being put into a ‘them and us’ space. Rather we should be objective (not driven by ideological or corporate values) and be driven by empirical evidence, reason, research etc.

We discussed whether we need to make the values explicit when they should be implicit in the above – there is a danger in trying to list values and then potentially missing something out). So the pre-amble could set out some of the wider values that underpin the work of universities and teacher education more generally, before setting out the distinct contribution that university teacher education makes.

Universities have a commitment to truth and knowledge so should be outside the sphere of vested interests. Our role is more than just preparing teachers – we are generating new knowledge in the field of teacher education. There is also a role in socialising new teachers into the notion of the profession. All of this relates to practice, but that is not our primary concern. The content of teacher education should be related to the pursuit of truth, not driven by ideology. Universities have a role in identifying problems and then coming up with solutions – our role is not to define a set of practices as a way of doing teacher education. It is important also that practice is informed by theory and research.

We need to develop teachers who are able to take an ‘enquiry stance’ and who are able to step back and take a critical stance. We need to re-claim the language of research (which is being appropriated by others). Teachers need to understand that knowledge about teaching will change and that what we know today may look different to what we know in 10 years’ time. Our role is to support the long-term development of the education system through teacher education programmes that develop the wider professional (as opposed to a ‘technician’ or ‘craft worker’).

We agreed that, following the pre-amble, we should express the key modalities of effective teacher education, but without closing down the possibilities. It was suggested that we present the principles as a set of ‘Teacher education should … ‘statements, and then follow that with a few sentences to indicate how university teacher education is well placed to address these principles. This will then come as a logical conclusion to what has gone before in the document. It will emphasise our distinctiveness – we will not claim that we alone are able to meet these principles but that we are ideally placed to do so because of the nature of the work that we do.

This would fit in well with the development of the next UCET strategy, where it will be important to emphasise the centrality of the role of the university. We need to make it clear what this sector stands for – giving UCET the warrant to articulate what we believe in.

There was some discussion around whether the statements are framed as: ‘teacher education should …’ or ‘teacher education seeks to …’. The research/evidence base will inform us what the characteristics of high quality teacher education are and this evidence base can be referred to with footnotes in the document.

The intended audience of the document is UCET and its members but it will inform the way in which UCET engages with policy makers.

The document needs to be aspirational – not all university teacher education will necessarily reflect the full range of principles. We would acknowledge that there can be barriers, including contextual factors, which make these difficult to achieve.

The document needs to emphasise that teaching is an intellectual profession and that we need to create teachers who are ‘future proof’. High quality teacher education equips teachers for a career in teaching and fosters intellectual freedom, autonomy, trust etc. This then becomes a wider recruitment and retention issue.

Following the principle there could be a set of assertions along the lines of; ‘high quality teacher education equips teachers who are ….’.

The document we produce will be a warrant for the intellectual basis of teacher education.

Once drafted it will be presented to the various UCET forums for commentary as part of the process of re-writing and refining. The group will also produce a more detailed report for Management Forum. Also discussed presenting the document at the UCET conference in November, this to be discussed at the next meeting.

3. UCET Conference (Nov 5-6th 2019)

Alex reported on discussions around having a ‘research-focussed’ session at the conference during which all the workshops will have a research focus.

4. Next Meeting

We agreed to arrange a meeting for late September/early October, but to continue to refine the Values and Principles document via e-mail.