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*Promoting Quality in Teacher Education*

**Note of the meeting of the UCET ITE secondary forum held on-line at 1pm on Tuesday 8 March 2022**

Welcome, introductions and minutes of the previous meeting

Colleagues were welcomed to the second meeting of the academic year by Tracy Wallis, who had kindly agreed to chair the meeting in the absence of the forum chair and vice-chair. The note of the meeting held on 23 November 2021 was agreed. There were no matters arising not included elsewhere on the agenda.

Discussion

A range of issues was discussed, including:

* An update from JNR on non-secondary related issues, including the 1-2 November UCET conference which would take place in Stratford upon Avon (for which workshop volunteers were invited), the development of a new teaching qualification for the FE and skills sector, the drafting of a new UCET Effective CPD paper and developments in Wales and Northern Ireland
* The ITE Market Review, where large numbers of providers were thought to have submitted applications for accreditation in round 1. The number of successful applications would depend in part on the extent to which DfE remained true to its word that the process would be ‘*open transparent and equitable’,* that any application meeting the Quality Requirements would be approved (with no other criteria used) and that providers referencing research with which DfE and OfSTED might not agree would not be penalised, providing CCF requirements were met. UCET would be supporting providers through stage 2 of the 1st round application process and through round 2 applications. Provider to provider support would be encouraged and facilitated
* Recruitment to ITE programmes to 2022/23, which was helped by a presentation on latest applications data from Mark Crowley from NTU, which showed a reduction compared to the mean for the previous three years in almost all secondary subjects and likely recruitment of some 14,000 secondary students, a reduction of 20,000 compared to the previous three-year average. Forum members reported particular difficulties in regards biology, MFL, geography and computing. Reports were received of applicants not taking up interviews possibly because the new Apply system encouraged them to accept their first offers within a 10 day timescale. School Direct applicants were often down, possibly in part because staffing levels in school were comparatively stable. Retention on programmes because of financial pressures and mental health issues were also reported. It was also confirmed that a mixed approach was being taken on whether or not to continue to interview ITE candidates on-line, with some returning to face to face, others interviewing exclusively on-line and others taking a mixed approach.
* ITE placements, which continued to be challenging, with providers having to go further afield to secure placements, with implications for the distance students have to travel and possibly some quality issues as well. The scope to secure alternative placements for students struggling in a particular school had reduced. Pressures on mentor capacity as the ECF entered its second year was likely to increase. Some schools were reported as having to choose between employing ECTs and meeting ECF responsibilities or offering ITE placements. DfE advice to providers experiencing placement difficulties, which included scope to request institution-specific relaxations to the ITE criteria once other options had been exhausted, were noted.
* The ITE requirements, with which providers must familiarize themselves and ensure that all programmes were compliant. It was confirmed that: the 120 days in school requirements related to programme design rather than to the experiences of each and every student; assessments of fundamental skills in maths and English could take place at any time prior to the recommendation for QTS; and requirements relating to covering at least four consecutive school years related to overall programme design and not only to placements.
* Inspection issues and the challenging approach of OfSTED inspectors continuing. Colleagues were reminded about the UCET briefing paper on the handling of inspections, and were advised to contact UCET and others either before or during inspections for advice. Providers should make sure they have a detailed knowledge of the ITE requirements and the inspection handbook and be ready to challenge any dubious claims made about compliance. In preparing and managing inspections, it was suggested that providers might want to: use OfSTED terminology and language whether possible (‘sequencing’, ‘components’, ‘provider led & school-centered’ etc.); encourage mentors to give feedback through a subject-specific lens; ensure that mentors and schools have a good understanding of, and can articulate, how the CCF is addressed through the ITE curriculum and that mentors understand their role as ‘expert practitioners’. Looking at EIF videos was also suggested.
* SKE, where thoughts on the DfE review of KE should be sent to UCET and to phoebe.lill@education.gov.uk. The number of people on SKE programmes, which were delivered both remotely and face to face, had fallen significantly.
* Suggested topics for the next morning symposium included: feedback from OfSTED inspections; and the outcome of Market Review applications.

Items for information

The following items were noted:

* The December UCET newsletter
* The DfE physics for engineers programme, the results of applications to deliver were expected soon.

Any other business

None

Future meetings

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 June via Zoom.