

For discussion

**'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers' (Furlong Report)
Minister's response and implications**

Agenda: 12
HEFCW/15/60

Disclosable

03/07/2015

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper provides a summary of the Minister's response to Professor John Furlong's 'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers' report. Council is asked to discuss the implications of the Ministers statement for HEFCW.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 Under the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (Wales) Regulations 2004 and the Education Act 2005, HEFCW is responsible for funding and accrediting providers of initial teacher training (ITT) for school teachers and commissioning research to improve the standards of teachers and teacher training. This legislation supersedes the Education Act 1994, which first gave these responsibilities to HEFCW.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. note the contents of the Minister's statement on the Furlong Report; and
 - ii. discuss the implications of the statement for HEFCW

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 The Minister did not provide any specific timeframes within his speech for the introduction of proposed changes.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No Council member has declared any further interests to those set out in the Register of members' interests which are of specific relevance to the matters covered in this paper

6 Further information

Kimberley Meringolo (029 2068 2258; kimberley.meringolo@hefcw.ac.uk)

7 Background

- 7.1 Brief background information on the issues covered in this paper is included in the **Background Appendix**.

8 Minister's statement

- 8.1 The Minister for Skills and Education made a statement at Plenary on 23 June 2015, setting out Welsh Government's (WG) response to Professor John Furlong's report, 'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers – options for the future of Initial Teacher Education in Wales'. The Minister noted that his statement did not cover all aspects of the report.
- 8.2 The Minister noted that addressing the recommendations within John Furlong's report would be a long term ongoing development, as they linked closely with the Donaldson review of Curriculum and the 'New Deal'.
- 8.3 The initial steps that WG will take will be to revise and align the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards with the wider professional standards for the education workforce. The Minister has commissioned an internal reference group to develop and consult on draft revised standards later in the year.
- 8.4 The role of accrediting body will need to change and the Minister accepts fully that the criteria for accreditation need to be revised and improved. The benchmark for prospective providers and students needs to be raised through the minimum entry requirements. The Minister has asked Professor Furlong to chair a task and finish group to review each accreditation criterion. The group will be made up of representatives from external stakeholders, experts from the Initial Teacher Training sector, Consortia and school representatives.
- 8.5 The Minister agrees in principle that the most appropriate body to be responsible for the accreditation process will be the Education Workforce Council (EWC) as they are the professional regulatory body in Wales.
- 8.6 The Minister believes these measures will bring about a robust quality assurance process. A further announcement on the role of the EWC will be made in the summer.
- 8.7 The Minister noted that WG would commission an independent review of incentives and their impact on recruitment. WG will consider the development of a targeted trainee scholarship programme to support teacher recruitment to certain STEM subjects, digital competency and numeracy and literacy.
- 8.8 It was confirmed that Estyn would continue to have a role in ITT provision, however, this would evolve over time. The Minister would like Estyn, through the school inspections, to consider how school inspections can be used to gather evidence of excellent practice within practitioner development and a schools' role in the delivery of ITT. Estyn would have a role in assisting WG with the revision of the professional standards along with assisting in the revision of the accreditation process. Estyn's future role within ITT as the wider reforms are implemented will be an advisory role, carrying out thematic reviews of providers.
- 8.9 The Minister confirmed that the Primary Undergraduate course would need to be strengthened and to do this it would need to change from a 3 year to a 4 year course. The Minister does not agree entirely with the Furlong report suggestion that each student should study two out of the four year course in specific subject based training. Instead the Minister suggests the potential introduction of one year Masters

level training along with subject enhancement might be the stronger approach for the additional year.

- 8.10 The Minister would like alternative routes for teacher training to be considered such as employment based training. He would like a review of the Graduate Teacher Programme to be carried out looking at how it works and consider its implementation in difficult to recruit subject areas in particular Welsh medium.

Council is invited to note the contents of the Ministers statement on the Furlong report.

9 Implications for HEFCW

- 9.1 No specific reference was made to HEFCW during the statement, however some of the proposed changes do have a direct impact on its role and responsibilities.

- 9.2 The change of the accreditation role to the EWC will mean HEFCW will no longer hold the statutory responsibility for this in the future. Without the ability to accredit providers we have limited leverage and therefore controlling student numbers for ITT against targets will become increasingly difficult. Neither the statement nor the report makes any reference to the allocation of targets and who will have this responsibility. It is also worth considering that HEFCW will no longer have any role in relation to quality of ITT specifically as it will no longer be responsible for the accreditation of providers.

- 9.3 The proposed changes to the Primary Undergraduate course may have an impact on HEFCW's future budget. The current target for this mode and level of course in Wales is 300 per year, estimating that all institutions charge the maximum £9k for this course, the increase in fee grant commitment would be around £1.55m per academic year.

Council is invited to note the implications of the report for HEFCW

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 The Minister has confirmed that the UG primary course for ITT will be extended from 3 years to 4 years. The current target for this mode and level of course in Wales is 300 students per year. As a consequence of this change there will be an increase to the tuition fee grant commitment for 300 students per cohort (around £1.55m). This may have consequences for HEFCW's overall grant in future years.

11 Communications implications

- 11.1 The Minister's speech has been made available via the Welsh Government website.

12 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 12.1 This paper has no implications for age, disability, marital/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, any other protected characteristic or Welsh Language.

13 Risk Assessment

13.1 The details of any identified risks, current or future, arising from the issues covered by the paper are provided below:

| Risk | Action to address risk |
|--|--|
| Increase in Primary UG from 3 year to 4 year will impact on recruitment and Welsh domiciled students may choose 3 year courses outside of Wales. | The tuition fee grant subsidy for Welsh domiciled students along with the review of incentives will alleviate some concerns. |
| Changes to ITT cause more unrest within the sector. | The Minister has proposed a task and finish group to discuss and further plan. This level of engagement should engage the sector with the changes. |
| Increase in Primary UG from 3 year to 4 year will increase fee grant commitment. | HEFCW to bring to the attention of WG the increase in commitment. |
| The consequences for Welsh medium provision have not been fully considered. | The Minister has proposed a task and finish group to discuss and further plan. |