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Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref: MA/LN/2328/25

20 November 2025

Dear Lisa

**NATIONAL LEVEL STUDENT TEACHER INTAKE ALLOCATIONS FOR INITIAL
TEACHER EDUCATION WITH QUALIFIED TEACHER STATUS: 2026/27 ACADEMIC
YEAR**

1. I am writing to let you know that the Cabinet Secretary for Education has agreed the national desired student teacher intake for full-time initial teacher education (ITE) programmes which award qualified teacher status (QTS) for the 2026/27 academic year.

Background and current situation

2. We continue to use the Teacher Planning and Supply Model (TPSM) to forecast the likely future national demand for newly qualified teachers in maintained settings. The model has been in use since 2007/08 to ensure against over/undersupply of newly qualified teachers in maintained schools in Wales. The statistical model considers actual historical data and future projections including learner, and teacher demographics alongside pupil teacher ratios.
3. Last year we [placed information on recruitment into initial teacher education \(ITE\) awarding Qualified Teacher Status \(QTS\) and the TPSM process on the gov.wales website](#). The aim of this webpage is to provide clarity to key partners and stakeholders on the TPSM and allocation process and provides transparency for the public. This letter

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

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will be published on that webpage, replacing our letter to you pertaining to the national level student teacher intake allocations for initial teacher education with qualified teacher status: 2025/26 academic year.

Action

4. EWC will have due regard of the national desired intake of primary and secondary student teachers for ITE for the 2026/27 academic year set out in the table in the annex attached. Total numbers are provided for the primary and secondary phases. These figures are derived from the Welsh Government's forecast demand for newly qualified teachers to which the EWC, in exercising its functions, is required to have regard to under the *Education Workforce Council (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) (Additional Functions) (Wales) Order 2017*.
5. The figures in the attached annex continue to not include a separate Welsh-medium desired stock level; the small numbers in this cohort would result in widely varying outputs each year producing instability in national workforce supply indicators, undermining ITE programme sustainability. Under EWC's monitoring processes the Welsh Government continues to expect that the percentage of Welsh-medium recruitment to ITE Programmes is included and related to the ongoing accredited status of ITE programmes. To support the growth in Welsh-medium education and the delivery of our Welsh in education workforce plan, the Welsh Government maintains our requirement that partnerships should continue to work towards ensuring that 30% of recruitment to all ITE programmes should be student teachers learning to teach through the medium of Welsh. This should be considered at individual programme level and across ITE Partnership's provision.
6. The 30% requirement is one of a range of actions Welsh Government has taken to support recruitment to the Welsh-medium sector however this should be considered not only as a desired recruitment outcome for our ITE partnerships but a marker for the whole of the education sector. All those involved in education play a role to ensure a sufficient supply of Welsh-medium applicants willing and able to enter ITE for this recruitment requirement to be met by our ITE partnerships, ensuring their accredited status and therefore ITE provision regionally.
7. Welsh Government will also continue to use this requirement as an indicator for the whole education sector when evaluating the success of strategies employed by all organisations for ensuring a sufficient pool of potential Welsh-medium applicants for ITE partnerships to attract to their programmes. However, if monitoring returns do not evidence an increase in the number of Welsh-medium students or recruitment more broadly, then partnerships may be required to provide written evidence of their actions to achieve this.
8. Welsh Government continues in its commitment to an Anti-racist Wales and the implementation of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic recruitment plan. A further iteration of that plan is planned for publication and workforce and graduate data suggests our school teacher workforce continues to have low levels of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teachers compared to our learner population. As such the marker for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic will remain at 5% and we will continue to use as an indicator for the whole education sector when evaluating the success of strategies employed by all organisations, including each ITE partnership, who are committed to increase applications from these students and offer support during the application

process and their ITE programmes. We request that the EWC continue to monitor ethnic minority applications and acceptances onto programmes monthly.

9. In setting allocations for each ITE Programme available in Wales for 2026/27, the EWC must continue to utilise a fair and equitable method based on robust methodology and statistical techniques. Consideration should be given to appropriate cohort sizes and this method should identify and support regional considerations and demand alongside allocations by:
 - a. phase or secondary subject specialism for every ITE programme / pathway (where applicable)
 - b. language medium
 - c. and utilise your expert knowledge of specific programmes, their capacity and recruitment success in previous years.
10. In considering the allocation of secondary numbers by secondary ITE programme, the EWC must bear in mind the Cabinet Secretary's continued focus on our priority subjects which must not be detrimentally affected by recruitment to other subjects or phases. The priority subject areas identified for AY2026/27 are:
 - Biology
 - Chemistry
 - Design & Technology
 - Information Technology / Computing
 - Mathematics
 - Modern foreign languages
 - Physics
 - Welsh
11. Partnerships are encouraged to exceed their allocations in secondary (except in the case of PGCE PE) where they can do so within reasonable parameters set at the discretion of the Welsh Government and EWC. For primary programmes, as was the case last year, a tolerance will be set of no more than 20% above the allocation. This is in response to higher-than-expected recruitment to primary PGCE courses over the last 3 to 5 years. This tolerance is intended to divert emphasis to the secondary sector where recruitment needs to be bolstered and to ensure positive employment outcomes for new teachers in the primary sector where pupil numbers are declining and the fiscal context is constrained.
12. The Open University Partnership's Part-time PGCE and Salaried PGCE remain outside the allocation process. Their recruitment levels are set under a grant agreement supporting student teachers unable to access full-time programmes on the alternative routes into teaching.
13. Using the methodology at point 9 above, the EWC will calculate the regional allocations by phase, language and including for secondary subject specialisms.
14. The EWC will calculate allocations for each ITE programme and submit these in writing to the Welsh Government by 3 December. These allocations will need to be justified and able to stand up to independent scrutiny or challenge.
15. The Welsh Government will give due regard to the submission and respond to the EWC by 5 December.

16. Once approved by the Welsh Government the EWC will be able to notify ITE Partnerships of their allocations by 10 December.
17. This timeline corresponds to this year's process only. Welsh Government and EWC reserve the right to manage the process timeline in forthcoming years as they see fit with due regard to ITE Partnerships recruitment cycles and the receipt of the required data sets needed for the TPSM.
18. EWC will continue its responsibility for monthly monitoring of recruitment levels for subject and phase, the take-up of Welsh medium provision, and recruitment of students from an ethnic minority background, under their duties as the accrediting body. EWC will report this data to the Welsh Government monthly at no additional cost as per EWC statutory obligations.
19. EWC will alert the Welsh Government immediately where recruitment to programmes in the next academic year is likely to exceed desired intake allocations for each partnership by any significant degree so that officials can ensure the viability of any existing incentive schemes. EWC will also alert the Welsh Government to any anomalous reporting patterns in subjects, phases or language medium to ensure that allocations are being worked towards in an equitable manner.
20. The Welsh Government and EWC reserve the right to rescind these arrangements at any time. The Welsh Government and EWC reserve the right to limit continued recruitment to any subjects or phases where recruitment levels have exceeded the parameters agreed. This can apply to whole partnerships, phases nationally or specific programmes at the discretion of the Welsh Government and the EWC.

Next Steps

21. Welsh Government will continue to update and review the TPSM as part of ongoing model development and workforce planning to ensure a sufficient supply of new teachers into the national workforce to maintain, and where appropriate reduce pupil teacher ratios, protect against oversupply of teachers and provide a robust evidence base for supporting the development of policies to address any emerging issues.
22. The annual outputs of the TPSM will continue to be provided to the EWC for monitoring purposes which form part of your statutory obligations with regards to the accreditation and monitoring of ITE in Wales.
23. The Welsh Government will continue to review recruitment levels to ITE nationally and retains the right to reinstate the recruitment caps for secondary ITE in future academic years.
24. The Welsh Government will publish this correspondence on gov.wales at <https://www.gov.wales/initial-teacher-education-recruitment-process>.
25. The EWC will communicate to the ITE partnerships that part of the monitoring of accredited status will include the Welsh Government's clear expectations for recruitment to ITE programmes for AY2026/27, as set out in this letter. In addition, ITE partnerships should be advised of the importance of providing timely and accurate recruitment data to the EWC and the Welsh Government where requested. This should be formally communicated to all ITE partnerships with programmes available in AY2026/27 by 10 December 2025.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max White', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Max White

Head of Initial Teacher Education

Annex A:

Table 1: Desired Stock of new teachers academic year 2025/26

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
Primary	224	339	563
Secondary		1,009	1,009
Total			1,572

The desired stock of new teachers is intended to support a reduction in the pupil teacher ratio (PTR) in both secondary and primary and reflects levels of actual ITE recruitment achieved separately in primary and secondary in previous years alongside completion rates. The desired stock maintains aspirations in relation to secondary intake where recruitment to ITE is most challenging and the pupil teacher ratio remains higher than the previous years. It maintains to an extent primary levels where recruitment into ITE has been buoyant with some recent years of over-recruitment and declining pupil projections. The January 2025 pupil projections indicate that in nursery and primary schools, the pupil FTE will continue to decline with a similar picture in secondary pupil numbers. As with the previous year an assumption of less than 100% of new entrant need is achieved within the secondary sector has been utilised in the model.

Setting the TPSM model to deliberately reduce PTR (**it should be noted that the national and local PTR is directly affected by decisions made at a school and local authority level in relation to their role as employers of teachers in Wales**) is intended to mitigate the impact of the pandemic via reduced class-sizes. It is hoped this will support learners in relation to their attainment as well as teacher-wellbeing. Decreasing PTRs may also help to ensure there are enough highly skilled teachers within the workforce, including those able to work through the medium of Welsh and in the wide range of ALN roles.

In both the primary and secondary sectors, data from the Schools Workforce Annual Census that in nursery and primary schools, qualified teacher FTE has decreased by 375 (3.3%) between November 2023 and November 2024. Over the same period, qualified teacher FTE in secondary schools has decreased by 240 (2.2%). In previous years the re-entrants' rate was set with a greater reliance on re-entrants than ITE entrants. This was amended in 2020/21 and continues to ensure that more new teachers that have been trained to deliver the new curriculum through the new robust, accredited ITE programmes, are available without reducing space within the workforce for experienced practitioners that may wish to return to teaching. A greater reliance on new entrants will ensure that the age profile of the workforce is better balanced across the sector; increased reliance on re-entrants potentially unbalances the age profile in the workforce which has damaging implications once these re entrants reach retirement age.

A three-year average wastage rate has been used given the uneven workforce picture across the pandemic and non-pandemic years

Table 2: Indicative projected desired stock of new teachers academic year 2027/28 (subject to change)

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
Primary	239	360	598
Secondary		1,028	1,028
Total			1,626

Table 3: Indicative projected desired stock of new teachers academic year 2028/29 (subject to change)

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
Primary	251	378	629
Secondary		1,045	1,045
Total			1,674

The indicative numbers are for information only and are not to be considered a confirmation of the national level student teacher intake allocations for ITE in future years. The Welsh Government will continue to provide annual confirmation to EWC on the desired stock of new teachers based on the most current **actual** data relating to pupil and teacher demographics and levels of ITE recruitment.