

# Education Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee

## ELLS(2)-07-06 Paper 6

**Meeting date: May 3 2006**

**Meeting time: 9.00am-12.30pm**

**Meeting venue: Committee Room 3 The Senedd, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff**

## Welsh Assembly Government Review of Initial Teacher Training Provision in Wales May 2006

### Written Evidence from NASUWT

1. NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Welsh Assembly Government's 'Review of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Provision in Wales'.
2. NASUWT is the largest union representing teachers and headteachers throughout the UK.

### General Comments

3. NASUWT holds, on an annual basis, seminars for NQTs to help them prepare for their first teaching post. The Union tracks the progress of these NQTs and receives regular feedback on the issues which arise during their induction year. This feedback, together with the experience NASUWT has gained in representing both ITT students and NQTs in casework, informs the Union's written evidence to the Review.
4. NASUWT welcomes the fact that the content of ITT in terms of meeting the standards for Qualified Teacher Status and the minimum requirements for ITT courses, lies outside the scope and the terms of reference of this Review.
5. Furthermore, NASUWT would wish to make it clear that any review of Welsh Office Circular 13/98 which defines the standards for QTS as well as the minimum requirements for ITT courses must be subjected to the normal consultation process.
6. Currently ITT students, in both Wales and England, are subject to the same standards for QTS as well as the minimum requirements for ITT courses. NASUWT would wish for that parity to continue and that the Review adopts such a policy as a benchmark.
7. It is important that this review is undertaken within the context of the National Agreement: Raising

Standards Tackling Workload which has introduced a strategy to tackle workload, and enhance professional status to assist teacher recruitment and retention.

### **NASUWT recommends that:**

- the same standards for QTS as well as the minimum requirements for ITT courses be continued in both Wales and England;
- the Review adopts such a policy as a benchmark;
- this review is undertaken within the context of the National Agreement: Raising Standards Tackling Workload which has introduced a strategy to tackle workload, and enhance professional status to assist teacher recruitment and retention.

### **Specific Comments**

#### **1. The Needs of Schools in Wales**

What issues need to be taken into account in trying to achieve a better match between the supply of newly qualified teachers and the needs of schools in Wales?

NASUWT has identified the following factors to be taken into account in trying to achieve a better match between the supply of newly qualified teachers and the needs of schools in Wales:

#### **a) Age Profile of the Profession**

8. The General Teaching Council for Wales' 'Annual Statistics Digest' published in March 2005 illustrates that of the 38,220 teachers registered with the Council as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2004 18,995 are aged 45 or over with nearly 9,000 being aged 55 or over -

45-49 4726

50-54 6335

55-59 5640

60-64 1906

65+ 388

9. This, in itself, represents a need to ensure that the number of teacher training courses in Wales is not reduced over the next few years. Consequently, it is disappointing to note that the Welsh Assembly Government has asked the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to make reductions to the primary ITT intake targets for the 2005-06 academic year of about 5%. NASUWT is

of the opinion that this is a short-sighted approach and should not be seen as a long-term policy.

## **b) The teachers' workload agreement**

10. Since the introduction of the National Agreement Raising Standards Tackling Workload (The Agreement) in September 2003 NASUWT has identified that a number of NQTs are not receiving appropriate information, either during ITT, or in their first post, on its provisions. The Union has obtained evidence that some ITT providers continue to apply standards in their ITT curricula which relate to tasks that have been explicitly removed from teachers' professional duties, including classroom display. NASUWT regards this as wholly unacceptable and meriting specific remedial action by the Welsh Assembly. As the Agreement was fundamentally a strategy to tackle workload and enhance professional status to assist recruitment and retention, this is an extremely serious matter which must be addressed by Higher Education providers.

11. NASUWT believes that the Welsh Assembly Government must ensure that NQTs are made fully aware of all the implications of the Agreement as part of their ITT course. The agenda set by the Agreement will have profound and far-reaching effects on the way in which teachers undertake their professional responsibilities throughout their careers and it is essential that the ITT courses which lay the foundation for a career in teaching, reflect this in full. The Union is equally of the opinion that WAG needs to address the quality of school placements and that schools used for teaching practice must have implemented all the national agreement contractual changes and re-modelling.

12. As one of the signatories to the 'National Agreement: Raising Standards' NASUWT is totally committed to the full implementation of the Agreement which has already introduced significant improvements to teachers' conditions of service.

From September 2005 the introduction of a contractual entitlement to a minimum of 10% Planning, Preparation and Assessment for all teachers, will make a significant impact on teacher retention in the short term and on recruitment and retention in the medium to longer term

13. One of the options available to schools in implementing the PPA requirement for all teachers will be to employ additional teachers. The introduction of PPA time represents a significant culture shift for primary schools. Consequently, and as previously noted, it is disappointing that the Welsh Assembly Government has asked HFCEW to reduce the intake for primary ITT courses for 2005-6.

## **c) 14-19**

14. In responding to the WAG's Consultation Document 'Learning Pathways 14-19' in February 2003, the Union's response recognised "the need for reform, which, if properly directed, resourced and implemented, should deliver measurable gains for both teachers and learners across the phase". More importantly, in the context of this review it called for the "recruitment of more qualified teaching staff to manage the extra burdens and ensure that class sizes are manageable".

15. This imposes a responsibility on all ITT institutions in Wales. How many have embraced the proposed changes and have, or are in the process of, amending their secondary courses accordingly?

An equally important development has been the introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate currently in its third year. NASUWT believes that a major weakness within current ITT provision in Wales is the inability of various institutions to react positively and quickly to fundamental changes to the curriculum.

#### **d) The Foundation Phase**

16. The introduction of the Foundation Stage provides an equally challenging development both for schools and ITT institutions. In responding to the recent WAG Consultation on the 'Foundation Phase Pilot', NASUWT proposed 'that there needs to be more guidance and training for teachers on the management of assessment within the Foundation Phase and that such training be given the highest priority by the Welsh Assembly Government'.

17. Such advice is equally applicable to this review. Training for the Foundation Stage needs to 'be given the highest priority by the ITT institutions'. Pivotal amongst the Foundation Stage's seven areas of learning will be 'Bilingualism and Multi-Cultural Understanding'.

18. The proposals suggest that 'in schools and settings where English is the main medium of communication, more attention should be given to developing children's bilingual skills'. Such a proposal has a resource implication as acknowledged in that 'staff will require support and training to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language if they are to support children's bilingual development'.

19. Equally in terms of Multi-Culturalism the proposals suggest that 'in the Foundation Stage more emphasis should be given to celebrating differences and developing children's knowledge and understanding of racial, cultural and religious diversity. This would help to increase children's understanding of the influence of multi-culturalism in shaping our society. This will require extensive training and guidance for practitioners and adults themselves'.

20. Whilst NASUWT fully supports these proposals, it is of the opinion that the necessary training is currently not available both for experienced teachers and, in the context of this review, for ITT students. With the Foundation Stage due to be introduced nationally as from September 2006, the Union proposes that ITT institutions in Wales need to tackle, as a matter of some urgency, the proper training of students in all aspects of the Foundation Stage.

#### **e) Welsh language provision**

21. Whilst the Welsh Assembly Government's decision to make Welsh compulsory for all students up to the end of Key Stage 4 has certain merits in principle, it has in practice led to many problems for both schools and teachers. A lack of properly qualified and trained teachers to teach Welsh, especially as a second language, has led to many teachers being 'persuaded' to teach the subject, leading in many cases to undue stress and strain.

22. This current state of affairs is totally unacceptable to NASUWT. Consequently, it is of the opinion that the problems and issues associated with the policy need to be re-visited and that ITT

institutions must have a more coherent policy for the training of those students who wish to offer Welsh as a second language as a qualification.

#### **f) Cross border movement and wastage rates**

23. As the Review's Terms of Reference acknowledge 'it is not practically possible simply to prevent students from outside Wales entering ITT courses in Wales, and the movement to posts of NQTs produced in Wales and England'. Whilst NASUWT agrees that such attempts would not be 'practically possible' it is firmly of the opinion that it would also not be desirable. Such cross-border movement needs to be sustained and, in some cases encouraged, for despite the 'progress' of devolution the education systems of Wales and England are still inexorably linked. The National Curriculum, GCSE and A Levels are just a few examples of this.

24. It is somewhat disappointing to note that the number of first year students from England on ITT courses in Wales has decreased over the last few years from 510 (23%) in 1999/2000 to 320 (14%) in 2003/04. Yet over the corresponding period the number of students from the Republic of Ireland has shown a slight increase from 100 (4%) to 110 (5%).

25. Recent figures released by the General Teaching Council for Wales show that 107 (11.6%) teachers registered by the Council and, who achieved the Induction standard in Wales in 2004, are English. A further 123 (13.4%) described themselves as British.

#### **g) Regional differences in supply and demand**

26. NASUWT fully accepts that there are regional differences in both the supply and demand of teachers. It seems that WAG's advice to HEFCW in respect of primary teacher numbers is solely based on supply, as there are still primary schools in some parts of Wales who are unable to attract both the quality and the number of applicants for specific posts. Examples include Welsh as a second language in schools in South and South-East Wales, Religious Education and Physical Education through the medium of Welsh.

27. Certain teacher shortages within specific subjects, both in Wales and England, have been well documented over the years. Despite various inducements by successive Governments, the problems still exist and consequently need to be tackled by the ITT institutions.

28. NASUWT therefore, proposes that an audit should be undertaken of the needs of schools in Wales for the next ten to fifteen years, bearing in mind as previously mentioned, that nearly 50% of all the teachers currently registered with the GTCW are aged 45 or over.

NASUWT recommends that:

- the Review fully considers the current age profile of the profession in Wales;
- the decision of the Welsh Assembly Government to ask the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to make reductions to the primary ITT intake targets for the 2005-06 academic year of around

5% should not be seen as a long term policy;

- the Review fully embraces the terms of the National Agreement: Raising Standards Tackling Workload and its implications for the future supply of teachers;
- the Welsh Assembly Government must ensure that NQTs are made fully aware of all the implications of the Agreement as part of their ITT course;
- in respect of the proposed 14-19 reforms the Review recommends that the ITT institutions fully embrace the proposals in order to ensure the proper training of more qualified teaching staff to deliver the changes;
- in respect of the full introduction of the Foundation Phase the Review recommends the need for more specific guidance and training for teachers especially student teacher in order to facilitate the overall delivery of the Foundation Phase;
- ITT institutions must have a more coherent policy for the training of those students who wish to offer Welsh as a second language as a qualification;
- the Review strongly recommends that it is not practically possible nor desirable to prevent students from outside Wales entering ITT courses in Wales.

## **2. Course Provision for Wales' needs**

To what extent can or should Wales aim to provide just for its own needs for newly qualified teachers and, as far as possible, avoid producing teachers unlikely to work in Wales?

29. NASUWT totally rejects the notion that Wales should 'aim to provide just for its own needs for newly qualified teachers and, as far as possible, avoid producing teachers unlikely to work in Wales'.

30. As previously mentioned, the education systems of Wales and England are inexorably linked and will in the Union's opinion, so continue for the foreseeable future. These links extend to higher education and ITT provision. For Welsh ITT students to be confined in their choice of institution would be parochial and counter productive. NASUWT firmly believes that there has to be a continued opportunity for Welsh ITT students to study in England and vice-versa.

31. There are currently in Wales hundreds of teachers born and trained in England, each of whom have made invaluable contributions to the education of thousands of Welsh children. Serious recruitment shortages in certain subjects over the years would not have been alleviated were it not for teachers coming from England and elsewhere.

32. Any attempt to provide 'ITT in Wales only for Wales' would, in a short space of time, have an effect on reducing student numbers and consequently the supply of teachers. Such a development would, in turn, affect the number and the variety of courses being offered, as well as the desire and the ability of those institutions to offer other types of provision such as continuing professional

development and research, both of which are important factors in the drive to improve standards.

33. NASUWT is also of the opinion that WAG needs to be mindful of the fact that EU provision ensures equal access to courses, including cross-border courses and that there is mutual recognition of QTS between Wales and England through an equivalent ITT structure and provision.

NASUWT recommends that

the Review totally rejects the notion that Wales should ‘aim to provide just for its own needs for newly qualified teachers and, as far as possible, avoid producing teachers unlikely to work in Wales’.

the Review recognises that any attempt to provide ‘ITT in Wales only for Wales’ would in a short space of time have an effect on reducing student numbers and consequently the supply of teachers;

the Review reminds WAG of the need to be mindful of the fact that EU provision ensures equal access to courses including cross-border courses and that there is mutual recognition of QTS between Wales and England through an equivalent ITT structure and provision.

### **3. Adjusting Provision in Wales**

How might Initial Teacher Training provision be adjusted to ensure a supply of high quality new teachers appropriate to the needs of schools in Wales?

#### **a) The balance of undergraduate and postgraduate provision**

34. NASUWT would not be in favour of altering the balance between undergraduate and postgraduate provision. It does, however, accept that certain barriers do exist. The route to a career as a secondary school teacher is almost exclusively through the PGCE route, whilst it has generally been accepted that the three year undergraduate route best serves the prospective primary school teacher.

35. This, over the years, has created a ‘them and us’ situation, despite the fact that all qualified teachers have equal access to the national pay and conditions of service regulations.

36. NASUWT is of the opinion that barriers need to be removed. Over the last few years WAG has invested heavily in improving the transition between primary and secondary education. Why therefore, cannot an individual be trained as a teacher rather than either a secondary or a primary teacher? Ease of movement between the two sectors could greatly improve the directing of teachers towards areas of specific shortages.

#### **b) Means of increasing the diversity of students entering Initial Teacher Training.**

37. NASUWT has serious concerns over the diversity of students entering Initial Teacher Training and, as a Union fully committed to the equalities agenda, calls upon this review and WAG to give the issue the highest priority.

38. The current statistics make disappointing reading. Of the 920 teachers registered with GTCW and who achieved the Induction standard during 2004, 903 are white, with only 1.8% being from an ethnic background.

39. Equally worrying are the WAG statistics for the first year students on ITT courses in Wales during 2003-04. Out of a cohort of 2,340 students 2,215 are white, 10 are Asian, 5 are black and 5 describe themselves as mixed. This needs to be placed within the context that Wales is becoming an increasingly multi-cultural society. According to the January 2004 School Census, around 15,000 pupils in Wales were of a non-white background. Against such a disappointing background it is also important for WAG to ensure the retention, within the profession, of those teachers from under-represented groups.

40. In terms of disabled ITT students, 45 state that they are dyslexic, 10 suffer from unseen disability e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, whilst only 5 are blind/partially sighted/deaf/have hearing impairment.

41. NASUWT also draws the Review's attention to the current imbalance between male and female teachers in Wales. Of the 38,220 registered teachers in Wales as of the end of March 2005 73.1% were female thus creating a distinct impression that teaching has become a 'female dominated' profession.

### **c) The needs of Welsh medium provision**

42. The demands for Welsh medium provision, as well as the need for teachers of Welsh, has increased significantly over the last few years. The number of pupils taught Welsh as a first language, has risen from 25,225 (13.7%) in 2000 to 27,726 (14.6%) in 2004. The number taught Welsh as a second language has also increased from 143,264 (78%) in 2000 to 159,762 (84.2%) in 2004, whilst the number not taught Welsh at all, has fallen over the corresponding period from 15,283 (8.3%) to 1,597 (0.8%).

43. Such increases impose considerable strain on the supply of teachers who are able to teach Welsh as a subject, as well as through the medium of Welsh. Consequently, NASUWT reminds both the review and WAG that the issue needs to be at the forefront of any future strategic planning.

### **d) The potential of different types of provision, including employment based routes such as the Graduate Teaching Programme**

44. Subject to detailed discussions with the teacher unions, NASUWT would not be opposed in principle to flexible, modular, or part time courses offering ITT, in relation to individual needs being added to HE institutions provision.

45. It would, however, point out that any such provision should not impose an intolerable workload on individuals and must be within the provisions of the National Agreement: Raising Standards Tackling Workload.



46. The Union would also remind the review of the anomaly that currently exists in that those teachers with QTS, but who are FE trained, are not allowed to be registered with the GTCW. Whilst WAG have promised to rectify the situation, it is important to recognise that if different types of provision are adopted in the future, such anomalies are not repeated.

#### **e) Contributions from industry/commerce**

47. NASUWT would not be opposed to the possibility of using people with appropriate qualifications, e.g. people who are employed in industry or commerce, to teach in a limited part-time capacity, provided they could gain QTS.

48. The Union accepts that this could be advantageous in certain circumstances, particularly in the delivery of the new 14-19 curriculum, where there will be a greater emphasis on vocational subjects.

NASUWT recommends that:

the Review considers opening up more flexible ITT pathways, including steps to train individuals as teachers rather than as either a secondary or a primary teacher in order to ease the movement between the two sectors and greatly improve the directing of teachers towards areas of specific shortages;

this Review and WAG gives the highest priority to the means of increasing the diversity of students entering Initial Teacher Training, and those from under-represented groups retained in the profession;

this Review acknowledges the current imbalance between male and female teachers and considers various strategies in order to attract more men to enrol on ITT courses;

the needs of Welsh medium teaching must be at the forefront of any future strategic planning;

teaching should remain a Graduate only profession;

the potential of different types of provision, including employment based routes such as the Graduate Teaching Programme should not impose an intolerable workload on individuals and must be within the provisions of the National Agreement: Raising Standards Tackling Workload

#### **4 Maintaining and Improving Quality in ITT**

What sort of high quality ITT provision should Wales aspire to develop over the next 5 to 10 years in order to continue improving standards of teaching and pupil achievement?

48. NASUWT agrees that the quality of ITT provision is a key contributor to the standard of teaching and learning in Wales. It also agrees that the primary purpose of ITT is to provide a supply of high quality NQT's in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of every school.

49. The Union welcomes the comment in ESTYN's Annual Report that 'trainee teachers' teaching

has improved greatly over the last five years'. The Report also notes however that 'there has been less progress in trainees' ability to assess pupils' work. Many trainees still do not know enough about how to use pupils' assessment results to plan their teaching and to help improve pupils' learning. At times, the aims they set for lessons focus too much on what pupils will do rather than what they will learn or achieve'.

50. The statement in fact concurs with a long held NASUWT belief that ITT courses concentrate more on the mechanics rather than the practicalities of teaching. Although the ESTYN report suggests great strides have been made over the last few years, the Union believes that more needs to be done by ITT institutions in preparing their students for the 'world of work'.

51. NASUWT proposes that the conditions of service of teachers should become an integral part of every ITT course rather than be confined to a single annual visit and presentation by a teacher union official.

NASUWT recommends that:

the quality of ITT provision is a key contributor to the standard of teaching and learning in Wales;

ITT courses should concentrate more on the mechanics rather than the practicalities of teaching;

the conditions of service of teachers should become an integral part of every ITT course.

## **5. ITT and Induction/EPD**

With the introduction of Induction and Early Professional development for NQTs, is there a case for examining the balance between ITT and what can be done through Induction and EPD and how they might be better integrated?

52. NASUWT believes that Induction and Early Professional Development should not be regarded as separate entities to ITT. In fact, the three components needs to be seen as part of a process which should ensure the delivery by the end of the third year in the classroom of a highly skilled and highly motivated professional. Such a continuum of learning must be regarded as a basic entitlement for all NQTs, rather than just a paper exercise, which would have nothing more than a demoralising effect on the individuals involved.

53. The Union further proposes that the Review should propose that the Welsh Assembly Government adopts the principle of a guaranteed post that would enable all NQTs in Wales to complete their Induction year.

54. The Union strongly recommends that the implications for induction and EPD be considered within the context of developments on new professionalism within the Rewards and Incentives social partnership group.

NASUWT recommends that

Induction and Early Professional Development should not be regarded as separate entities to ITT;

a continuum of learning must be regarded as a basic entitlement for all NQTs;

the Welsh Assembly Government adopts the principle of a guaranteed post that would enable all NQTs in Wales to complete their Induction year;

the Welsh Assembly Government discuss the implications on Induction and EPD with the RIG social partnership group.

## **6. Strategic Planning**

How might arrangements for the strategic planning of ITT provision in Wales be developed that is responsive to the needs of schools in Wales?

55. Current responsibility for formulating the policy as well as the strategic and operational planning of ITT is undertaken by a number of different bodies. These include the Welsh Assembly Government, HEFCW, ESTYN, HEIs and schools in Wales.

56. Whilst NASUWT is content for this arrangement to continue, it is of the opinion that they need to be brought together to provide a more structured approach to the future development of ITT provision in Wales.

57. In proposing the establishment of an over-arching or umbrella organisation to monitor such developments, it is further of the opinion that such a body should include NASUWT.

NASUWT recommends that

the Review considers a more structured approach to the future development of ITT provision in Wales;

the Review considers the establishment of an over-arching or umbrella organisation to monitor the future development of ITT provision in Wales and that such a body or organisation should include NASUWT.