

Developing Professional Identity and Ethos through Research and Practice in Initial Teacher Education: The USW ITE Partnership Approach

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ABSTRACT

Reform of the education sector in Wales has given university-school partnerships of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Wales much to grapple with conceptually and practically, in order to design new programmes of ITE that can attract national-level accreditation in line with the recommendations made by Professor John Furlong in 2015. These reforms have required a system-wide rethink of ITE, based on a philosophy for new provision. This article outlines an approach to ITE inspired by the work of Lee Shulman (2005) who argued that teacher education should prioritise the acquisition of three habits, corresponding to the ‘what’ the ‘so what’ and finally the ‘who’ of teaching, namely an understanding of one’s professional identity, ethos and character. We describe a pedagogical model for embedding these principles in ITE, based on the work of Parker, Patton and O’Sullivan (2016). Finally, we consider the implications for mentors and lecturers, noting in particular the need to see all members of the ITE partnership as learners, both to ensure effective role models for beginning teachers, and also to remain faithful to the principle laid down in social development theory (Vygotsky, 1978) that learning is interactive and symbiotic.

Key words: philosophy, Initial Teacher Education, social development theory, social learning, mentoring, professional education, reflective practice, research, critical inquiry

Introduction

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Wales is undergoing a period of intensive change that aims to bring about a ‘transformational’ education system that can build teachers’ capacity as practitioners, leading to improved outcomes for pupils. In 2005 the Welsh Government commissioned a review of Initial Teacher Education and Training in Wales to advise on how it might more effectively meet the current and likely future needs of learners. The first Furlong report (Furlong *et al.*, 2006) highlighted the need for change in terms of delivery and research capacity. In response to the second Furlong report (Furlong, 2015), the Welsh Government required ITE providers to seek approval at national level for redesigned programmes of teacher education, against ambitious accreditation criteria that support the transition from ‘teacher training’ to ‘teacher education’. The criteria require universities and schools to collaborate, co-plan and provide ITE as partners, with clearly defined roles. A key requirement of universities is that they lead on bringing expertise to bear that is heavily research-informed (BERA–RSA, 2014), and develop the capacities of teacher educators to be research-engaged with the ability to design programmes with a strong teacher inquiry strand. The University of South Wales Initial Teacher Education Partnership (USW ITE Partnership, or the Partnership), alongside other ITE providers, is therefore a site of profound and ambitious change for its teacher educators, school partners and students. This paper examines the core conceptual foundations that underpin this new provision, located within the distinctive features of long-established USW relationships with key stakeholders and the contribution made by the university to learning in the professions.

The USW ITE Partnership has evolved from a long tradition of community-engaged professional education in the region. The recruitment and education of professionals at USW has long been driven by local community needs, designed in collaboration with local employers and graduating professionals have largely been employed within the local community in South and South East Wales. ITE has been a key part of the

portfolio at USW and its predecessor institutions for over 100 years, providing programmes of professional preparation in education, and drawing on the experience of USW academics in a range of disciplines including social work, nursing, midwifery, police science, and therapies. These disciplines are tailored to meet the unique needs of their respective sectors, but are bound together by a core approach to developing professionals that is grounded in four elements. These elements are driven by the USW strategy and form part of the blueprint laid down by the university as pre-requisites to the design of any new undergraduate provision:

- Core content is designed and provided in collaboration with employers, to ensure that programmes meet the needs of professional communities.
- Students are taught by academic staff who continue to engage with practice, refining their embodied knowledge through engagement with the latest evidence-based innovations.
- All programmes have a core placement element, supported by employer mentors and coaches, ensuring that graduates are fully conversant with, and ready for, the world of work and ensuring that employer partners have continued access to the research knowledge and expertise of the university.
- Graduates have access to clear, employment-relevant progression routes following qualification, so that they can continue to develop as they start their careers in their chosen discipline.

The new BA (Hons) Primary ITE with QTS programme has been designed in line with these foundations, continuing to harness the strengths of collaborative programme design with key stakeholders in schools where 95% of USW ITE graduates are employed. The new BA in Primary ITE continues to share core features with the USW suite of professional preparation programmes but is also underpinned by the requirements of accreditation and the need to ensure that graduates have developed holistically, refining not only skills, knowledge and understanding, but also values, ethos and dispositions that are vital if the Welsh Government's vision for education in Wales is to be realised.

The USW ITE Partnership's offer therefore harnesses existing strengths of USW provision – high employability in the region, strong practice-based relationships and stakeholder engagement in on-going professional learning – within a reconceptualisation of what it is possible for new teachers to achieve if programmes adopt a holistic approach to professional development, and what their role is in a reformed, research-literate workforce. In

this paper, we describe a conceptual framework for ITE provision offered by the Partnership, a model for implementing this conceptual framework and the resulting implications for mentors and lecturers.

A. Developing a conceptual framework for ITE

The design of the new programme is driven by the need to provide a model of teacher preparation that moved from the concept of training to education. The conceptual framework aims to develop a profession underpinned by inquiry and the knowledge needed to establish career-long collaborative professional learning that is critical, meaningful and effective. We outline in this section the foundation of the conceptual framework – social development theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the need for critical engagement in research and experience of practice, and the resulting ‘signature pedagogies’ of educating teachers based on the writing of Shulman (2005).

1. The foundation of our conceptual framework; social development theory

Our conceptual and philosophical basis for professional learning and curriculum design in education in the USW ITE Partnership has its roots in social development theory (Vygotsky, 1978). This theory led to models of social learning which posit that learning is dependent upon interaction and collaboration between teacher and learner in a relationship that is symbiotic. That is to say that learning is not ‘imbued’ upon the learner, but that both parties, and indeed all parties involved, generate their own, and others’, learning through interacting with, encouraging, supporting, questioning and challenging each other. For this reason, professional learning in education in the Partnership relies on the building of high-quality, non-hierarchical, relationships with clear expectations of stakeholder roles. It has been argued by Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) that such relationships form the essence of the social context within which teachers learn, so that the learning of new teachers takes place within what Langdon (2017) has called ‘relational school communities of practice’ in which all participants ‘are invariably concerned with expanding their knowledge about teaching and learning through their on-going interaction’ (Langdon, 2017: 529). The community involves the following stakeholders:

- the student¹;
- the university lecturer;

- the mentor(s) in education settings;
- learners in professional education settings such as schools (in 2020, the Partnership's provision will focus on early years and primary school settings); and
- the wider stakeholders in the community, including parents and carers.

2. Critical engagement with research and experience of practice

For collaboration to be sustained, there must be perceived benefits for all the parties involved. These relationships have as their goal the development and progression of students as agentive professionals, to the benefit of learners. They are aimed at ensuring that, for example, school practitioners can learn from students and that school practice informs on-going programme improvement. Research is embedded in the Partnership's provision as both evidence that drives programme-related decision-making, and as provocation that drives students' inquiry and reflection, ultimately enabling them to determine, adopt and justify their professional stance as teachers. Teacher learning is thus viewed as contextually-situated in communities of professionals (Lave and Wenger, 1998) who inquire together.

Critical engagement with research and experience of practice is therefore at the centre of new developments. The aim is to develop a body of knowledge that is particular to teachers but is also implicit and frequently 'unspoken' or tacit within the profession (Shulman, 2005; Eraut, 2004). That knowledge comprises content, practice and values and drives the creation of pedagogical approaches which:

- are rooted in research and evidence, driving adaptive and authentic learning;
- understand teacher learning as constructed by the context in which students are learning, such that no two students experience exactly the same learning trajectory;
- enable students to become critically informed practitioners who form part of a professional community and contribute to a body of professional knowledge; and
- develop teachers' capacity to 'go meta' (Hutchings and Shulman, 1999) about their practice and articulate it in order to learn through dialogue with colleagues, based on reflective inquiry.

3. Signature pedagogies as a basis for educating teachers

Within the social learning tradition, Shulman's (2005: 59) work on 'signature pedagogies' has proposed the core ways in which teaching and learning take place in a particular professional field; they lead to the building of knowledge that is unique to the profession and an understanding of how that knowledge is acquired. Here, we describe these signature pedagogies and we show that they lead to learning that is complex. Finally, we show that one of the core elements of this complex form of professional learning by teachers is the development of 'pedagogical content knowledge' (PCK).

i. What are signature pedagogies?

Signature pedagogies develop 'three habits' that have informed and will transform the Partnership's programme design for ITE (Shulman, 2005):

- Habits of the head – facilitating the learning of content.
- Habits of the hand – facilitating the learning of practice.
- Habits of the heart – instilling values, ethos and moral duty.

The USW ITE Partnership seeks to embed these habits in its teacher educators, teachers and students. Because 'habits of the heart' involve developing deep-seated beliefs about learning and teaching and how teachers' actions have profound impacts on their pupils, our ultimate aim is to help new teachers negotiate complex professional identities and learn to be critical and deeply reflective practitioners. We recognise that this is far from simple and far from comfortable for students.

ii. The complexity of teacher learning

This mode of professional learning is complex. It is difficult to generalise about socially- and contextually-situated learning, such that each student will learn in their own, unique, non-linear way, shaped by autobiographical dimensions that affect a person's values and beliefs (Opfer and Pedder, 2011). Consequently, students need to be challenged and supported to understand and master the complexity of learning to become increasingly confident and competent professionals. We aim to achieve this by making the signature pedagogies of teaching teachers explicit to students, and by role-modelling the behaviours and dispositions we want them to develop as critical, research-informed, inquiry-engaged members of a professional

community. As for discomfort, it is established that tensions between students' existing beliefs about learning and teaching and the beliefs they will encounter on a number of levels during their teacher education are very challenging but that this challenge can be harnessed to escalate students' development and progression provided sufficient thought is given to the discussion and exploration of professional identity as part of programme content (Pillen, Den Brok and Beijaard, 2009).

iii. Pedagogical content knowledge

For teachers, the appropriate 'signature pedagogy' (Shulman, 2005) is one that drives the acquisition of 'pedagogical content knowledge' (PCK). PCK is built on a continuum from 'surface level' knowledge structures that seek to understand learning and teaching, consisting of concrete, operational acts ('What is happening?'), through to 'deep' knowledge structures aimed at building assumptions about the way knowledge is developed ('How it is happening?'), and finally to 'implicit' knowledge structures, seeking to build professional attitudes ('values, identity and ethos') that can be characterised as 'habits of the heart'.

The development of signature pedagogies requires not only the arrangement of course content to facilitate student transitions from 'surface' to 'implicit' knowledge structures, but also that programmes develop students' ability to critically reflect on the experience of teaching, collaborative learning and research-informed inputs. There are implications for the formation of teacher identity, which has been described as 'an on-going and dynamic process which entails the making sense and (re)interpretation of one's own values and experiences' (Flores and Day, 2006: 220). This indicates the importance of students having opportunities to articulate and critique their 'surface, deep and implicit' knowledge as it evolves over time. In USW programme design, this is via structured dialogue, reflection activities and responses to inputs and questions which are related to research and which are designed to facilitate an exposition by students of the tacit professional knowledge of teachers and teaching. The synthesis of these activities is designed to develop the 'three habits' of head, hand and heart (Shulman, 2005).

B. A pedagogical model for implementing the conceptual framework

We have outlined how Shulman's (2005) work, based on social development theory, drives a conceptualisation of ITE that aims to develop critical reflection, research literacy and the adoption of professional stance, ethos and identity. To design a pedagogical model that can realise these goals, we turned to research into pedagogical structures undertaken by Parker, Patton and O'Sullivan (2016), that brings together social development theory with programme design for teachers' professional learning. Parker, Patton and O'Sullivan's (2016) study identifies three main pedagogical components that are consistent with the development of Shulman's 'habits' and with concepts of relational learning for teachers and that can lead to agentive outcomes (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002; Langdon, 2017):

- Communities of learners acting with a common aim in which students are situated, comprising a group of schools, the learners and staff in those schools, the students, university staff and mentors and the wider school community.
- Critical dialogue to test and build understanding via interaction. This is stimulated by inputs from research and theory, as well as practical evidence arising out of key learning moments in school, and generates outcomes consisting of solutions to problems, ideas to be tested and further questions to investigate.
- Sharing and testing of work to examine understandings and share ideas and structured opportunities for engagement and reflection to build knowledge and more formal, close-to-practice research, disseminated to others in the community.

Unifying all three of Parker, Patton and O'Sullivan's (2016) pedagogical components is the centrality of an inquiry model of teacher learning that is situated, by which students are supported to develop curiosity about how their pupils learn in their school contexts, how their teaching relates to that most effectively and to collect a range of forms of evidence that help build professional knowledge and practice. This is to develop 'inquiry as stance' (Cochrane-Smith and Lytle, 1999) – a disposition towards teaching based on the formation of curiosity-led professional identity, that continually seeks ways to understand the needs of learners and how they can be met.

1. *Communities of learners*

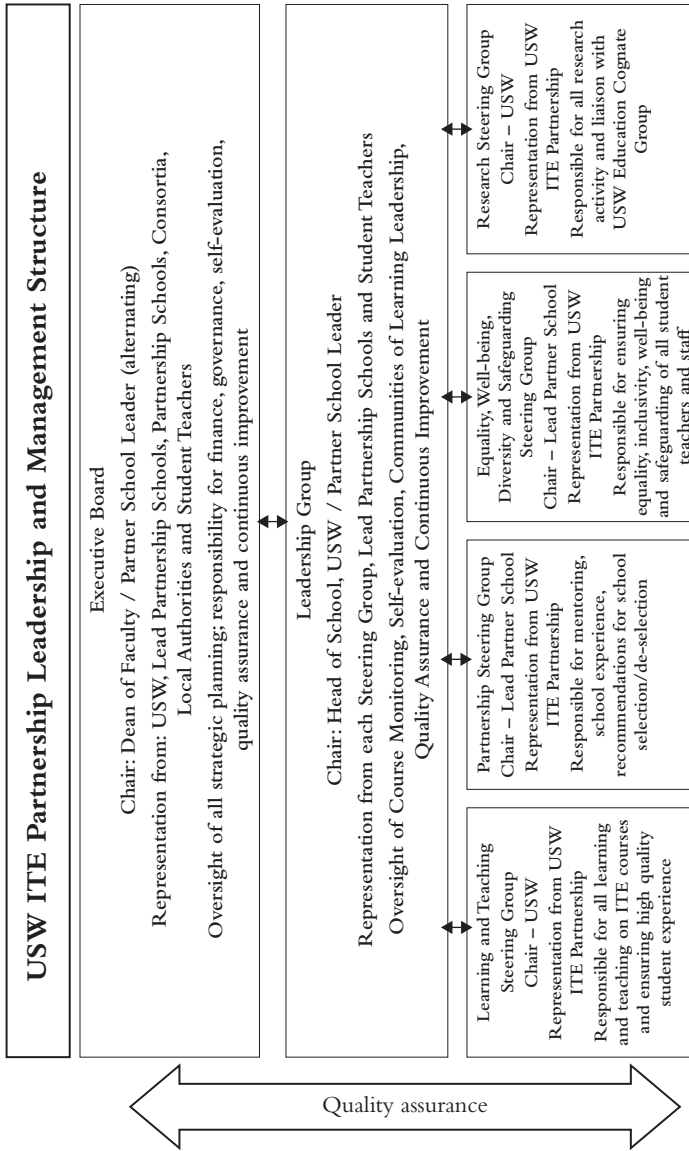
In this section, we explain the structure and governance of our ‘Communities of Learning’ and the design of ‘key learning moments’. We explain how these ‘key learning moments’ support the interweaving of activity on campus and in schools and how they require students to develop skills of critical reflection.

i. The structure and governance of ‘Communities of Learning’

ITE provision has been co-constructed with a small number of highly effective ‘Lead Partnership Schools’, each of which oversees a ‘Community of Learning’ comprising up to seven additional school partners in the South East Wales region. Lead Partnership schools, with support from regional consortia – organisations in Wales charged with the coordination and realisation of school improvement – have been active co-designers of ITE provision. For instance, consortia funding enabled the formation of a working group to design and produce the partnership agreement for ITE. This agreement posits a three-way relationship between the university, schools and regional consortia, and foresees cooperation not only in relation to ITE but also to Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) induction. In relation to the latter, a successful pilot programme has already established a module of study which supports NQT reflection and professional development as part of the induction period (the first year of a qualified teacher’s career). This module is accredited at master’s level, is run in collaboration with the regional consortium in South-East Wales, the Education Achievement Service (EAS), and aims to add further strength to existing support mechanisms for early career teachers and reinforce the reflective and critical habits that have been established during ITE. Partner schools have also co-designed programme content and the governance model for the Partnership; a model of distributed leadership has been developed, founded on the involvement of students and all staff – from the university and from schools – in the running of steering groups that focus on the core areas of the Partnership’s activity. This has been key to realising ‘strategic leadership’ as well as enhanced ‘communication’ and ‘coordination’ identified by Furlong (2015: 11) as essential to renewed teacher education in Wales (see Figure 1).

Not only are steering groups key to the setting of shared partnership objectives, but they also take a prominent role in the evaluation of partnership activity. The Partnership’s approach to self-evaluation is to ensure

Figure 1: USW ITE Partnership Leadership and Management Structure



mutual responsibility for monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of students' learning experiences. All steering groups are accountable for development, innovation, monitoring, improvement and quality assurance in their areas (Learning and Teaching; Partnership; Equality, Well-being, Diversity and Safeguarding and Research). They are accountable to the Leadership Group, and ultimately the Executive Board, which aims to ensure that all monitoring and self-evaluation processes are rigorous, robust and impactful. Continuous improvement of provision is central to the Partnership's approach to self-evaluation, through monitoring progress towards targets.

Students will spend approximately 49% of their study time in a minimum of two contrasting schools in their Community of Learning, in addition to time spent on campus. The aim is to ensure that students, equipped with theoretical knowledge, have opportunities to interweave this theoretical knowledge incrementally with the practical knowledge of highly effective schools in their day-to-day professional practice. It may be considered axiomatic that this should be (and arguably has been) a facet of successful ITE provision. However, for Communities of Learning to establish and embed apposite, timely and sustained interweaving of theory and practice, individual themes have been adopted within programme design that reflect the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (PSTL) (Welsh Government, 2017), for example behaviour for learning, Welsh language skills, progression in learning and professional networks and communities.

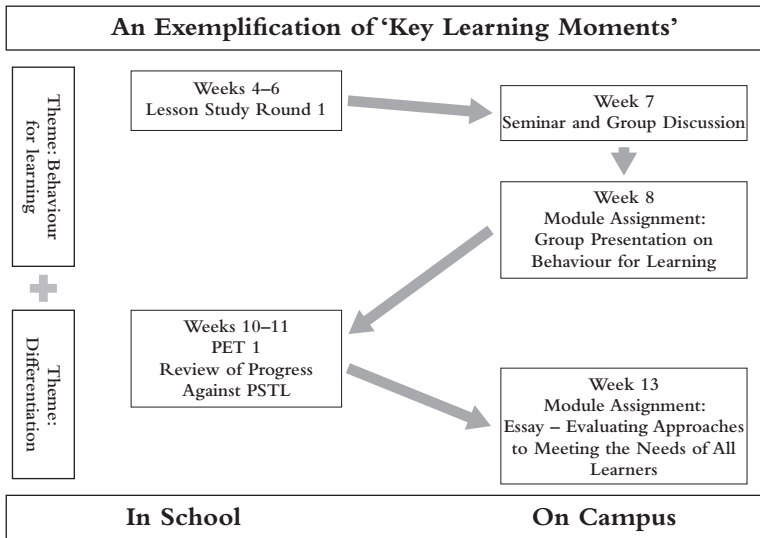
ii. 'Key learning moments'

The programme is structured around the judicious and timely treatment of such themes, so that learning opportunities for students are optimised at key points. These can be considered as 'key learning moments' for students, taking place at moments of praxis within the Community of Learning. For instance, as shown in Figure 2 below, students' first experience in school will encourage them to focus on an area that has long been a major preoccupation for beginning teachers – behaviour for learning. At this point, not only will students undertake a round of Lesson Study (Lewis, Perry and Friedkin, 2009) but on return to campus, this theme will form the basis of further discussion in seminars, allowing students to engage in dialogue which helps to interweave theory and practice, and will culminate in a group assessment on understanding behaviour for

learning as part of a module on 'Professional and Pedagogical Studies'. On their return to school, students will learn how behaviour for learning links with the second major theme taken from the PSTL (Welsh Government, 2017) that of differentiation and ensuring equality of access for all learners. This theme forms the basis of their first Professional Experience Template (PET) (see further below), which has been adapted from documentation that supports the NQT induction and student teachers' Professional Development Journals, as a vehicle to support critical reflection and critical dialogue by students. It also provides a basis for student-mentor meetings to engage in how differentiation and behaviour for learning complement each other, prior to students' next period on campus. On return to campus, they will engage in further interrogation of these themes and prepare for an assessment involving an evaluation of how differentiation is used to ensure the effective teaching of subject knowledge, incorporating PCK as part of a module of 'Subject Studies'. 'Key learning moments' orchestrate learning through bringing together students, mentors and lecturers both in school and on campus, to discuss and develop evidence, theory and practice – these are planned strategically at major transition points. These moments encourage students to consider professional development holistically but are structured to allow students to see and engage with individual aspects of professional practice, and the links between them, as well as interrogating them as part of a greater 'whole'.

Thus, not only are students and other members of the Communities of Learning able to engage in 'critical dialogue' (Parker, Patton and O'Sullivan, 2016) because of the shared focus on a given theme at a given point, such an approach enables the Partnership to scaffold students' learning to support engagement with 'surface', 'deep' and 'implicit' knowledge structures (Shulman, 2005) without losing the flexibility that is a natural component of socially- and contextually-situated learning. For example, the theme of behaviour for learning is revisited by schools and the university over time to enable students to move beyond identifying and reproducing classroom routines for behaviour (surface level structures) to considering and acting on a range of evidence of factors that contribute to pupils' capacities to engage positively (deep level structures). They are then more able to develop a values-driven conceptualisation of pupils' experiences of school and become an adaptive practitioner whose understanding of pupils' perspectives are embedded in everyday actions and words that underpin positive relationship-building (implicit knowledge structures). This takes time. Deliberative, critical and collaborative

Figure 2: An Exemplification of ‘Key Learning Moments’



scrutiny of experience is planned for within university provision and research evidence from the classroom is utilised at intervals, enabling the student to build an increasingly complex and nuanced understanding of ‘behaviour’ and adaptive expertise.

Such learning from experience in school requires that students have opportunities for reflection on evidence from their practice as well as time to learn how to reflect critically, with perspectives from a range of stakeholders – lecturers, mentors, other teachers, learners and parents, for example – that help to refine thinking. It requires support from insightful and learning-oriented mentors and lecturers, and opportunities to prepare well for school praxis, including opportunities to trial ideas and techniques before going out into schools, and collaborative peer-review on return to campus. Schools will take an active role in the life of the Partnership and the development of student learning tasks and collection of evidence around their evolving practice.

In order to stimulate opportunities for critical reflection, a crucial feature of the ITE Partnership pedagogy is the provocation of productive and collaborative dialogue, which we explore in the second of the pedagogical components outlined by Parker, Patton and O’Sullivan (2016).

2. Critical dialogue

Inherent in the decision to adopt a partnership model based on ‘Communities of Learning’ is an outlook that prizes learning which is born of interaction between agents, specifically interaction via dialogue. The role of dialogue as professional learning in the context of developing teachers is well-established (see, for example, Grey, 2011; Pickering, Daly and Pachler, 2007). The Partnership has designed students’ experiences so that their learning is both enriched by on-going, informal opportunities for critical dialogue, as well as ‘punctuated’ by key episodes and activities that invite more intensive, deliberate engagement with peers, professionals and stakeholders to both discuss and critique research, evidence and practice as a vehicle for increasing understanding, and the acquisition of ‘the three habits’ (Shulman, 2005).

The result is an annual calendar of activities which facilitate critical dialogue and the sharing and testing of ideas. Three specific forms of related dialogic learning opportunities are core to the programme design: mentoring of students in line with ‘educative mentoring’ goals; preparation for students to complete reflective Professional Experience Templates; and rounds of collaborative Lesson Study in schools. In addition, the Partnership has developed innovative use of simulation technology to prompt sustained student dialogue as an aid to understanding complex professional scenarios. It is to these activities that we now turn our attention.

i. Mentoring and Professional Experience Templates (PETs)

Weekly formal engagements between students and mentors are a well-established part of ITE school placements. In responding to Estyn’s findings in relation to mentoring in Wales (Estyn, 2018), whereby Her Majesty’s Inspectorate called for mentor development to increase the focus on developing mentoring as a professional practice, and reduce time spent on ‘housekeeping’ or ‘form-filling’, the Partnership has redesigned its approach to mentor development, more detail of which is returned to later in this article. The aim is that mentors role-model effective professional learning and that mentor meetings involve less ‘telling’ or ‘instructing’ and more facilitation of inquiry by students, through the development of relevant questions and provocations that are stimulating for both parties. This is in line with learning-oriented mentoring that has been developed with early career teachers in Wales (Daly and Milton, 2017) and is based on a

model of 'educative mentoring' (Langdon and Ward, 2015; Norman and Feiman-Nemser, 2005). Langdon and Ward (2015) have suggested the value of educative mentoring as a 'new mentoring stance', in which collaborative talk and action takes place between mentor and mentee so that learning is often reciprocal. Talk is based on deepening questions about pupils' learning and teachers' developing practice. It goes far beyond mentor 'modelling' or advising on reproducing existing practices, and positions both parties in sustained dialogue about specific learners' needs and how they can be most effectively addressed in the classroom shared between the mentor and the student.

In keeping with the Partnership's structured approach to working with key themes, the completion of PETs is timed during the academic year to support deepening exploration of these. In completing their PET, students are encouraged to reflect on four key points relating to an aspect of their practice. These points are expressed as, 'What?', 'So what?', 'This is what!' and 'What next?'. PETs not only form the basis of students' reflection, they also act as a stimulus for on-going, informal dialogue with others, thereby embedding the professional habits of 'head' (evaluation) and 'heart' (ethos and identity) (Shulman, 2005) as professional practices.

ii. The role of Lesson Study

Critical dialogue and the sharing of work is further fostered through the adoption of Lesson Study as a vehicle for reflection and discussion with the aim of consolidating and reinforcing the role of teacher inquiry as a core facet of students' professional learning and the development of their professional ethos and identity. Lesson Study is a particular professional learning strategy that structures inquiry into practice in school and collaborative interrogation and reflection on experience, and is built into time spent in school in six 'rounds' over the course of the undergraduate programme. These rounds maintain the focus on core themes within the structured interweaving of learning in school and the university. Starting with 'Behaviour for Learning' early in the programme, study groups of up to five or six students within a shared Community of Learning will progress to the themes of questioning, cross-curricular learning, the use of digital technologies in learning and teaching, managing the learning environment and meeting the needs of all learners, and finally the development of innovative teaching informed by students' existing practice and further informed by pedagogical research. Thus, the programme design

incorporates collaborative inquiry with a view not only to building students' confidence in their daily practice, but also to inculcate students' propensity towards high-quality collaborative reflection and criticality, looking not only at the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching, but also looking at 'why' and building a growing picture of the impact this has on students' values, ethos and professional identity.

iii. Simulation that enhances professional learning

Critical dialogue related to the core themes is further developed by the adoption of simulation technology that provides challenging contexts in which students can develop understanding about complex professional situations and rehearse thinking and actions in a peer-learning environment. The Hydra Minerva Suite is a state-of-the-art simulation facility and at the time of writing, it is the only one located in a university within Wales. Students encounter a scenario via a mixture of video footage and written narrative communicated through the suite's 'interface'. Using a plenary room or one of a number of situation pods, students are required to critically reflect upon the stimulus they encounter whilst discussing and collaborating with their peers. The video footage shows an actual lesson, involving real learners, filmed in collaboration with a partner primary school. This simulated learning environment closely mirrors the realities of teaching a primary school lesson but affords the students the opportunity to analyse and reflect through peer and lecturer dialogue on their practice; the students must observe, rationalise and justify their views. As Wenger and Allers gure (2019, n.p.):

There is a significant role for simulation technologies that can expose new teachers to challenging experiences and scenarios that prompt peer-learning and critical dialogue within ITE course design. Risk-taking can be explored through carefully designed use of such technologies, enabling student teachers to access experiences from which they can learn within a constructive environment.

The work of Wegener and Allers has indicated the importance of challenging the learning capacities of students and using technologies to enhance dialogic pedagogy, extending the normal bounds of what can be imagined and made 'discussable'. Such tools are of course only as effective as the task design that utilises them; they are harnessed here within an overall pedagogical approach to ITE that promotes dialogue within an inquiry stance – the desire to learn to solve problems together, to which

there are no fixed answers, and where students, mentors and lecturers continue to learn together as a professional community.

3. Sharing and testing of work

Parker, Patton and O'Sullivan's (2016) third pedagogical component prizes mutual investment in acts of inquiry, reviewing what has been learnt and sharing the development of worthwhile goals for future professional learning. The body of knowledge that is specific to the teaching profession is largely based on evidence and experience and embodied through teachers' everyday acts in school, and is therefore often tacit (Eraut, 2004). Successful professional learning, therefore, depends greatly on the ability to make tacit knowledge explicit. Critical dialogue can make explicit, that which is hidden. This critical dialogue is enriched by access to research and world-leading practices to expose students to new ideas and ways of thinking.

i. The role of research

An indispensable part of this process requires increasing engagement with and generation of research evidence; if students are to be able to uncover that which is hidden, and taking heed of Piaget's well-known adage that intelligence is about 'knowing what to do when you don't know what to do', it is essential that students come to see research as a tool not only for uncovering what they do not know, but also as a source of conceptual frameworks with which they can understand, break down and rebuild new knowledge. That is to say that they need a framework for 'making sense' of practice within critical conceptual frameworks that challenge orthodox views of 'what has always worked' and that encourage deep questioning about how their pupils are able to learn effectively.

As part of this challenge, the Partnership has designed opportunities – including rounds of Lesson Study – to increase student engagement and confidence with regards to developing inquiry skills and becoming 'research literate', as both consumers and producers. Inquiry skills are developed throughout the programme modules, so that students learn how to observe in classrooms, how to collect forms of pupil voice that can inform their planning and teaching, and how to think critically about the use of data. All programmes at USW comprise an element of research, whether it be via small-scale action research projects or via larger projects

that feed into submissions at doctoral level. Students will continue to attend an annual workshop or symposium, where final year students present and critique their dissertation projects for an audience comprising students in years one and two of their degree, lecturers and partner school colleagues. These sessions support students in years one and two to think positively about the potential of undertaking research as an enriching experience, one that offers learning opportunities to a range of professionals besides the individual researcher, whilst also offering a forum to further challenge students' assumptions about the profession they are joining and what this ultimately means for their professional dispositions and identity – becoming a teacher means becoming research literate.

ii. The role of practice from around the world

The Partnership will continue to expose students to expertise and professional engagement from around the world, for example through online 'EduChat' sessions, where they exchange ideas with practitioners overseas. New programmes of ITE will continue the current practice of offering highly popular overseas placements, which provide students with opportunities to learn from practitioners from around the world and bring back what they have learned overseas to their teaching in Wales. These four-week placements are in addition to the statutory placement requirements laid down for programmes of ITE, and open up opportunities for students to spend time in schools in locations such as the Czech Republic, Spain, Hungary, Qatar and Malawi. As with the sharing of dissertation findings, students currently lead a session for their peers outlining their experiences overseas, how this has developed them as professionals, and how they have used their knowledge, skills and understanding to support development and innovation in their overseas settings. All of this is conducive to ensuring that students in the Partnership are proactive, inquiring professional thinkers, open to new ideas, and able to share what they have learned to support the development of others, in Wales and beyond.

C. Implications for mentor and lecturers as teacher educators

The Partnership is acutely aware that such pedagogical design is dependent on developing the inquiry habits of all practitioners in the Community of Learning – lecturers and mentors as well as students. The Partnership aims

to create a culture of professional and critical inquiry among students through explicit exposition of social learning approaches to ITE, role modelling effective professional learning, which in turn, requires educative mentoring that is learning-oriented – where the mentor is a co-inquirer and shares learning goals with students. Ultimately, in order to flourish as developing professionals, students need an inquiring environment that fosters individuals who are aware of themselves not only as students, but also as inquiring professionals, and as professionals who learn. This, it is argued, can only happen where mentors reinforce and exemplify what professionals who learn look like, and how they behave, as an indicator of how they think. It is with this in mind that the Partnership has developed the master's level-accredited programme of mentor development, outlined earlier in this article. Mentors can use the credits they have earned towards a full master's degree; USW has a long tradition of offering a range of study opportunities, led by highly experienced staff with expertise in fields such as Additional Learning Needs, Autism, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Innovation in Learning and Teaching and Education Leadership and Management.

There is an equal responsibility to facilitate the development of research literacy among ITE lecturers. The challenges facing those who transition from senior school roles to ITE in universities are well-documented, identified as 'expert-novice' tensions (Murray, 2010) experienced on moving into research-focused organisations with altered expectations and indicators of success in research assessment exercises (Czerniawski, 2018). Further to this, expectations of enhanced 'research literacy' (Furlong, 2015) among teacher educators in Wales are viewed as essential to the realisation of a transformed ITE pedagogy. There are significant implications for appropriate professional development for staff on ITE programmes and this has been a related strand that underpins the new provision in the USW ITE Partnership. The Community of Learning includes ITE staff and a range of developmental opportunities have been designed within a comprehensive Professional Learning and Development programme. The effectiveness of research engagement means that this is a core part of staff roles (Czerniawski, Guberman and MacPhail, 2017). All university staff maintain a personal research plan that is discussed throughout the year as part of performance review and on-going professional development, in order to prioritise strategic support. Dedicated time is set aside for research as part of – rather than in addition to – staff workload. Collaborative research development is encouraged to support research conference presentations,

joint practice-based projects that explore, for example, the development of physical literacy in primary school teaching and technology-enhanced ITE pedagogy, and co-authored scholarly outputs, building both research engagement and inquiry habits that reflect the collaborative values that underpin the pedagogical design of ITE by the Partnership. More widely, all staff have access to the expertise and support of USW's Education Research Cognate Group. This group brings together academic staff from across the university to offer opportunities for research development, professional learning and sharing of practice, as well as focused opportunities for scholarly writing through writing retreats. Staff have access to funded support to complete higher academic qualifications. Amongst these is USW's 'PhD+' programme, an approach to PhD by portfolio aimed at enabling staff with practical experience in the education sector to use this as a basis for generating original research and to earn their doctorate. In addition, HEI staff can engage with a range of online and face-to-face opportunities for Welsh language development. These range from taster experiences for complete beginners to intensive courses and 'proficiency' support for those with greater fluency.

It is recognised that growing mentor and lecturer expertise in inquiry-based ITE is a long-term project. The Partnership is mindful of the work of Strauss (1995), whose seminal writing on teacher research warned that there are 'No easy answers' (p. 28) once teachers are prepared to ask challenging questions about their own practice and development. Increasing critical dialogue based on reviewing evidence about one's own teaching/mentoring/tutoring, can be deeply unsettling. Indeed, critical dialogue needs to be unsettling if it is to develop 'habits of the heart' as well as the 'hand' and the 'head' (Shulman, 2005). Strauss (1995: 29) famously articulated this as a 'dilemma': 'Am I the teacher I think I am?' The collaborative relationships we are building within the Community of Learning will be vital to our capacities to mutually support and sustain all participants throughout this period of intensive development and realignment to inquiry goals for teacher education.

Conclusion

The current ITE policy environment in Wales reflects a commitment to a profession in which participation in generating knowledge and scrutinising evidence about learning and teaching is regarded as essential to becoming

a teacher. The USW ITE Partnership has designed provision not only to prompt critical scrutiny and generation of evidence about teaching, but to do so with the ultimate aim of supporting students to develop the habits of ‘head, hand and heart’ (Shulman, 2005). It is important to us, therefore, that opportunities for critical dialogue focus on ‘deep’ and ‘implicit’ learning, which in turn means ensuring that such dialogue focuses on evaluating practice and comparison of experiences with students’ beliefs and values, to support the development of their teacher identity. As an outcome, the programme aims to develop teachers who embody ‘inquiry as stance’ (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999), along with their mentors and lecturers, where an inquiring disposition and the capacity to act upon it is embedded within their professional identity and practice. The challenges of achieving such ambitious goals cannot be underestimated – all providers are at the ‘critical turning point’ for ITE in Wales (Furlong, 2015: 38). The capacity of the Partnership to continue to build trusting, sustainable and effective professional relationships will be vital. The infrastructure to support this is there, along with a pedagogical framework that enables principled design of research-informed learning experiences for students. By this, the programme has laid the foundations to offer ITE that is ‘expansive rather than restricted’ (ibid.), and can instil in teachers the confident professional knowledge and skills that are needed to benefit learners today and in the future.

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Note

- 1 For the sake of clarity, this article refers to student teachers and those studying on programmes of professional education as 'students' whilst children and young people in education settings will be referred to as 'learners'.