

## “New online PGCE can make Wales a world leader” – Kirsty Williams

The addition of this new alternative route into teaching, announced today by Education Secretary Kirsty Williams, is the latest in a series of reforms designed to revolutionise the way ITE is provided in Wales. These also include new full-time ITE programmes.

The new part-time PGCE would provide a high quality alternative to full-time study and remove the need for students to travel just to attend their chosen course.

Students could instead interact with their lecturers and fellow students online, just as they would in the soon-to-be accredited full-time ITE programmes. This would remove any barriers that might be caused by their location or distance from a university.

In addition to the new PGCE, the Education Secretary also announced a new Employment Based Route (EBR), which would see a student teacher employed by a school from the outset. This would be targeted to help regional consortia address teaching shortages in schools region by region.

Both the part-time PGCE and EBR would enable student teachers to maintain their current commitments, including employment and income, whilst studying to be a teacher.

The students would also be able to take advantage of opportunities afforded by Wales' new student finance arrangements. From the 2018-19 academic year, all Welsh students – whether studying undergraduate full or part time – will receive support for their living costs equivalent to the UK national living wage.

Announcing the changes today, Kirsty Williams said:

“An education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and our new curriculum cannot be delivered without a well-supported, aspirational teaching profession.

“The new part-time PGCE has the potential to completely transform the way Initial Teacher Education in Wales is delivered, complementing our equally high quality full-time ITE programmes.

“New students who may previously never have considered a career in teaching or been put off by costs or their location will have access to an academic qualification and programme that is of the very highest standard while also being flexible and easily accessible.

“It's by harnessing technology in this way that we'll attract

highly-talented, experienced people with the higher level skills needed by both the teaching profession and our wider economy.

“I am confident that along with the step change in our soon to be accredited full-time ITE programmes the new part-time PGCE and EBR, together with new Professional Standards for teaching and accreditation criteria for initial teacher education, will allow us to raise standards across the board and make Wales a world-leader.”

The Education Secretary also confirmed today that an HE provider, or partnership of providers, will be procured to deliver the proposals by working with schools and education consortia across Wales.