

A Registered Charity (No 275082)

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*Promoting Quality in Teacher Education*

**UCET NI Committee**

**10.00am, Tuesday 12 January 2021**

**Via Zoom**

**Notes of meeting**

1. **Welcome and introductions**

**Chair** Roisin McPhilemy (RMcP) (Open University)

Ann Heaslett (AH) (Stranmillis)

Martin Hagan (MH) (St Mary’s)

James Nelson (JN) (Queens)

James Noble Rogers (JNR) (UCET)

Jackie Moses (UCET)

Max Fincher (UCET)

1. **Minutes & matters arising**

Minutes of last meeting accepted as accurate

No matters arising

**JNR** noted that the UCET Conference went ahead virtually and that it was good to see colleagues from NI there

1. **SCoTENs**

**JNR** – The meeting before Christmas resulted in the Minister agreeing to review and see if they could find some funding to support this and thereby restart the collaboration

1. **Covid 19:**
   1. Contingency placement plans from member institutions (inc. placements)
   2. Reports from member institutions (placements & assessments)

**MH** – St Mary’s have been trying to plan but challenging as situation is so fluid. They are trying to stay as close as possible to outline plans but there is such a wide variety of experiences, (e.g., some students allowed in schools others not) that this is proving difficult. They are looking at levels of competence across a range of evidence bases to make assessments. Relatively confident that student will be able to progress

**AH** – Stranmillis placements have been pushed back to start in March, they are pressing on with trying to secure placements as much in line with as normal practice as possible They are also developing and looking at a range of actions to overcome some inevitable difficulties, this incudes collaboration with schools to look at development of resources, shared placement, trial runs of virtual assessment. In addition, they are looking at support in college through more seminars and additional work with tutors. The implementation of virtual assessment is also being considered.

**JN** – At Queens, all students have been in school and seen once in the classroom, some in person some via camera link. Queens have also just agreed to assess learning by structured interviews. It was noted that students have very different experiences whilst on placement, so they are looking to develop ways of assessing competences taking this into account.

They will be a big challenge for providers if schools remain closed beyond March.

March will be a pinch point for schools as a number of providers are putting students out at same time. This will need careful management.

It is important that both providers and school remain agile, important to balance a professional dimension with a practical one of making an assessment. Tracking the evidence across a variety of sources is also very important and so the briefing of students around this (and schools) is vital.

There has been some very positive feedback about aspects of the current training set up and how this is assessed, it will be good to review this post pandemic and look to decide which aspects could be retained moving forward.

1. **AQ requests on programme details**

These requests come up from time to time (via parliament) and it has requested to be discussed at afternoon meeting with government representatives.

**JNR** felt it was importantnot to be too specific and to not give figures/statistics as this increased the likelihood of things being misrepresented. It was important to explain that it would be training etc. is dependent on a number of parameters, so it is generally best to give broad framework

The meeting felt that it would be appreciated if a lot of requests could be handled by the Department in a generic way rather than constantly coming to providers, especially as at times the expected turn around for responses is not realistic

**JNR** – suggested maybe draft a short response which covers the main questions around ITT, CPD etc. may be worthwhile to prevent/cut down on the number of enquiries. Agreed to make this suggestion to the government representatives at the later meeting

1. **UCETNI on-line event**

**AH** asked ifit is important for the group to host an event this year to highlight the spread of innovations that have been adopted in light of pandemic? This would also demonstrate how flexible and adaptable the sector has been in responding to the crisis.

**MH** felt that as a result of pandemic thinking and practice is probably 10 years further on than it would have normally been. However, he was not sure that this is the right time to showcase this as he felt time was needed to get through this challenging time first, once out the other end then we could review and then share positive outcomes with the sector.

**JNR** agreed with MH and added that he also thinks we will learn more before we are through. An online event could take possible take place this calendar year but probably in the Autumn term and not Spring which was the original intended date

**RMcP** acknowledged that the Autumn term was the current thinking and not Spring

**JN** agreed that the Autumn term would be a good time to take stock and look forward. There has been a huge amount of learning and it was important to assess what we need to hold on to. He asked who the audience would be as our own staff could benefit from this. It would also be interesting to share across providers and be good for all colleagues to have the opportunity to hear this.

**RMcP** agreed with this but also thought it would be worthwhile and important to share this with the Department and other government colleagues

It was agreed to return to this in Spring meeting and look at steps to take this forward

1. **Independent Review of Education**

**AH** Asked for this to be on agenda as she was interested to hear people’s views of the document published on 15 Dec 2020.

**MH** agreed and said that this came ‘out of the blue’. He felt that in principle a review is probably overdue but had concerns around the implementation. He was also unaware of any consultation around some of key points. Some areas not clear and not sure what is meant so would welcome some explanation and dialogue.

It was agreed that this would be raised at the afternoon meeting.

1. **UCET issues:**
   1. UCET strategy (enc.)
   2. UCET December newsletter (enc.)

**JNR** The Strategy and December newsletter have been published and are on the website.

1. **Arrangements for NIHELG meeting**

Things to raise

* + - 1. COVID (already on the agenda)
      2. Independent Review of Education
      3. Quotas for 2021/22 & ask for 3-year allocations
      4. Recruitment challenges linked to the DE plan for workforce
      5. To what extent can DE (& others) partner with providers to make teaching a choice profession

1. **AOB**

**MH** circulated paper on ‘The Learning Leadership Lens’.

It was agreed by the working group that this would be the direction of travel, but further work needed to be done and a writing group was working on this at the moment. Once complete, this will replace the current competency framework and will cover the whole profession from ITT to senior leadership.

1. **Date of next meeting: 4 May 2021**