

Meeting
04/07/08

Agenda Item
19

Reference No
HEFCW/08/50

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper provides for information, the annual report on progress in meeting the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales' (HEFCW) remit for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and updates members on other relevant developments.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The Council was given responsibility, under the Education Act 1994, for the funding of teacher training for school teachers and the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales. Responsibility for accrediting ITT providers has been confirmed by the 2002 Education Act. We report annually to Council on progress against our remit for ITT. When Members received last year's paper, there was also a request for an update on wider activities relevant to ITT.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. note the outcomes of the 2006/07 ITT inspection and the programme of inspections in 2007/08;
 - ii. note the progress made in meeting the remit for ITT;
 - iii. note the information on other ITT related activities.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 There are no timing implications. The paper is for information only.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 The Chief Executive has declared that his partner is employed in teacher training in Swansea Metropolitan University.

6 Further information

Contact Kate Stevenson (Tel 029 2968 2285; E-mail:
kate.stevenson@hefcw.ac.uk)

7 Background

- 7.1 The Council was given responsibility, under the Education Act 1994, for the funding of teacher training for school teachers and the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales. Responsibility for accrediting ITT providers has been confirmed by the 2002 Education Act. Following the 1994 Act, our particular responsibilities for ITT were detailed in the remit letter from the then Secretary of State in October 1994. The major areas of responsibility given in the letter were: funding teacher training; accreditation of providers of initial training for school teachers; and carrying out or commissioning research to improve the standards of teaching and teacher training.
- 7.2 From these responsibilities stemmed tasks such as: allocation of intake targets; quality and standards; ensuring the cost-effectiveness and diversity of ITT provision; the development and maintenance of the system of institutional accreditation; relations with other bodies and the provision of advice to the Secretary of State (and now the Welsh Assembly Government). The letter also stated that the Council and the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales, now entitled Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, and renamed Estyn, would wish to consider jointly the priorities or an inspection programme.
- 7.3 In May 2006 we received a remit from the Welsh Assembly Government to work with the sector on the reconfiguration of ITT provision in Wales. This followed the Furlong review of ITT provision commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government, which indicated the need to reduce the number of teachers trained in Wales. The Council has received progress reports and discussed developments on ITT reconfiguration regularly since the publication of the review report in January 2006. We are therefore not covering this topic specifically in this paper. However, some of the other matters in the paper have a bearing on ITT reconfiguration.

8 Annual Report on progress in meeting the Council's remit for ITT.

Estyn Inspection

- 8.1 Up until 2003, the Council had a specific role in approving the programme and priorities for Estyn inspection. Responsibility for setting these now rests with Estyn and they are approved by the Welsh Assembly Government as part of Estyn's remit. Nonetheless, HEFCW officers still discuss priorities and themes regularly with Estyn and Welsh Assembly Government officials.
- 8.2 The current cycle of Estyn inspection of ITT providers began in 2002/03 and ends in 2007/08.
- 8.3 **2006/07:** We reported to Council in September 2007 that, following its inspection of ITT provision at Aberystwyth University (AU), Estyn deemed AU to be non-compliant with the Welsh Assembly Government's requirements for ITT, specifically on quality assurance requirements. As HEFCW has statutory responsibility for accrediting ITT providers, this brought into play HEFCW's procedures for the withdrawal of accreditation, which required the institution to submit and agree an action plan with HEFCW and Estyn to address the non-compliance. This action plan was agreed in November 2007. We also agreed

that Estyn would undertake an interim progress visit in mid-February and a re-inspection in June/July 2008.

- 8.4 Estyn made its interim progress visit to the University on 29 February 2008. The visit focused on assessing the processes that the AU was putting into place in order to address issues of non-compliance. Estyn was not able to review all issues during the visit as the evidence for some will not be available until the end of the 2007/08 academic year.
- 8.5 Estyn has indicated that AU is making good progress towards achieving compliance and that significant improvements have been made in line with AU's Action Plan. However, Estyn will only be able to make a final judgement on whether AU's ITT provision is now compliant after completing the re-inspection in late June/early July 2008.
- 8.6 **2007/08:** Estyn has completed its inspection of Trinity College Carmarthen (TCC) and will publish its report in later in the summer.
- 8.7 The Council granted provisional accreditation to the Open University (OU) in Wales in March 2007. Estyn is undertaking an inspection of the OU's provision in the later stages of the Summer Term 2007/08. Estyn will then make a recommendation to us, whether they think the OU's accreditation should be confirmed.
- 8.8 We have had officer level discussions with Estyn and the Assembly Government on possible approaches following the completion of the current cycle in 2007/08. For other areas of Estyn's responsibilities a new six-year cycle is not scheduled to begin until 2010/11 and they are also consulting on a new inspection framework. In the light of that, Estyn are considering a two-year interim cycle for ITT, possibly on a themed basis, which could prove helpful for institutions during the transition to a reconfigured sector.

Other remit activities

- 8.9 **Annex A** provides a summary of actions taken during the year with regard to the Council's remit for ITT, under the headings: Accreditation; Funding; Recruitment and Liaison. The Annex also includes some information on other developments relevant to ITT.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 There are no immediate financial implications to this paper. The financial implications noted in **Annex A** have been covered in previous Council Papers.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 The Estyn report on the inspection on AU was published in August 2007 and is available on Estyn's website. It has primarily been for AU to deal with publicity arising from the report. Estyn will also publish the reports of their inspections of TCC and the OUW on their website in due course.

10.2 We will consider any publicity implications arising from the re-inspection of AU once we have received Estyn’s report.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

11.1 We undertook an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the revised ITT Accreditation Procedures prior to their publication. The changes made as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment were minor adjustments, which made the document more accessible to a wider audience.

11.2 We expect, in any future requests for ITT strategies from the reconfigured sector, to ask institutions to identify actions to support a diverse intake to ITT. We will also need to consider further the equalities implications of the changes in ITT provision.

11.3 We expect institutions to continue to address the need for Welsh medium teachers and course provision in their recruitment activities.

12 Risk Assessment

12.1

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
Estyn Inspections	
Failure by institutions to reach acceptable outcomes in Estyn inspections, with consequential implications for the students concerned, the provision at, and the reputation of, the institution concerned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close working with Estyn to ensure that we are informed of emerging problems at an early stage. • Working with Estyn and the sector to address any issues. • ITT Strategy Funding supports institutions in actions to improve quality of provision; the student experience, and school partnerships. Officers monitor these through the AMS process.
Attendance at liaison meetings	
HEFCW officers’ inability to attend meetings could lead to misunderstanding within the sector regarding HEFCW policies as well as a lack of information being fed to HEFCW which could directly affect a number of areas of our work in ITT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued HEFCW presence at liaison meetings. • Ensure that partners have accurate information concerning funding strategies and intake targets. • Ensure that partners have the latest information regarding all HEFCW policies directly affecting the sector.
Nomenclature of Post Graduate Courses	
Inconsistency could lead to problems with recruitment; the reputation of the institutions, as well as affecting student experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close working with the Welsh Assembly Government and the sector to resolve these issues. • Liaison with the QAA to keep abreast of English and UK developments.