UCET
Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

Promoting Quality in Teacher Education



UCET December 2025 Newsletter

The big UCET event of the term was of course the **annual conference** which took place at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds on 11-12 November, and our thanks go to the excellent keynote speakers: Anne Phelan; Caroline Daly, Rupert Knight, Jo McIntyre & Trevor Mutton; and Daniel Muijs.

Thanks also to the brilliant workshop & symposia leads, to Andy Howes for chairing the ''drinks with James' session, to the fabulous Madness tribute and, especially, to everyone who attended. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

This was, as you all know, JNR's last UCET conference as Executive Director, which he first attended in 2004. He would like to pass his deep thanks onto all his friends and colleagues for the kind words and stunning presents, made on what was his 22nd and final UCET conference as Executive Director. His place next year will be taken by our new Executive Director.....

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

Email: info@ucet.ac.uk

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Key Policy Developments (England only)

There were a number of key policy developments in England during the term. The new Ofsted inspection framework/toolkit for ITE was published in September, and we were pleased to see that many of the concerns raised by UCET during the preceding consultation have been addressed:

Inspections will begin in January 2026, and we will be sharing feedback from members about how they are going. We were also pleased to host two workshops with Ofsted about the new framework, which several hundred people attended. Ofsted also published a report on the outcome of the Thematic Monitoring Visits (TMVs) that it carried out in 2024/25 which painted a positive picture of ITE across the early years, primary, secondary and FE & Skills phases. A copy of the report can be found here.

A joint UCET symposium: Wolverhampton University, 3rd March 2026

A joint UCET symposium, on the general theme of 'belonging', and which members of all UCET forums are welcome to attend, will be held at Wolverhampton University on 3 March. The event is free.

This will replace the morning symposia for the Assembly, Primary and Secondary forums in the first term of 2026, although other forums might still hold their own symposia as usual. Further information will be announced in due course.

Teacher Degree Apprenticeships (TDA)

On the Teacher Degree Apprenticeship (TDA), DfE has confirmed that its preferred option is that apprentices receive at least 2,200 off the job training hours and that programmes last for four years (although other options are technically allowed). The DfE's preferred option is in line with the Trailblazer Group recommendations .

We will keep colleagues in touch about the discussions we are having with DfE about this issue. New guidance on End Point Assesments has been published here.

UCET will be holding another workshop on apprenticeships in the Spring term. If you would like to attend, please register your interest here.

Updated ITE Requirements

DfE finally published the updated ITE requirements document at the end of October, although a summary of the minor changes made was issued earlier.

Amongst other things, the new requirements confirmed that the tuition fee cap for ITE programmes has increased (in line with that for undergraduate programmes) to £9,535. Fee caps for future years will be calculated on a similar basis, although we will be discussing with DfE whether the link to TEF outcomes that will apply to general UG courses are appropriate for ITE.

Also on funding, DfE confirmed a continuation of ITE grant funding for the ITE reforms in July with detailed guidance in October, which can be found here.

Details of financial support for ITE students (including those in the FE & Skills sector) were also published in October.

Finally, on QTS programmes in England, UCET has recently issued a note on DBS requirements, which can be found at: News: DBS guidance (October 2025) | UCET

The government's move to re-regulate **ITE for FE & Skills sector** continues, with a call for evidence (https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/fe-teacher-training-and-development-call-for-evidence) which will inform the development of curriculum guidance for ITE which will apply from September 2027.

The final guidance will be developed by an Expert Advisory Group, on which UCET is represented.

Another key policy development is the announcement that DfE will work with the sector on reviewing how professional status (QTLS) for the sector is achieved, with a view to closer alignment with the processes that apply in the schools' sector. UCET, which has long argued for QTLS to be awarded on completion of a recognised programme of ITE instead of (as now) a subsequent period of professional formation, has welcomed this development.

UCET Equalities Group

The Equalities Group, now chaired by Balbir Kaur, continues to go from strenght to strength, and has recently been looking at the impact on students of the current discourse around immigration, the demonstrations that have taken place in some areas and the 'othering' and problematization of people from minority backgrounds.

Other issues discussed include:

- **the development by colleagues from Reading of an anti-racism policy for teacher education;**
- **feedback on the ITE student survey and the support it is now receiving from DfE;**
- **discussions taking place with parliamentarians; and research into supporting trans-gender ITE students in the light of recent court judgements.**

If you would like to join the group, please contact Max: m.fincher@ucet.ac.uk

The Research and International Forum was pleased to welcome REF Education sub-panel chair Dominic Wyse to its October meeting, and we will be keeping members informed about all key REF issues, and in touch with Dominic, as the 2029 exercise approaches.

Also on the research front, the new ITE Research Network led by Aimee Quickfall is going great guns; anyone interested in joining the mailing list can do so at https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/EG3W5hH28m

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UCET Teacher Education Blog

We were delighted in November to see the publication of the first of the new UCET blogs, by Professor Trevor Mutton and Professor Stefanie Sullivan, and which can be found at: https://www.ucet.ac.uk/blog/16999/who-cares-about-the-ibte-we-do-and-were-going-to-tell-you-why

Many thanks to Keither Parker for leading the work on this and to Max Fincher for providing the support. We would like to encourage all colleagues, including those who may not have published before, to submit blog proposals. Details of how to do this can be found at: UCET Teacher Education Blog | UCET.

USCET Cymru and UCETNI

In Wales, the development by Welsh Government of a strategy for ITE and an implementation plan (in discussion with members of USCET) will be taken forward following publication of the Strategic Education Workforce Plan. UCET are also contributing to a review of ITE reforms in Wales being led by Alma Economics (who are also leading a review of recent ITE reforms in England). Bursaries for ITE students have also been confirmed.

In Northern Ireland, Professor Daniel Muijs from Queen's University Belfast has been commissioned by the Department of Education to develop a Core Content Framework for ITE, which UCETNI members will be contributing to.

Some £31 million of funding over three years has been made available in NI to support CPD for teachers, some of which will we hope be used to fund Master's level professional development, and funding has for the first time been made available to provide bursaries to support ITE students in some secondary subjects.

Representation for Members

As well as our regular meetings, we have been representing our members at the following meetings & events:

- Regular three-way catch ups with NASBTT and DfE;
- the Education & Training Foundation's ITE working group;
- the Scottish Deans of Education;
- the Global Deans of Education Network;
- the Expert advisory and steering groups for the DfE review of the Market Review ITE reforms;
- Ofsted catch ups and Ofsted webinars;
- the DfE start of recruitment cycle webinar; the Gatsby Foundation FE & Skills ITE group; the annual NASBTT conference and 25th anniversary dinner.
- the Welsh Government's termly ITE stakeholder meeting; and meetings with DE in NI to discuss the new CCF.



Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy new year. 2026 is likely to be a key year for UCET, with the taking up of post by the new Executive Director and the development of a new strategy.

We look forward to seeing you all then.

UCET December 2025