

17th March 2023.

Dear James,

We are writing to apply for the Gordon Kirk Travel Scholarship which we will use to undertake an initial reconnaissance project designed to better understand the ways in which teacher educators working in the university milieu engage in intellectual and academic work. As part of this project, we will also seek to identify how centralised policies related to the teacher education curriculum affect their perceptions of this work.

As highly experienced teacher educators, our interest has been provoked by the significant changes imposed upon the sector in the last four years. The roll-out of the Core and Early Career Frameworks and subsequent changes to Ofsted inspection frameworks, the challenges presented by the Initial Teacher Education Market Review as well policies that impact the University more widely, such as those that lie behind the Office for Students Regulatory Framework, have forced us to think deeply about what it means to be a teacher educator working in the university sector in the 21st Century. Whilst these seismic shifts have certainly affected the security and stability of our professional identity, they have also prompted us to engage in significant thought about the integrity, independence, and positioning of our intellectual work. Having successfully navigated the rocky roads of teacher education over many years and inspired by Stefanie Sullivan's call at the UCET conference this year for the sector to exercise 'creative compliance', we feel there is an urgent need to give voice to the ways in which teacher educators go beyond any state-mandated frameworks to engage in meaningful, intellectual, and critical work. It is here that our proposal is situated.

To provide depth to our understanding, the research project we are developing will look beyond the very particular systemic challenges of teacher education in England to explore the ways in which colleagues in other countries engage in this aspect of their role. Our intention is to use the funding provided by this bursary to travel to two European University Departments of Education: University College Copenhagen and Malmo University (see

letters of support attached with this email) both of whom run well-regarded, large teacher education programmes.

These visits will provide opportunity for reconnaissance work with leaders and other stakeholders in teacher education which will provide a foundation of an in-depth, post-doc comparative research project. We anticipate that it will provide the groundwork for a response to two key questions:

1. What are the key policies related to (initial and continuing) teacher education curriculum content and delivery in three European nations?
2. How do these policies locate new and experienced teachers, and new and experienced teacher educators in relation to research and their academic and intellectual work?

The key outcomes of this initial reconnaissance work will be:

- To identify what critical, intellectual work for teachers and teacher educators looks like in Sweden and Denmark, in comparison to England.
- To identify elements of 'good practice' which can be shared with others working across the sector and identifying how these might be embedded in (re-)accredited teacher education programmes, resulting in 'creative compliance' with CCF and ECF.
- To contribute to the development of programmes of professional development designed to enhance the academic capital of others in the sector.

Our initial outcomes will be communicated with the sector through the production of think pieces and through the publication of academic papers. They will also be shared as part of our ongoing planning activities with colleagues in other universities and will be disseminated more widely through appropriate conference presentations.

We anticipate that the programme of events at each university visit will take place over two days during the autumn term 2023. They will include meetings with key actors at three levels: leaders of the teacher education department, current teacher educators, and current teachers. In addition, each visit will incorporate observation of taught sessions or in-school training for (trainee) teachers. Following the visits, some scrutiny of each university's teacher education course materials will take place.

The scholarship will assist our funding in the following ways (costings for two people):

- Return travel to Sweden and Denmark: £600

- Accommodation for 5-7 days: £1,000
- Subsistence: £400
- Total: £2000

As outlined in the letters of support attached to this email, the relationships established as part of this project will also be mutually beneficial with colleagues in Sweden and Denmark

- Gaining a rich understanding of the particular challenges of teacher education in England,
- Having opportunity to discuss and reflect on their own policies and practices in relation to building critical intellectual work for teachers and teacher educators,
- Agreeing future participation and collaboration in research seminars based on current research in teacher education,
- Becoming involved in a future, funded comparative research project that will be developed from this reconnaissance project.

Thank you for reviewing this application. We believe that the outcomes could be instrumental in making significant developments to conceptualisations and practices in relation to critical, intellectual work for teacher educators locally and more widely through dissemination to our colleagues nationally through the highly regarded UCET network.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Nuttall and Alison Griffiths

Leeds Trinity University

Email: a.nuttall@leedstrinity.ac.uk a.griffiths@leedstrinity.ac.uk