

## UCET DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

It is with deep regret that this newsletter has to begin with the unfortunate death in November of UCET's former Executive Director, **Mary Russell MBE**. Mary joined UCET when it was formed in 1967 until she retired in 2004. Under her leadership UCET grew into the influential organisation that it has become. She oversaw the bringing into UCET membership of the former polytechnic departments of education after 1992, and was at the forefront of the sector's response to the wide ranging reforms of teacher education in the 1990s. The teacher education sector owes her a huge debt of gratitude. She will be sadly missed.



*Mary Russell*

The key policy announcement of the term for members in England was the new **ITE content framework** which was published, much earlier than had been planned, on 1 November. All QTS programmes will be expected to deliver the new framework from September 2020 and UCET and NASBTT are holding events to help providers plan for implementation. Although it will require a change to programme content, it should be possible in many cases to change the ways in which some things are done rather than require more to be done. In many cases it should be possible to map existing programme content against the new framework. It can be used, as some have suggested, as a lens through which to review provision. It should not be used as an assessment tool, but as a minimum entitlement for student teachers, who will continue to be assessed against the teacher standards. Not everything that should be included in ITE is covered. While delivering the framework should lead to students being able to demonstrate that they meet many of the standards, more will be covered in the light of particular contexts. The framework is not endorsed by UCET. But UCET has (through its membership of the review group) sought to ensure that, as far as possible, it is: a framework rather than a curriculum; flexible and adaptable; and recognises the academic base of teacher education. We are also seeking to ensure a measured and pragmatic approach to ensuring compliance by OfSTED.

On 12 September, following a long campaign by UCET and others, the Department for Education finally announced that entrants to ITE programmes will no longer have to undertake pre-entry **skills tests** in literacy and numeracy. ITE providers will, instead, have to ensure that they have mechanisms (e.g. mapping of programmes against the identified skills) in place to ensure that students have the necessary level of fundamental skills in literacy and numeracy before they are awarded QTS. UCET, NASBTT and others were involved in detailed discussions with DfE over the summer about the form these alternative measures should take, and significant changes were made as a result. In many cases, particularly on primary programmes, students will often demonstrate they have the necessary skills by virtue of successfully completing the programme and meeting the QTS standards. Some providers will carry out light touch assessments (either at interview or later) with students needing to address any particular areas doing so during, but not part of, their ITE. While OfSTED will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure students have the appropriate skills before being awarded QTS, they will look at the mechanisms rather than the assessment of individual student teachers.

Results of the **ITE census** for 2019 were published at the end of November, with total recruitment broadly the same as for the previous year. Recruitment to secondary programmes was at just 85% of target. Possibly even more worrying for DfE is that the primary target was missed, something that has only really happened in the past. If this is not to become a trend, the DfE must reinstate the payment of bursaries to those on primary programmes.

The results of the tendering exercise to develop and deliver the **Early Career Framework** in the pilot areas from September 2020 have been announced, and we are pleased that four universities will be involved. It would, however, have made more sense for responsibility for ECF delivery to be the sole responsibility of accredited ITE providers, for the reasons set out in JNR's *Schools Week* article in March <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/why-ite-providers-should-deliver-the-early-career-framework/>.

On **post-compulsory** issues, UCET helped to successfully resolve a problem which led to student teachers in some parts of the country not being able to access student support. We were also pleased to welcome Kirsti Lord from the Association of Colleges, Pete Grady from DfE and Howard Pilot from the Education & Training Foundation to our October Post 16 forum meeting. We are also grateful to Ellen Butler from Warwick for representing UCET at the ETF's October ITE stakeholder group meeting.

The announcement of the **General Election** for 12 December curtailed a number of activities, including the termly meeting of ITTAG, the DfE workshops on the shape of the market review; and OfSTED events in relation to the new ITE inspection framework (although planned pilot inspections are still going ahead). The election also prompted UCET to issue a press release calling for, amongst other things: all teachers to have or be working towards professional status, financial support for teachers to become members of professional bodies and teaching to become an all master's qualified profession, the latter of which prompted something of a storm

on social media and was quoted in the press, despite the same call being made by UCET on many previous occasions. Following this, a number of other organisations have called for more master's CPD for teachers. A copy of the press release can be found at:

<https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11405/press-release-ucet-calls-for-a-reinvigoration-of-teacher-professionalism>

The big event of the term was of course the annual **UCET conference**, which was the best attended for several years and included some excellent keynotes from Mary Bousted, Trevor Mutton, John Furlong, Hazel Hagger & other colleagues from Wales, Moyra Boland and Caroline Daly & Julie Greer. Our thanks go to them all, and to those who led workshops, piloted the boat and contributed to the discussions. And not to forget the excellent Dusty Springfield tribute. Copies of presentations, conference pictures and recordings can all be found at:

<https://www.ucet.ac.uk/conference>. Other popular events included morning symposia on: the drafting of REF environment statements; the Association of Colleges and professional qualifications for teachers; the new teaching school hubs (led by Teaching School Council Chair Richard Gill) different kinds of support for student teachers; mental health & well-being; and an analysis of trends in recruitment and applications.

A highlight of the UCET conference was also the presentation of the first ever UCET Lifetime achievement award to **Peter Gilroy**, former UCET Chair, REF expert, journal editor and leader of teacher education at a number of universities. The award was presented by UCET Executive Committee member Linda la Velle and current Chair Sean Cavan. A well-deserved honour for Peter. A full copy of his citation can be found under 'downloads' at:

<https://www.ucet.ac.uk/conference>



*Peter Gilroy receiving a lifetime achievement award*

In **Wales**, USCET Cymru held a special event to discuss partnership working which led to the publication of a new paper on best practice in respect of partnerships. At USCET's instigation, a new group including representatives from USCET, HEIs, Estyn, Welsh Government and the EWC has been meeting to discuss how best to ensure consistent assessment of student teachers and NQTs against the new teacher standards. Other meetings have been held with Welsh Government about supporting schools in challenging circumstances and addressing mental health and well-being issues. In **Northern Ireland**, an event for stakeholders across the education sector is being arranged for May in Stormont to demonstrate the invaluable contribution that higher-education institutions make to teacher supply, teacher development, retention and the broader economy. This builds on a successful event at Stranmillis earlier this

year. Hugely interesting things have been happening in regards to teacher professional development in **Scotland**, including moves to funded master's level CPD and teacher sabbaticals. More information can be found in Moyra Boland's UCET conference speech.

The first meeting to discuss the development of a new **UCET strategy** to be launched in September 2020 took place on 15 November, with a further meeting scheduled for January. The Executive Committee will also devote its January meeting to strategy discussions. The work will be informed by an excellent paper prepared by the Intellectual Base of Teacher Education Group chaired by Trevor Mutton, a copy of which can be found at:

<https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11406/ucet-intellectual-base-of-teacher-education-values-and-principles-november-2019>

Other meetings attended by UCET staff during the term on behalf of the membership included: several DfE catch-ups; a BERA keeping in touch; learning sciences in ITE; the NASBTT Board; TES; and the National Education Union.

Wishing everyone a relaxing festive break.

UCET  
December 2019

