

Refresh of the Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education in Wales

Consultation response form

Your name: Phil Stubbington (Chair)

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LL20 8HS

Responses should be returned by **19 January 2023** to:

Initial Teacher Education Branch

Pedagogy, Leadership and Professional Learning Division

The Education Directorate

Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to: ITEducationAddysgGA@gov.wales



Cyngor Cymru ar Gyfer
Dysgu yn yr Awyr Agored

Wales Council for
Outdoor Learning

[Wales Council for Outdoor Learning](http://www.walescouncilforoutdoorlearning.org/) acts as a voice for the outdoor learning and environment sector bringing together organisations that support and deliver high quality teaching and learning in the outdoor environment.

The partnership shares good practice and influences policy development, highlighting the many benefits of outdoor learning and its contribution to the development of ethical and informed citizens of future generations.

Wales Council for Outdoor Learning helps to raise the profile of Out of Classroom Learning aiming to foster greater understanding and appreciation of its value and its vital contribution to education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

More information can be found at: www.walescouncilforoutdoorlearning.org/

Wales Council for Outdoor Learning welcomes the opportunity to comment on the refresh of the criteria for the accreditation of ITE and is happy to work with Initial Teacher Education Branch to ensure the role of outdoor learning and the natural environment in improving physical activity, mental health and well-being, and attainment is highlighted throughout the teaching and learning system.

The Council recognises outdoor learning as covering a wide range of activity from use of our school grounds, local parks, woodlands and beaches, field studies, environmental education, recognised accredited approaches to teaching like forest school and coastal school, residential stays and adventure education. The partners provide expertise in areas ranging from Initial Teacher Education, professional learning and curriculum support, use of school grounds for play and learning, and for well-being and physical health improvements, supporting awards, land ownership, residential and overnight expeditions, national guidance and health and safety.

The Network can provide advice and guidance on quality assured outdoor teaching and learning and provide training and support for teachers and education professionals.

Please do contact us for further clarification or information.

Question 1

- i) Do you work in or support the delivery of initial teacher education (ITE)?
(If no continue to iv.)

Yes	✓	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- ii) If Yes, in which type of setting/organisation do you work?

ITE partnership – HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership – primary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional consortium	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership – secondary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regulatory body (including inspectorates)	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership – through school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership – special school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) Network of organisations in Wales representing the outdoor learning sector -see full explanation above. Many of our members either deliver ITE directly or provide supporting activities.	✓

- iii) What is your primary role?

Teacher education/student teacher mentor – HEI-based	<input type="checkbox"/>	Induction/NQT support officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher educator/student teacher mentor – school-based	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspector	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership leader – HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accreditation monitoring official	<input type="checkbox"/>
ITE partnership leader – lead partner school	<input type="checkbox"/>	ITE partnership leader – partner school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify): Chair of Wales Council for Outdoor Learning, this response has been approved by members	✓		

- iv) If you do not work in or support the delivery of ITE, in what capacity would you like to provide feedback?

Parent/carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional associations including education workforce unions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child or young person (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Third sector	<input type="checkbox"/>

Adult (not a parent or carer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newly qualified teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student/academic	<input type="checkbox"/>
School teacher (not currently working as a teacher educator)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Headteacher (not currently involved with an ITE partnership in Wales)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

v) Are you providing feedback on behalf of an organisation or group?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If 'yes', please specify.

On behalf of Wales Council for Outdoor Learning
[Outdoor Learning | Wales Council For Outdoor Learning](#)

Question 2 – Have you read the ‘Refresh of the Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education in Wales’ consultation document?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have selected ‘No’ we recommend you read the document before continuing with the questionnaire.

Question 3 – Do you agree that the amendments to ‘Section A: A vision for initial teacher education in Wales’ in the document make more explicit the vision for ITE in Wales and the intellectual thinking required to design and deliver ITE programmes?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have any comments related to your response, please use this space to elaborate.

Wales Council for Outdoor Learning would like to see a vision that includes reference to the utilisation of outdoor learning as a central pedagogy which provides increased opportunities for physical activity, mental well-being and attainment, encouraging a connection to nature and pro-environmental behaviours leading to an understanding of

all our roles in helping to mitigate and adapt to the declared climate and nature emergencies.

Question 4 – Do you agree that the amendments to ‘Section B: ITE programmes structures, processes, and inputs’ reflect the maturing educational reforms in Wales, make the requirements clearer, and further the quality requirements for ITE programmes in Wales?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have any comments related to your response, please use this space to elaborate.

Wales Council for Outdoor learning would like to highlight that in his speech during the plenary session of 26th October 2022, the education minister, Jeremy Miles MS, highlighted the changing view of outdoor learning and its role as a ‘*fundamental element*’ in the learning of the children and young people of Wales. This is not reflected in the programme content (section 5.9) as outdoor learning is not mentioned here either as a specific pedagogical approach to be covered, or in any previous sections on course design or in relation to the Curriculum for Wales and subject studies (section 5.6). In fact, bullet points in section 5.9 state:

- *classroom management and organisation*
- *working collaboratively in the classroom and with colleagues* – implying the indoor classroom only

In section 5.4 it also states that ITE programmes should focus on “*preparation for the complex environment of classrooms*” – we suggest that reference to the outdoor teaching and learning environment should also be made here. Use of the natural environment is crucial in supporting well-being (linked to section 5.8) providing opportunities for increased physical activity within the school day and a supporting environment for those who do not learn as well in the classroom, which in turn supports the Whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being.

In his speech on 26th October, the minister stated that ‘*the new curriculum emphasises the role of outdoor learning across the curriculum*’ and that ‘*it is crucial that children and young people have the experience of outdoor learning throughout their time at school*’. If such content is not included in ITE, it is reasonable to suggest that newly qualified teachers, qualifying under these ITE criteria will not be able to deliver high quality outdoor learning as they will not have been given the opportunity to learn the pedagogical and practical skills required to facilitate learning outdoors. The Minister further explained that ‘*the pedagogical principles in the [statutory] guidance document also explains the importance of outdoor learning*’. If the pedagogical principles are outlined, it is important that ITE providers are required to provide opportunities for student teachers to learn about those principles before being asked to apply them. Finally in the same speech the Minister made a commitment to ‘*a package of measures that could be implemented quickly in the here and now, aimed at strengthening the*

impact and access to outdoor education'. Including a requirement for instruction and practice in outdoor learning pedagogy would seem an appropriate and timely response as part of this package of measures. The Minister concluded with a specific mention that *'areas that could be explored, for example, are improved professional learning support for practitioners, initial teacher education, resources...'* It would seem that one way that the Minister's pledges to improve the quality, understanding and impact of outdoor learning and support of practitioners and ITE provision would be to include a requirement for outdoor learning pedagogy to be included in section 5.9 on programme content.

The Minister's views support the findings of a Welsh Government commissioned piece of work (available at <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/the-national-strategy-for-educational-research-and-enquiry-nserc/research-studies-on-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-the-welsh-education-system/research-study-6/>) published on Hwb, that recommended an increased focus on outdoor learning in schools, and a greater focus on the health and well-being impact of outdoor learning in initial teacher education.

With both the Minister's public commitment, and Welsh Government commissioned work highlighting the need for a greater focus on outdoor learning, it would seem appropriate to specifically highlight this in section 5.9 acknowledging that an increased awareness of, and experience of the natural environment encourages an enhanced connection to nature and the establishment of pro-environmental behaviours leading to an understanding of all our roles in helping to mitigate and adapt to the declared climate and nature emergencies – essential knowledge for our future generations.

Question 5 – Do you agree that the amendments to 'Section C: Programme outcomes' reflect the maturing educational reforms in Wales, make the requirements clearer and more explicit, and further the quality requirements for ITE in Wales?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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If you have any comments related to your response, please use this space to elaborate.

No comment

Question 6 – Do you agree that the amendments to the following sections:

- 'Glossary'
- 'References'
- 'Appendix 2: Entry requirements for student teachers in Wales'

- ‘Appendix 3: Standards for Qualified Teacher Status – further advice for ITE partnerships in the design of programmes’

support the changes to the main body of the document?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have any comments related to your response, please use this space to elaborate.

We would like to see a definition for outdoor learning included in the Glossary:

Outdoor learning/Learning outside the classroom - this covers a whole range of activity including use of our school grounds, local parks, woodlands and beaches, field studies, environmental education, recognised accredited approaches to teaching like forest school and coastal school, residential stays and adventure education.

Question 7 – Do you agree that the inclusion of ‘Appendix 4: Specialist primary phase ITE provision for ALN’ clearly outlines Welsh Government’s aims to determine whether any changes are required in the Wales ITE framework to meet and support the requirements and aspirations of learners with the most complex additional learning needs?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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If you have any comments related to your response, please use this space to elaborate.

No comment

Question 8

We would like to know your views on the effects that the refreshed criteria would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Supporting comments

Wales Council for Outdoor Learning would expect any changes to be in line with the Welsh Language Standards under Section 47 of the Measure to which many of the member organisations adhere.

Question 9 – Please also explain how you believe the proposed criteria could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

Wales Council for Outdoor Learning would expect any changes to be in line with the Welsh Language Standards under Section 47 of the Measure to which many of the member organisations adhere.

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:

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: