

UCET SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

This term was of course dominated by the implications of the **Corona virus** for ITE providers, and we hope that all of our friends across UCET are managing to cope with the situation as best they can. In a fast moving environment, UCET collected details of the implications the virus had for ITE providers, which was then shared and discussed with DfE. We pressured DfE, on a daily and evenly hourly basis, to issue advice, and argued that they should suspend the ITE requirements and give providers the scope to take professional judgements about the award of QTS. We have also asked that the introduction of the core content framework and new OfSTED inspection framework be delayed. Because the DfE was unable (for reasons outside its control, it must be acknowledged) to release advice, UCET and NASBTT took the unusual step of issuing guidance to our members based on what we understood the policy position to be. This is not something we did lightly, and would not in the normal course of events make public information that had been shared with us in private. But these are not normal times. DfE guidance, consistent with what UCET and NASBTT issued, was eventually issued at the end of March and can be found at: <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11679/dfe-statement-on-the-corona-virus-and-it> Similar discussions took place in Wales with colleagues from USCET and the Welsh government and the resulting advice can be found at <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11669/corona-virus-welsh-government-advice-190320> while a message from the Department for Education in Northern Ireland can be found at <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11673/corona-virus-dfe-northern-ireland>. In Wales, a sub-group of USCET members has been convened to agree approaches to ensure a consistent assessment of students against the teacher standards in the light of the decision made, following discussions with us, to suspend all placements, and regular catch-ups are taking place with Welsh Government colleagues.

Because of the ongoing crisis, all face-to-face UCET meetings for the next term have been cancelled. We are investigating the possibility of remote communications through Zoom or other on-line mechanisms. In the meantime, do not hesitate to get in touch with UCET if you have any questions or concerns or have information that you think would be of use to other UCET members. The relevant emails are j.noble-rogers@ucet.ac.uk and info@ucet.ac.uk.

At the beginning of the term, we assumed that the main policy areas to be discussed in England would be the new ITE **core content framework** and the OfSTED consultation on its new **ITE inspection framework**. Two joint and well-attended UCET- NASBTT events were held in January to discuss the implementation of the CCF, and forums devoted a lot of time to discussing the new inspection framework, discussions which fed directly into UCET's formal response to the consultation which can be found at: <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11662/ucets-response-to-the-current-consultation-on-the-new-ite-inspection-framework>. Our main concerns about the inspection framework related to: the importance of providers being able to implement the CCF in a way that allows it and its underpinning evidence to be critiqued; the unrealistic and undesirable demands for consistency and uniformity across all placement settings; and the prohibition of covering any approaches to the teaching of early reading other than systematic synthetic phonics. Our thanks go to everyone who contributed to the response.

The final report of the **Intellectual Base of Teacher Education (IBTE)** report has been published and can be accessed at: <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/11675/ibte-position-statement-updated-february-2020> We are very grateful to members of the group who contributed to this report, which has been extremely well received and had a significant influence on our response to the OfSTED consultation. It will also inform the development of **UCET's new strategy**, a draft of which will be issued to UCET members for comment soon.

We are still planning on going ahead with this year's **annual conference**, which will take place on 3-4 November in Stratford-upon-Avon. Keynotes will include: Mark Boylan; Joseph Mintz & Peter Hick; and Jo McIntyre & Caroline Daly. A number of workshops have also been agreed, and we would welcome suggestions for more. The post-dinner entertainment will be a Rod Stewart tribute act. Registration for the conference, with special discounts for early bird registration by the end of May and for institutions sending five or more delegates is at: <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/conference>. Money will of course be refunded if the conference does not go ahead, or if anyone is unable to attend through illness or self-isolation.

We will at the end of this academic year see a number of **UCET positions** become vacant. These will include the chairs or vice chairs of the following forums: ITE secondary; CPD; and Research & International. There will also be four elected places becoming vacant on the Executive Committee. Nominations for these places will be invited next term. In the meantime, please get in touch if you would like to talk about what they involve.

I hope that, as far as possible, that colleagues have a good Easter and stay safe.

UCET
April 2020