UCET
Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

Promoting Quality in Teacher Education



UCET Summer 2025 Newsletter

A significant event in England since the last newsletter was the news that all six of the HEIs that applied for reaccreditation to deliver QTS programmes from September 2026 have been successful.

Well done to you all and many thanks to those who helped with the process. A great wrong has, at least in part, been righted.

Another accreditation window, for those wishing to deliver programmes from September 2027, will open in the autumn and we are pressing it to be available to all previously accredited providers, and not only those who are currently acting as lead partners.

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

Email: info@ucet.ac.uk

UCET is a registered charity (no. 275082).

It has been confirmed that grant funding for mentor training and ITAPs will be continued beyond the current academic year. UCET has argued that: support for school-based mentors will aid on-programme retention and therefore the government's 6,500 new teachers policy, and that ITAPs were a new centrally-imposed requirement on ITE programmes and require additional support if they are to continue in their current form.

UCET carried out a survey on the effectiveness of grant funding and the impact that its loss would have. The results have been shared with DfE and, through them, with Treasury. Key results included:

- 84% thought that grant funding for mentors had a positive impact on the quality of mentor training;
- 74% said that mentor funding had a positive impact on retention;
- 71% said it had a positive impact on securing placements;
- 56% said that ITAPs have improved the quality and effectiveness of ITE programmes;
- 84% think that ITAPs would have to change if grant funding is not available.

Many thanks to all of you who responded to the survey.

Quality Requirements : 80% teaching contact time

The requirement that all student teachers experience 80% of a teacher's teaching timetable (as defined by the school) for a six-week period has been identified by UCET as one of the Quality Requirements that needs to be relaxed.

We have been collecting feedback from members and have carried out a survey which found that the requirement was increasing pressure on both schools and student teachers, was preventing providers from spending time on other important activities and was having a negative impact on placements, especially for those training to teach pupils in their GCSE year.

Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship (PGTA)

Welcome changes have been made to the postgraduate teaching apprenticeship (PGTA), notably (after many years of pressure) the reduction on the minimum length of programmes which will allow the award of QTS and the End Point Assessment (EPA) to be brought into line, thus reducing the risk of apprentices leaving between the time they are awarded QTS and the EPA, and the need for providers to provide new learning experiences during the same period.

Details of the announcement can be found at:
https://www.ucet.ac.uk/16763/pgta-reforms-qa

The new undergraduate TDA programmes will begin in September, with the funded maths pilots and other programmes currently recruiting. Advice from the DfE and the Trailblazer group is that programmes should include a minimum of 2,200 off-the-job (OTJ) training hours, although this won't be a structural requirement until 2026/27 and 1,200 are technically allowed in the interim. Guidance is also that programmes last for at least four years

Ofsted consultation results

The results of the Ofsted consultation will not now be announced until September 2025. UCET and NASBTT asked that the start of inspections be delayed from January 2026 to September 2026 to give providers time to adjust their programmes, but this request was declined. The ITE Quality Requirements will not however change because of the inspection framework so existing programme structures can remain in place.

UCET has had constructive meetings with senior Ofsted colleagues about the new framework, covering concerns that we raised in our consultation response about the draft ITE toolkit and some of the metrics it has been suggested be used in making judgements about ITE provision, and we are hopeful that we will have some influence.

Thematic Monitoring Visits by Ofsted have now come to an end, and we are grateful to everyone who shared their experiences with us, which allowed us to feedback to Ofsted about the intensive nature of the visits and the workload they entailed for providers and partner schools and colleges.

Measures to be taken by DfE to improve the quality of ITE for the **FE & Skills sector** include requiring providers to:

- Register as an FE ITE provider with the DfE and provide information on courses and students to give DfE a more accurate picture about the shape and size of the FE ITE provider market;
- Have regard to guidance published by the Secretary of State on standards for the delivery of FE ITE courses;
- And to take account of guidance from the Secretary of State on curriculum and content standards for FE ITE courses.

Requirements to register programmes with DfE fall short of an accreditation process and we think that it is reasonable for DfE to collect information on the size, shape and coverage of ITE provision. We will however have to keep a close eye on programme prescription, where we think existing requirements in regard to the DIT criteria and the Occupational Standards are sufficient to give DfE any reassurances that it needs.

UCET Equalities Group

Vini Lander has stood down as Chair of the UCET Equalities group after several years of outstanding service. The new Chair is Balbir Kaur (Nottingham).

Recent discussions have covered:

Research carried out by colleagues from Worcester about accents and speech;

Trans issues and the implications of the recent Supreme Court judgement;

An update on case studies for the Anti-Racism Framework;

The third hearing of the Teaching Commission on racism in relation to teacher recruitment;

The launch of the NEU's *Thinking beyond the box* and the possible development of a knowledge and exchange repository.

Two new self-sustaining working groups are being established by UCET. These are: partnership and mentor support and supporting international students. Please contact m.fincher@ucet.ac.uk if you are interested in joining either, or both, of these.

Work is progressing on the new UCET blog. Please keep an eye out for invitations to submit articles, opinion pieces, research findings, reflections etc. We are very keen to have inputs from people across UCET's diverse membership and from people at all stages in their careers.

Other UCET working groups:

- **Sustainability and Climate Change**
- **Artificial Intelligence & ITE**

Please contact info@ucet.ac.uk if you would like to join any of these groups.

UCET has, as ever, attended various meetings on behalf of our members. As well as those already mentioned, we have represented the sector at:

- Westminster Education Forum (at which JNR spoke);
- An FE and Skills teacher education conference in Huddersfield (at which JNR also spoke);
- Meetings with DfE about reform grant funding, Apply changes, Assessment Only and the ITTECF;
- The apprenticeship Trailblazer Group, the UUK/Guild HE Teacher Education Advisory Group, and the ETF's ITE forum.

JNR has also visited some member institutions and would be more than happy to visit some more.



UCET Annual Conference 2025

Registration for the 2025 UCET conference, which will take place in Leeds on 11-12 November, is now open at: www.ucet.ac.uk/conference

The theme will be ‘How can Teachers and Teacher Educators develop as inquiring professionals’.

Keynotes agreed so far include:

- Anne Phelan, University of British Columbia, Canada.
- Daniel Muijis, Queen’s University Belfast
- Caroline Daly, UCL, IoE
- Rupert Knight, Nottingham

The evening entertainment will be a Madness tribute. Applications for symposia and workshops, which should relate to the conference theme, have been invited with a deadline of 31 July. Please send to j.noble-rogers@ucet.ac.uk. We hope to see you all there.



Wishing everyone a long and happy summer break.

UCET July 2025