

**Note of the meeting of the University and Schools Council for the Education of Teachers (USCET) held at 10am on Thursday 4 February 2021**

Attendees

Elaine Sharpling (UWTSD, Chair)

Lisa Taylor (Uof South Wales)

Jackie Moses (UCET)

James Noble-Rogers (UCET)

John Luker (Glyndwr)

Hazel Jones (Bangor)

Kin Yu (Cardiff Met)

Sian Brooks (Swansea)

Jeremy Griffiths (Bangor)

Catharine Bleasdale (UWTSD)

Melanie Smith (Swales)

Tracy Eastment (Cardiff)

Lisa Bowen (Cardiff Met)

Leon Annett (Cardiff and Vale College)

Mandy Essen (CSJES)

Julia Jenkins (Teach First)

Alwyn Ward (Aberystwyth)

Sally Llewlyn (Education Regional Working)

Andrew Pickford (OU)

Hannah Barry (SE Wales)

Jonathan Davies (Treorchycomp)

Sharne Watkins (Central South Consortium)

**Apologies**
Sarah Stewart (OU)

Anna Bryant (Cardiff Met)

**WG/EWC/ESTYN** (from 11am)

Max White (WG)

Hayden Llewellyn (EWC)

Sarah Lewis (ESTYN)

Lisa Drury-Lawson (WG)

Welcome, introductions and minutes of the previous meeting

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies noted. John Luker was wished well for his forthcoming retirement and thanked for his excellent contribution to the work of USCET and teacher education.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October were agreed. There were no matters arsing not already included on the meeting agenda.

Reports from ITT providers (including Covid related issues)

The following reports were received:

* Significant attention was being given to the mental health, well-being and safety of both staff and students. This would continue to be a priority for all partnerships.
* The value of students having two placement experiences was recognised, although it was not always possible in the current circumstances.
* Student teachers were inevitably having a range of different experiences in regards placements and centre-based activity. Placements had in many cases been restructured, and a lot of activities were (successfully) taking place on-line. Approaches to the assessment of the different and contrasting experiences of student teachers were being developed. It was felt that formal cross-Wales/USCET moderation of assessments was not at this moment required.
* Resources would be needed to provide NQTs with targeted and tailored support to address any issues resulting from disruption to their ITE, although it was noted that this cohort of NQTs would also have developed particular skills and experiences which would be hugely beneficial to schools. Students who, through no fault of their own, were not in a position to be recommended for QTS at the end of the current academic year would require financial support to continue their ITE and placements in 2021/22.
* The academic year was in some cases being extended into the summer to ensure that as many students as possible could be recommended for QTS.
* Applications to ITE for September 2021 remained buoyant and new recruitment measures were working well. Consideration was being given to forthcoming changes to UCAS application procedures resulting from the transition to the new Apply system in England. This would mean postgraduate applications going through the undergraduate UCAS process. Discussions about bringing recruitment in Scotland into the UCAS fold were continuing.
* Particular issues, for example in regards lesson observation hours, applied to PCET provision. Meetings of the PCET sub-group had continued, and discussions were taking place with Welsh government about the possibility of a PCET teaching qualification with QTS. ITE PCET programmes were also being matched against the ETF standards for digital learning.
* Regional leads were working with ITE partnerships to ensure successful bridging between ITE and early professional development and induction. Surveys and focus groups were being used to assess the effectiveness of arrangements made in respect of the previous year’s cohort.

It was agreed that the lessons learnt from the Covid experience and the implications for the future would be discussed at the next meeting. This would include discussion of QTS assessments.

It was agreed that Sian Brooks would represent USCET on the Welsh Government’s MFL group.

Reports from Welsh Government, EWC and Estyn colleagues

*(a): Welsh government*

New guidance for ITE providers had been shared with the sector and should be published soon. Likely additions included: clarification that non-salaried student teachers would not be required to carry out Covid testing; and funding already provided for placement extensions could be used until the end of the summer term. Discussions about support for students requiring placement extensions next year were taking place. USCET members welcomed the new WG guidance.

Funding from WG to support digital marketing and communications to support ITE recruitment was likely to be made available. WG websites on teaching were being updated to provide improved access to information. Feedback on the new pages would be welcomed.

The previous week’s USCET-WG meeting on support for NQTs had been extremely helpful and it was hoped that firm plans would be announced by Easter. These were likely to include both immediate and longer term measures.

Discussions had been taking place between WG and the UK government about post Brexit protocols for the recognition of professional qualifications, including those for teachers.

*(b): Education Workforce Council*

The EWC was being as flexible and pragmatic as possible to allow providers to adjust ITE programmes in the context of the pandemic. ITE providers were asked to keep the EWC informed about any planned changes. Recently accredited programmes had been monitored and appeared to be progressing well. A sub-group of the Accreditation Board had been considering ongoing monitoring activities in discussion with Estyn. USCET would be involved in these discussions in due course.

Two applications for teacher registration had been received from overseas qualified teachers, both of who were already in Wales, since new recognition arrangements had come into effect.

The launch of the Educators Wales website had been delayed because of Covid, but would take place as soon as filming had been completed.

*(c): Estyn*

The first day of peer inspector training had been completed and had involved 13 people, including HE colleagues. The 2nd and 3rd days training would take pace in May. Qualified peer inspectors would be in receipt of update training.

Peer inspectors had been invited to take part in ‘try-out’ inspections under the new framework, which would for the time being take place remotely. All ITE partnerships would be given the opportunity to be involved. Estyn would be in touch with providers about engagement meetings soon. Four weeks’ notice of the try-out inspections would be given.

The new inspection cycle was scheduled to begin in September. Guidance for inspectors would be reviewed and discussed at the project board.

ITE partnerships would be informed soon about a stakeholder meeting to be held in late May.

Any other business

**Talk Pedagogy Update (Lisa Taylor on behalf of Mark Ford, Welsh Government)**

As well as developments with the range of groups in Talk Pedagogy, a number of other work-streams are being planned that would benefit from closer collaboration with HEIs. The thinking is to identify six to eight areas of practice worth sharing, to capture it and explore it from a research and evidence-informed perspective. The aim is to support practitioners across Wales to develop a deeper understanding of these learning experiences and to support the development of inquiry-based approaches. These should provide valuable networking opportunities and there will be funding attached to each mini-project. More information will be shared when it becomes available.

Date of next meeting

20 May 2021 (on-line)