UCET
Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

Promoting Quality in Teacher Education



UCET December 2024 Newsletter

A great deal of UCET activity in England since the July General Election has involved discussions with senior civil servants about the recommendations contained in UCET's pre-election manifesto/briefing paper and in UCET's summer letters to newly-appointed ministers:

- News: Letter to Catherine McKinnell, MP, Minister of State for Schools | UCET
- Letter to Rt. Hon. Jacquie Smith MP, Secretary of State for Education | UCET
- Response from Rt. Hon. Baroness Jacqui Smith, Secretary of State for Education (FE & Skills sector - July 2024) | UCET
- Response from Rt. Hon. Catharine McKinnell, Minister for School Standards | UCET

For more news and information, please visit:
www.ucet.ac.uk/news

Email: info@ucet.ac.uk

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It was encouraging that DfE sought meetings with UCET about our election manifesto, where initial discussions focused on the impact of the 20-hour mentor training requirement on school placement capacity (informed by the results of a UCET survey) and on giving ITE providers who lost their accreditation through the previous government's Market Review process to re-apply for accreditation.

These discussions appear to have borne fruit, with the government announcing on 13 November that the 20-hour training requirement for general school mentors would be revoked, and that de-accredited ITE providers who are acting as lead partners in 2024/25 will have the opportunity to re-apply for accreditation to deliver ITE from either September 2026 or September 2027.

Expectations about the content and coverage of training for mentors, and the knowledge and skills they require, has not of course changed and colleagues should take care not to reduce training coverage to the extent that they might fall foul of the ITT Quality Requirements. What has changed, and for the better, is that providers now have greater flexibility about how to achieve the required outcomes.

UCET will be holding further discussions with DfE on re-accreditation and we are pressing for the process to be as collegiate, supportive and light-touch as possible. We will keep everyone in touch with developments.

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DfE: Initial Teacher Training (ITT): Mentor Training Times | UCET

and

Initial Teacher Training (ITT): Accreditation Process Frequently Asked Questions (November 2024) | UCET

OFSTED Inspections 2024-2025

We also, with NASBTT, pressed OfSTED and DfE to pause Ofsted inspections in 2024/25 to allow time for the new ITT Quality Requirements to bed in, to reduce pressures on ITE providers and their partner schools and colleges and to avoid the risk that different providers might be inspected under different inspection frameworks during the same inspection cycle. We are very pleased that DfE and Ofsted have listened to us and agreed to a pause:

https://www.ucet.ac.uk/16327/ofsted-ite-inspections

We have also asked that the Market Review related decision to introduce a three-year inspection cycle be reversed; a decision on this is pending. Discussions about the development of a new inspection framework for 2025/26 will begin soon.

JNR was pleased to have a meeting with Catherine McKinnell, Minister for School Standards, on 25 November where a number of policy issues were discussed, including:

- The further relaxation of the ITE Quality Criteria (for example in respect of Lead Mentor training, ITAP and the 80% contact ratio), where we think that the focus should be on the quality of student teacher outcomes rather than on crude input measures;

- Taking forward discussions about the interface between ITE and EPD, and the contribution that master's level CPD can bring to teachers' ongoing professional development.

On the FE & Skills side of things, members of the Post 16 forum have been engaging with DfE and the ETF on a number of matters, including securing greater parity with the QTS sector, for example in terms of the award of QTLS and financial support for student teachers.

In the medium term, we can expect a continuation of the previous government's policy of partial re-regulation of the sector, moving away from the reforms introduced following Lord Lingfield's 2014 report into the regulation of the sector.

In other parts of the UK, JNR has taken over from Jackie Moses on representing UCET on the Scottish Deans of Education forum, while in Wales USCET members recently had a productive meeting on teacher education and teacher supply with the incoming Cabinet Secretary.

In Northern Ireland, UCETNI has been involved in discussions with Government about:

- Workforce planning, and the process for accrediting ITE programmes;
- The development of flexible routes, with a UCETNI working group taking the lead.

UCETNI members have also met with members of the team leading on the review of the school curriculum in Northern Ireland.

UCET Workshops Autumn Term 2024

UCET has held a number of successful workshops (leaving free symposia time for discussions on inclusion & diversity) on QTS apprenticeships:

The provision of support for international students and the role of external examiners.

Supporting International Students workshop: 18 November 2024 | UCET

Please contact us at info@ucet.ac.uk if you are interested in receiving the recording of the external examiners workshop.



UCET Annual Conference 2024

The 2024 UCET conference in Leeds on 12-13 November was a great success, with approaching 250 delegates attending.

For the first time this year it was agreed that all keynote and plenary sessions would have to address the theme of the conference, which was: ‘a space in which to create and celebrate inquiry rich teacher education’, which ensured a research rich and scholarly focus for the whole event, with a lot of content drawn from the work of the UCET Intellectual Base of Teacher Education (IBTE) group’s work.

We are very grateful to everyone who attended, to those who led workshops and contributed to plenary sessions, and of course to our magnificent Dolly Parton tribute. Special thanks go to the following for their keynote and plenary sessions: Clare Brooks; Christine Counsell; Lynda Dunlop; Joseph Mintz; Lisa Murtagh; Trevor Mutton; Rupert Knight; Stefanie Sullivan; Paul Vare; Adam Vasco; Aimee Quickfall; and Phil Wood.

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UCET Blog

One outcome of the conference was an agreement to launch a new UCET blog which will give opportunities to colleagues from across the UCET membership to write articles, showcase their research and share their ideas.

We are delighted that Keither Parker (York St. John) will lead work on the blog.

Please keep an eye out for further information.

The various working groups are going from strength to strength, with membership of the Artificial Intelligence, Climate Change, Equalities, Partnership, Early Years and Institutional Issues groups ever increasing.

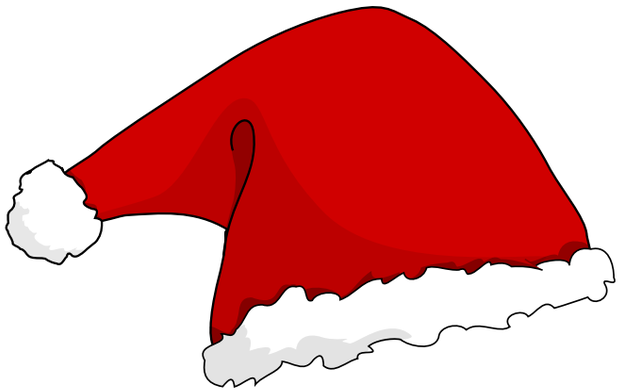
We are very grateful to colleagues who lead and contribute to the work of these groups.

UCET colleagues, have, as ever, attended a range of meetings on behalf of the membership over the course of the term.

These meetings include:

- regular catch-ups with DfE and Ofsted;
- Conferences at Huddersfield, Anglia Ruskin and the University of East London;
- discussions with Ambition Institute, the Literacy Hub, the Education and Training Foundation and the joint UUK/Guild HE Teacher Education Advisory Group (TEAG).

Wishing all UCET members a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.



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