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Circular

Accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales: Revised procedures

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To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Response by: No response required
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This circular presents revised procedures for the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales which are effective from the 2011/12 academic year.

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Introduction

- 1 This circular presents revised procedures for the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training (ITT) in Wales which are effective from the 2011/12 academic year (Annex A).

Background

- 2 Under regulation 7 of the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (Wales) Regulations 2004, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) may accredit institutions as providers of ITT for school teachers. We can only accredit institutions as ITT providers which satisfy criteria specified by the Welsh Government.
- 3 Higher education institutions (HEIs) providing ITT in Wales are required to obtain accreditation by HEFCW in order to run courses of ITT which allow their students to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- 4 HEFCW may withdraw accreditation from an ITT provider where there is evidence of non-compliance with the criteria for accreditation.
- 5 So that we can fulfil these responsibilities, HEFCW has in place procedures for the accreditation of ITT providers and updates these from time to time as needed. In 2007/08 we consulted on a major revision of our procedures, publishing revised procedures in May 2008 ([Circular W08/17HE](#)) for:
 - The accreditation of new providers
 - Confirming compliance by existing accredited providers
 - Addressing non-compliance and the withdrawal of accreditation.

Revised procedures 2011

- 6 Since 2008, there have been a number of changes which have made it appropriate to update our procedures. The three Centres of Teacher Education have become established, with compliance with the criteria for accreditation becoming the joint responsibility of the two higher education partners in each Centre. The Welsh Government has introduced updated QTS standards and in 2010 the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in Wales (Estyn), whose responsibilities include the inspection of ITT in Wales, introduced a new Common Inspection Framework.
- 7 We have updated the procedures to reflect these changes and the current legislative framework from which HEFCW derives its accreditation responsibilities. These are factual changes, rather than amendments of substance to the procedures themselves.

We have not therefore undertaken a formal consultation. However, we contacted the heads of ITT departments to outline the changes which we were proposing to give providers an opportunity to raise any concerns.

Equality and diversity

- 8 As the changes to the accreditation procedures are factual updates we have not undertaken a new equality impact assessment of the procedures. The procedures continue to emphasise (2.4) that it is for providers to ensure as they deliver ITT in compliance with the accreditation criteria that they do so in a way that meets their statutory responsibilities to staff and students, and promotes equality of opportunity. The Welsh Government's requirements for ITT which are reflected in the accreditation procedures include:

“That providers demonstrate a convincing rationale for the provision of ITT which:

- supports or adds to the diversity of choice available or attracts applications from groups that are currently under-represented in the teaching profession.”

This will therefore feature in any assessment of an application to HEFCW for accreditation and in continuing compliance.

Timetable

- 9 The revised procedures are effective from the 2011/12 academic year onwards. They are based on current Welsh Government requirements and Estyn's current arrangements for inspecting ITT providers. We will continue to revise the procedures from time to time as required. In between such revisions, it should be assumed that the latest Welsh Government or Estyn requirements apply unless indicated otherwise.

Further information

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