

Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers issues damning response to Department for Education's market review proposals

*Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers responds to Market Review proposals, warning of
'hidden agendas' and 'flagrant disregard' for providers*

*Department for Education's teacher training market review condemned as destabilising,
unreasonable and unrealistic*

The Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) has today issued an in-depth response to the Department for Education's (DfE) Initial Teacher Training (ITT) market review consultation; warning of seismic consequences for academic freedoms, teacher supply, school and university budgets, and educator workload. The practicalities of the review are also called into question, with concerns that the DfE's advisory panel - chaired by Ian Bauckham, CEO of Tenax Schools Trust and Chair of Ofqual and Oak National Academy - has failed to consider the additional cost implications for schools, as well as suggesting an unreasonable timeline.

With universities involved in the education of some 80% of new teachers entering England's schools each year, they play a critical role in allowing for access to subject and pedagogic expertise as well as providing a research-rich learning environment. Globally, the highest-performing education systems around the world are guided by the involvement of universities in teacher education. Polling conducted by UCET has established that as many as 10,000 teacher training places across 30 providers may be at risk as changes would prove unviable for universities.

Whilst supporting some elements of the proposals in principle, including a need for programmes to be informed by up-to-date and robust research, and agreeing that any publicly funded system should be properly regulated and held to account, the response emphasises a complete lack of evidence to justify such radical restructuring.

An official [enquiry](#) conducted by the APPG for the Teaching Profession this month found no evidence to support the Department's proposals, and polling conducted by TES Global found that 72% of teachers rate their training as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'. Similar levels of excellence were echoed in findings in Teacher Tapp data collected in March 2021, which found that 81% of recently trained teachers rated their provider's quality of teaching and learning highly, with 76% believing their education prepared them well overall for their first professional role.

James Noble-Rogers, Executive Director at UCET said: *"Our position has remained clear and unwavering since the formation of the Department's 'Expert Advisory Group': this overhaul of the teacher training sector is not only poorly timed, but represents an existential threat to the very future of the teaching profession and its subsequent ability to provide a high-quality education. Just last month, the Department recognised the immense strain faced by education staff over the past year and a half through its wellbeing charter – it's unclear quite how these review proposals, which will add to teachers' already out-of-control workloads, fit into this narrative of prioritising wellbeing.*

"Already we are receiving reports that course leaders, who have turned themselves inside out through the pandemic to ensure trainees receive exemplary training, are suffering mental and physical ill health

as a direct result of recent demoralising Ofsted inspections – which do appear to being undertaken with flagrant disregard for providers in order to push a particular agenda.

“Through its inability to listen to key stakeholders, or take their concerns seriously, the DfE has achieved quite the feat in managing to alienate and unite a diverse range of bodies and organisations working across the sector, including those representing school leaders, teacher unions, professional associations and representative bodies. This alone should make the government think again.

“If the Department continues to stick its head in the sand and forge ahead with the review as it currently exists, it can no longer expect to count on the good faith and expertise of the sector to engage any further with these destabilising and hollow proposals.”

ENDS

For further information and to get involved please contact: getinvolved@teachbest.education

Notes to editors

- The Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) is an independent, professional organisation funded solely by its member institutions, universities, colleges and others providing accredited Higher Education level teacher education. Their mission is to support the quality, sustainability and professionalism of teacher education through the encouragement of cohesive partnerships and constructive stakeholder engagement based on evidence from UK and international research. You can see more at: <https://www.ucet.ac.uk/>

- UCET launched the #TeachBest campaign on Monday 15th March 2021, at <https://www.teachbest.education/>

- In all, some 30,000 teachers each year join the profession through Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships. As many as 80% of those involve universities through undergraduate and Master's programmes, as well as strategic partnerships and mentoring support that universities have with schools, colleges, school-centred initial teacher training organisations (SCITTs) and other providers.