Leeds Trinity University

Reimagining Partnership in ITTE: A Provocation for the Future

What might meaningful, equitable partnerships between universities and schools look like?

2025 -26

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Today

This interactive workshop invites you to critically explore the evolving nature of partnership in Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

We will:

- Ask what might meaningful, equitable partnerships between universities and schools look like in the years ahead?
- Offer provocations designed to spark discussion about current partnership offers and the possibilities available across ITTE collaboration.
- Support the sharing of experiences, challenge assumptions, and contribute to reimagining partnership as a dynamic, dialogic, and mutually enriching endeavour.



The LTU Partnership



2 Lead Partners

- Curriculum developed collaboratively

8 Delivery Partners

- Opportunities for shared delivery

900 School Partners

- Actively work with around 350 schools each year

Teacher Education Students: 800

In partnership with Leeds Trinity University

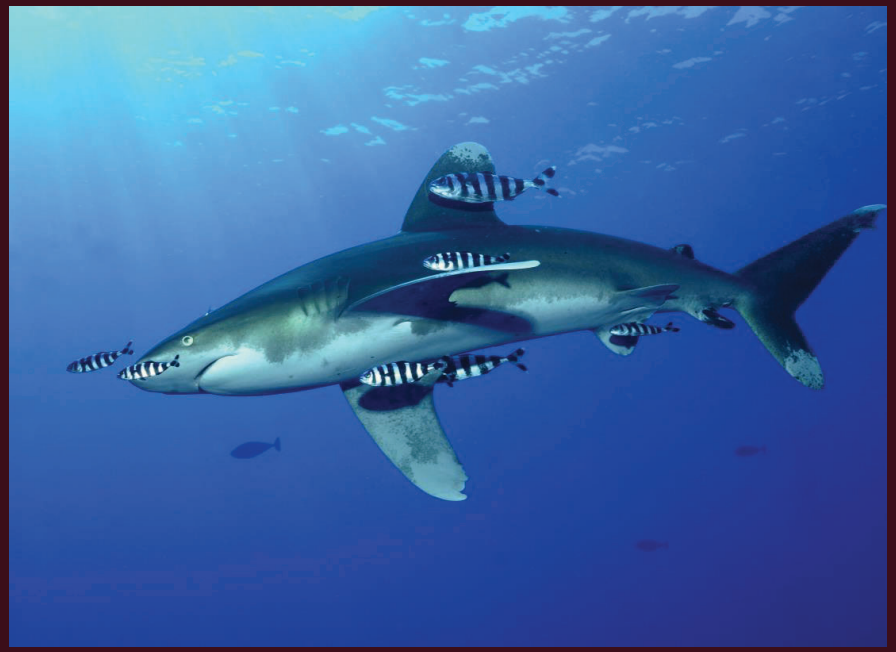
A Partnership Symbiosis



- Parasitism = one benefits and the other is harmed!
- Commensalism – one benefits, the other is neither harmed nor helped
- Obligate – species are entirely dependent upon each other

Robinson and Feldman (2023)

Symbiosis is not always comfortable - and the concept of partnerships is increasingly complex, challenging and changing





A Partnership Ecosystem

If your current partnerships were alive — not a structure or system, but a *creature* — what would it be?

Think about

- How does it travel? Swiftly or slowly? Alone or in a group?
- What kind of environment sustains it — forest, ocean, sky, or savannah?
- What sounds does it make?
- How does it protect itself?



What would happen if your partnership creature could evolve? If it could grow wings, shed its shell, or find a more nourishing habitat?

Our Thoughts: Facultative Mutualism

Partnership is a symbiosis, where species benefit from each other but are not fully dependent on the partnership for survival. While the relationship offers advantages, each species could theoretically survive on its own without the other.

- **Mutual benefit**: Both species gain some advantage from the interaction.
- **Non-essential**: The relationship is not required for the survival of either species; they could live independently.
- **Flexible**: The partnership is a flexible one that is beneficial when conditions are favourable, but not critical.

We will now share some of our approaches.





The Butterfly in a Storm: Adapting to change while preserving balance, purpose, connection, and beauty.



Initial Challenges:

- Getting everyone in the same room.
- Getting the "buy-in" for the revised structures (e.g. reduced time for old SD Partners).

Ongoing challenges:

- Recruitment uncertainty and instability.

Our response:

Establishing our non-negotiables.

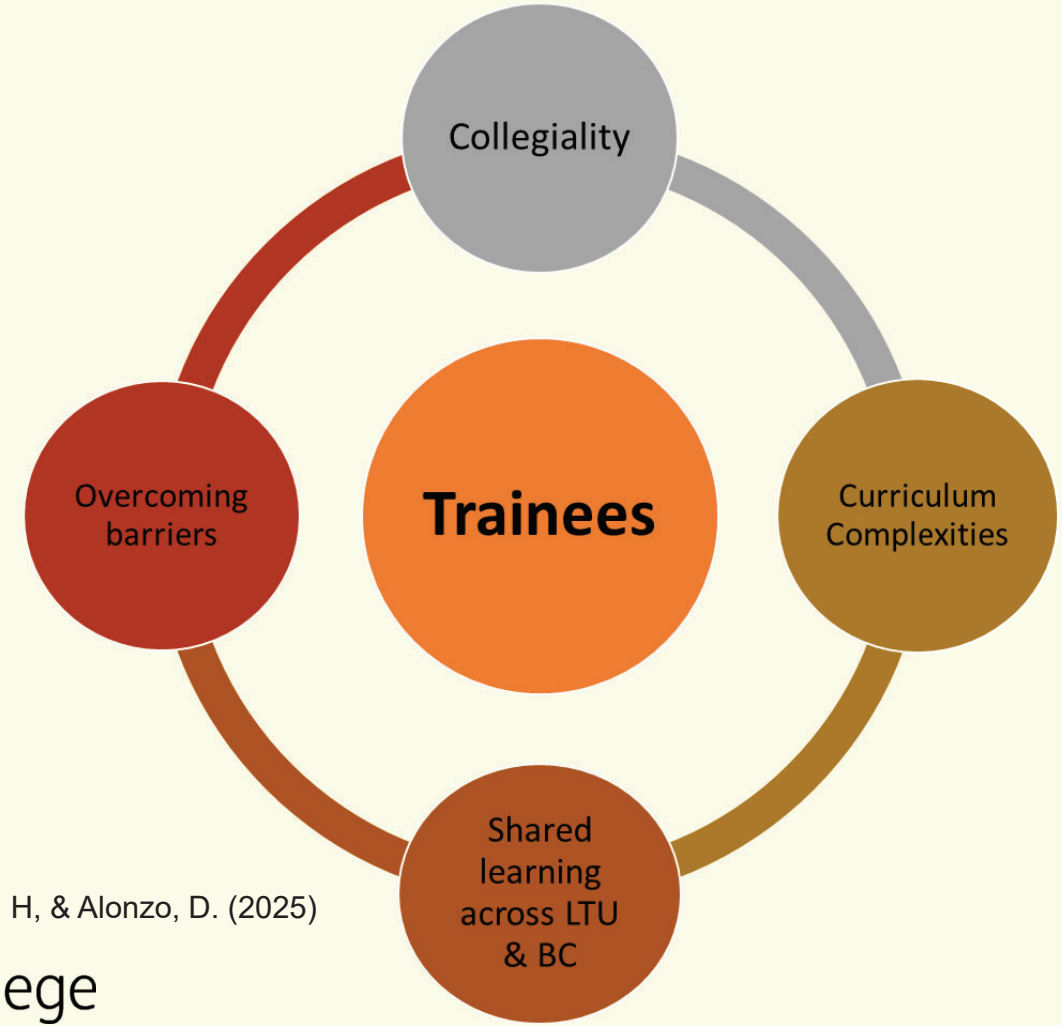
Development of *Core, Enhanced and Enriched* Aspects of the "centre based" curriculum.

Shared development of the School Experience aspect of the curriculum.

Embedding Quality Assurance across provision (also an ongoing challenge).

Purposeful - Newly imagined partnerships

Margaret McMillan School of Education





Hargreaves. A. (2019)
Wijarwadi, W., Nguyen, H, & Alonzo, D. (2025)

Bradford College

Over to you …



SPEED DATING

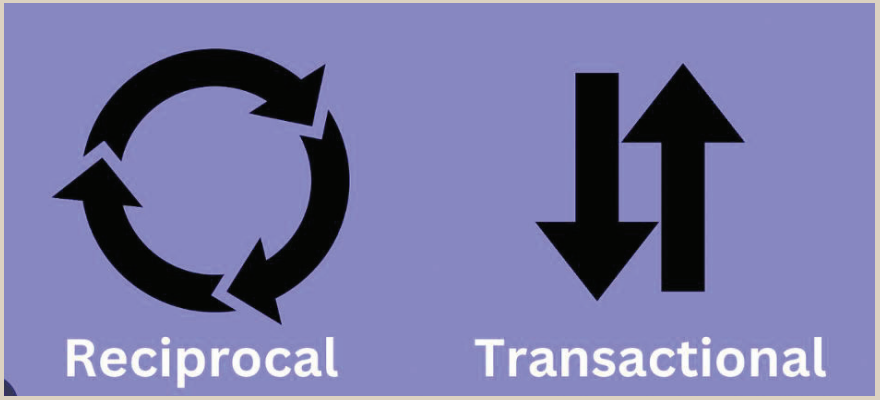


HOW HAS IT WORKED?

External Opportunities

- Creative community projects and developing partnership.
- Facing up to the competition.
- Working with our new partners to develop employability opportunities.

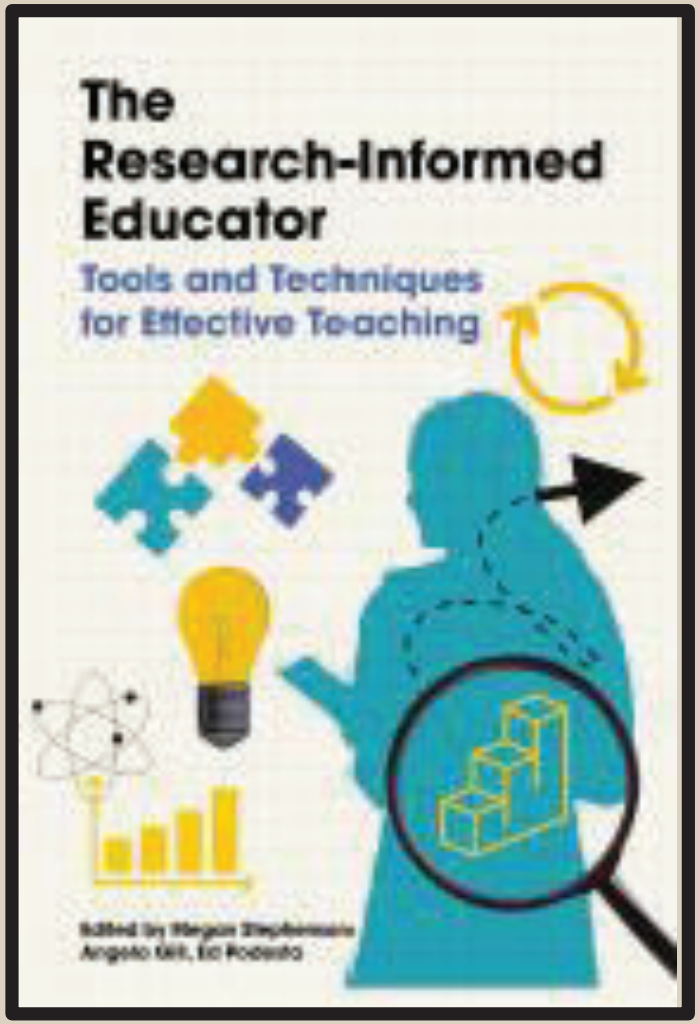




Stand Firm: Knowledge exchange that works for us all



Stand Firm: Knowledge exchange that works for us all



Investment in KE around partnership counts: support our students to thrive, belong and achieve!



Possibilities for the future?

A manifesto for the future …

Thoughts on partnership and opportunities?

Research participant opportunity:

Keeping ourselves sane:

Using Arts Based Research to Explore Change and the Future of Teacher Education

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References

Hargreaves, A (2019) Teacher collaboration: 30 years of research on its nature, forms, limitations and effects. Teacher and Teaching. Vol 25. Issue 5. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2019.1639499

Robinson, M., & Feldman, J. (2023). University–school partnerships in initial teacher education. In R. J. Tierney, F. Rizvi, & K. Ercikan (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (Vol. 5, pp. 381–392). Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-818630-5.04002-1

Wijarwadi, W., Nguyen, H. T. M., & Alonzo, D. (2025). Teacher collaboration: conceptualisation and practice. *Professional Development in Education*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2025.2504693

