

**To: Heads of higher education institutions
in Wales providing initial teacher training
(ITT) courses**

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INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING (ITT) PARTNERSHIP STUDY IN WALES

I am pleased to confirm that the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has commissioned Education Data Surveys Ltd (EDS) to undertake an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Partnership Study in Wales.

Undertaken over a five month period, commencing February 2004, EDS will study the effectiveness of ITT partnerships in Wales, examining in particular, the cost and operational aspects of partnership as well as building on the good practice already developed across the HE sector in England and Wales. A desk-based study will be undertaken on the effectiveness of ITT Partnership practices in England and Wales. Fieldwork will consist of interviews, focus groups and questionnaires to elicit qualitative and quantitative information with staff at associated bodies, and trainees and staff from HEIs and partner schools in Wales.

Some of the issues they will be exploring are:

- I. the actual running costs of ITT partnerships to both HEIs and partner schools over the last five years in Wales;
- II. the cost implications of providing additional school-based support for improving the Welsh of trainee teachers in Welsh-medium schools;
- III. the advantages and disadvantages of developing a national rate in Wales for payments to schools in ITT partnerships;
- iv. the strengths and weaknesses of developing unified operational structures for ITT partnership arrangements, to include standard proformas, guidelines, assessment criteria, mentor training etc, and assess whether there would be any significant Welsh medium implications associated with such operational change;
- v. the specific issues associated with partnerships in small rural schools.

EDS will be contacting ITT providing institutions, and related organisations shortly. We are sure you will want to contribute fully to the study so that as wide a range of viewpoints as possible can be taken into account. The main contact at EDS for the study will be Professor John Howson.

The EDS study forms the second phase of the HEFCW ITT Partnership initiative, undertaken between 1998 – 2001, to strengthen ITT school partnership arrangements, and advance good practice in mentoring following the publication of an Estyn report focusing on this aspect of Primary ITT in Wales. A total of nine projects were funded under the first phase initiative. Eight of these were able to report their findings to a dissemination seminar, held in December 2000. The eight reports, alongside a report on the ninth project, which was working to a longer timetable, have been incorporated into an outcomes publication, attached to this circular for information. We hope that this phase one outcomes publication will facilitate the building of good practice in mentoring.

A report on the outcomes of the ITT Partnership Study will be considered by the Council in October 2004.

We will greatly appreciate your active support for this important work.

PROFESSOR PHILIP GUMMETT
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE