
INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING (ITT) PARTNERSHIP: CONSULTATION OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

23 May 2005

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To: Heads of ITT providing higher education institutions in Wales

Summary: This circular outlines progress made by the Council in supporting ITT Partnership in Wales, the outcomes of the recent consultation and proposed next steps.

Response by: No response required

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 This circular outlines progress made by the Council in supporting ITT Partnership in Wales, the outcomes of the recent consultation and proposed next steps.

BACKGROUND

- 2 Education Data Surveys (EDS) were commissioned by HEFCW to undertake a study of ITT partnership, commencing in February 2004. The brief was to examine, in particular, the cost and operational aspects of ITT partnership, as well as building on the good practice already developed across the HE sector in England and Wales. The final report was received in July 2004, and was circulated to the sector in October 2004 (Circular W04/63HE refers).
- 3 The recommendations and conclusions of the report were considered at the late September 2004 Council meeting. Members agreed that future Council action should fall into two areas:
 - i. Issues that could be pursued immediately, namely: (a) publishing the report; (b) establishing an internal officers group to examine the financial recommendations arising from the study; and (c), initiating discussions of the study outcomes with Estyn and Welsh Assembly Government officers.
 - ii. Issues for further consultation with the sector, including: (a) the possibility of reforming the system of ITT partnership payment; (b) mechanisms to oversee ITT partnerships in Wales; (c) mechanisms for enhancing the commitment of schools; and (d), the development of a unified approach to administrative arrangements.
- 4 Authority was delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise consultation arrangements. The outcomes of the consultation process were considered at the May 2005 Council meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT ON IMMEDIATE ISSUES

- 5 Following publication of the EDS report in October 2004, officers initiated a series of internal discussions on the financial recommendations of the study, taking account of the uncertainty across the sector of the impact of the Assembly review on ITT provision, due to be completed in Autumn 2005. As indicated in the EDS report, many ITT providers subsidise their secondary phase provision by recruiting well to primary phase provision. Reductions in primary targets applied by the Assembly from 2005/06 onwards may therefore impact upon the viability of some smaller departments and institutions, including those offering Welsh Medium provision, and support for ITT partnership arrangements. At its March 2005 meeting, the Council were advised of these concerns and agreed to allocate additional funding to support the ongoing viability of ITT provision until the outcomes of the ITT review are known (Circular W05/26HE refers).
- 6 The report recommended that the Council should consider the effectiveness of its Hyfforddi Athrawon/Teacher Training (HATT) initiative as a means of increasing provision via distance learning and whether additional research into distance learning is necessary. The final report on the HATT initiative was submitted to the Council in March 2005. Officers are now in the process of confirming arrangements for an evaluation of HATT to be undertaken in Summer 2005, which will feed into considerations regarding the future of this provision. The evaluation will consider the effectiveness of the materials developed through HATT in supporting bilingual open and distance learning and its role in future related developments.
- 7 Council officers met with colleagues from the Welsh Assembly Government and Estyn in November 2004 and March 2005 to consider actions against six of the recommendations

presented in the study, including the possibility of establishing: (a) a partnership promotion scheme for Wales; (b) a strategic body to oversee the development and operational aspects of partnership; (c) a national system of recognition and training for partnership schools; (d) mechanisms for additional school based support for improving the Welsh of trainees in Welsh medium schools; and (e), mechanisms for enhancing the commitment of all schools involved, and not yet involved, in ITT to provide quality training. Officers will continue these discussions throughout 2005.

ITT PARTNERSHIP IN WALES: CONSULTATION - OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

- 8 Circular W04/77HE, *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Partnership In Wales: Consultation*, was published in December 2004. The consultation ended in late February 2005. **Annex A** provides further information on the responses received. As part of the consultation process, a seminar was held in Cardiff on Friday 11 February 2005. The list of seminar delegates is attached at **Annex B**. The seminar was well attended by all ITT providing institutions and other interested organizations, such as Estyn and the General Teaching Council for Wales. Breakout groups had an opportunity to discuss consultation issues in depth and participants welcomed this. The detailed outcomes of the seminar have informed the proposals for future action.
- 9 Overall, respondents expressed support for the approach proposed by the Council, emphasising the need to share good practice and establish benchmarks and standards for ITT partnership activities across Wales. Respondents reiterated the importance of cross sector collaboration to develop innovative and imaginative solutions for ensuring the long-term stability of ITT partnership arrangements in Wales.
- 10 Respondents acknowledged the complexity in the external environment, particularly in light of the Welsh Assembly Government's review of ITT, cuts in primary intake targets and the reconfiguration and collaboration agenda. Emphasis was repeatedly directed at the importance of cross-sector and multi-agency collaboration on ITT partnerships. Colleagues from partnership and non-partnership schools, Local Education Authorities (LEAs), the Assembly Government, Estyn, the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW), the Teacher Training Agency and HEFCW were identified as having a role to play, alongside the sector, in responding to the outcomes of the study.

Costs of ITT Partnerships

- 11 There was general agreement amongst respondents about the benefits of HEFCW establishing a common and transparent financial framework and a willingness to work with the Council to develop good practice guidelines. Any such guidelines would need to be informed by agreement over the relative entitlements and expectations of all three partnership partners (Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), schools and trainees). The development of minimum standards and payment thresholds was championed as a mechanism for clarifying roles and responsibilities, providing a baseline across Wales, while enabling individual institutions to continue to operate arrangements above the baseline, where appropriate.
- 12 Concerns were expressed that if partnership agreements were to be more formalised or standardised across Wales, the good will and working relationships already built up through current partnership arrangements could be endangered. However, it was acknowledged that existing arrangements were already under enormous strain. At the same time, it was recognised that there is considerable variability in the payments made to schools, often derived from circumstances that applied at the time when the initial agreements were set up in the early nineties but may no longer apply today, so that a review of the financial terms of agreements was now timely.
- 13 One mechanism suggested for facilitating the introduction of standardised agreements would be the establishment of a kitemarking scheme for good school partners. This would raise the profile of partnership within schools and recognise the role of schools in

ITT. The kitemark would identify the baseline of expectations from partnership, possibly based upon the generic expectations from current agreements, which could be shared more widely amongst providers. It would be possible to tie such an initiative into the Workload Agreement as well as developments on Professional Standards, where mentoring is seen as an important role. The need to build 'enhancements' into the partnership agreements was also highlighted, particularly in relation to free or reduced fee continuous professional development (CPD) and consultancy.

Operational Aspects of ITT Partnerships

- 14 Broad support was expressed for the establishment of a unified approach to the operational aspects of ITT partnerships. Respondents saw merit in the establishment of guidelines or even mandatory procedures in relation to: (i) mentor training and recognition, (ii) assessment criteria, (iii) school-based professional studies, (iv) 'kite-marking' of partnership schools, (v) links to induction standards, and, (vi) trainee entitlements. Respondents identified that the sector itself would be best placed to develop many of the unified arrangements proposed within the study, based upon the wealth of best practice already available across England and Wales.
- 15 Significant advantages were identified with the establishment of a strategic body to co-ordinate the aspects identified above. It was suggested that the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers in Wales (UCET Cymru), an established sector body for ITT providers in Wales, could be involved in the development of such an entity. The consultation response from UCET Cymru outlined that it was already exploring collaborative working arrangements operating in England and planned to develop a proposal under the Council's Reconfiguration and Collaboration Fund to take similar arrangements forward in Wales.

NEXT STEPS

- 16 Council officers will continue to discuss the recommendations of the study with the ITT providers, Welsh Assembly Government and Estyn officers at regular meetings throughout 2005. Officers will also engage in discussions on the financial aspects of ITT partnership, in advance of, and in response to, the outcomes of the Assembly review of ITT.
- 17 With regard to the costs of ITT partnerships, officers will work with the sector to establish a common and transparent financial framework for ITT partnerships supplemented by good practice guidelines. As part of this, guidelines for a minimum common payment to schools will be established, linked to agreed roles and responsibilities.
- 18 To address the operational aspects of ITT partnerships, officers will assist the sector, where appropriate, in its endeavours to establish unified ITT partnership guidelines and procedures across Wales in relation to: (i) mentor training and recognition, (ii) assessment criteria, (iii) school-based professional studies, (iv) 'kite-marking' of partnership schools, (v) links to induction standards and, (iv) trainee entitlements, including through a proposal to the Council's Reconfiguration and Collaboration Fund.

Responses to Circular W04/77HE, *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Partnership In Wales: Consultation*

(I) List of Respondents:

- Coedffranc Infants School, Neath
- Cwmnedd Primary School, Neath
- Estyn
- General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW)
- North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
- Open University in Wales
- Penybont Primary School, Bridgend
- Pontarddulais Comprehensive School, Swansea
- St.Cyres Secondary School, Swansea
- St Thomas Primary School, Swansea
- Swansea Institute of Higher Education
- Trinity College Carmarthen
- Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (Wales) (UCET Cymru)
- University of Wales, Aberystwyth
- University of Wales, Bangor
- University of Wales, Newport
- University of Wales Institute, Cardiff

(II) Summary of the Responses

Consultation Issue 1: *Should the Council work alongside the sector to establish good practice guidelines for ensuring mutual accountability in the use of funds between schools and HEIs involved in ITT partnership rather than imposing a strict financial framework of ITT partnership funding.*

There was general agreement amongst respondents about the benefits of HEFCW establishing a common and transparent financial framework and a willingness to work with the Council to develop good practice guidelines. Any such guidelines would need to be informed by a clear understanding and agreement over the relative entitlements and expectations of all three partners (HEIs, schools and trainees).

Consultation Issue 2: *Should the Council advise HEIs to consider whether funds transferred to schools by HEIs for partnership activities be exempt from institutional overheads.*

Mixed views were expressed on this issue primarily as a result of the varied ways in which each HEI manages its partnership budgets. In some cases the costs of HEI partnership offices are perceived as a top slice of the department's partnership budget. In others, the partnership funds simply relate to the amount of money transferred to schools, with no allowance for the resources required to manage partnership arrangements from within the department. Institutional autonomy should therefore remain. Respondents did however emphasise that what

is more important, is that the amount of money available to schools for the work they undertake is fair and leaves sufficient funding within the HEI for it to undertake its part of the partnership work.

Consultation Issue 3: Outline the advantages and disadvantages of the Council establishing a uniform payment to schools for work on Partnership in ITT.

Respondents suggested that a minimum common payment to schools should be established although this must be linked to agreed roles and responsibilities. Custom and practice has allowed a variety of relationships to develop between HEIs and schools with 'enhancements' to the financial contract including free or reduced-fee continuous professional development (CPD) and consultancy. Without adequate funding, it was suggested that simply providing a common payment at the upper end of the existing payment range would place many HEIs in a susceptible financial position. Furthermore, having not received any significant increase in payments for six years, it is unlikely that schools would be willing to engage in a review of their partnership arrangements without adequate financial recompense.

Consultation Issue 4: The feasibility of the sector being able to develop a unified approach to ITT partnerships. Proposals for how a unified approach might be achieved would be helpful.

Broad support was expressed for the establishment of a unified approach to partnerships. Respondents saw merit in the establishment of guidelines or even mandatory procedures in relation to: (i) mentor training and recognition, (ii) assessment criteria, (iii) school-based professional studies, (iv) 'kite-marking' of partnership schools, (v) links to induction standards and, (iv) trainee entitlements. There was however disagreement on the establishment of a common placement timetable, patterns of placements and regional placement agreements.

Consultation Issue 5: The merits of a strategic body being established to oversee ITT partnerships, or whether this function could be undertaken via existing groups/committees.

Significant advantages were identified on the establishment of body to coordinate the aspects identified above. It was suggested that UCET Cymru, an established sector body for ITT providers in Wales, could be involved in the development of such a body. The response from UCET Cymru outlined that it was already exploring collaborative working arrangements operating in England, and planned to develop a proposal under the Council's Reconfiguration and Collaboration Fund to take similar arrangements forward in Wales.

**The ITT Partnership Consultation Seminar, held on Friday 11 February
2005, The Quality Hotel, Cardiff**

(I) Delegate List

Institution/ Organisation	Delegate	Position
ESTYN	Lesley James	Additional Inspector
General Teaching Council For Wales	Karen Evans	Policy and Planning Manager
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales	Celia Hunt Karen Jones Emma Raczka	Head of Learning and Teaching Senior Learning and Teaching Manager Learning and Teaching Manager
North East Wales Institute of H.E.	Phil Bassett Hilary Fabian Graham Williams	Head of the School of Education Head of Education and Childhood Studies Head of Partnership
Open University	Steve Hutchinson Martin Rhys Trevor Scott	Director of PGCE Staff Tutor, Education Assistant Staff Tutor
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	Duncan Hawley Jillian Long John Parkinson	Deputy Director of Secondary PGCE Primary Partnership Co-ordinator Head of School
Teacher Training Agency	Lindsey Reardon	Recruitment Advisor
Trinity College Carmarthen	Alun Charles Gwilym Jones Vaughan Salisbury	Director of School-based Studies (Primary) Head of the Faculty of Education and Training Director of PGCE Secondary Course in RE
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	Trish Evans John Pugh Paul Thomas	Head of Primary Partnership Pro Vice Chancellor Head of School
University of Wales, Aberystwyth	Aled Jones Dylan Jones Peter Neil	Dean Director of PGCE Director of the School of Education and Life Long Learning
University of Wales, Bangor	Magi Gould Janet Pritchard Delyth Rees Huw Roberts	Primary Director Head of School of Education PGCE Secondary Course Director Manager of Primary Partnership
University of Wales, Newport	Carl Peters Carys Davies Emlyn Powell	Dean of School of Education Secondary Placement Officer Associate Dean
Welsh Assembly Government	David Egan	Special Advisor