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Rt Hon Anne Milton MP
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James Noble-Rogers
Executive Director
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4th March 2019

Dear Mr Noble-Rogers

Thank you very much for your letter of 14 February, following our meeting of 12 February, summarising the main areas we discussed.

Ensuring that high-quality training and development opportunities are available for all teachers in the Further Education (FE) sector is extremely important to me, and I was grateful to you for setting out your thoughts on some key issues.

As regards accountability for providers of initial teacher education (ITE), I recognise that the current system of inspection by Ofsted examines only a small tranche of overall FE ITE provision. Departmental officials are actively looking at how we can get a more representative picture of the quality of provision across the whole system in future – and will of course be working closely with Ofsted as the new ITE inspection framework is developed.

We will be looking carefully at how the proposals in our recent Recruitment and Retention Strategy for school teachers might inform the support we can provide to FE teachers. Although the needs of teachers in the two sectors can be different, there are clearly areas – such as the importance of high-quality early career development – where we will want to look at what more we can do to support teachers in post-16 settings.

I understand that you were disappointed by our decision to discontinue the FE ITE bursaries programme beyond the current academic year. I would like to assure you that we are taking a broader view of teacher recruitment and retention challenges across the sector, and I will be pressing for greater investment in the FE teaching workforce at the forthcoming Spending Review.

I very much appreciate you raising these important issues with me, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that we have a strong and vibrant teacher training offer fit for the FE sector.

Best wishes

Anne M. H.

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