



2021-0052486RWPO

Robin Walker MP

Minister of State for School Standards

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Mr James Noble-Rogers,
Executive Director,
Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET)
By email: J.Noble-Rogers@ucet.ac.uk

6 January 2022

Dear Mr Noble-Rogers,

Thank you for your letter of 9 December regarding initial teacher education (ITE), the initial teacher training (ITT) market review, and Ofsted inspections.

Firstly, I am grateful to UCET for engaging with us throughout the review. Our continued close cooperation is essential so that we can achieve our shared objective of improving the quality of ITT provision across the country.

I am pleased to read that you welcome some of the amendments we have made to the review's recommendations in the Government's response. These changes were made after listening carefully to feedback from the consultation and stakeholder discussions. I note that you have some remaining concerns about the ITT criteria and accreditation application documentation, which you will be discussing with Departmental officials.

With regard to your concerns about the timescale for the accreditation process, we acknowledge that some providers may find it challenging to submit their application for accreditation by the end of the first round. We are, however, monitoring the situation carefully in the light of the latest developments with the COVID-19 pandemic. At present there are no plans to extend the 7 February deadline. We are running a second accreditation round between 19 April 2022 to 27 June 2022, and we may run further rounds if required.

Both accreditation rounds are taking place in spring and summer 2022 to give successful providers sufficient time to develop plans and formalise partnerships before delivery in the 2024-25 academic year. The first deadline is in February 2022 so that the Department can assess the applications and notify applicants of outcomes in May. This will allow time before the second application deadline on 27 June for any unsuccessful applicants to either address feedback and reapply, or to decide to join a partnership with a successful provider.

The Department arranged provider information sessions to disseminate information and provide an opportunity for prospective applicants to ask questions. We are making these questions and answers available through the Jaggaer system so that they are visible to all prospective applicants. The sessions were intended to help facilitate both existing and new providers preparing and submitting their applications. We have also made every effort to ensure that the process is as streamlined as possible, while still enabling us to make sound judgements about whether an applicant meets the Quality Requirements.

The current Ofsted cycle will be continuing in January 2022. We understand your concerns regarding inspections taking place at the same time as many education settings are preparing accreditation applications. We acknowledge these pressures and as a result, current providers who are inspected between January and 7 February 2022 will be granted a 10-day extension for their application. This means that their application will need to be submitted by 21 February. We have updated our frequently asked questions on Jaggaer to confirm this.

In addition to the points you raise about our response to the ITT review, I am also grateful for the sector feedback that you have shared and for the support you have provided to Departmental officials as we have been reviewing and implementing our response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

With regard to the feedback on the speed at which we can respond to disruptions, we have subsequently developed a comprehensive mitigation framework for different levels of disruption to ITT courses. This includes preparing modifications to the ITT criteria or Teacher Regulations, which can be deployed if needed. We are closely monitoring the level of disruption to ITT courses and stand ready to respond quickly where needed. We will continue to keep UCET involved as we keep the situation under review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Waller'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.