

10 Ways for Schools to Support Initial Teacher Education



Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

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Some key principles and considerations for school leaders working in partnership towards high quality initial teacher education.

The national mission for education in Wales highlights initial teacher education as an intrinsic part of the continuum of teachers' professional growth and development. Since Professor John Furlong wrote his report 'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers' there have been significant changes in initial teacher education in Wales. All ITE programmes have been co-constructed by stakeholders in universities, schools and consortia and all ITE programmes are now assessed, evaluated, and monitored against the Welsh Government's criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes in Wales. As a result, programmes are based on student teacher learning and experience that is, in the words of the new Accreditation Criteria, "both rigorously practical and intellectually challenging at the same time" (2017, p.4).

One of the most significant changes in this new model of ITE is that the partnership – university and lead schools together – are jointly responsible for conceptualising the programme, constructing the curriculum and developing new teachers who are committed to excellence, professionalism, and high-quality teaching. Consequently, both partners are also accountable for the quality of provision – not only to student teachers, but to school governors, the Education Workforce Council and to Estyn.

Professor Graham Donaldson discussed the need for teachers to have "a sound understanding of the 'why' and 'how' of teaching as well as the 'what'" (2015, p.71). In initial teacher education, this requires schools to go beyond opening up their classrooms for 'teaching practice' but to view themselves as *teacher educators*. This involves helping student teachers to reflect on their teaching in the light of other sorts of evidence: from research and enquiry, from theory, and from knowledge of good practice in school or elsewhere. This change in emphasis alongside increased responsibility involves a significant cultural shift where professional learning for student teachers is seen as a whole school issue and part of the school's core mission.

This guidance document is aimed at school leaders and mentors and was written in collaboration with colleagues from schools and universities working within the Central South Consortium region who are committed to initial teacher education. It aims to provide some key principles and practical guidance in an accessible format that can benefit all schools. Each chapter also contains an additional section for lead schools reflecting their enhanced responsibility and commitments. For further information about initial teacher education or any aspect of this document, readers are invited to contact Central South Consortium via ite@cscjes.org.uk

“Making a systematic and sustained contribution to teacher education should be one way of demonstrating that a school is a good school or is aspiring to be good” (Furlong, 2015)

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Take the lead in supporting the teachers of tomorrow

All schools

Schools and school staff should see an investment in student teachers as a contribution to the future of the profession and the education of children in Wales. All ITE providers recognise the important role that each partner plays in supporting student teachers in successfully meeting the Standards. Schools need to recognise that the responsibility of mentoring student teachers has a significant impact, not just on an individual's development, but also the contribution that the individual then makes to learners across the span of their career. Mick Waters, in his [report](#) on the induction of teachers to the profession, discusses the importance of supporting early career teachers as being one of the bedrocks of professionalism. "The good, experienced teacher is paying back through their relationship [with early career teachers] for the support they had from others at the start of their own career. While a formal mentor arrangement is an important role, it does not deny or reduce the responsibility we all carry for the informal commitment and mentoring of new professionals." (Waters, 2020, p. 16)

Schools will want to ensure that student teachers know and uphold the school's vision, strategic aims and objectives. Student teachers are valued members of the staff body of the school. As part of their experience and to support an increasing understanding of the school's vision and how it translates into practice, student teachers will benefit from an induction at the start of their placement from senior leadership and to

be given opportunities to engage with staff that hold various different roles. Through these experiences and increased awareness of different perspectives across the school, they will be able to make an increasingly effective contribution to meeting the whole school aims and objectives.

Being a Partnership School means ensuring school governors have an investment in supporting initial teacher education. As the governing body provides overall strategic leadership and accountability in schools, it is important that governors understand the school's full commitments to ITE, the financial implications, impact on learners and staff, and the potential benefits of supporting student teachers as part of a learning culture – within school and within the education framework in Wales.



Student teachers benefit when schools invest time in preparing them for employment.

From the start of their initial teacher education programme, student teachers need to be exposed to the bigger education arena, for example by being invited to conferences, where available, or by being encouraged to meet and speak with a

wide community of educators. This will help them gain a sense of what it means to be part of the profession and to develop the values and dispositions, and the skills, knowledge and understanding to allow them to progress throughout their career and make a positive impact. The Partnership has a joint responsibility to prepare student teachers for a successful transition from ITE into their first teaching job and help them see teaching in Wales as an exciting and rewarding prospect. In some schools, the senior leadership team help student teachers with this transition by organising recruitment preparation activities for student teachers, for example mock interviews and feedback on application letters.

As headteacher, I always meet with the student teachers and talk to them about the culture and vision of the school, the expectations we have for them and the support we will provide. We make it explicit that while they are in our school, we will treat them and value them as members of staff and that we will extend them the same courtesies and respect as we would expect from them. In essence, we don't see them as students, we see them as student teachers as an integral part of the fabric of the school. We then plan strategically so that they meet with different leaders and stakeholders in the school, including several meetings with me ensuring the whole school is involved in supporting student teachers. This level of input extends itself to supporting them as they seek employment. As a headteacher, I take time to read their personal statements and provide feedback that can help them to make their applications stand out based on their strengths and experiences. As a school, we take real pride in our student teachers, who we have developed and supported, go on and secure a job

- Sally Phillips – Pear Tree Federation

Education is always changing, and schools have a responsibility to develop professionals that are

able to adapt in line with national priorities.

Working within the partnership, schools have a key responsibility in supporting student teachers to become reflective practitioners that are able to respond positively and proactively to change. It is important to create a climate for student teachers (and all staff) where sustained learning is the norm and, as a result, create the “capacity to change and adapt routinely to new environments and circumstances...” (OECD, 2016, p.1). This can be achieved by sharing up to date research and tailoring professional learning programmes for both staff and student teachers together. In the best examples, schools follow an enquiry approach where teachers routinely put research into practice and reflect.

It takes a whole Partnership to create a student teacher.

Partnership is based on the mutual dependence of schools and university working together. Each has an important and valid contribution to make to creating high-quality teachers and, therefore, all partners need to see initial teacher education as their responsibility. Schools will need to be prepared to promote the professional values and behaviours that can contribute positively to partnership improvement and encourage effective collaboration between staff within school, across the Partnership and with other organisations, such as consortia. It is only by working together with a mutually held vision can partnerships create the best teachers for Wales.

Lead schools

Lead schools hold joint responsibility for the quality and delivery of initial teacher education in their Partnership.

Lead schools will have a full overview of the ITE programme in which they are a partner and be active in their participation. This will likely include co-

construction of content and processes. Lead schools have a key role in enabling the link between theory and practice by collaborating with the university and other schools to lead professional learning for student teachers. To do this, lead schools need to have a comprehensive understanding of the student experience as a whole. This overview helps to ensure tasks do not happen in isolation and there is a seamless transition between the various aspects of the programme.



By the very nature of their role, lead schools have a strategic commitment to the Partnership. Lead schools should understand their commitment to the partnership and their roles and responsibilities through representation on strategic boards and working groups. In this capacity, they play a key role in ongoing monitoring and evaluation and the implementation of learning points from these activities. The success of partnership improvement lies with how well partners at all levels understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities and the full commitment from lead schools and university, and other organisations such as consortia, in driving forward strategic priorities.

A partnership is stronger when all schools in it work together. Lead schools should look for ways to link with other schools in the partnership. This is important to ensure a high-quality experience for the student teacher. In the best partnerships, schools share good practice and support one another to ensure provision is effective. Lead schools are well placed to support other placement schools to fully understand the model of the Partnership.

Embed ITE into school strategic plans

All schools

Initial teacher education is an important part of the National Mission for Education, and schools, as learning organisations, have an important part to play. The school culture fosters the development of all staff regardless of where they are on the continuum and initial teacher education is an integral part of the school's provision. The most successful learning organisations will embed initial teacher education into systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge for learning, for building partnerships, and for developing the culture and conditions to facilitate professional dialogue and collaboration. The success of a school's commitment to ITE lies within effective planning, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Schools will want to strategically plan for a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development that meets the needs of all involved in school, and this includes student teachers. The time provided for professional learning programmes should be used to co-ordinate the best of opportunities for professional insight and reflection. Professional learning at all levels - from student teachers to leadership - could include a suite of professional learning opportunities. Examples could include a coaching programme, learning walks or leadership programme. For this to be successful for student teachers, they need to be active in identifying their own needs in collaboration with their mentor and make links to the professional learning programme, as appropriate.

Strategic planning for the ITE mentor role, both at school and partnership level, is pivotal to the success of the ITE programme.

Schools will need to carefully consider how they will meet agreed expectations in relation to ITE programmes. This will involve identifying staff to be effective mentors and strategically planning capacity to reflect the demands of this role. The requirements of the mentor or senior mentor, as well as any further roles working within the ITE partnership, should be captured in the school structure and individual staff members' roles and responsibilities. As such, they will naturally form part of individual and school development evaluation and improvement planning.



Routine monitoring of ITE provision as part of in-school self-evaluation processes ensures continuous improvement.

A range of evidence can be considered in order to evaluate the provision made for the ITE programme. This could include, but is not limited to, analysis of feedback from student teachers about in-school professional learning experiences; outcomes and progress of individual and cohorts of student teachers in different subject/age phases; effectiveness of

mentor support; and the impact of the ITE programme on pupils' progress and the capacity of the school in this respect. Outcomes from these activities can then be used to plan for development and improvement.

In our school we see it as our responsibility to develop, coach and mentor our teachers of tomorrow. It is a collective responsibility and not just the responsibility of the senior mentor, but everyone in school. Our aim has always been to guide our student teachers with their professional learning but now we recognise that it is also an opportunity for all staff to develop. For example, last year, part of our school development plan was to look at the twelve pedagogical principles and for our staff to take more ownership for developing their own practice. Each colleague chose one of the principles to engage in research work where they looked at theory and then looked closely at their own practice in class. What I was able to do then was to share with the staff what I had gained from working with the student teachers, who were looking at the principles too, and this included the reading materials they were using. It works both ways: we were developing future teachers, but we were also developing our own teachers at the same time.

- Nia Jones – Ysgol Y Wern

Student teachers can contribute to school improvement and development work. By ensuring the student teacher is included in whole school improvement activity, for example, curriculum design and development, it enables them to be active innovators of learning. In this way, the school can ensure that student teachers acknowledge and develop their professional status and their sense of responsibility, as well as their ownership for the outcomes of pupils. In turn, schools can benefit from the wider insights and ongoing research and reading that student teachers can bring to the discussion.

Lead schools

Being a lead school in a partnership means that the school regards initial teacher education as one of the school's core responsibilities. The lead school needs to be fully cognisant of the role that it has undertaken and embed ITE as part of its vision and culture. This includes ensuring all stakeholders understand the lead school's investment in capacity building for the education system in Wales. All lead schools will need to work with governors to make effective plans to ensure initial teacher education is a positive experience for all. In some lead schools, they ensure that their partnership involvement is made visible via school websites. This ensures that everyone understands the level of commitment to initial teacher education and the benefits to the school, the learners and the sector as a whole.

Lead schools will need to ensure that their wider work with the Partnership is reflected in their Strategic Plans. The lead school should reflect the Partnership's vision and values in the school strategic plans and be an important part of evaluation and improvement planning processes. Careful planning and monitoring are vital to ensuring that involvement in ITE does not negatively impact pupils' progress. This means regularly reviewing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the school's involvement. Some lead schools, for example, may want to evaluate the impact of supporting large numbers of student teachers and, through strategic planning, identify solutions in overcoming potential overload. In the best examples, schools avoid overload by strategically selecting classes allowing student teachers to have the full access to a range of experiences and age phases while avoiding pressure on individual teachers or the same groups of pupils. Capitalising on team teaching is an excellent way to do this.

Prioritise well-being

All schools

Schools need to ensure that student teachers know their role in safeguarding adults, children and young people. Although they will have received child protection training in university, student teachers need to fully understand safeguarding procedures in the context of the school where they are placed. This should be provided through school-based training as part of induction ensuring student teachers understand their duty as set out in the [Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014](#) and [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#). Training ensures that student teachers know who the school Designated Safeguarding Lead is and the procedures within the organisation for communicating concerns. Student teachers should also understand how to recognise neglect and abuse and how to deal with disclosures.



All practitioners in schools, including student teachers, are subject to enhanced DBS checks.

Student teachers will have been DBS checked as part of their acceptance on to their ITE programmes. Schools will want to check what the University's procedures are to be sure that DBS certificates are in place. International students face equally stringent checks but, depending on when they come into the country, a UK-based DBS may not be available at the start of their programmes. In this case, schools can expect the university provider to liaise with them about the status of safeguarding checks for the school's own reassurance.

As well as safeguarding pupils, Partnerships have a responsibility to safeguard the student teachers.

Schools have a duty of care to the student teacher, and it is important to provide induction training on aspects of professional conduct and school expectations. This ensures student teachers understand how their own setting of boundaries affects how pupils, other staff and parents perceive and relate to them. Amongst others, this might include personal presentation and dress code; protecting oneself from allegations; appropriate language use; modelling behaviour; working with parents; personal space; e-safety and social media; data and GDPR.

Student teachers will benefit from an induction at the start of a placement providing information on school systems, procedures and operational guidelines. This should cover their contractual, pastoral, health and safety, legal and professional responsibilities. Among others, this could include providing a copy of the staff handbook; arrangements for fire drills;

protocols for break and lunch, and also the start and the end of the day; professional learning timetables; key dates; learning and teaching policy; challenging inequity; behaviour policy and procedures for managing challenging behaviour. Student teachers should also be given clear guidance about who to go to for support.

Clear communication within the school and across the Partnership is key to supporting a student teacher's well-being. It is part of making them feel safe and part of a staff team. In some schools, student teacher handbooks are provided as guidance and this is generally well received.

Regular, structured support is a really important part of providing for student teachers' well-being. In all Partnerships, student teachers are entitled to regular meetings with their mentors. It is important to the mentor and to the student teacher's workloads if these sessions are carefully planned and set aside from the teaching timetable. Student teachers need to feel confident that they know when the meetings will take place and what will happen within them. In addition, student teachers should feel that they can receive informal mentoring time if there is a need at other points in the week, but mentors need to be explicit about what is appropriate in line with their own commitments.



There is much a mentor can do to alleviate the pressures on student teachers to ensure progress is not hampered by pressures of learning to teach. If a student teacher feels of equal worth to other members of staff within the school, this will help them feel safe and a valued part of the team. Mentors might adopt a growth mindset approach to supporting student teachers remembering they are not yet the finished article and this is ok. Providing a student teacher with a space to work effectively in school can also improve productivity and well-being.

Student teacher well-being is really important to us and, to ensure the student teachers feel safe and welcome, one of the first things we do is to find a physical space for them for the duration of their placement. In our department, we have a Prep Room where all the staff plan and prepare for their lessons. We make sure student teachers are based in that room so that they quickly feel part of a team, which is vitally important. In this room, staff are always working together, bouncing ideas back and fore and so by student teachers being there too, they are immersed in the culture of the department and can see that teaching is a constant process of refining, analysing and improving. It also means they are able to ask anyone within the department for help whenever they need it because there's always someone there.

- Gavin Gibson – Mary Immaculate High School

Schools may wish to provide support for student teachers' mental health and well-being by sharing strategies about managing workload, managing stress, and prioritising their health and well-being. Student teachers may benefit from peer support as well as support from mentors and well-being check-ins. There are also useful support systems within universities

such as counselling services, which are available to student teachers.



Student teachers should be encouraged to play a full and active part in school life and to appreciate the value of building relationships.

Teacher well-being is more than just tackling workload and a student teacher should feel that they can play a full part in the life and work of the school. Going above and beyond has many benefits for them. For example, working with the school orchestra, helping with the school production, engaging with clubs and societies such as STEM, Eco Club or the Student Council. These are all vitally important in feeling part of the school community and provides student teachers further opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

Lead schools

Having joint responsibility for initial teacher education, lead schools have an enhanced duty of care. There may be times where lead schools will pick up issues from student teachers who are undertaking placements in other schools. This means that they may need to liaise with the university or with other placement schools to support student teachers' well-being. In such situations, this needs to be handled confidentially and sensitively and with full disclosure to the student teacher.

As part of Partnership quality assurance procedures, lead schools are well placed to influence strategic decisions linked to student teacher well-being. Incorporating check in points with student teachers can help identify potential pressure points. There are times when lead schools have greater opportunities for student voice to be shared, particularly when larger groups of student teachers come together or through in-school evaluations. This gives them greater insight into the general student experience and should, therefore, be shared across the Partnership. Having a more in-depth knowledge of both university and school demands, they are also able to support universities in making decisions about dates, deadlines and work commitments.

Refine coaching and mentoring

All schools

It is important that schools and mentors understand that a good mentor is an experienced and trusted adviser. They need to understand the expectations of the mentor role and effectively support student teachers to successfully meet the Professional Standards at the level pertaining to QTS. The most effective mentors evaluate what is happening, assess the path the student teacher is on and then support them along their development path.

It is important that mentors continue to develop their mentoring skills. As a minimum, all mentors will benefit from attending Partnership-led training. However, this should be considered as just the start of ongoing training and development in the student teacher mentor role. Responsibility for ongoing development sits with the mentor, the school and the Partnership collectively.

Good quality mentoring should be backed up by careful monitoring of progress. Mentors need to have a thorough understanding of the Standards in order to make accurate evaluations of where the student teacher is at any point. This also includes being cognisant of their well-being, attendance and professional behaviours. Progress needs to be discussed with student teachers in structured, regular meetings and student teachers can be expected to be an active participant in the process. Mentors should be able to identify at an early stage any student teachers who are not making expected progress and act quickly, sensitively and appropriately if interventions need

to be put in place. It is sensible to check thinking with other colleagues in making any judgements prior to feedback. Any difficult conversations should be prepared for using outcomes from discussions across the Partnership.



A student teacher's progress is not the responsibility of the mentor alone. Mentoring student teachers and mentoring in other contexts is different in that ITE mentors also assess progress and can feel, therefore, that they are gatekeepers to the profession. The challenges with this can be mitigated against if mentors work effectively in partnership. Such partnership includes close liaison with the senior mentor and university provider as well as capitalising on opportunities for informal mentoring to take place from other members of staff based on their expertise. If initial teacher education is viewed as a whole school commitment, then everyone should see themselves as working together with the progress of the student teacher in mind.

Mentoring and coaching share many similarities but knowing the differences can help the mentor know when and how to apply the skills. The relationship in mentoring

acknowledges the significant experience of the mentor compared to the student teacher, whereas the positional relationship is much more on a par in a coaching relationship. Mentoring tends towards giving solutions through instructions and advice whereas coaching veers more towards enabling others to find their own solutions through supporting reflection and asking questions. ITE mentors need to have an awareness of both mentoring and coaching skills and techniques to allow them to recognise where to apply them so that the support provided is well suited to the needs of the individual.

Our staff team recognise the responsibility that we have to support each other's learning and how, by working together, we can contribute to the development of our staff in order to positively impact on pupil outcomes and experiences; coaching and mentoring is key to this at Ysgol Nantgwyn. It is important that our staff are agile and responsive to the needs of our pupils as part of our own 3-16 curriculum continuum and, to support this, there is an expectation that everyone has regular, identified meetings in which they work with one other colleague to focus on an aspect of their development. This discussion may tend towards mentoring or coaching or perhaps include elements of both; however, all discussions in these meetings will support staff in reflecting on their practice, exploring possibilities and making decisions. This commitment to a whole school culture of coaching and mentoring means that student teachers become an integral part of whole school coaching and mentoring arrangements and a staff team that has a commitment to developing others' in this way.

- Laura Morris – Ysgol Nantgwyn

There are many mentoring and coaching models available for mentors to access.

Mentors should continue to develop their mentoring and coaching skills by trying different models so that they are able to select the ones that are most appropriate for them and the student

teachers. Models widely used in all professions can help focus discussion, enabling student teachers to meet their goals. Models widely available include, among others, GROW, OSCAR, and Nancy Kline's thinking environment. The latter focuses on the importance of the coach as a listener, affording the coachee – or student teacher – time and space to allow *quality* of thinking, which could include time for silence. Researching into the various models can give mentors the opportunity to reflect on how well their interactions support the student teacher to be a self-improving professional.



Mentors and experienced teachers need to learn to make the implicit, explicit in order to support student teachers.

How teachers' strategies are successful are not always apparent to new teachers. It is important not to assume that things are obvious and invest time in explanation and in facilitating opportunities for student teachers to develop skills that sit implicitly within the Standards. Examples of this could include, but are not limited to, distributing resources, welcoming pupils, managing transitions between activities in lessons, reading the classroom and positioning within the room.

Lead schools

Lead schools should be in a position where they can support other schools, if required.

This means they need to have carefully chosen, highly skilled ITE leads that have the knowledge, skills and experience to be effective in their role within school but they also need to be equally effective in supporting other schools.

Lead schools should have trained, senior staff to lead on ITE within the Partnership to help raise the standards of mentoring.

As senior teacher educators, coaching and mentoring skills should be a priority for ongoing professional development given the senior status of the role. This might mean engaging in professional learning above and beyond the Partnership's standard training agreement for senior mentors and regular engagement with research.

Focus on the Standards

All schools

The Standards are the foundation to all feedback. The five professional standards for teaching and leadership work as one to secure effective pedagogy with overarching values and dispositions and student teachers begin their journey working towards the Standards at the level pertaining to QTS. These Standards are aspirational in their design and so, where there are exceptional student teachers, mentors should not view the QTS Standards as a ceiling on student teachers' development. Feedback is the vehicle to allow such progression to happen.

Mentors need to have a detailed knowledge of the Standards and how to assess them fairly and holistically. It is important to understand that the Standards were not designed to be used individually but to be woven together, moving from Standard to Standard making links to enhance learning and teaching. For example, a student teacher who is keen to develop their planning for real life, authentic contexts (*pedagogy*) may well seek advice from a more experienced teacher (*collaboration*) and engage in some further reading (*professional learning*). This may lead to new ways of teaching (*innovation*), and, if successful, the student teacher may go on to share new practice with staff or peers (*leadership*).

This makes assessing against the Standards challenging because the student teacher cannot be considered to have secured a particular descriptor or Standard in one instance. Instead, the student teacher must demonstrate sustained practice over time, and it is the role of the mentor to facilitate and encourage these processes and assess them

accordingly. Consequently, it is imperative that mentors have a comprehensive understanding of all of the descriptors within the Professional Standards.



Schools need to be familiar with the assessment requirements of the Partnership. While the Standards are the same, each Partnership will have its own approach to how the Standards are assessed with its own grading structure. It is important that schools fully understand what each grade descriptor means as it reflects the extent to which each Standard has been met. It could also impact on the progress of the student teacher and, in some instances, determine whether they pass or fail. Mentors will also need to know and adhere to assessment submission deadlines as a late submission could be detrimental to a student teacher's progress or outcome. If in doubt, senior mentors should always seek support from the partnership university.

Partnerships will have moderation procedures to verify the accuracy of assessments and schools will need to engage fully with these processes. Moderation is crucial to ensuring validity and accuracy of assessment,

and good communication is paramount. This includes communication between university providers and senior mentors, between senior mentors and mentors, between mentors and other mentors/classroom teachers, and between mentors and student teachers. For this reason, schools may also choose to develop their own internal moderation processes as part of staff development.



Student teachers should be encouraged to be self-reflective and to offer their own assessments of their performance against the Standards. Appropriate opportunities should be in place to allow student teachers to identify their own strengths and areas for development. This should be linked to the Standards. Good practice could include student teachers working together to review their own and others' performance. For example, student teachers could plan a lesson together with one participant going on to teach the lesson while the other observes the learning. Follow up reflective dialogue can be powerful in understanding pedagogy and practice while the Standards help to provide a framework for discussion.

ITE is the beginning of a teacher's journey.

When a student teacher meets the requirements for qualified teacher status, it does not mean that they have finished learning. Final placement outcomes will be reflected in the student teacher's career entry profile which will support them through the start of their induction year. It is important to remember that the Standards underpin a teaching career and that teachers never 'finish' the Standards but are constantly developing and progressing. The positive influence of a mentor who understands this can go a long way in embedding a culture of self-improvement and reflection.

As a learning organisation, we place a strong emphasis on professional learning for all staff. This is reflected in our school's belief that learning is at the heart of everything we do. By experiencing a culture of continuous learning for all and collaboration focussed on the Standards, student teachers can begin to see the importance this has on their career progression. For this to be most effective, the Standards must underpin everything we do in school and they are not just for student teachers to tick off their endless lists. All staff continue to work on the Standards and use them to identify their strengths and areas for development. Our mentors need a thorough understanding, not only of the Standards, but of how they can provide appropriate opportunities to allow student teachers to develop and make progress. Working in partnership with network schools and HEIs, we support one another in this. By having regular and honest professional dialogue, we now have a shared understanding of the assessment and moderation processes and feel confident in offering an appropriate level of challenge and support to enable our student teachers to be the best they can be.

- Caroline Grennan – Cardiff High School

Lead schools

Lead schools have greater opportunities to ensure consistency concerning the use of the Standards in ITE across the sector. They should work in collaboration with the university provider and, in some cases, other schools to ensure there is a clear understanding of what is required to meet the Standards. Mick Waters notes in his report on the induction of teachers to the profession that, “In ITE, where standards and descriptors are being used as integral parts of courses from the beginning, the trainees are reportedly seeing the

value and benefit of reflection and the influence on their growth in teaching. Those supporting trainees are seeing the Standards as ‘game changers’”. (Waters, 2020, p. 19). Collaboration across the Partnership can involve, but is not limited to, working together on module design, school-based professional learning for student teachers and moderation of assessments while always keeping the Standards at the centre. This work can contribute to the ongoing aspirations of a self-improving profession in ITE and beyond. Lead schools, by their very nature, are invested in the outcomes of student teachers in line with the Standards and the impact of the programmes on the education landscape in Wales.

Link theory to practice

All schools

Part of a mentor's role is to help student teachers make the links between theory and practice. This involves making the most of senior mentor and mentor sessions to discuss, explore and evaluate the practice that they have seen that links to the theory they know. A senior mentor's role is to upskill mentors so that they can better help student teachers to make connections in their understanding. Mentors can help student teachers to challenge their assumptions and consider practice from different angles. When mentors model lessons and reflect on practice, making explicit how theories have impacted on teaching approaches, it enables student teachers to make the connections between theory and practice and see that they are not mutually exclusive.

As student teachers learn theoretical aspects of education in university, schools can capitalise on these themes and provide opportunities for student teachers to see how this looks in the school context. This might be as part of group sessions with senior mentors and school leaders taking the lead or as part of ongoing weekly mentor meetings linked to the student teacher's own practice. This is more effective if done within a collaborative and coordinated approach with the university's model and timetable.



As a mentor, it is important that I communicate my understanding of theory and how it translates into my classroom practice. Wrapping language around the decisions I make and the rationale behind what I do throughout the day is important so that students can unpick the teaching process. As experienced practitioners we often do things instinctively whether it is settling a group ready to learn or the questions we ask when a pupil is reluctant to engage. Thinking out loud enables a clearer and shared understanding. For example, whilst undertaking action research on Doug Lemov's 'Teach Like a Champion', I articulated to my student teacher the reasons behind picking individual pupils when trialing 'cold calling' techniques. We have done much work to develop our school as a learning organisation and I believe that whatever stage you are on in your professional journey, research is vital to refine and develop stronger pedagogy.

- Sarah Cason – Palmerston Primary School

Some schools provide professional learning sessions and resource banks to support student teachers' theoretical understanding within a whole school context. This can help student teachers to see that the theories they learn in university are reflected in whole school policy and in learning and teaching strategies. Linking theory to practice is likely to be more successful if mentors familiarise themselves with university content and the senior mentor can offer support by being a conduit between university and mentor.



Dedicating scheduled non-contact time on a student placement allows student teachers the opportunity to engage in planning, critical analysis and reflection.

This involves careful planning of student teacher timetables to meet the requirements of the dedicated non-contact time as advised by the university provider. It is helpful if a mentor guides the student teacher about what they should be doing during this time whether that be observation of specific teachers, reading recommended texts, planning for research, or reflecting on their own practice. Student teachers may need some guidance about how to critically reflect on their teaching and the use of lesson capture tools can be beneficial to support student teachers during this time.

Scheduled non-contact time for reflection, research or enquiry should not be viewed as ‘time off’. This time provides student teachers with the opportunity to explore and make sense of a wide range of aspects necessary to becoming an

effective practitioner but, without guidance, student teachers may not make the most of this time.

Student teachers should have opportunities to collaborate, learn and exchange knowledge with specialist staff across the school.

This enables them to build on their theoretical knowledge and see how other professionals put what they have learnt into practice. For example, a student teacher could be tasked with spending a day observing a theoretical concept across a department, age phase or whole school. Student teachers could also attend whole school professional learning sessions and work alongside experienced staff exploring aspects of pedagogy or whole school development in more detail.

Similarly, time spent with the school’s specialist in, for example, blended learning can give student teachers time to focus on an aspect of pedagogy but with the benefit of drawing from the expert teacher’s knowledge and expertise. In this instance, the expert teacher would focus not just on what they do but why pedagogical choices have been made.

My mentor was incredibly supportive in enabling me to connect theory with practice. I learned a vast amount from observing other professionals and planning collaboratively for teaching experiences. This supported my professional inquiry and, allowed me to innovate and explore my pedagogical practice.

- Joe Baxter – student teacher

It can be beneficial to both experienced staff and student teachers if the school purchases key texts for their own library. University reading lists can be a useful source in selecting professional texts for school, and making reference

to these texts in mentor sessions can support student teachers' understanding. If there are any key texts that underpin the learning and teaching philosophy in school, it is useful to share the texts with student teachers during their induction.

Lead schools

A lead school may co-construct planned, structured opportunities to discuss with student teachers about what specific theories look like in practice and how such theories are facilitated at a whole school level. In this instance, responsibility goes beyond student teachers in their own school and extends to the whole cohort of student teachers within a network or cluster of schools. These sessions help student teachers to compare, contrast and synthesise what they have seen, exploring how a specific theory

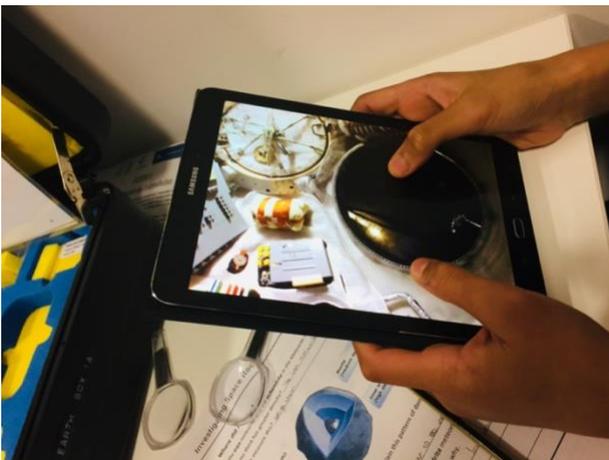
may manifest itself in different ways. This is achieved through facilitating discussion, encouraging student teachers to be evaluative and analytical, drawing conclusions, and broadening their understanding beyond their direct experience

Lead schools may be able to offer experiences that some student teachers do not have in their placement schools. It is the lead school's responsibility, therefore, to identify gaps in knowledge and experience to enable student teachers to receive any support they need to understand theoretical principles being discussed. For example, this could be in the form of an elective week where student teachers are immersed in new theories and practices. Similarly, lead schools may draw on expertise and experience from across the Partnership to facilitate a focused session on an area of need.

Embrace professional enquiry

All schools

Developing the school as a learning organisation involves establishing a culture of enquiry, innovation and exploration for both staff and student teachers. All initial teacher education programmes in Wales base student teachers' learning on enquiry-led practice so schools can benefit if student teachers are integral to the whole school culture. This could include providing opportunities for student teachers to be part of action research projects and engaging in collaborative practice within the school while working alongside experienced practitioners. It might also involve encouraging student teachers to share their research with the senior leadership team, governors and other members of the school community. Often experienced practitioners gain as much out of this experience as student teachers do because of the fresh perspectives student teachers can provide.



Student teachers need opportunities to put what they have read into practice in the classroom. This doesn't always need to be within a whole class context. Instead, they might need time and space to explore this in the form of action research with a small intervention group. Smaller enquiry-based interventions provide opportunities to experiment, innovate or find solutions to a problem. The outcomes can be shared with experienced practitioners affording everyone the opportunity to examine new educational ideas and developments in their own contexts.

A strong professional learning culture within our school allows students to engage in wider reading and research, relevant to their practice. We provide a wide range of opportunities for them to work alongside our staff in learning and teaching groups, INSET programmes, on-line learning opportunities, and curriculum development groups. Alongside this, we have a designated induction programme that focuses on individual ITE development needs. During the induction programme they have many opportunities to develop their understanding of school processes and structures as well as time to work collaboratively with NQTs, new staff, and ITE students from other universities.

- Alison Lambert - Hawthorn High School

By allocating time and resources for collaborative working and collective learning, both mentors and student teachers can benefit from developing effective classroom practice. This can involve mentors participating in any action research that the student teacher

may need to do as part of their university expectations. There are many ways that mentors can get involved such as observing learning together or supporting student teachers in the organisation of pupil voice activities and surveys. Coordinating learning walks can also provide valuable learning opportunities especially when followed up with group discussion. Collaborative enquiry enables everyone involved to build upon their existing knowledge, skills and experience and provides opportunity to critique current practices and investigate new approaches.

Mentors can help student teachers to view ‘problems’ as opportunities for learning. This can be achieved by encouraging them to focus on self-improvement using enquiry-based techniques or by encouraging them to experiment and innovate. For example, a student teacher may have difficulties establishing a strong classroom presence, which can impact on classroom management. A mentor might direct the student teacher to some useful reading around the topic and encourage them to investigate solutions to try out in their own practice. Working alongside the mentor or their peers, student teachers can debate and exchange ideas and potentially observe best practice in the school. Reflections on the impact of new approaches to practice can help the student teacher to identify some personal recommendations and next steps

Schools are in a unique position to enable student teachers to use and understand data in real contexts. Senior mentors and mentors need to help student teachers to understand and use the programmes that hold data in school, e.g. SIMS, and to understand how to add, access and manipulate the data. This will enable student teachers to ask questions about pupil performance relating to specific data sets. For example, they may use data to enquire into the performance of

groups of learners. Not only will this give them insight into the progress of learners, but it may also be one way of assessing the impact of their teaching.

By being involved in ITE partnerships, schools can take advantage of the rich variety of learning opportunities extended throughout the Partnership. This can include being part of a network of schools working collaboratively on research projects led by the University. It may also involve releasing staff to participate in development opportunities working alongside university practitioners and other schools even if this is beyond the minimum expectation of being in Partnership. Network meetings offer a vital context for professional enquiry and development of experienced practitioners.



Lead schools

Lead schools need to provide space for student teachers to test out their emerging ideas. By including strategies such as lesson study, teaching rounds or enquiry-led practice, student teachers can be given the opportunity to examine what they are learning in school against other forms of professional knowledge made available from their university and vice versa. This enables them to develop a sense of extended

professionalism that will help them to be truly reflective about their own practice and it ensures that ITE programmes are both rigorously practical and intellectually challenging.

There is a professional responsibility for lead schools to participate in enquiry-based practices focusing on the Partnership model.

This is because university and lead schools share joint responsibility for delivery and outcomes in the partnership. Lead schools, while working with the university, will find professional enquiry an invaluable way of exploring the effectiveness of ITE provision. This could include engaging in evaluative practice and sourcing feedback on content, delivery, progress and well-being from student teachers and other schools within a network or cluster.

Lead schools offer models of practice that support professional enquiry. There should be a culture of professional learning in the school that permeates from the senior leadership team to classroom practitioners. Having an openness to examining own pedagogical practices in the light of evidence from research and elsewhere is likely to influence the student teacher's own attitudes to professional enquiry as a means to improving practice. Similarly, where this is done well, good examples can be shared across the Partnership for all partners to benefit from. This includes seeking out appropriate learning materials, contributing to conferences, webinars or other professional learning opportunities.

Promote Welsh language development

All schools

In order to support student teachers in Welsh language development, mentors will want to establish what the student teacher's starting point is and focus on promoting a positive ongoing commitment to their progress. Some student teachers may not have had any prior experience of using Welsh in spoken or written form; other student teachers will be fluent in the use of Welsh and may have Welsh as their first language; in Welsh medium schools, some student teachers may have studied their prior degrees through the medium of English and may have only recently come back to using Welsh. Therefore, establishing a baseline is an important start. In some secondary schools, for example, where student teachers have expertise at A level or beyond in Welsh, they capitalise on this baseline and offer them opportunities to teach Welsh in lower Key Stage 3. Not only does this build on their knowledge and skills, but it provides opportunities to build an additional area of expertise.

A Framework exists to support student teachers' progress in Welsh. Mentors may wish to use the [Welsh Language Competency Framework for Education Practitioners](#) to facilitate any discussion about the student teacher's abilities and identify ongoing targets for development. The Framework helps both mentor and student teacher to reflect on their specific skills in reading, writing and oracy but also their confidence to use Welsh in the classroom. The Framework applies to all student teachers and experienced teachers

regardless of whether they are Welsh or English medium and this can be reassuring, particularly for those on the start of their journey.



It is good practice to identify a member of staff who can act as a 'champion' to student teachers for the Welsh language. The Welsh language champion can be a language specialist or could be an enthusiast but, either way, would be somebody who could offer focused training within school or direct student teachers to useful online support. Sometimes schools have their own context-specific support materials such as classroom phrases in Welsh or dictionaries that they may wish to share. Signposting Welsh Government online language learning materials could be a way to bridge this gap, for example [Cymraeg Gwaith / Work Welsh](#) for English medium student teachers or [Sgiliau Iaith Athrawon resource](#) for Welsh medium student teachers. Schools need to be cognisant that there is a specific descriptor under 'Professional Learning' that student teachers must meet within the Standards for QTS linked to Welsh language development.

Senior mentors can coordinate opportunities for student teachers to observe best practice in Welsh language development. In both primary and secondary schools, it is not always the case that a student teacher is placed with a confident user of Welsh language. Therefore, senior mentors should consider coordinating opportunities for student teachers to observe Welsh lessons or Welsh being used in a range of different subject areas taught by confident practitioners. Building in opportunities to learn from experienced teachers will develop or refresh language knowledge, skills and confidence.

Student teachers, while developing their own Welsh language, may lack the confidence to engage learners in their own use of the language. Mentors can support student teachers by encouraging them to think more carefully about pupil responses and general use of Welsh in their planning. Depending on the lesson, pupils' abilities or medium, this could include thinking about what the pupils will say or write within the context of the learning. This means ensuring that student teachers think about pupils' Welsh that is linked to the topic being studied and is beyond the inclusion of everyday Welsh. The Welsh Language Competency Framework will also be useful to support mentors and student teachers with this.



As well as thinking about Welsh language development, student teachers will need support incorporating y Cwricwlwm Cymreig across the curriculum. Looking for links across the curriculum gives a depth and context that prepares student teachers for the new Curriculum for Wales. This is something that mentors will want to consider when discussing student teachers' planning and they could share how y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is factored into whole school planning and policies.

Induction to the school could include how Welsh is promoted within and across the school community. This enables student teachers to understand and support the vision, aims and objectives in providing opportunities for pupils develop their social use of Welsh in all aspects of their lives. They will also need to understand how the school policy aligns to the national [Siarter Iaith](#) framework. This is important in making the student teacher feel part of the whole school community and helps them to appreciate how they can contribute towards national priorities.

The ITE team at Fitzalan plan a series of professional learning sessions linked to Cwricwlwm Cymreig and Bilingualism across the curriculum. These sessions give context to the role and responsibility of student teachers and help them to foster an appreciation of the Welsh language. Student teachers complete the 'Work Welsh' modules in addition to completing observations and learning walks to see Welsh teaching in action. Student teachers participate in the Eisteddfod and trips and are encouraged to award 'Siarad Cymraeg' points to pupils who use Welsh in their lessons; they are encouraged to instil a positive approach to Welsh language development.

- Angela Thomas – Fitzalan High School

Lead schools

Welsh medium, bilingual, or lead schools with excellent Welsh language provision have a lot to offer schools within their networks or clusters. Lead schools can work with universities to support the wider professional community in supporting good pedagogy related to language learning and the promotion of Welsh. If not already happening, these lead schools could initiate strategic discussion with the Partnership about how best to disseminate good practice.

Lead schools should take opportunities to involve themselves in research projects linked to Welsh medium and Welsh language

development provision. There is an increasing demand for research relating to current provision and the sharing of best practice in order to meet the strategic goals of the Welsh Government as outlined in [Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers](#). Lead schools, as key influencers on early career teachers have a big role to play in meeting this vision.

Welsh medium lead schools are key influencers in the recruitment of Welsh medium teachers to the profession.

This can include liaising closely with universities about how they can encourage Welsh medium applicants, using contacts to identify and encourage potential teachers, or getting involved with interviews and open days and any other recruitment projects.

Take an interest in student teachers' academic work

All schools

Writing about their practice in the form of an academic assignment helps the student teacher to articulate and reflect on their emerging professional identity. The teaching profession is moving towards a scholarly approach to the development of practice, with teachers engaging with research to become critical, reflective practitioners who can express their rationale for their pedagogical choices. Academic assignments support student teachers to develop the scholarly dispositions they need to enter the profession. It also supports the student teacher to learn how to synthesise ideas from research and to evaluate their usefulness in their own school contexts to improve the learning of their pupils. It also helps student teachers to learn how to express their own theories of practice over time.

Partnerships should take a collaborative approach to supporting student teachers' academic work. Whereas academic work may once have been perceived as the domain of the university, all accredited ITE programmes now take an integrated approach to theory and practice and provide opportunities for student teachers to develop holistically within a practice setting. Student teachers can be encouraged to view their academic work as a contributor to meeting the Standards at the level pertaining to QTS. In turn, mentors can help with this by taking an interest in student teachers' academic work, supporting them through professional dialogue and helping them to reflect critically.

Mentors need to know the academic requirements of the student teacher's programme. Undergraduate student teachers are working up to level 6 (equivalent to Y3 of a degree) and postgraduate student teachers are working up to level 7 (equivalent to master's level). This means the student teacher will be expected to be increasingly critically reflective as they progress. It is helpful if mentors can take an active role in asking student teachers to reflect on their classroom experience and make reference to their theoretical knowledge being aware of how this might later translate into academic writing. This might include modelling the articulation of theory and practice within professional dialogue.



The school is an expert in professional practice and providing the school context. The school can support student teachers by providing an authentic context for the research and providing opportunities and / or evidence to contribute to the student teachers' assignment. Key school documents outlining the school vision

and development and improvement plans can help student teachers to understand more about their individual school context. This process can help student teachers refine their assignment and make them more meaningful and relevant for the context in which they are working. There is no expectation to proof-read assignments but for mentors to have professional learning discussions around key aspects of the assignment that impact on pedagogy and practice.

I found the experience of engaging in research really positive. It allowed me to explore an area of interest and consolidate my own opinion and teaching strategies. We were encouraged to look at the theories in a rigorous way, look at the ideas underpinning the texts and how it looked in practice and then how it would work in our own specific context as teachers working in Wales. The experience of completing my research was really helpful when I started working in my school during my NQT year. Because of how much research and how many texts I explored, I felt I had a really strong understanding of the specific area of teaching that I had looked at and I felt I could pass on my own strategies and techniques with confidence. I felt that it underpinned my own practice but I also felt confident to share my research with others, too.

- Molly Steers – Student teacher

Student teachers' academic work can be beneficial to the whole school. Student teachers are likely to undertake a wide range of academic activities such as critically examining a school policy or undertaking enquiry into a pedagogical approach. This may lead to interesting critical reflection amongst staff as they support the student teacher to think about their topic. Student teachers can be encouraged to disseminate their findings to the school so that the school can benefit. In some cases, findings can also be shared

in departmental or staff meetings or the student teacher could be asked to present their ideas.

Student teachers will follow ethical practices in all aspects of their teaching and academic work. Being ethical means student teachers are expected to behave professionally at all times, including in everyday decision making in the classroom. This doesn't just apply to academic assignments but should form the foundations of ongoing practice in line with the Professional Code of Conduct. When completing academic work, student teachers will follow clear codes of practice including those specific to their university as well as [BERA guidelines](#) for educational research. For example, they will be expected to give due regard to confidentiality and GDPR. Student teachers will work closely with their university to gain ethical approval for any research or enquiry, and they will also need to comply with any processes for gaining consent that apply in their placement school.



External examiners quality assure the marking and moderation of assignments as well as the assessment of student teachers on placement. All ITE programmes undergo a rigorous quality assurance procedure, including input from the EWC, Estyn and from external examiners who normally have experience in other universities. Their role is to ensure that procedures are followed, and they provide a benchmark of

quality of provision across the UK. They will review a sample of assessed work, comment on policies and procedures and they may visit the school to discuss the experience both from a student and a school perspective. Mentors and school leaders should understand that, should they receive a visit from an external examiner, the focus will be on quality assuring the procedures and outcomes rather than assessing the quality of provision in schools.



Lead schools

At a strategic level, lead schools may be asked to co-construct and contribute to the evaluation of academic assignments. One of the features of ITE in Wales is the ownership of the programmes by partnerships of schools and Universities. In each partnership, designated lead schools help oversee the strategic direction of the partnership. They may also be asked to provide feedback on the usefulness of academic assignments and other key elements of the programme as well as overseeing the professional teaching experience placements. This is part of the co-construction and ongoing evaluation of the programmes themselves.

Make practical and effective use of finance

All schools

Whatever role your school plays in Partnership, you will receive funding for supporting student teachers. Funding for placements reflects the recognition that this brings some additional workload both to the class teachers hosting student teachers and to at least one member of senior leadership who will oversee student teacher provision within the school. Set against the background of challenging school budgets, it is essential that the funding available to schools for their participation in ITE is put to maximum effect.

Funding will be directly linked to jointly agreed Partnership Agreements as set out in your Partnership's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU provides clarity for all partners about what each is putting in, what each is getting out, and helps schools and universities build a shared responsibility for initial teacher education. It is a document that can be shared with relevant stakeholders to give clarity about what the partnership involves and can be a tool for integrating ITE into the strategy and ethos of the school.



First consideration for funding is ensuring course requirements for student teachers are met. The key issue here, however, is how that can be done in such a way as to maximise the impact for a given activity, not just for the student teacher, but with 'payback' to the school too.

For example, ITE programmes will need to ensure that student teachers:

- meet the professional standards to achieve QTS;
- are ready to deliver the new Curriculum for Wales;
- understand and are able to utilise research and school-based enquiry.
- develop a collaborative approach to professional learning.

From these few examples, it can be seen that student teachers will share many of the same professional learning needs as serving and experienced teachers, albeit at a different level. Professional learning opportunities provided within the school, e.g. through staff meetings, INSET days etc can provide effective ways to develop schools' own staff knowledge and expertise alongside student teachers. Encouraging open dialogue amongst staff with student teachers included, helps student teachers to develop an early appreciation that pedagogy is not a secret code that is one day 'cracked', but a topic of continual reflection, discussion and revision.

Funding should be used to release staff to work with student teachers. This includes, as a minimum, ensuring that key staff are released to attend any professional learning required by the partnership model. Partnership funding is unlikely

to release staff for all one to one mentor meetings; however, a strategic approach to organising time wisely can pay dividends. Opportunities can be put in place for staff to utilise enquiry groups involving multiple student teachers saving time while also enhancing collaboration.

As student teachers build their confidence in the class and progressively take on greater responsibility for the class over time, this can also provide opportunities for teachers, used judiciously, to ‘step back’ and observe the learning happening in their class. Such opportunities can greatly support teachers to consider, for example, how well learners are responding to particular strategies, update their own assessments of progress or undertake some listening to learners’ activities in support of wider-school MER. This, in essence, helps ‘buy back’ time from other school activities.



The best examples of using funding effectively is to build capacity to ensure that its impact reaches beyond the timeline of the funding itself. The partnership models of ITE are based on commitments to providing for the needs of both student *and* serving teachers, addressing the key themes of theoretical knowledge and research, practical application of that knowledge and professional development. These themes sit

firmly within the Welsh Government (2019) [National Approach to Learning](#).

For my school staff, I wanted that experience of explaining concepts, discussing pedagogy and contextualising this in their own classrooms not only to consolidate their own professional learning, but to facilitate and encourage them to evaluate the impact of existing approaches and be open to possible alternative approaches. The requirement of the teacher to support the student in evaluating their teaching and the impact thereof, supports their own reflection and evaluative skills.

Facilitated through either supply or ‘in-house’ cover, time spent during the school day for teachers and students to meet, discuss and evaluate pedagogies has been a worthwhile expenditure, not only meeting the student needs but also supporting the professional learning of my own staff.

- Kevin Stroud – Maes Yr Haul Primary School

Lead schools

Lead Schools will receive additional funding to reflect their additional responsibility for initial teacher education. Depending on the partnership, the role of the lead school varies but the additional workload is not insignificant and there is an expectation that the lead school will take strategic responsibility for the partnership as a whole, liaising with other schools, providing professional learning activities and overseeing the progression of much larger groups of student teachers. To manage this additional work and responsibility effectively, key staff will need to be appointed to act as an ITE Lead and, certainly, a

senior member of staff should be appointed given some of the activities that this role can involve.

An important strategic decision for a lead school is how the role of an ITE Lead can operate to best effect while ensuring pupils are not disadvantaged as a result. Different schools have considered and deployed a number of different solutions to this issue using the funds available. Some schools have established temporary TLR3 non-teaching positions specific for the role. Other schools have combined the role of ITE Lead with complementary responsibilities such as NQT induction and/or professional learning. As a minimum, such responsibility demands a well-considered review of the time needed to complete the work and considerable, protected, non-contact time needs to be reflected within the ITE Lead's contract.

If investing in protected time for the role, the ITE Lead might consider, at senior leadership level, how the school can benefit from such a financial commitment. The ITE lead can provide cover for mentors to meet with their student teachers, thereby explaining their knowledge of

practice around the school and gaining valuable insight into how consistent or effective practices are, both in relation to working with student teachers, but also other aspects of school life. This removes the majority of additional costs over and above that of the full-time teacher post and this form of whole-school activity can benefit the school as a learning organisation while at the same time support and develop ITE provision.

Lead schools should have the resources, equipment and facilities to support student teachers. With the responsibility for providing professional learning activities for larger groups of student teachers in some partnerships, lead schools will need to consider whether they have the space to host large numbers, taking into consideration learning space and resources, as well as impact on the staffroom, toilet facilities, refreshments and parking. The practical implications will, therefore, also need to be considered within the strategic use of funds to support initial teacher education.

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Please note: some hyperlinks require a sign in to Hwb prior to clicking the link

Getting to know your Partnership

There are four main Partnerships that schools currently engage with in the Central South Consortium region. The following section provides a brief overview of each partnership model, initial teacher education programmes available and contact details for further information.



Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership

The Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP), based at the University of Wales Trinity St David, is one of Wales' biggest providers of teacher education and offers primary and secondary training with partner schools across South Wales.

Through the APLP, we support more than 600 student teachers on our Initial Teacher Education programmes. These include primary undergraduate, and primary and secondary PGCE programmes, all with Qualified Teacher Status.

Over 100 partnership schools are part of the APLP and we are proud to be working in partnership with schools, the Welsh Government and colleagues on a number of important educational and community initiatives, including the design and development of Wales' new curriculum and the assessment of the learning of our pupils.

The **BA Primary Education Honours with QTS** is a highly respected full-time degree, which takes place at our Carmarthen campus; a place where tradition and modern meet to form a unique learning environment. The programme focuses on professional study across the full age-range of primary education and provides a thorough understanding of the statutory curricula for primary schools.

Our **PGCE** is an innovative one-year programme which provides student teachers with the opportunity to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) – the recognised standard you need to teach in England and Wales. We offer pathways for primary and secondary with 16 different subject specialisms. PGCE students spend 12 weeks of the year in our brand-new waterfront campus in Swansea and 24 weeks in schools the length and breadth of South Wales. Students exit our PGCE with 60 credits at Masters level.

Students on all our programmes follow a curriculum that includes:

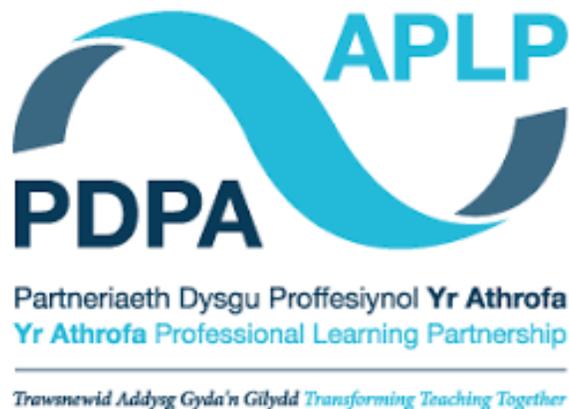
- Compulsory modules
- Research skill development
- Professional pathway for Qualified Teacher Status
- Welsh Language Development Pathway
- Bridging – activities which bring together theory and practice
- Electives – a school-based experience following a chosen area of interest
- Alternative setting – an opportunity to experience non-school education settings
- Phase Swap – an opportunity to explore the full continuum of learning

Our teaching philosophy is one of engaging our student teachers in lively debate and active learning that develops critical thinking and engagement. This prepares our student teachers to become research-informed and research-active teachers, ready to make a difference to young people's lives

All programmes include Professional Teaching Experience placements within an APLP network consisting of a lead school and a number of partnership schools. Each teaching experience is in different settings to give you a range of experiences and the opportunity to engage with a variety of approaches to teaching and learning. During school-based experience, student teachers are supported to integrate theory and practice and develop the reflective skills needed to become a highly successful teacher.

The APLP provides a graduated introduction to teaching to give student teachers time to develop their confidence, knowledge of the curriculum and skills of classroom organisation. This will include working with small groups of learners before moving to being responsible for the whole class. Seminars hosted in school and delivered by mentors and university staff give student teachers the opportunity to meet with other students in their network and engage in collaborative discussion. Such shared reflection is a powerful tool in moving practice forward. Our partnership of networks offers urban and rural placements as well as placements available in either English or Welsh-medium schools.

Much more information is available from <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/teacher-education/> and you can get a sense of life on the programmes by following us on Twitter - [@APLPTeach](https://twitter.com/APLPTeach)



Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Education

Cardiff Metropolitan University has over 60 years' experience in initial teacher education, and an enviable reputation for preparing student teachers to be highly skilled, confident, critically reflective and innovative practitioners with excellent employment prospects.

The Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) comprises Cardiff Metropolitan University and its associated schools, working in collaboration with University of Oxford, Cardiff University, Central South Consortium (CSC), Education Achievement Service (EAS), and City of Cardiff Council. Together, the Cardiff Partnership collaborates to ensure that our student teachers not only achieve but seek to surpass the professional standards for QTS through high-quality professional education that is rigorously practical and intellectually challenging.

The Cardiff Partnership Model of ITE is designed to build 'an excellent professional workforce with strong pedagogy based on an understanding of what works. This is being achieved through use of the 12 pedagogical principles in *Successful Futures* as the starting point for our ITE planning process. Our vision is:

'Working together with teachers, for teachers, as teachers to inspire the future minds of Wales',

and this is underpinned by the following values:

- empower tomorrow's teachers to realise their potential;
- create a culture of collaboration across all aspects of our work;
- be committed to creating confident, independent teachers who are dedicated to lifelong learning;
- embed research to innovate and inform teaching; and
- ensure that the wellbeing and the education of pupils are at the core of all that we do.

The Cardiff Partnership offers the following courses which lead to Qualified Teacher Status:

- BA (Hons) Primary Education with Qualified Teacher Status
 - PGCE Primary
 - PGCE Secondary (Subjects include: Art and Design, Biology with Science*, Chemistry with Science*, Design & Technology (Product Design, Food and Nutrition, Fashion and Textiles and Engineering Design), Drama, English, Geography, History, Information Communications Technology & Computing*, Mathematics*, Modern Foreign Languages (Specialising in either French, French and Spanish, or French and German.), Music, Physical Education, Physics with Science*, Religious Education & Welsh.
- *Priority subjects

Distinct feature of the degrees include:

- University and school experiences that train student teachers to teach the Curriculum for Wales across the full age-range of the primary - secondary school
- 60 credits at Masters' level that can be 'traded in' towards an MA in Education (PGCE only)
- Students are prepared for a teaching qualification widely recognised throughout the United Kingdom and the rest of the world
- Research-informed clinical practice where structured opportunities enable student teachers to use theory to interrogate practice and vice versa.
- A supportive and collaborative culture of learning
- School-led training days led by schools identified as leading providers of education and professional development
- A 'return day' to university and/or lead partnership schools every week to consolidate and cohere learning
- Opportunities for cross-phase learning (PGCE)
- Person-centred enrichment opportunities to build on strengths and develop innovative, collaborative, professional learning and leadership skills.
- A commitment to the development of Welsh language skills of all student teachers based on their individual experience and needs

**Cardiff
Partnership**
for Initial Teacher Education

**Partneriaeth
Caerdydd**
ar gyfer Addysg Gychwynnol i Athrawon



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Open University ITE Partnership

The Open University in Wales ITE Partnership was developed and accredited in conjunction with all Regional Consortia (Gwe, EAS, CSC and ERW) and partner schools across the whole of Wales. The programme offers a blend of online study with essential practical experience within schools, in a format that offers flexibility to the student teacher. Student teachers can choose from two routes – an employment-based salaried route, or a part time route, both completed over two years. Student teachers can follow a Primary pathway or a Secondary pathway in the subjects of English, Welsh, Maths or Science. All pathways can be studied either through the medium of English or Welsh.

Fundamental to our vision of high-quality teacher professional learning is a model that recognises the expertise that all of those involved in this landscape of professional teacher practice bring; student-teachers, mentors, practice tutors, school students and others. Central the new model is our close partnership with schools, and there are different ways to become involved, including becoming a Lead, Associate or Employer school. You can read more about school partnership opportunities [here](#).

The design aims to develop student teachers who are secure, strong and competent entrants to the teaching profession, who can work with autonomy, creativity and passion within their specialist subject area or phase. Student teachers should be ready to become active contributors to the reform and development of education in Wales, to embrace the opportunities of a new curriculum within bilingual Wales and able to navigate the complexities of an evolving profession by engaging with research critically to provide an evidence base for their approaches.



Students work towards 60 credits at Level 6 and 60 Credits at Level 7 (Masters level) across three modules of study. The ‘traditional’ university delivery takes place through a combination of online study materials and live online seminar sessions with an OU Curriculum tutor.

Practice learning takes place in a high-quality school setting, supported by a programme of mentor support and which takes a scaffolded and graduated approach to the development of teaching. The student undertakes a number of practice learning activities across each level, designed to bridge their module study and practice learning experiences

and supports them to build their research capacity through engaging with lesson study and small-scale action research at Masters level.

Salaried Route

Student-teachers:

- Are employed by the school on a **full time** basis for **two years**.
- Undertake roles and responsibilities commensurate with their status as an **unqualified teacher** (related to the support of teaching and learning) and payed at point 1 of the unqualified teacher scale.
- All student teacher's costs of study are supported by a Welsh Government training grant. Additional incentives apply to Secondary priority subjects.
- Have a flexible timetable which combines their **learning support role** with **protected time** for **online module study and seminars**. Dedicated PGCE **practice learning periods** develop along a continuum moving from supervised practice in the first year to independent practice in the second year.
- Experience a six week **second school experience** in a nearby Lead partner school in the summer term of year one.

You can find out more about the Salaried route [here](#).

Part Time Route

Student teachers:

- Are supported by a Lead Partner School and/or Associate School for 120 days over the two years, completing a practice learning placement in each module on a part-time basis (so **three** periods of **placement** over the two years).
- Students begin by completing a short observation period in school, allowing students to begin to **make links** between school practice and the online module study from day one.
- The student engages in what is referred to as a consecutive study pattern, which alternates between study and school experience, ensuring a manageable work load and a flexible way of working towards the PGCE. Students undertake dedicated periods of **part time online module study and online seminars**, alongside their own commitments.

You can find out more about the Part Time route [here](#).

You can find out more information about the programmes by visiting our website:

- [Information for Schools](#)
- [Programme Information](#)
- You can also contact us at Wales-PGCE@open.ac.uk



Swansea University Schools' Partnership

Established in 2018, the Swansea University Schools' Partnership (SUSP) is built upon authentic collaboration between the university and partnership schools. This collaboration is pivotal to the design, delivery, and management of our programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Our partnership currently extends across 27 schools in south Wales, from Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi in the west to Cardiff High School in the east. These schools vary in size, location, age range and language of provision. All partners share a vision to support the development of student teachers who are research-informed, critically reflective practitioners, able to draw purposefully and confidently upon research and theory to make meaningful and deep connections between the academic and practical elements of teaching.

SUSP offers the following programmes of Initial Teacher Education:

Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Secondary:

- Biology,
- Chemistry,
- Design & Technology,
- English,
- Computer Science,
- Mathematics,
- Modern Foreign Languages (Specialising in either French, French and Spanish, or Spanish)
- Physics,
- Welsh.



The SUSP Vision for Initial Teacher Education

The SUSP programme adopts a clinical practice approach, which essentially means connecting a research-informed understanding of learning and teaching to the professional understanding and expertise of experienced classroom teachers.

What does this vision mean for our student teachers and partnership schools?

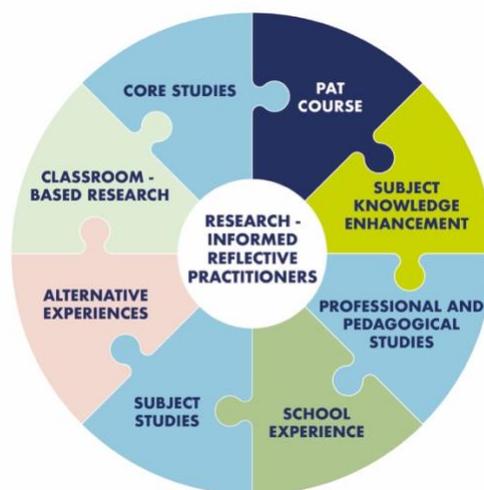
Throughout the SUSP programme, student teachers will be supported to develop their practical, pedagogical and professional confidence, knowledge and skills.

In line with a clinical practice approach, they will be given the opportunity to:

- Design and implement enquiry/research processes within their placements.
- Systematically reflect upon the implications/outcomes of their research/enquiry on learners and on their teaching.
- Refine their pedagogical and professional practices, based on feedback and personal reflections, with the central aim of continually improving their practice in an informed and focused way that impacts positively upon learners and learning.

By research-informed, we mean that our programme design will enable student teachers to:

- Diagnose instructional problems quickly
- Critically evaluate the available evidence
- Draw on a wide repertoire of proven instructional strategies to identify the most appropriate solution
- Evaluate the impact of their teaching decisions in a process of informed reflection and refinement.



What opportunities does the programme offer?

The SUSP ITE programme offers:

- Innovative and engaging university and school experiences
- Personalised support from highly experienced, research active subject tutors and school mentors
- Authentic assignments, including those providing 60 credits at Masters' level
- Access to excellent facilities such as University science and language laboratories
- Partnership-led 'Practice and Theory' days
- Opportunity to develop Welsh language skills whether beginners or fluent Welsh speakers
- Opportunity to learn from University based subject-specific Academic Advisers to deepen and extend subject knowledge and to develop effective pedagogic practices.

More information is available from <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/education/postgraduate-study/pgce/> and on Twitter - @PGCEswanseauni



**Swansea
University**
**Prifysgol
Abertawe**

**Swansea University Schools'
Partnership**

**Partneriaeth
Ysgolion Prifysgol Abertawe**

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