

**Message from Professor Kate Ireland, Director of Centre for Teacher Education, University of Warwick**

To all University of Warwick PGCE students, trainees and partner schools covering the following:

- COMMUNICATION TO STUDENTS, TRAINEES REGARDING THE RECENT DfE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT ON COVID-19 AND INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING.
- UPDATE ON TRAINEE ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Friday 27 March 2020

**DfE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT ON COVID-19 AND INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING**

We have received the following communication from the DfE on a whole range of aspects in connection with Initial Teacher Training. The details are copied in full from the DfE statement:

1. ITE requirements in respect of time spent in school and number and location of placements are suspended. ITE programmes can continue through on-line learning, the setting of assignments to be completed at home and in other ways that providers think appropriate.
2. Where at the end of the programme students are judged by the provider to be on a *trajectory towards* meeting the teacher standards they can, on normal timescales, be recommended for the award of QTS.
3. Arrangements for students who could clearly not be judged to be on a trajectory towards QTS at the end of their programmes will be announced in due course, along with details of any financial provision.
4. Additional support for next year's NQTs who are awarded QTS will also be announced in due course.

**Where are we now?**

The Warwick PGCE course is not suspended, even though PGCE placements have been suspended. We don't know how long schools will be closed but it may be a significant amount of time between now and the end of the school year 2019-20.

PGCE students will have assignments to complete between now and the end of the year. We will ensure that there are ways for these to be completed without the need to go into school, as we need to assume that this will not be possible during this time.

**Qualified Teacher Status.**



From the above statement (2&3), it is clear that the majority of PGCE trainees will qualify this year, as if they were completing placements normally. However, we need to have a valid, reliable and evidence-based approach to this which is fair and transparent for all students and their prospective employing schools.

We will be working closely with Schools to develop arrangements for determining the award of QTS in the current circumstances, so that you have full confidence in the process. We will be involving school partners on all training routes in making reliable decisions which are in the best interests of trainees, schools and learners.

Irrespective of individual circumstances, the recommendation for **the award of QTS will not be made until the end of the 19/20 PGCE programme** and will be dependent on both completion of the PGCE academic elements and continued evidence of all aspects of the Teachers' Standards including the preamble and Part Two of the Teachers' Standards.

We have a duty of care to all trainees to make the right judgments for QTS, not only for the present but also for their longer-term careers. We are expecting that further guidance will follow shortly from the DfE on arrangements for additional support in the NQT year. We are considering what this process might look like as a priority. However, it will take us some time to develop our approach, which will be informed by guidance yet to be published by the DfE.

We will of course communicate with all trainees at the individual level at the earliest opportunity, especially where we judge that they are not be in a position to be awarded QTS by the end of this academic year.

### **Moving forward**

We are formulating a new, exceptional process for recommending QTS as a priority. We are also looking ahead to ways that we can provide additional support for all trainees in preparing for an NQT year that is likely to include more than the usual challenges.

Support is in place to help all current PGCE trainees with the remaining academic parts of the programme and we hope that trainees are able to focus on ensuring that these are passed successfully.

We will communicate on a regular basis the progress that we are making and the guidance received from the DfE. It's important that we keep you informed of progress even if we do not have all the answers yet.

**We sincerely thank you for your continued patience at a time that we appreciate comes with a lot of uncertainty. Please could we ask that you provide us with the space and**

**time to develop the necessary arrangements by keeping questions about individual circumstances to a minimum until we are in a position to provide more detailed answers.**

### **Changes to assignment submissions for students**

On Friday 27 March you will receive communication from the central University that all assignments due to be submitted between 30th March 2020 and 31st July 2020 will automatically receive a 2 week extension. You do not need to apply for this as it will be applied to all students/trainees.

In addition to the automatic 2 week extension, you are able to self-certificate and obtain a further automatic 5 day extension for any assignments that are due to be submitted within this period, this can be used twice within the academic year.

As a department CTE fully support this position and would encourage any trainees who have been impacted by Covid-19 to complete the following form:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cte/students-partners/students/self-cert/> and select the following statement “I wish to self-certify for 5 working days”

If you require an extension in excess of five days this must be requested using the normal channels on Tabula:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/its/servicessupport/web/tabula/manual/cm2/mit-circs/declare>

and will be considered in line with the existing departmental mitigating circumstances processes.

The requirements to obtain supporting evidence for any mitigating circumstances requests has also been amended in light of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Further information is available on the EPQ Mitigating Circumstances webpage:

[https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/u\\_mitigatingcircumstances](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/u_mitigatingcircumstances)

Kind Regards



Professor Kate Ireland,  
Director of CTE