Requirements for the provision of initial teacher training courses in Wales – literacy and numeracy issues

Consultation response form

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Responses should be returned by **03 August 2012** to:

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or completed electronically and sent to:

ITTRequirementsconsultation@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Question 1 – Do you agree with the proposal to change the minimum entry standard for initial teacher training (ITT) courses for all trainees from a GCSE grade C equivalent to one equivalent to a GCSE grade B in both English and mathematics (and additionally in a science subject for all primary or Key Stage 2/3 entrants)?

Agree	☐	**Disagree**	☒	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
ATL Cymru is concerned that the raising of the minimum GCSE entry standard will not provide necessarily provide sufficient or fair evidence of an individual's numeracy and literacy skills. Members also feel this proposal could work against closing the gap agenda in that it could penalise candidates whose lower GCSE scores are more a result of the schooling they received until the age of 16 rather than be a true reflection of their ability. More

accurate assessments are available to support an increase in the minimum entry level and these should be administered closer to the time of application.

Question 2 – Do you agree with the inclusion of the proposed additional requirements in respect of the initial assessment of individual trainees' personal literacy and numeracy skills, the ongoing assessment throughout their training programme, and the requirement for ITT providers to satisfy themselves that the required standards are still met at the point trainees are assessed against the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Standards?

Agree	☒	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
This proposal is more relevant and appropriate than the proposal outlined in question 1. It is vital that those who exit ITT institutions possess the required levels of literacy and numeracy required to deliver the Welsh Government's programme.

Question 3 – With regard to the proposed additional requirements in respect of the assessment of individual trainees' personal literacy and numeracy skills, we have indicated that these would need to be at an academic standard equivalent to the minimum entry qualification requirement referred to in question 1; and that they would additionally need to be functional skills which would be applicable in a professional teaching context. Do you agree with this approach?

We would also welcome views on how the reference to functional skills could be practically described and applied in these requirements.

Agree	☐	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☒

Comments:

While we agree that the academic standard has to be at least equal to that outlined in question 1, we are not clear exactly which 'functional skills' are under consideration.

Question 4 – Do you agree with the inclusion of the proposed additional requirement in respect of the mandatory training of ITT students in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, appropriate to the phase and subject being studied and forming an integral part of training courses?

Agree	☒	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:

This would be an essential component to embed within, the teaching of literacy and numeracy, all subjects and appropriate to the phase.

Question 5 – Do you agree with the introduction of a requirement for all ITT providers to design training programmes so that they provide all trainees with at least 60 days of university-led and school-based dedicated training activity, separate from the teaching timetable per academic year (pro rata for part-time or modular courses)?

Agree	☒	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
We agree, but on the assumption that the university-led and school-based dedicated training activity is of suitable content and quality, and that this is regularly and robustly monitored.

Question 6 –Do you agree with the minimum time that trainee teachers on all primary postgraduate programmes spend being trained in schools being amended from at least 18 weeks to at least 24 weeks?

Agree	☒	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
We believe that this additional time will help trainees further develop and hone their teaching skills.

Question 7 – Do you agree with the proposal to no longer include a requirement that all ITT trainees should meet requirements for health and physical capacity to teach, in the light of legislative developments, including the Equality Act 2010?

Agree	☐	**Disagree**	☒	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
Teaching is a demanding vocation physically, emotionally, and mentally. Those who seek to enter it need to exhibit the required stamina and health conditions. We are not clear what applicants would be admitted to teaching if the current requirements were rescinded.

Question 8 – Do you agree with similar changes to the ones covered in questions 1–3 and 6 being made to the Employment-based Teacher Training Scheme 2012?

Agree	☒	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:

We believe that consistency demands this.

Question 9 – Do you agree with the proposed timetable for implementation?

Agree	**x**	**Disagree**	☐	**Not sure**	☐

Comments:
The proposed changes are not onerous and the ITT institutions should be able to implement them on the required timetable. However, provision must be made to support schools to do so.

Question 10 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Comments:
Inter-personal skills, above the ability to relate to children and young people, are essential to the success of a teacher and should be assessed as part of ITT.

We raise caution with regard to the consistency of the quality of support offered during ITT by hosting schools.

Responses to consultations may be made public – on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to be kept confidential, please tick here: ☒