



## UCET DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

As we head into a new calendar year, which will almost certainly include a **General Election** and a possible change of government, we can take the time to reflect on what has been another eventful year and plan for what, whatever the election result, will be a contrast with what we have experienced in recent times. The sector is, all things considered, well-placed to move into what could be a new era. In England, new ITE partnerships are being formed, and UCET has been pleased to facilitate these. Stage 2 of the **Market Review** accreditation process, which was a lot more bureaucratic, inconsistent and burdensome than it needed to be (a fact that UCET has made clear to DfE, with actual examples provided by our membership) is coming to a close. We have and will continue to press for those universities that lost their accreditation (because of the wholly unnecessary Market Review process) to be re-accredited but are pleased that those who have chosen to do so will continue to provide high-quality teacher education in partnership with other providers. The DfE published in September new partnership guidance for ITE providers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-forming-partnerships> as well as updated ITE criteria to apply from September 2024, the content of which takes account of numerous comments made by UCET on earlier drafts. A copy of the new requirements can be found at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181568/Initial\\_teacher\\_training\\_criteria\\_and\\_supporting\\_advice\\_2024\\_to\\_2025.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181568/Initial_teacher_training_criteria_and_supporting_advice_2024_to_2025.pdf) A revised OfSTED inspection handbook, which UCET will be given the opportunity to comment on in advance, is expected to be published in the new year.

The **Education Select Committee** has held a number of oral evidence sessions as part of its enquiry into teacher recruitment, training and retention and we were pleased that written evidence submitted by UCET was cited on a number of occasions. A copy of UCET's written evidence can be found at: [Evidence to Education Select Committee \(updated August 2023\) | UCET](#) The recommendations that we have made include ensuring that all student teachers have access to bursary support, that consideration be

given to the writing-off of student loans for new teachers and that a government-funded hardship fund be established to allow ITE providers to provide financial support to help students remain on courses given the increasing financial pressures that they face. The teacher recruitment crisis is continuing, with government again expected to miss its 2023/24 targets for recruitment to secondary programmes by a wide margin. Although there are indications that applications for 2024 are slightly better than this time last year, much of the increases are from **international applicants** which have been placing unsustainable burdens on both SCITTs and HEIs, and which in the majority of cases do not translate into actual recruits. We have been discussing the issue with DfE, who are considering what might be done to address the issue. We have also helped DfE to establish a group of ITE providers to help them identify solutions.

We also await publication in the New Year of new **CCF** and **ECF** documentation. UCET has been represented on the reference group established by DfE to consider the frameworks and has additionally had a number of direct meetings with DfE and others to discuss possible changes. A number of HEI colleagues nominated by UCET have also discussed early drafts of sections of the new frameworks with DfE. It is understood that the new CCF will not require any significant changes to ITE programmes before September 2025, although providers will be able to introduce them earlier should they choose to do so. We will circulate the new documentation as soon as we can, and will provide members with whatever support, individually and collectively, is appropriate. The **CPD forum** has also been looking in detail at the ECF and NPQTLD and is working on track-changes documents providing detailed commentaries which we will share with DfE. Also, on CPD, we are pleased to report that the CPD forum has established a sub-group, to be chaired by Paul Vare, to consider **climate change** issues. Please get in touch if you would be interested in joining this group.

At an organisational level, UCET has laid the groundwork for the medium-term future. The new **UCET constitution**, which re-confirms our university membership base, was approved (following discussions at all UCET fora and committees) at an Extraordinary General Meeting in the summer, and our 2020-2025 strategic plan, which is based on the work of the Intellectual Base of Teacher Education (IBTE) group, has been re-confirmed. We are delighted that the work of the IBTE group is continuing with the formation of various sub-groups, overseen by the group's new Chair, Linda La-Velle. We have also had, or are in the process of arranging, meetings with the new **Minister of State** Damien Hinds, **Shadow Education Schools Minister** Catherine McKinnell and **Lib Dem Education spokesperson** Munira Wilson. Our work will be led by a new and revitalised UCET **Executive committee**, including our new Chair, Stefanie Sullivan, Vice-Chair, Lisa Murtagh and Chair of the new UCET Assembly, Claire Ball-Smith. One of the functions of the new Assembly, which replaces the Management Forum, will be to identify issues which the Executive Committee needs to take decisions about.

A number of **UCET-wide sub-groups** have also been established to look at specific issues. These cover: QTS apprenticeships; iQTS and iPGCE issues; and the implications for teacher education of Artificial Intelligence. Please get in touch if you or any of your colleagues would be interested in joining any of these sub-groups.

One of the highlights of the first term of the new academic year is of course the **annual UCET conference**, which this year took place in Leeds on 14-15 November. We are very grateful to everyone who participated, especially those who led workshops and symposia and our plenary sessions, including: Katherine Burn; Clare Brooks; Una Meehan and colleagues from Chester Zoo; the UCET Equalities sub-group; the Leeds Learning Alliance; Nick Sorensen; and David James. Details of many of the presentations can be found on the UCET website, and we are pleased to announce that

the Equalities sub-group now has a dedicated page on the website which can be found at: [UCET Equalities Group | UCET](#)



The UCET **Post-16 forum** has been very busy, with work including supporting members preparing for the introduction of the new Diploma in Teaching (DIT) qualification which will replace the DET in September 2024. We have also been discussing with DfE proposals to re-introduce a measure of re-regulation into the sector in the light of concerns expressed about the quality of some non-HEI awarding body provision. These include: restricting public funding for pre-service ITE programmes to those either delivered by, or in partnership with, HEIs, and considering (in the longer term) accrediting ITE provision and introducing a new set of quality requirements. We have expressed our support for the first of these proposals, remained neutral on the second given the lack of information provided and argued that the new DIT requirements and occupational standards already constitute sufficient centrally-imposed content requirements.

In **Wales**, progress has been made by USCET Cymru is initiating discussions with Welsh Government, Estyn and the EWC to find a way to reduce the unsustainable, and overlapping, burdens being placed on ITE providers. Other discussions with WG and others have covered financial incentives, cross-HEI collaboration, recruitment and qualification equivalencies. In **Northern Ireland**, UCETNI has been discussing with the Department of Education processes for the reaccreditation of ITE programmes, as well as a range of issues relating to teacher competencies and the Learning Leaders strategy.

Work to develop a new undergraduate QTS **apprenticeship** programme is ongoing, and UCET is represented on both the Trailblazer Group and a number of sub-groups established to consider detailed issues such as secondary subject specialist requirements. It is envisaged that the new apprenticeship will subsume the existing postgraduate teaching apprenticeship, with graduate entrants starting the programme part-way through.

The **morning symposia** held immediately before many UCET forum meetings continue to prove very popular and we are very grateful to the volunteers to help lead them. The UCET Executive has suggested that these include a common theme, and in the year ahead it has been suggested they cover (amongst other things) **Equalities and Diversity** issues. A number of EDI-related events have already been arranged.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and peaceful new year.

December 2023

