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HEFCW/07/67
ANNEX A

Eich cyf * Your ref
Ein cyf * Our ref SF/CJ/5077/07

27 July 2007

Dear Professor Gummett

INITIAL TEACHING TRAINING RECONFIGURATION - HEFCW REPORT

1. Thank you for your letter of 8 May 2007 and the accompanying annex containing further information on a number of points on the advice on the reconfiguration of the initial teacher training (ITT) sector in Wales which you previously submitted to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Mrs Jane Davidson AM, on 30 November 2006.
2. The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Ms Jane Hutt AM, is grateful for the advice and further information which you have set out and has considered this alongside the outline plan which you provided last year. Overall, we think that HEFCW has produced a viable outline plan for ITT reconfiguration. There is clearly much more work needed to put all the details into place, but we appreciate the amount of information and detail which can be provided is now at the limit of what is possible unless a go-ahead is given for the general approach.
3. The Welsh Assembly Government is therefore content in principle for HEFCW to proceed on the basis set out in its outline plan of 30 November 2006 as amplified by the subsequent additional material of 8 May 2007 ("the documents"). HEFCW is therefore asked to work towards an ITT sector reconfigured on this basis, in partnership with the ITT institutions. The main points which must be achieved by this reconfiguration work are:-
 - (a) three collaborative ITT Schools, each with two current providers in partnership, but with structure, organisation and portfolios varying according to the individual proposals set out in the documents. These should comprise:
 - one covering North and Mid Wales, to be provided by the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and the University of Wales, Bangor
 - one covering South-West Wales, to be provided by Swansea Institute and Trinity College, Carmarthen
 - one covering South-East Wales, to be provided by the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff and the University of Wales, Newport;

- (b) consequently, ITT in the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education (NEWI) should cease;
 - (c) ITT numbers allocated in 2006/07 which are not utilised in intake targets set for entry years up to and including 2010/11 should be redeployed within institutions in other HE education-related work in line with Assembly Government workforce planning priorities; and
 - (d) all three ITT Schools to be substantially complete and able to receive intake numbers on the reconfigured basis by September 2010.
4. Additionally, in respect of more specific proposals for primary provision:-
- (a) we agree that HEFCW should protect Welsh medium provision and diverse access by the retention of a measure of undergraduate provision;
 - (b) we agree that this should be delivered by giving priority to ring-fencing Welsh medium numbers, based on the current regional pattern and volume. We note that this means that it is unlikely to be equally divided amongst the three providers;
 - (c) on diversity we note HEFCW's view that the current ITT profile already includes a significant widening access dimension which will continue. We would like HEFCW to monitor trends in this area and include in its reports assessments of the state of access diversity in ITT, with where necessary any proposals to require providers to take actions to maintain a diverse intake in future ITT strategies; and
 - (d) we agree that for postgraduate provision, Welsh medium targets should not be introduced at the moment while reconfiguration work is in progress. HEFCW should monitor performance and advise in reports if any future action is considered to be needed.
5. In respect of more specific proposals for secondary provision:-
- (a) we have noted HEFCW have considered whether any secondary undergraduate provision could be converted to postgraduate. We agree that as current provision is relatively small, is a significant route for diverse entry and is all in priority subject areas, this issue should be left for the moment. We will reconsider as reconfiguration work progresses in the light of whether plans to incorporate secondary undergraduate provision in the new provider set-up appear to be sensible and coherent;
 - (b) we agree with the aim of organising secondary undergraduate provision on the current regional pattern and volume but with some protection for Welsh medium numbers; and
 - (c) for secondary postgraduate provision we note that the current regional pattern will be the starting point, modified where necessary to take account of the new providers. We agree that Welsh medium targets should not be introduced at the moment while reconfiguration work is in progress. HEFCW should monitor performance and advise in reports if any future action is considered to be needed.
6. As noted above, this is a decision in principle. It provides clarity about what we want to see happen, so that HEFCW and the institutions can undertake further planning with a clear set of overall directions. We recognise that more work is needed to put all the details into place.

7. This decision in principle is therefore the first stage of a process of ongoing development, with issues being dealt with as and when they arise in the future. In particular, HEFCW should produce further reports on a regular basis as details are firmed up, seeking approval for an increasingly refined reconfiguration plan and, where necessary, agreement on particular issues. The first report should be submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government by the Council by no later than the end of March 2008. This report should note any information made available by or correspondence from institutions to HEFCW which supports, informs or otherwise relates to the report, and copies of these should be provided to the Welsh Assembly Government if requested.

8. These reports will need to include a specific section on the developing proposals for utilising numbers no longer needed for ITT. It should be emphasised that that this alternative provision will need to comply with the Assembly Government's workforce planning priorities as described in our remit letter of 22 May 2006, on the developing basis set out in the documents - in particular, paragraphs 3.1 - 3.14 of annex A to your letter of 8 May 2007. In NEWI's case, as it felt that it could not make any proposals until a decision was taken on its future role in relation to ITT, this will mean working up a first set of proposals for the March 2008 report. We will not be able to move from an agreement in principle to full confirmation until firm details of alternative provision are known and approved.

9. On transitional costs, we can say that in principle transitional costs which are clearly and specifically a consequence of the ITT reconfiguration scheme will be met by the Welsh Assembly Government (via a funding mechanism to be agreed separately). However, the transitional costs must be the subject of regular reports for the Welsh Assembly Government's approval. These reports must update the detail; specify in more detail what the costs will cover, why they are needed and why they are clearly and specifically a consequence of the ITT reconfiguration scheme; and provide updated resource timescales showing what funds will be needed for which parts of the project at what times. These reports should accompany the main reports, with, as noted above, the first being due by no later than the end of March 2008.

10. We have noted that there is no consensus view from the sector as to whether a higher pro-rata level of resource is required to make the reduced future ITT provision sustainable over the longer term. HEFCW should continue to pursue this question with the providers. This issue should be tracked as work progresses and updates and further information covered in the reports to the Welsh Assembly Government.

11. We have noted HEFCW's view that would not be appropriate to fund changes in education research capacity from the resources freed up from ITT. We particularly noted your view that this could destabilise ITT reconfiguration, since the use of the released numbers for non-ITT education provision is needed to contribute to providing a viable environment for the continuation of ITT with reduced intake targets. In view of this we think that any initiative on changes in education research capacity will need to take place outside the scope of the ITT Change Plan in general and the ITT reconfiguration scheme in particular. The Welsh Assembly Government will contact HEFCW separately about this once any options for how this might be taken forward have been considered. The work on securing support through ESRC may be a useful start subject to the sector's proposal being accepted and we were grateful for the rapid work by HEFCW on this.

12. HEFCW should now take this work forward, as before working in close collaboration with the sector. I would be grateful if HEFCW could inform vice-chancellors of institutions, heads of schools of education, UCET Cymru and HEW (and other interested organisations as appropriate) of the contents of this letter as the next step in this process.

Yours sincerely

Philip J Rogers
Head of Practitioner Division - Higher Learning Group