



7 February 2020

Kirsty Williams MA  
Minister for Education and Skills  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Dear Minister

### **ITE entry requirements**

I am writing to you on behalf of accredited teacher education partnerships in Wales to request that consideration be given to removing the English/Welsh language and mathematics/literacy Grade B requirements for entry to teacher education programmes in Wales to bring them in-line with other parts of the UK by requiring a C grade or equivalent instead.

We do of course believe that the best qualified people should be recruited to teacher education programmes in Wales, and USCET members will always take account (alongside other factors) of the academic qualifications of applicants. All other things being equal, an applicant with B grades will always be at an advantage compared with those with C grades. However, we are faced with a worsening teacher supply crisis and this is not being helped by what is, in effect, arbitrary grade B requirements. Potentially good teachers are being attracted to other parts of the UK because of lower entry requirements, along with the offer of extremely generous bursaries in some subjects. There is no evidence to support the view that those with B rather than C grades go on to make better teachers. There is also an issue of equity, with applicants without B grades facing additional costs in terms of tutoring, re-sits etc. compared to their colleagues elsewhere in the UK.

In addition to the GCSE requirements, all ITE providers carry out stringent assessments of literacy and numeracy through testing before student teachers begin their training as well as during their training. These tests are, under the auspices of USCET, about to be reviewed and we would be pleased to work with your officials (with whom we have a very good relationship) to ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose and that high standards are maintained.

We would be happy to discuss this in further detail if you would find that helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Rogers', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

James Noble-Rogers  
Executive Director