

Cyngor Cyllido Addysg
Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding
Council for Wales

Cwrt Linden
Clos Ilex Llanisien
Caerdydd CF14 5DZ
Ffôn 029 2076 1861
Ffacs 029 2076 3163
www.hefcw.ac.uk

Linden Court
Ilex Close Llanishen
Cardiff CF14 5DZ
Tel 029 2076 1861
Fax 029 2076 3163
www.hefcw.ac.uk

hefcw

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Circular

Initial teacher training: Revised controls on recruitment against intake targets

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Response by: No response required
Contact: Name: Alison Allan
Telephone: 029 2068 2223
Email: alison.allan@hefcw.ac.uk

This circular presents revised controls to maintain recruitment to initial teacher training intake targets and to discourage over-recruitment, to be effective from the 2012/13 academic year.

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Introduction

- 1 This circular presents revised controls to maintain recruitment to initial teacher training (ITT) intake targets and to discourage over-recruitment to be effective from the 2012/13 academic year.

Background

- 2 ITT is a quota subject in that each year the Welsh Government sets and informs HEFCW of sector intake targets for primary and secondary phase training in line with its estimates of the required demand for newly-qualified teachers. We then determine the individual allocations to ITT providers, taking into account:
 - sector recruitment performance in recent years;
 - individual institution or Centre of Teacher Education recruitment performance against intake targets in recent years;
 - the need to maintain the viability of provision;
 - for secondary phase training, the need to balance subject provision across the sector
 - evidence from Estyn of the quality of training provided, as appropriate.
- 3 In the annual letters we receive from the Welsh Government setting out the intake targets, we are asked to maintain our efforts to ensure that over-recruitment against targets does not occur. This has been particularly the case for primary provision which is traditionally popular amongst applicants. It has been less so for secondary subjects, with under-recruitment being more of an issue for some priority subjects. However, the situation does vary from year to year, with the potential for exceeding the target in subjects where it can be easier to recruit.
- 4 We have had penalties for over-recruitment to primary provision in place for a number of years, revising these as appropriate from time to time. These penalties result in the provider's intake target for the following year being reduced, with a consequent loss of teaching funding.
- 5 From 2011/12 a maximum student number, determined annually, applies to HEFCW-fundable home and EU full-time undergraduate (UG) and PGCE new entrant student numbers, with penalty arrangements for over-recruitment against this maximum (see Circular W11/41HE).
- 6 We are concerned, however, that with the introduction of the new tuition fees regime from 2012/13 and the consequent changes to HEFCW's methods for allocating funding, the overall maximum student number and existing ITT penalties, may not of themselves be a sufficient deterrent against over- or under-recruitment to ITT.
- 7 For example, provided the total numbers remain within an institution's overall maximum student number, then if a provider were having difficulty recruiting in non-ITT areas, it might compensate by increased recruitment to primary ITT. Conversely, for secondary ITT, the provider might have less concern about under-recruitment to priority subjects, if it felt it could make up numbers either in secondary subjects where recruitment is

easier, or in non-ITT subjects. This situation may be further influenced by the nature of any ITT incentives for students which the Welsh Government may make available in future. Thus, if there are Welsh Government incentives available up to the intake target for particular subject groupings, this would provide controls on the numbers institutions recruit. However, if particular subjects or categories of students are not eligible for incentives, then such control is harder to exercise.

Revised controls from 2012/13

- 8 HEFCW will therefore apply controls or take associated actions in relation to recruitment to ITT from the 2012/13 academic year onwards as set out below:

Primary ITT

- The **existing** penalties which are applied to intake targets for over-recruitment to primary provision at the Centres of Teacher Education will continue. These are:
 - If a Centre over-recruits by more than five per cent or five students (whichever is the greater) against its primary intake target in one year at either undergraduate or postgraduate level, a five per cent reduction will be applied to its intake target for that level for the following year. These intakes will not be returned to the Centre after the penalty year.
 - A penalty for more significant over-recruitment. Thus, if a Centre over-recruits by more than ten per cent in one year at either undergraduate or postgraduate level, its target for that level for the following year will be cut by ten per cent.

In determining whether this penalty will be applied, there will be no rounding. Immediately the over-recruitment is over ten per cent by any fraction, the penalty will be applied. For example: An institution has an intake target of 58. The calculation of ten per cent over-recruitment is 5.8 full-time equivalent students. The institution over-recruits against its target by six students (10.3%). Arguments that the institution could not have recruited 0.8 of a student for an ITT course or that the 10.3% should be rounded to ten per cent would not be accepted. The ten per cent over-recruitment threshold has been breached and therefore the penalty will be applied.

This penalty will be reduced to 5% in the year after, provided that the institution has not again over-recruited above the specified limits.

- **Additionally**, the number of students recruited over the five per cent threshold allowed against the institution's ITT primary intake target at either undergraduate or postgraduate level will be deducted from the institution's maximum student number for the following year. It will be possible to apply this penalty on an institutional basis: the partners in the

South East and South West Centres of Teacher Education each have either UG or PGCE primary provision, not both, and in the North and Mid Wales Centre all primary provision is located at Bangor University.

Secondary ITT

- *UG Secondary* Where a provider over-recruits by more than five per cent against its UG Secondary intake target, the number of students recruited over this threshold will be deducted from the institution's maximum student number the following year. This can be done on an institutional basis as there is no overlap of subjects between partners in the Centres.
 - *PGCE Secondary* Where a provider over-recruits by more than five per cent against its PGCE Secondary intake target, the number of students recruited over this threshold will be deducted from the institution's maximum student number the following year. There are a few subjects which are offered by both partners in a Centre (North and Mid Wales – Welsh, Chemistry, Physics and Biology; South East Wales – Design and Technology). In these instances, we would calculate what we considered an appropriate proportion from the numbers registered at each HEI and, if this did not concur with how the Centre saw the split of the targets between the partners, the Centre could propose to us that the reduction be applied to one institution only or in a different agreed proportion.
 - For both UG and PGCE Secondary, we will monitor recruitment and if we have concerns about the level of under or over-recruitment to a particular subject within the provider's portfolio, we will discuss with the provider and require an action plan to address the situation.
- 9 As last year, we will look for a commitment to keep to the intake targets to be included in the Fee Plans of the ITT providers.

Timetable

- 10 The revised arrangements will apply to recruitment against ITT intake targets from the 2012/13 academic year, with any penalties applied to 2013/14 ITT intake targets and maximum student numbers. We will continue to monitor the situation and take further action in future years if we deem this necessary.
- 11 We would remind ITT providers that the existing penalties for over-recruitment against primary intake targets remain in place for 2011/12, with any penalties being applied to 2012/13 targets.

Further information

- 12 For further information, contact Alison Allan (tel 029 2068 2223, email alison.allan@hefcw.ac.uk).