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CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Issue 13

CollectivED Working Papers

Mentoring and Initial Teacher Education Special Edition

Working Papers from CollectivED; the Centre for Mentoring, Coaching and Professional Learning

A University Research and Practice Centre where collaborative conversations create powerful professional learning

2022

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Introduction to CollectivED and Issue 13

by CollectivED Director Rachel Lofthouse

CollectivED The Centre for Mentoring, Coaching & Professional Learning is a research and practice centre based in The Carnegie School of Education. We form a community of professionals, academics and students with shared interests. Our aims are to

- Encourage and enable collaborative conversations which create powerful professional learning
- Build capacity of educators to create contexts which support inclusive career-long and profession-wide learning
- Remove barriers to professional development
- Increase opportunities for educational change through enhanced professional agency and well-being

The research undertaken by the CollectivED community relates to formal and informal professional learning and practice in all sectors of education. Our research focuses on

- teacher education and professional learning at all career stages
- learning through mentoring, coaching, digital pedagogies, workplace and interprofessional practices
- teachers' and leaders' professionalism, identity, wellbeing, self-efficacy and agency
- educational policy and partnership

You can find out more about CollectivED here https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/research/collectived/ where you can access each issue of our working papers and other activities.

In Issue 13 we have selected papers which have direct bearing on initial teacher education and mentoring. These are particularly relevant given the significant policy changes in England in these areas, but will also have resonance in other contexts. We conclude Issue 13 with notes on our working paper contributors, and information on submitting papers for future publication.

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Lessons learnt from a year of training teachers virtually but collaboratively

A practice insight working paper by Victoria Crooks

This paper reflects on the academic year 2020/21. It was a year of unprecedented change and creative challenge in initial teacher education. Initial principles, drawn up in the early weeks of the pandemic and in consultation with mentor colleagues, have continued to act as a foundation upon which to build our response to the evolving circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the University of Nottingham, we value our partnership with local schools that has been developed over decades; partnership underpins our philosophy of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Theory is vital in developing specialised teacher knowledge (Shulman and Shulman, 2004) but theoretical knowledge cannot be easily interpreted by teachers into effective classroom practice unless they are specifically supported to do so, in our context, by colleagues in school placements (mentors) working collaboratively with their Higher Education Institution (HEI) subject specialist tutor (Smith et. al. 2006). The collaboration within the partnership enables our beginning teachers to understand their classroom and school experiences through a reflective and theoretical lens and become inquiring

professionals able to adapt their knowledge to a wide range of contexts.

Establishing principles for a 'lockdown' curriculum

Yet in March 2020, as the ITE course entered its final phase, we suddenly found ourselves faced with the prospect of completing our students' teacher education programmes without school placements and via a virtual medium using new and unfamiliar technologies. This necessitated a reconceptualising of our programme and the ways in which our beginning teachers could be supported to continue making progress in relation to the Teacher Standards (DfE, 2012). In those early days, as we considered how our students could achieve qualified teacher status (QTS) without classroom practice, the History ITE team at the University of Nottingham identified 5 principles that became our priorities for our curricular provision in the first lockdown:

1. Collaboration with colleagues
2. Subject Knowledge enhancement
3. Pedagogical engagement

4. Lesson planning practise
5. Professional growth and understanding

Reflecting on a year of unprecedented change and creative challenge it is clear how the initial principles, drawn up in these early weeks in consultation with our mentor colleagues, have continued to act as a foundation upon which to build our response to the evolving circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to these curricular principles, the need for a compassionate, person-centred approach recognising the very unusual and particular stress of this period, for mentor colleagues and ITE students, has been vital. Consequently, our curriculum has also been informed by the necessity for flexibility in terms of curriculum design, expectations of engagement and, in the 2020/21 academic year, placement organisation. Our confidence in our established curriculum, at both a whole course level (Sullivan & Knight, 2019) and subject level, has enabled us to embrace this flexibility of approach. As the events of 2020/21 have unfolded, our innovation, initially born of necessity in response to the changing circumstances, evolved beyond reaction to a more proactive vision of how the pandemic might enable us to develop expertise in our beginning teachers that is

usually beyond the bounds of a PGCE year (Breslin, 2021).

During the first lockdown, we developed a subject specific 'virtual' PGCE curriculum for our beginning teachers (Crooks, 2020). In this period the students continued to draw on their school placement context when engaging a programme of weekly seminars that allowed them to continue developing on a trajectory to meeting the teacher standards (DfE, 2020). These seminars provided structured opportunities to:

- critically examine history specific pedagogy and the disciplinary underpinnings of their subject;
- engage with historical scholarship to build their own subject knowledge;
- plan historical enquiries as sequences of lessons, implementing their weekly disciplinary and pedagogical focus before enacting these through micro-teaching opportunities, and then engaging in the evaluative reflection cycle;
- discuss and debate different aspects of their emerging teacher identity, teaching and learning, and classroom practice, to support the continued development of their own theory of practice;
- develop their understanding of the professional role of a teacher through our 'Conversations from the Classroom' series

which involved teachers from our partnership and alumni of the course.

First outcomes

Evidence of our students' lockdown outcomes enabled us to (with some relief) confidently recommend them for QTS on the basis that they were 'making adequate progress towards the teachers' standards' and 'would have completed their ITT course successfully' (DfE, 2020). Indeed, local schools who employed this cohort of beginning teachers as NQTs have remarked that, whilst they have inevitably needed support to make the transition back into classroom practice and develop day to day teaching stamina, time spent in the virtual curriculum had prepared them for their new roles. Two school partners have particularly noted that these pandemic-NQTs are thinking far more deeply about subject specific pedagogical approaches and curriculum planning than would usually be expected of a beginning teacher. The absence of school-based experience has challenged our preconceived notions of an effective training programme. Musset states in her 2010 OECD working paper the research evidence of 'the positive impacts of reinforcing complementarity between field experience and academic studies', asserting this is 'why it shouldn't take over completely on the theoretical part of teacher education, fundamental to obtain high-quality teachers'

(Musset, 2010). The COVID-19 response in ITE has demonstrated the value of having more time and space to consolidate and push beginning teachers' disciplinary thinking once they have understood the nature of the classroom, and in some respects has illuminated the limitations of outcomes based around beginning teachers' ability to maintain a 'full' timetable in the final months of the course.

The new blended challenge

During the academic year 2020/21 the pandemic has continued to present us with challenges, but it has also demonstrated the strength and versatility of collaboration within our partnership from both school and university-based colleagues. In a very challenging climate, we have been able to provide all our beginning history teachers with two distinct teaching practice placements in local secondary schools. Once again, flexibility in our new 'blended' approach has been key and has been made possible by our clearly defined and shared principles of our ITE curriculum.

Having now moved beyond the initial 'stabilising' phase of our pandemic response into a 'rethinking practices' phase (Ellis et. al., 2020), our school-partners have been enabled to take creative and bespoke approaches to

developing in-school experiences for our beginning teachers. The students have been able to engage with placements in person – both in face-to-face teaching and supporting critical worker bubbles during national lockdown. They have also supported and led remote learning when bubbles have burst, they have been required to self-isolate, or as a consequence of national lockdown. Blended approaches to placement have been supported by the continuation of a virtual curriculum, providing additionality to these school-based experiences and the usual university-based days. Within the partnership a shared philosophy of teacher education, which reaches beyond the 'craft' and 'executive technician' perspectives of ITE to one that sees teaching as a 'professional endeavour' (Winch et. al., 2015), has enabled this reconceptualization of how an effective teacher education programme can adapt to new contexts. It has empowered the innovation required by the circumstances and validated a bespoke approach deepening engagement with certain elements of the course for individual beginning teachers.

Unexpected benefits of technologies

The routine uses of remote technologies, whilst initially providing one of the greatest anxieties for us as teacher educators, has proven one of the most interesting consequences of the pandemic. Initial concerns about how virtual engagement might hamper the building of relationships, with mentors in the partnership and with the beginning teachers themselves, have been largely unrealised. Technology has also enabled tutors and mentors to work more closely to support students as they've returned to face-to-face teaching after lockdown, through more regular online meetings, prompt and responsive interventions to support, and opportunities to undertake 'remote' observation visits.

The pandemic has also provided a solution to some of the barriers to our desire to build communities of engagement with historical scholarship and pedagogy. Technology has made involvement in Subject Interest Groups, where partnership colleagues engage with subject knowledge enhancement and subject specific pedagogical thinking, more accessible and thus better attended. Within the beginning teacher cohort efforts to promote sustainable habits of subject knowledge enhancement, which have previously been difficult to maintain once students were fully embedded in placements, have flourished in the form of weekly online subject knowledge enhancement groups. Our training teachers have also brought their expertise as learners and teachers in the online environment to support remote learning in their school placements (Breslin, 2021).

Considering how to adapt pedagogical approaches for online teaching has been a footnote to the innovations in approaches to working in partnership with school colleagues and the opportunities for peer support within the cohort.

Conclusions

The past year has vividly demonstrated the importance of shared vision in partnership. We work with our school partners to develop beginning teachers who think critically, have a strong sense of their teacher identity, and are enquiring professionals who develop agency which means they can be visionary not just reactive when circumstances change. The pandemic has demonstrated the ability of ITE providers to '[create] a future through agentic transformations of an existing situation' (Ellis et. al., 2020) and to do this with measurable success. From the pandemic cohorts of 2019/20 and 2020/21 it is clear the virtual space has provided opportunities beyond the usual ITE curriculum resulting in differently but not deficiently educated beginning teachers. Our real challenge now is to preserve and develop the best elements of this creativity and innovation to be employed into a future which has returned to 'normal'.

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Mentors are first and foremost teachers

A research insight paper by Geraldine Leydon

This is a reflective paper. The class mentor and trainee have been anonymised and there are no identifying features.

Background

The Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training (2015) identified that training is variable and lacks status both in schools and across the sector more widely. A key recommendation in the review was for trainees to have effective mentoring. Since then, there have been successive national policy initiatives that impact the expectations and quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). This academic year, the Core Content Framework (CCF) (DfE, 2019) was introduced which outlines the fundamental entitlement for trainee teachers. A key element of the framework is to have mentoring in schools from 'expert' colleagues with the expectation of mentors moving to co-deliver part of a core content curriculum (Boyle, 2020).

The notion of 'expert' caused me to reflect on my experiences working with class mentors in my role in ITE. I found the quality and expertise of mentors to vary considerably. This caused me to consider the potential for tension between the practice of mentoring and the aspirations for 'expert' mentors called for in the CCF (2019). This reflective paper is based on my final EdD assignment. I reviewed the literature and in line with my experience, there were suggestions that mentoring quality in ITE was lacking (Galley, 2020; Wexler, 2020) (Hobson and Malderez,2013) (Ponte and Twomey,2014). In addition, there was discussion in the literature that mentoring practices were being culturally shaped by the aims and agendas of schools beyond a class mentor's commitment to a trainee (Lofthouse and Thomas 2014).

In my literature search I discovered that there was little discussion around ITE mentor identity. I turned to reflect on one of the placements that I was involved with. Jane was on her first teaching experience placement in a mixed year five and six class. She was in the first half of her placement which consisted of four non-consecutive weeks which was to be followed with a four-week block placement. My interactions with the class mentor, Cathy took place over the course of the first half of the placement in the Spring term.

Towards the second week of Jane's placement, Cathy contacted me with concerns about Jane's commitment and progress. In line with the University policy, I guided her in writing a plan to support Jane to make progress towards specific targets. At this point Cathy appeared agitated and expressed that she did not have time to facilitate this targeted support. I understood this to mean that other aspects of her professional role took priority. She expressed disappointment in that she thought Jane would have been able to teach the year six children in her class whilst she could focus on teaching the children in year five. Two weeks later at the mid placement stage, the interim report for Jane was graded as still needing support for her to pass the placement and continue with her studies. However, due to Covid 19, this placement was cut short and Jane did not return to the school.

During my interaction with Cathy, I sensed that the development of the trainee to become a qualified teacher was not a priority for her. A focus for the class mentor appeared to be to have an additional teacher to support her in teaching the children. Although this was Jane's first placement, Cathy referred to the fast pace of the class and staff, which she expressed should include Jane. The oft considered high stakes statutory Standard Assessment Tests (SATS) that the year six children would soon be sitting were brought into our interactions by Cathy when we were discussing this placement.

Expertise in the Figured World of Romance

Whilst considering Cathy's mentoring role, I read the work of Holland et al.'s (1988) exploration of women's identity in the figured world of college romance. A figured world is described by Holland et al. (1998) as,

> … a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others (Holland et al., 1998:52).

The authors observed how skills and competence varied in the world of romance and how expertise can be developed or prohibited. Some women developed mastery which became a motivating force. However, their mastery was dependent on the individual's view of themselves and how they interpreted and developed an identification of themselves as an actor in that world. Significantly, for the authors, identification could not be presumed.

> If a woman did not identify a clear identification of herself in the world of romance, then romance was not likely to be very salient for her and

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she was not   likely to be much of an agent in conducting romantic relationships (Holland et al., 1998: 116).

As the women became more confident, there was a change in the relationship between the individual and the system. They came to see themselves as being competent within the system and became emotionally involved. They developed a sense of responsibility for the results of choices they made. The researchers found this to be necessary for further proficiency. For Holland et al. (1998), the process of developing a sense of being in the figured world of romance revealed much about the motivating force of that world for women. If the women were unclear, vague, or resistant in visualising themselves in that figured world, then it remained unimportant in their lives and they would lack expertise.

As I continued to reflect, I considered that Cathy appeared to identify more readily with the role of teacher and did not appear to identify, be motivated, or have a sense of responsibility to the mentoring role.   She said she did not have time for it and even suggested that the university were responsible for the lack of success on the placement for placing Jane in a year group with high stakes testing. Interestingly it is the school that identify the mentors and consequently the year groups that the student

will be placed.   Looking back, I do not remember Cathy showing any sense of responsibility for the failing placement.

> It seems you can't acquire these skills [of having a complex view of the situation] unless you are taking the game very seriously... (Dreyfus cited in Holland et al. 1998: 119)

Cathy, as with all class mentors in ITE, was a teacher before becoming a mentor and she appeared to identify more readily with her first role. Perhaps then she felt more responsibility and emotional involvement to that figured world.

Identity Dissonance

This insight into the women in the figured world of romance, provided me with some insight into Cathy's role as a mentor and the possibility of the perceived lack of identification with it. The research by van Lankveld et al. (2016) went beyond an actor's identification, responsibility, and expertise in professional roles. In their focus on the world of undergraduate medical education, they identified the existence of three identity positions. These were that of teacher, doctor and researcher and they explored how the teacher role is integrated into the identity of a doctor. These roles were found to be either adopted, rejected, or combined.   The researchers asserted that before these

doctors began to teach, their identity was usually firmly grounded in the figured world of research or health care. As they adopted the identity of doctor and researcher first, it led to dialogue between the positions.   The authors identified 'identity dissonance' which they saw as the struggle to integrate the teaching role into the pre-existing identity of doctor or researcher.

Of import and relevance to mentors in education, van Lankveld et al.'s (2016) study claimed that where there was a smooth integration of the role of teaching into their first identity, then teachers were more likely to continue teaching. They also might invest in their development and gain more confidence in their role. Where a lack of identification and synthesis in roles was found, the teaching role was not viewed positively and there was a lack of prestige associated with it. In the figured world of health care, teaching was perceived as being for failing doctors and viewed as having less importance than research. Critically for the researchers, the lack of identification put the education of the undergraduate doctors at risk. Teachers were prevented from developing expertise as they did not stay long enough in the teaching role.

Synthesizing Figured Worlds

Crucially, and with optimism van Lankveld et al.'s (2016) research claimed that a figured world of teaching (referring still to the medical profession) can be developed. The teacher role can be actively integrated into pre-existing identities and they can be synthesised into a coherent and effective whole.   The teacher's role can be identified with positivity and they could become emotionally attached to it. The use of positive stories, events and traditions can make the figured world more visible. The researchers advised that there should be role models to identify with and that the role should be celebrated to ensure that teachers feel valued. They also stressed that there should be a reward system with structures to facilitate promotion.

> When teachers feel emotionally attached to their role, the category of 'teacher' becomes a more structural part of their thinking and reasoning, it becomes 'part of who they are' (van Lankveld et al., 2016:603).

Conclusion

In this reflective paper, I have considered the potential to develop the figured world of school-based mentoring in ITT that class teachers could identify   more positively with. Perhaps teachers such as Cathy could become

emotionally attached, gain a sense of responsibility, and become 'expert' within that figured world.

However, my preliminary exploration of the literature suggested that the focus on mentor identity in ITE is sparce. Similarly, this paper is a reflective piece and is not based on a thorough research project. I suggest then, that in the first instance, there should be further research to explore mentor identity in ITE. My EdD focus is using figured world theory to explore this.   With a more nuanced understanding of developing mentor identities, perhaps only then could the focus move to consider how roles could be synthesised.

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The use of storytelling as a pedagogical tool in the instruction and support of trainee teachers

A practice insight working paper by Henry Sauntson

"Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education" - Paulo Freire

There has been much research into - and debate around - the use of storytelling in teaching and the power it has to enable learners to make connections, relate new material to existing understanding and also build mental representations.

Human beings have been finding ways to teach each other for many centuries, since records began; "Storytelling is culturally universal—it is likely the oldest form of teaching, allowing generations of humans to share cultural knowledge to be remembered over time" (Landrum 2019 p.2) from paintings on walls of caves, through to great Mentors as told by Homer, through to aspiring Knights, debutants, raw soldiers, children learning their 3 'R's; each generation has developed its own pedagogies suited best to its desired outcomes, and learned from its mistakes. One constant, however, has been the dialogue between teacher and student - the expert instructing the novice through a combination of demonstration, explanation, modelling and feedback until the novice themselves achieves some form of expertise. In the early years of discourse and theories surrounding education, the telling of the story would be the prime medium for the delivery of counsel; Plato, Socrates et al would frame philosophy in narrative to make it mean something to their listener.

In the days of the staff room, the regaling of colleagues with tales of classroom derring-do might have seemed a nice way to let off some steam and find humour in the often-distressing failures of the classroom, but each story was in fact a reflective articulation of a reality, from which lessons could be learned and shared; the better the storyteller, the more memorable the message. Stories allow us to connect through shared experiences, and to construct new realities from the ashes of those that have gone before - we love to share a success, framed in narrative, littered with characters, conflicts, crises and resolutions.

Stories as constructs are conscious - they require thought, expression and communication; all vital aspects of teacher

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development; stories help to organize thinking and in doing so enable reflection in a more structured manner.

Behind every teacher is a story; the story of their journey through their own education and to the point where they begin ITE - a clearly identified narrative with its range of functions; what teachers become as teachers begins with what they are as humans. The stories pre-service and early-career teachers tell of their own experiences help us as teacher educators frame the way we instruct them, how we draw out inferences, how we help them develop and guide their evolution. In The Call of Stories, Robert Coles (1989) provides strong evidence that the literary stories and poems his students read and responded to influenced their moral decisions in their professional lives; they become a vital part of the mirror in which we frame our reflection and decisions we make, which can be extrapolated to the classroom and our methods of instruction.

As we teach our trainees we can assume there is a semblance of story-construction ability innate within them, and therefore we can harness the power of gaps in the narratives we outline in our instruction of them, encouraging the trainee to fill said gaps in their own way, with their own experiences and reflections based on their own teaching,

linking to their lessons they teach and the feedback they receive.

Narratives give scope for transformative possibilities; observation is a narrative, be it to a specific point in the story or an holistic overview of the lesson experience, with its characters, emotional touchstones, peaks and troughs.

In his work on Andragogy, Malcolm Knowles explored the facets and motivations of the adult learner (which all those in ITE are) and concluded that, amongst other things, drawing on the past experiences (stories) of the learner and encouraging them to draw on these in their own development had a positive impact on their motivation - he felt that most thrive on the opportunity to share their experiences and the knowledge that has derived from them. Knowles also argued that real-life case studies were a strong basis from which to learn about more abstract theory - something very prescient in the throes of ITE. Thus we consider the power of stories to enable trainee teachers to make mental representations of to-be-learned ideas, turning the theoretical abstract into the achievable concrete.

As a Teacher Educator I often frame instruction - especially more complex theoretical material - within a story, to give it

relevance and physical 'characteristics'; I use analogy within the training narrative to help give easier points of reference for novice learners with as-yet incomplete schema.

Much of ITE Core Content training is imbued with explanation; modelling; demonstration; the use of storytelling as a tool for explanation allows a trainee to hear the emotional and sociological connection of the material to be learned and the circumstance in which it is played out - from a cognitive perspective as humans we benefit from stories because they are easy to remember, easy to understand and, above all, interesting.

We can see our ITT Core Curriculum as story - a journey underpinned by narrative and with human interest at its heart. If we draw down on the etymology of the word 'curriculum' as 'to run' then we see a clear destination indicated through start and end points, like a traditional narrative; to draw on many of the ITT Core Content framework statements, there is a need for trainees to be 'discussing and analysing with Expert colleagues' to make real the ideas therein - how better for the 'expert' colleague to frame this discussion than through the medium of the story? An anecdote from an experienced, battle-hardened practitioner carries more authenticity than a sterile reference to a research paper, and yet the latter can be the bedrock on which the former is developed.

From my own experiences as both individual trainee mentor and whole-cohort trainee instructor I harness the power of a narrative to frame much of my introductions to core concepts within teaching, be they explicit to the Standards or more nuanced in their view of certain pedagogies and techniques.

Stories bring abstract principles to life; they are given concrete form. The power of the story to make real and manifest a classroom experience or to make more accessible a theory or concept (Pygmalion, anyone?) should be embraced by teacher educators, if only to ensure that there is a connection between experiences and to-be-had experiences as they develop their practice in the classroom.

The further power of the story is the connection it creates between teller and listener; they are not only a familiar and accessible form of communication but also create a more personal link - the mentor tells the trainee stories of their own success and failures, the mistakes they have made and the lessons learned; the teacher trainer uses stories to help place hitherto unencountered pedagogical scenarios into more relatable form, and also to enforce and validate their own efficacy and ethos in the role they have adopted - stories of experience strengthen the message behind the instruction.

A good story can be a fine vehicle for clear illustration of a principle that you are seeking to demonstrate; the outlining of a pedagogical approach or classroom strategy made real, drawing links between the story content and the principle it demonstrates.

Let us explore this in practice through three standard case-studies in ITE; the trainee as the student, the trainee as the Mentee, and the trainee as reflective practitioner and autobiographer.

Firstly, the trainee as the student, attending Core Training sessions and developing an understanding of aspects of assessment, learning theory, classroom management et al as they move towards meeting the Teacher Standards.

At the beginning of an ITE year a trainee can happily be acknowledged as a novice; they are working towards meeting Teacher Standards in an official capacity for an award of Qualified Teacher Status. As such, they must demonstrate throughout the year progress towards those standards - theoretically and practically. Their practice in schools is underpinned by their Core Training offer, a scenario in which they as the trainee are the student in the room, being given instruction and guidance in largely 'classroom' form by more experienced teachers who lead the sessions and enable the trainee to understand the material; a classic teacher / student

relationship with clear outcomes and intentions, the only difference being the age and experience of the 'student' in 'real world' terms; 'Preservice teachers' belief systems provide an initial perspective against which they can begin to make purposeful choices about how they will behave as teachers' (Knowles, P1)

Teachers arrive in pre-service with formed ideas relating to schools, drawn through their own histories and observations whilst they were studying; these histories can often lead to skewed or outdated conceptions of pedagogy based on their own anecdotal experiences - what Knowles refers to as an 'apprenticeship of observation'; these histories need to be harnessed and confronted to ensure that they do not inveigle their way into a pre-service teacher's practice - 'Preservice teachers sometimes use alternate and potentially dysfunctional rationales for interpreting classroom events and making instructional decisions.' (Knowles p2).

Landrum tells us that 'The ultimate benefit of storytelling [...] is the special status that stories have regarding their memorability, derived through their narrative structure and the emotional investment they elicit from their audience' (p5), so we can as teacher educators adopt this within our own methodology - we are, after all, using

pedagogies appropriate to our students to teach our students about pedagogies; a mirror to our own practice.

In designing a day of Core Training and instruction I have to first ensure that I know my aims, my intended outcomes and the relationship and relevance of my instruction to the overall curriculum map the trainees are part of; I must activate their existing knowledge, challenge their misconceptions and build stronger links - I can do this through a combination of my own knowledge, valid research evidence and indeed narration of my own experience, to validate my ethos as their 'teacher'; 'We do not tell [trainees] about the importance of activating relevant schemata as preparation for new learning. We simply do so for and with them in dramatic, highly visible, and memorable ways' (Knowles p.18). Knowles continues; 'since we understand that preservice teachers already have processes for building premises about good instruction out of experiences they have had as students and that this process is in fine working order, we see the powerful potential for co-operating with them and the process. We aim to evoke change' (p.18). The core word here is 'change'; challenging the existing conceptions within the pre-service teacher, the aspiring pedagogue who has the potential to inspire and improve others. Bower (1978) tells us that 'story comprehension gives us a way to illuminate cognitive processes, because the

procedures people use to understand and remember stories are very general. In fact, in understanding stories, we seem to use much the same principles and procedures that we use when we are interacting with people in real settings, trying to interpret or explain why some person acts the way he does' (p.212); we can harness the power of storytelling in accompaniment with theory as an instructive device to broaden the rudimentary or fragmented schema of the novice learner - in his work 'MARGE' Shimamura states that 'by their very nature stories offer their own schema—they have a beginning, middle, and end—and are typically framed by way of a series of questions and answers' (p.10); we can harness the instructive framework inherent within them.

The second core interaction essential to the development of the pre-service teacher is that with their mentor; much has been written about the value of strong working practices and the impact that high-quality mentoring can have on induction; our focus here lies with the weekly (daily, often) feedback-as-narrative idea. The Trainee / Mentor relationship is one of duologue - stichomythic perhaps in some exchanges but duologue nonetheless; mutual storytelling for the benefit of the listener, taking turns to listen, elaborate, question and reflect.

A typical interaction of this style between trainee and mentor can find success when framed as a narrative - the mentor must give formative and developmental feedback to the trainee to enable them to parse and improve their practice, using the existing facets of the trainee's experience and history to help them frame their input - 'teachers of those who would be teachers have a unique opportunity to develop understandings about the relationships among the psychological, sociological, epistemological, philosophical, and ethical factors that can and do influence the development of new teachers' pedagogies'. (Knowles p.1). The mentor is charged with inculcating and acculturalizing the trainee into the world of the setting in which they are practicing their craft, and must do so with sensitivity and surety.

So much of the feedback given to a trainee by a mentor is naturally aligned to the classic narrative structure - WIllingham draws our attention to how, 'when "story" is intrinsic to the subject matter, make use of the story format' to structure the content for delivery; he advocates using the four Cs —causality, conflicts, complications, and character', all of which are present in the post-classroom deconstruction and dialogue regarding an observed lesson; the lesson has its start, its end, its conflicts, climaxes, red-herrings, plot-twists, antagonists, nemesi - the trainee of course as the protagonist overcoming

setbacks to emerge victorious. By framing the feedback as narrative the mentor enables the trainee to see an objective commentary on their teaching, coupled with the natural prompts, discussions and targets that will emerge. In his work around Classroom Observation, Matt O'Leary (2014) advocates as an exercise a trainee re-telling and thereby reflecting on their lessons in the forms of narratives to give them substance, elevating the sense of the drama of the scene but also placing it firmly within a narrative arc - was it a cliffhanger? Were all plot threads resolved? What became of the key characters and their actions?

The third aspect we consider here is that of the trainee as the teller of their own tale; the first-person autobiographical representation of their development and progress from a state of novice to that of greater expertise, guided by key characters along the way. Knowles again argues that 'in facilitating the efforts of preservice teachers to make sense of their external experiences, we encourage them to internalize those experiences through the process of making them known to others.(p.19)'. He calls for us to embrace the power of autobiographical writing as a core tool for pre-service teachers to make sense of their experiences and therefore improve their classroom interactions.

It is assumed practice for a trainee teacher to keep an evidence trail of their ever-improving practice, from which are drawn inferences by mentors and programme leaders as to the indicative progress towards standards, and to enable standardization of judgement. In setting out these expectations at the start of any course it is important, I feel, to indicate and make explicit the autobiographical nature of this evidence trail; therein is concrete evidence of all of those stories and anecdotes; lesson plans, resources, feedback - all carefully crafted and all driving forward that narrative arc. This 'teaching file' can be read as a story - a trainee laying out all the chapters of their development as some form of bildungsroman; a life journey that can be shared with all concerned, analysed and critiqued to form professional development.

The story of the progress also makes real the internalized thought processes and pressures that come with professional development; Dreyfus reminds us that 'with more experience, the number of potentially relevant elements and procedures that the learner is able to recognize and follow becomes overwhelming' (p.178) and that 'to cope with this overload, and to achieve competence, people learn, through instruction or experience, to devise a plan or choose a perspective that then determines those elements of the situation or domain that must be treated as important and those

that can be ignored' - the teaching file is this plan, this perspective; it allows a trainee to build their own story which they can regale to others. Trainee teachers must balance their mindset and avoid being overloaded by increasing cognitive pressure - they are trying to juggle numerous aspects of their practice and, as Kennedy states, 'we need to help novices understand how both knowledge and procedures are relevant to the kind of problems they will face' (Kennedy 2016 p.16). As she discusses parsing the practice of teaching she reminds us that we also want trainees to 'understand the persistence of these problems and help them learn to think more analytically about them' (p.16); the laying bare of the narrative offers this opportunity for analysis and debate.

To conclude, it must be seen that there is great power in the narrative; the story and its telling can be a significant advantage in any teacher education scenario as it helps trainees make real the theory, manifest the instruction into effective classroom practice and focussed reflection, and see a sense of thread and consistency in their own development. As an instructional device stories hold great potential for teacher educators, mentors and for trainees themselves, giving structure and reality to dialogue and conceptual understanding.

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Tips for ITT/ECT mentoring

A practice insight working paper by Adam Lamb

As a leader I consider mentoring to be one of the most important jobs within my faculty and one that needs to be taken extremely seriously at all levels. My former role as a Lead Practitioner taught me that there are two important roles that ITT student mentors fulfil: they help to rapidly develop new teachers who might have little or no experience; as well as being a talent scout identifying potential future expert practitioners to recruit should a vacancy in your team open up. Further on at ECT level, mentoring provides a source of cementing practice, raising confidence and also the opportunity for moral support for when timetable pressures and accountability increase. Below are some tips that I use to help maximise time spent with mentees.

1. Schedule time into your timetable and ensure it is sacred time.

The nature of teaching 20-or-so hours per week along with the accompanying planning, feedback to students and other pieces of admin means that as a profession we are naturally time poor. That being said, it is essential we meet with our mentees and make them feel that the time set aside is dedicated to them and their progress. If they do not feel they have dedicated space and time in which they can meet with the mentor to discuss their needs/receive feedback, this can negatively impact a mentor-mentee relationship almost immediately as the mentee may feel somewhat put on the backburner and neglected, and in the worst case – a burden on the workload of the department. No matter our workload, if we want our mentee to succeed and sustain a positive working relationship with them, we must make them feel welcomed and that they are important. Obviously pinch points do occur, but if we stick to the sacred assigned time as much as we can, asking to reschedule will not cause a breakdown in the relationship; rather the mentee will realise that we still want to help them, albeit at a time that might be better for us at a different point that week. Sticking as much to the agreed meeting slot ensures that if we need to juggle meetings around that the mentee still feels valued by the mentor.

2. Engage proactively with the mentee's course/ECT requirements

We would never dream of teaching a GCSE class or an A Level class without knowing the subject specification and its intricacies inside out; so why should we do the same for our trainees and ECTs? Set out from the beginning what they should expect and when, making this a talking point in an initial meeting. Us as mentors showing that we know key dates, such as report deadlines, the number of formal observations that need to be conducted etc. can provide a mentee reassurance that we know what is going on and how the process needs to progress. If they feel that we are on top of things, they will feel reassured and will focus on the sole purpose of improving their practice rather than worrying about ECT requirements or course matters.

4. Ensure mentees have access to everything they need and take the time to walk them through things we might take for granted

As a mentor, I keep a little checklist in my CPD file at work for if/when I get a new mentor. It includes things such as SIMS logins, getting email and printing set up as well as the textbooks they need. Keeping this list allows me to know that I am not setting them up for a fail on their first day by not having access to what they need; but also informs my planning

of induction and what I need to sit down and take them through step-by-step. This avoids any last-minute panics and helps to the mentee to settle in as smoothly as possible.

4. Give the mentee time to say how they are and how their week has been.

It sounds basic and obvious; but launching straight into a meeting without offering up the chance for a mentee to air their feelings and to begin the process of reflection more generally is going to make the mentee feel less relaxed and open to sharing their thoughts and feelings. Use this as a thread which you can unpick, zooming into the positives of the week and unpicking why they were successful, before focusing on what has caused the mentee trouble, finding out why before helping them come up with an action to remedy the situation. The more we give our mentees the space to open up, the better the working relationship will be.

5. Allow the mentee to bring items to the agenda.

One of my former ECT mentees now forms an integral part of the leadership team in my faculty as one of my Heads of Key Stage. As an ECT, her progress was strong and her ability to reflect did not need any prompting. As is such, she would bring items to me that she wanted

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to discuss, based on her own reflections. One such time was when we were discussing speaking exams, and she wanted to know how to really push her students to the top. My suggestion – listen to some of my exams from the previous year and unpick what got them the high grade that they were awarded. Allowing this opportunity to bring items to the table is essential in order to help guide progress wholistically; not just in the classroom practice but also in areas such as assessment and behaviour management. It also allows the mentee to know that there is dialogue both ways, and that they can raise matters with you and that you will give them the time to talk about what they feel they need to work on.

6. Give timely feedback that focuses on the mentees action and the consequence on learning

One of our primary roles is to provide feedback. ECTs and trainees are entitled to this and it should be done timely to allow the mentee the earliest opportunity to build on their practice. Done too late, the feedback loses relevance as the mentor and the mentee will both have a more clouded recollection of events.

In my school, we follow a cause and affect style feedback process, where we look at the teacher's action or an item in their lesson and look at its impact on student learning. If we just say 'you need to pause after a countdown before transitioning to a new task' – the mentee knows that they need to pause, but don't know why they need to do so. Mentees need to know why they need to put into practice the piece of advice we have given them. Phrasing the above as "following on from the countdown, the lack of a pause before moving onto the next task meant that some students didn't properly hear the instruction and therefore were unsure what to do" means that the mentee knows what the consequence of the lack of a pause was on student learning. We must give novice teachers the result so that they understand the rationale behind our comments and to make feedback objective.

7. Constantly check in

As good as having one hour a week of dedicated time for your mentee is, if we really want to make the mentee feel comfortable, we should be regularly popping up to their workspace to see how they're getting on. Doing this can help you keep your ears to the ground for any problems that might be brewing and allow for these to be nipped in the bud earlier than waiting another four days. It also shows your interest and investment in the mentee and their progress.

As mentors, things can and will go wrong. But so often, where things do go wrong (in my experience at least) has been due to a breakdown of the working relationship between mentor and mentee. We must build trust. At the UCL Institute of Education's Developing Middle Leaders course that I attended, the course leaders Graham Dring and Christine Young spoke about trust being like a bank: people make small deposits of trust in us as leaders over time; but one wrong move can cause a big withdrawal from that trust bank. The same, I believe, can be applied to mentoring – we must seek to constantly accumulate deposits of trust to maintain the good working relationship that will ultimately secure progress for our mentees through them feeling safe and empowered.

Breaking the theory-practice relationship: why decoupling universities from ITE would be illogical

A think piece working paper by Emma Rawlings Smith

Introduction

This think piece gives a personal perspective on why it would be illogical to decouple universities from initial teacher education (ITE) at a time when we should be celebrating the quality and diversity of current routes into teaching and the expertise of teacher educators. I will begin this short paper by reflecting on the current ITE landscape in England and my own professional identity, before moving on to consider the professional capital of teacher educators and why their loss, if universities step away from ITE, would negatively impact the sector and the next generation of teachers.

Teacher recruitment, retention and student numbers

Approximately 37,000 teachers began their route into teaching through Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships in 2021-22, down 8 per cent from the year before when more prospective students applied than usual, likely as a result of economic uncertainty during the Covid-19 pandemic (Department for Education; DfE, 2021a). In June 2021, the School Workforce Census recorded 461,088 full-time equivalent teachers in England of which around 5 per cent were newly qualified (DfE, 2021b). This level of recruitment would satisfy teacher supply if it were not for rising levels of teacher attrition. These data reflect the bigger picture that both teacher retention and teacher recruitment are challenges that need to be taken seriously. On quality; of the 240 ITE partnerships inspected by Ofsted by June 2019, all were judged to be good or outstanding and 80 per cent of newly qualified teachers positive about the quality of their ITE programmes (Ginnis et al., 2018). It is against this backdrop that the Department for Education ran a Market Review of the ITE sector with a short 7-week public consultation. Although muted via the consultation process, ITE providers co-ordinated action and with the use of social media raised serious concerns (Murtagh and Rushton, 2021). Since May 2021 - and following the introduction of the Core Content Framework (DfE, 2019a), Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b) and Ofsted's (2021) new ITE inspection framework - half of ITE providers inspected have been downgraded. Speaking in Schools Week, James Noble-Rogers, Executive Director of Universities Council for the Education of Teachers,

suggested that the watchdog 'appear to be aimed at discrediting ITE provision whenever possible, rather than arrive at a balanced and informed judgement of quality' (Booth, 2021). With an ITE reaccreditation process underway, some providers may choose not to apply for reaccreditation and others, going by recent Ofsted inspections, may not 'meet the exacting Quality Requirements' (DfE, 2021c, p.4). By muting university ITE providers, making all providers apply for accreditation against new quality criteria and persisting with damaging proposals, it appears that the government continues to put at risk the future supply of high-quality teachers as 35 out of 40 university providers would potentially withdraw from the sector (UCET, 2021). A consequence of the inevitable teacher educator redundancies would be the loss of a huge wealth of professional capital - the specialised knowledge, expertise and skill which have developed over time through collaborative and effective school-university partnerships.

Teacher educator identity and theory-practice relationship

If universities decided to pull out of the ITE sector, teacher educators, like me, would be put at risk. Lecturers work with students, teachers and leaders, teach across programmes and draw on various specialist disciplinary knowledge. Most university-based teacher educators move from teaching children and young people in schools to teaching and supporting the professional learning of beginning and experienced teachers across subjects and phases (Boyd and White, 2017). This change in context also influences professional identity. Some parts of my identity disappeared when I stopped teaching in school, others have blossomed and have been joined by new elements related to the professional development of adults, educational scholarship and research. My multiple identity includes being a researcher, scholar, educator, project manager and so much more. A key aspect of my role is to help teachers develop their professional identity, as new members of the teaching community. I influence the students I teach, but my reach through learned societies, conferences, publications and networks is much broader. In the last 18 months, for example, I have published articles on Birmingham's Clean Air Zone for A level students, reflective practice for school mentors, and assemblage theory of place for academics. If I lose my job, the impacts would be felt far beyond those I teach.

Zipping together the theory-practice relationship as praxis

At the 2020 International Professional Development Association Conference, I listened to Dr Vince Clarke explain how he

conceptualised theory and practice, and I could see how his model of Paramedic Praxis, with students and educators centrally placed, is transferable to teacher education. Clarke (2018) dismisses a theory-practice divide model in favour of a theory-practice relationship where theoretical and practical knowledge inform each other and are intertwined to a greater or lesser degree within a fluid model of praxis. Clarke's use of a zip analogy with the zip pull representing the role of an educator, drawing on taught theory and situated practice to support student learning, spoke volumes. My expertise directly influences how students perceive the theory-practice relationship. As Table 1 illustrates, when teacher educators and students learn together, they both develop personal professional knowledge. Teachers use three aspects of this professional knowledge when deciding how to act in a classroom situation; situated understanding, technical know-how and critical reflection (Winch et al., 2015, p.204). Situated understanding or *phronesis* is the practical wisdom developed through classroom experience or indirectly via educational research (Biesta, 2012), technical know-how is the mastery of procedural knowledge which enables teachers to select the most appropriate classroom intervention for effective teaching and learning, and critical reflection is the sustained and intentional

process of reflection in order to improve future practice (Brookfield, 2017). When applying the zip analogy, it is easy to see how the stimulus for reflection can come from situated practice, theory or a combination of the two. Teacher educators draw on their wealth of knowledge, while the student is required to link theory with practice. Both learn via reflection in-action and on-action (Schön, 1983) and this can be transformational.

On PGCE programmes, reflective practice is intertwined in everything; it is explored in university sessions and weekly mentor meetings, is the focus of professional journals and often included as an element of assessment. By embedding reflective practice in this way, teacher educators are able to integrate theory with practice, in the same way that the teeth of a zip interconnect as it is pulled up.

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Table 1 The elements of the zip analogy (after Clark, 2018, p.269)

Zip component	Representation	Detail
Teeth	Elements of *Taught Theory* and *Situated Practice*	The teeth are representative of elements of both *Taught Theory* on one side of the zip, and *Situated Practice* on the other.
Slider	Student	The student is required to make appropriate links between theory and practice in order to develop their *Personal Professional Knowledge*.
Pull-tab	Teacher Educator	The Teacher Educator is seen to support the development of the student's *Personal Professional Knowledge* by facilitating their learning in practice.

Conclusion

Teacher educators in universities are encouraged to be research-active with time, support and opportunities given for scholarship and research. This sustained level of scholarship and research is much harder to achieve in the school context due to constraints such as time and workload and barriers such as access to fellow researchers, literature and academic support. It is clear that universities and schools serve different purposes, yet both are important partners in ITE. If universities pull out of the ITE market and university-based teacher educators leave the sector, it likely that our future teachers will be exposed to less educational theory and become competent craftspeople rather than scholarly reflective practitioners (Moore, 2004). Returning to Clark's zip analogy, it would be equivalent to the zip breaking, as the pull snaps off. Such irreparable damage to our high-quality ITE sector seems short-sighted and feels to be a personal attack on both my role and identity, especially when the reason for change seems to be ideological rather than educational.

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Book Review: Mentoring in Schools by Haili Hughes, 2021, Crown House Publishing

Review by Duncan Partridge

Mentoring is often regarded, rather unfairly in my view, as coaching's less glamorous cousin. Certainly it is the case that when writing about dialogue between professionals, educational authors and researchers have often tended to focus on coaching rather than mentoring. Coaching's emphasis on facilitated self-learning lends itself more readily, it would seem, to exploration and analysis, than the more directive in nature, mentoring. Haili Hughes' excellent new book, however, goes a long way to counter this notion.

With the recent launch of a revised Early Career Framework in England and a resurgence of interest in instructional coaching (which is actually often more akin in nature to mentoring, than coaching), Hughes book is timely. One of the requirements of the new ECF is that every newly qualified teacher has a designated mentor, and Hughes pitches her book squarely at those that will be taking on this role. Recognising that many of these teachers will have had little or no experience of mentoring, Hughes' book is a highly practical guide that will provide a valuable supplement to the training that all ECF mentors receive.

Each chapter of the book is dedicated to one of the eight ECF Standards and retains the same structure: *Why is this standard important? What does the research say? Focus Group Findings. How can I help my mentee meet this standard? Summary.*

Hughes initially places each standard in context by summarising research evidence, and laying out why each area of teaching practice matters in relation to student outcomes. Hughes' succinct and highly accessible style is very effective here, and she has selected pertinent and up to date references. As a result, time poor mentors will be able to dip into chapters on particular standards and be confident that they are tapping into the most relevant and compelling evidence available.

Hughes goes on relate the findings of focus group interviews she conducted with NQTs about their experiences of being mentored. The results of this qualitative research give us a range of perspectives on useful (and not so useful) experiences new teachers have had as mentees. These are particularly helpful

sections, as they allow the guidance being offered to mentors to be grounded in authentic feedback from teachers who have very recently experienced mentoring, rather than speculative musings.

In the '*How can I help my mentee meet this standard?*' sections, Hughes again draws effectively on the evidence base, and links research to practical suggestions. Very usefully she often presents summaries in tabular form, sometimes connecting key pedagogical concepts; for example, in the 'Standard 5, Adapt Teaching' chapter, Dylan Wiliam's formative assessment strategies are mapped against Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction.

The summary section of each chapter is presented in the form of a cycle of the type often used to frame instructional coaching relationships: *identify goal > come up with a plan > learn together > apply the learning > evaluate and reflect on the standard > identify goal.*

Hughes is very specific in the guidance offered here, an approach which may well be seen as anathema to the 'purist coach', accustomed to setting goals and making plans in partnership with their coachee. However, this is an absolutely appropriate approach for a mentor-mentor relationship, especially one

defined by the clear structure of the ECF. More experienced mentors will doubtless find their own equally valid ways of structuring their work, but Hughes' guidance will help those mentors still in the process of developing mental models to guide their mentoring and working towards expertise through deliberate practice.

A particularly notable element of the summary sections in each chapter, is the '*learn together*' part of the mentoring cycle. The idea of co-learning is very important in heading off the notion that mentoring is a purely 'top down' process. Hughes suggests readings, activities and discussion points that will encourage reflection and dialogue, demonstrating that the mentor-mentee relationship can result in new understandings for both parties.

We know that effective mentoring and coaching partnerships are about much more than structure and content. Indeed, there are many things not covered in this book, that mentors will need to learn to hone their practice. For example: how to ask effective questions, the art of active listening and the importance of developing trust. However Hughes makes it clear that her book is not intended to be comprehensive, stating that it "*does not claim to be to be a panacea for the*

problem of how best to mentor," rather that it offers *"busy teachers a practical interpretation of the ECF."* This is something that Mentoring in Schools does in a highly effective manner, and I am sure it will go on to make a huge impact on the practice of large numbers of mentors and well as those ECTs they work with.

Missing the point? The dilemma of 'best evidence' and the ITT Market Review

A think piece working paper by Rachel Lofthouse

This thinkpiece is a personal, professional and research-informed response to the DfE ITT Market Review, the outcomes of which were published in December 2021. It does not cover all of the review recommendations in detail, but instead suggests some of what seems to be missing.

The review is said to be based on the 'best evidence' of how teachers learn, but the status of evidence as 'best' is questionable. At the very least we would hope that the evidence base was relevant, systematic and inclusive. However, as BERA (British Educational Research Association) make clear the ITT Market Review does not explain how or why the research studies and other evidence that it relies upon were selected.

Indeed, the remit of the review is also not demonstrably valid, as the University Alliance (of which Leeds Beckett University is a member) has indicated in its response, there is 'an absence of clear and compelling evidence to demonstrate what exactly the quality issues are with the current teacher training system that have led to this review'.

In this blogpost I am choosing to address two core misconceptions that appear to be at the heart of the recommendations. Firstly, that teachers just need training, rather than educating, and secondly that learning to teach is a predictable linear process for which a universal training curriculum can be implemented. If I had been asked to contribute to the ITT review, in my role as Professor of Teacher Education, I would have invited the panel members to engage with a wider evidence base, including my own and I draw on some of this to articulate my concerns about what I believe to be missing from the ITT Market Review.

Conceptions of learning to teach

Let's start with student teachers and their beliefs about learning to teach. I recently contributed to phenomenographic/variation theory research to identify variations in trainee teachers' conceptions of learning to teach (Lofthouse, Greenway, Davies, Davies, and Lundholm, 2020). We found four variable phenomena in student teachers' conceptions of learning to teach which can be summarised as follows:

- the knowledge they considered to be relevant in learning to teach, and the degree to which the expected to have certainty about what works in teaching
- the focus of their reflections, which included the specific situations they faced on placement, broader teaching themes (e.g. differentiation) or how they were developing as a teacher
- whether they typically reflected 'in flight' (making an immediate evaluation of their performance as a teacher) or whether their reflections were more representative of the 'struggle over time' of learning to teach
- their level of self-determination, with some privileging copying other teachers, others adapting teaching methods, and others evaluating approaches in context and aiming to understand the rationale for different ways of teaching.

Our analysis of these variables led to an identification of two meta-phenomena of 'adherence' (learning to do the right thing) and 'enquiry' (learning to make sense of teaching). The difference can be seen in these two quotes from our research interviews, ''I think I just went in there, I just followed what the teacher said to do for the lesson, it wasn't really me thinking''.

"there will be many other ways of doing it (teaching) […] it makes you think about how you can put what you've learnt into practice […] it's critiquing, it's analysing, criticising the literature you've found in more detail and depth and then proposing new ideas".

Teachers as research-engaged professionals

In 2014 BERA and the RSA published their inquiry into the role of research in teacher education throughout the career stages (BERA-RSA, 2014). They recommended that teachers and teacher educators need to be equipped to engage in enquiry-based practice, which means having the capacity, motivation and opportunity to use research-related skills to investigate what is working well and what isn't effective in their own practice. (p.37)

The BERA-RSA Inquiry included seven specialist research papers, and I was a co-author of one of these which focused on teachers' perceptions of engaging in research (Leat, Lofthouse and Reid, 2014). This literature review demonstrated that engaging in and with research can balance the instrumental and managerial discourses prevalent in English schools and support the professional development of teachers by encouraging them to [think] beyond the accountability culture of a performative system, towards a more sophisticated working understanding of an ecology of learning [and] be more accepting of challenge and difficulty,

allowing them to step out of their comfort zone (p.8).

Context is critical

More recently I co-authored a research paper (Hollweck and Lofthouse, 2021) on contextual coaching as a means of levering school improvement through a focus on teaching. Two case studies, one in Canada and one in England, provided the evidence base for the research. We concluded that the following are critical in creating opportunities for professional learning through coaching:

- Deliberate yet flexible designs and structures of support
- Responsiveness to school culture and context
- A shared purpose and understanding
- Teacher autonomy and leadership
- Long-term commitment and resources

Why is this research relevant to the ITT Market Review?

First let's deal with what might seem to be a red herring – the research on contextual coaching. While acknowledging that this is not focused on ITT there is some resonance. At a recent DfE meeting Ian Bauckham, the chair of the ITT Market Review panel, made several claims which might at first seem persuasive. One was the reiteration of that the 'best evidence' underpinned the recommendations. However, under even mild

scrutiny it is clear that much of this 'best evidence' is either not specific to teacher learning (being based on research related to pupils' learning) or is drawn from research outside of the context of English schools.

For example, there is a strong cognitive science bias to the training content. The application of cognitive science to the curriculum has now been critiqued in an Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2021) research review, who state that the 'evidence for the application of cognitive science principles in everyday classroom conditions (applied cognitive science) is limited, with uncertainties and gaps about the applicability of specific principles across subjects and age ranges.' (EEF, p7) which leaves questions about the quality and relevance of the ITT core content and market review evidence base.

So, although Bauckham closed the meeting by stating the rhetoric that changes in ITT were necessary to 'level up' and 'close the gap' by linking the recommendations to school improvement we need to be aware that at best this can be a tentative claim. There is proven risk in simply transplanting effective programmes into new jurisdictions or organizations without considering the contextual and cultural features (Hargreaves and Skerrett, 2008). As such the universal core content and the requirements for ITT

partnerships to be configured in more prescribed ways than is currently the case take is into this this transplantation danger zone. The five bullet points related to contextual coaching above might offer insights into the design features of successful teacher professional development (of which ITT is the start), all of which are missing in the recommendations.

Secondly, it is appropriate to consider whether promoting a conception of adherence in learning to teach should be our collective ambition. Adherence might plausibly be associated with the way that teaching and teacher training is being framed by DfE 2019 policy, including the ITT core content framework and the Early Career Framework. Both frameworks refer to the need to 'know that' and 'know how to'.

In the recommendations in the Market Review the ITT core content is positioned as non-negotiable and the basis for ITT re-accreditation, partnership provision, mentor training and Ofsted inspections. In our research we found that shifts between conceptions of adherence and enquiry were strongly associated with student teachers' experiences of mentoring in school. The ITT Market Review recommends 'new minimum training expectations for mentors, emphasising the importance of mentors' deep knowledge of the training curriculum, the

evidence behind it, and support for trainees' progress through it.' This mentoring and fixed curriculum discourse runs the risk of further reinforcing the adherence concept of learning to teach.

Once again this seems to be missing the point. Pupils and students are not all the same, and they also change between the early years and the end of their school life. Schools are not monolithic - they are complex and diverse. It could be hoped that a teacher will stay in the profession for a decent career-span during which we could anticipate new research supporting better practice, that they might be employed in a number of different schools and that there will be changes to education policy. Currently the plans are to train teachers through a curriculum to match the demands of the current ideology of attainment and achievement and how it should be judged which pays no attention to nuance or context, or indeed to the diversity of new entrants into the teaching themselves. This is a poor preparation for a sustainable profession.

Finally, the framing of the ITT core content and Market Review recommendations as indicative of 'best evidence' is a discourse which bids the student teacher and their mentors to adopt it without asking the questions 'best for what?' and 'best for whom?' and indeed 'judged best by which

criteria?'. It is asking these sorts of questions that support the development of an enquiry concept of learning to teach and would increase the capacity for student teachers and their mentors to be research-engaged professionals. Questions such as these drive professional education and learning and take it beyond training.

Even new teachers need to be able to deal with uncertainty, work tentatively at times, be open to the expertise of others, be motivated to resolve complex dilemmas and to be active contributors to (not just consumers of) the professional knowledge base that are at the heart of teachers' most effective practice. I think this basic understanding is what is most missing from the ITT Market Review. And I am not alone.

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Contributing a CollectivED working paper

Introduction

CollectivED publish working papers written by researchers, practitioners and students on the themes of coaching, mentoring, professional learning and development in education. We publish these at   https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/research/collectived/working-paper-series/

Contributors to the working paper series are given Carnegie School of Education Professional Associate status making them eligible to use the Leeds Beckett University library facility (in person or online). They can also apply to become CollectivED Fellows.

Purpose and audience

The CollectivEd working papers are intended as an opportunity to connect educational practice, policy and research focusing on coaching, mentoring and related forms of professional development. They are written with a diverse audience in mind: teachers, governors and school leaders, academics and students, members of grassroots organisations, advocates, influencers and policy makers at all levels. We intend that the content and audience is national and international. The working papers will enable a diverse range of informed voices in education to co-exist in each publication, in order to encourage scholarship and debate.

Invitation to contribute and article types

We invite academic staff, research students, teachers, school leaders, and members of the wider education professional practitioner communities to contribute papers. This is chance to share practice, research and insights. All papers submitted should demonstrate criticality, going beyond descriptive accounts, problematizing professional development and learning practices and policy where appropriate and recognising tensions that exist in the realities of educational settings and decision making. The following types of contribution are welcome, and some flexibility will be built in around these:

- *Research working papers:* These might be in the form of summaries of empirical research, case studies, action research or research vignettes. These will normally be about 2000-2500 words in length, and will be fully referenced using Harvard Referencing. Please limit the amount of references to those which are absolute necessary to the understanding of the article, and use the most recent references possible. Research papers should include a consideration of the implications for practice and/or policy at an appropriate scale. Research papers should be accompanied by an abstract (max 250 words). Abstracts should outline the research undertaken, methodology and conclusions drawn.

- *Practice insight working papers:* These will be focused on aspects of relevant professional learning and development practice, and should communicate its particular features, its context and the decision making that shapes it. These will normally be 1200-1800 words in length and should reference policies or research that influence the practice.

- ***Think-piece working papers:*** These offer opportunities for writers to share opinions, reflections or critiques of relevant professional learning and development practice, research and/or policy. These will normally be 750-1250 words in length. They may include responses to previously published working papers.

- ***Book or conference reviews:*** Reviews are published of events or books which relate to the themes of coaching, mentoring or professional learning in education settings. These often include personal reflections from the author as well as elements of reportage. These will normally be 750-1250 words in length.

Writing style and guidance

In order for the working paper series to be inclusive and become a platform for a range of voices we would expect a range of writing styles. However, we do need to maintain the following writing conventions.

- Papers will be written in English, which should be accessible and clear to a range of readers. Text can be broken up with subheadings, bullet points, diagrams and other visuals.
- Papers cannot be submitted anonymously. The names of author(s) should be clearly stated, and where appropriate their educational context should be made clear (secondary teacher, PhD student, education consultant, ITE tutor etc).
- Names of schools, universities and other organisations can be included, and we require authors to confirm that they have consent to do so.
- Children and young people may not be identified by name and every effort should be made to ensure that their identities remain confidential.
- Adults (such as colleagues, and professional or research partners) may only be named with their consent, and where appropriate we encourage joint authorship.
- A limited number of images may be submitted with the papers, but please note that we will use discretion when including them according to formatting limitations. Please be clear if the inclusion of an image (such as a diagram or table) is critical to the working paper.
- No submitted photographs of children will be published, although the Carnegie School of Education may select appropriate images from stock photograph libraries.
- While will not publish papers written as a sales pitch we are happy for papers to be written which engage critically and professionally with resources, programmes, courses or consultancy, and weblinks can be included.
- Each paper should state a corresponding author and include an email address, and / or twitter handle.

Submission and review

Papers for consideration for CollectivED working papers should be submitted via email to
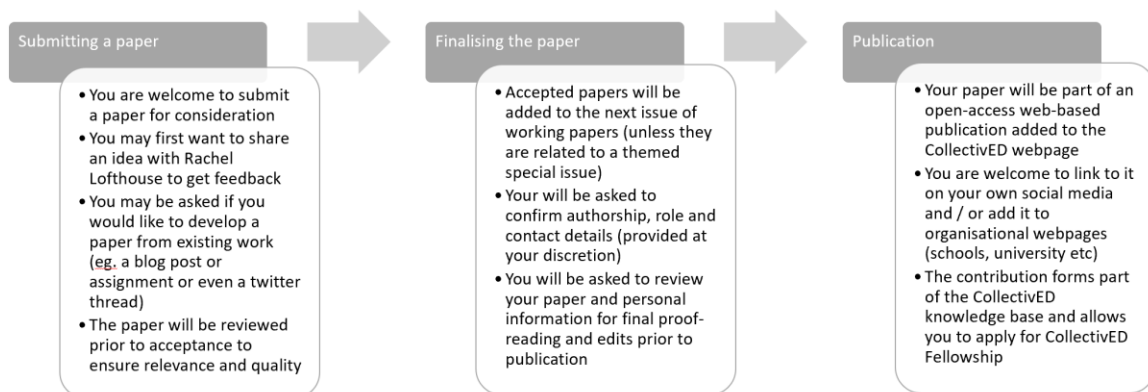R.M.Lofthouse@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

They should be submitted as word documents, Arial 11 font, 1.5 line spacing, with subheadings included as appropriate. Each word document should include the title, names of authors, context

and affiliations of the authors. Essential images should be embedded in the word document, and discretionary images should be sent as attachments.

Each submission will be reviewed by the working paper series editorial team. Decisions will be made in a timely fashion and any guidance for resubmission will be communicated to the authors. Once an issue of CollectivED is collated authors will be asked to undertake final proof-reading prior to publication.

CollectivED Working Papers; route to publication

The CollectivED Working Papers form an invaluable open access resource. Their focus is practice, policy and research on coaching, mentoring and professional development. The content and audience are national and international. Working papers give a voice to practitioners, researchers, and members of professional and grass-roots organisations. They enable scholarship and provoke debate.

Submitting a paper

- You are welcome to submit a paper for consideration
- You may first want to share an idea with Rachel Lofthouse to get feedback
- You may be asked if you would like to develop a paper from existing work (eg, a blog post or assignment or even a twitter thread)
- The paper will be reviewed prior to acceptance to ensure relevance and quality

Finalising the paper

- Accepted papers will be added to the next issue of working papers (unless they are related to a themed special issue)
- Your will be asked to confirm authorship, role and contact details (provided at your discretion)
- You will be asked to review your paper and personal information for final proof-reading and edits prior to publication

Publication

- Your paper will be part of an open-access web-based publication added to the CollectivED webpage
- You are welcome to link to it on your own social media and / or add it to organisational webpages (schools, university etc)
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