



## Insights into Post 16 Teacher Training Curriculum: Strengths and Challenges for Pre-service Teachers

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### Abstract

*The objective of the presentation is to provide an insight into teacher training programme at the UK post 16 level following huge financial sector job losses in recent years. The curriculum will be examined as part of the skills that trainees must develop in preparation for real time practice after the training. Another objective is to investigate the effectiveness of the curriculum against in service practice, teacher preparedness for work, teacher resilience, compliance with government education policy and meeting the demands of the role within FE. Recommendations will be provided to improve the curriculum towards real time practice. An essential support mechanism is the appointment of a mentor to offer guidance and direction. The lack of a worthwhile remuneration for this added responsibility means that the role leaves nothing to be desired, leading to a strained relationship between the mentor and mentee. Confronted with a heavy teaching schedule, the teacher's day, in addition to teaching is filled with administrative duties, tutorial sessions, pastoral guidance, meetings, interventions with students at risk, monitoring of attendance and punctuality, assessment procedures. Further to these are compulsory participation in CPD events to improve pedagogy and updates on e-learning and innovative practices. Internal and external observations to monitor and raise quality of teaching and learning present additional challenge to the teacher. There are pressures to improve on previous academic year's statistics on success rates, achievement, retention and attendance.*

*As a mentor to trainee teachers, it has been observed that these trainees fulfil the criteria of the training following pre-service subject qualifications and sometimes industry experience similar to the bankers mentioned at the outset.*

*The reality is that these newly qualified teachers are ill prepared for the demands of the job, leading to a large teacher turnover. A teacher support network reports that lack of support is responsible for large teacher turn over, which further reports that those who quit are inexperienced, leaving within the first 5 years. A University of Buckingham research concludes that 40% of newly qualified teachers drop out within the first six months of recruitment. As stated by Hattie (2009), well trained teachers can effectively manage different ages and learning needs through support by their school administration, an indicator of good institutional performance, the absence of which creates a domino effect that produces a cause for concern evidenced by teacher absence, low morale and an overt nonchalant attitude leading to poor learning experiences for students. It is expected that the presentation will critique current provisions of teacher training programmes and strategies to overcome the inherent challenges. The programme will need to be completely reviewed to equip teachers to meet the dynamic needs of young people. Transparency of real practice must be reflected in the curriculum so that teachers' expectations in the discharge of their pedagogy in the main domain are real to help them make an informed decision.*

### 1. Introduction

Teacher training programmes at the post 16 level in the UK provides the development of skills needed for planning, teaching, assessment and learner management. While the programme has practical teaching embedded, inadequacies exist that do not support real time practice. The presented challenges to newly qualified teachers far outweigh the strengths of the programme. It is the objective of the presentation to provide an insight and raise the awareness of necessary changes to accommodate real time practice.

## 2. Exemplary Curriculum

Despite the serious weaknesses in the training programme, the consequences for the newly qualified teacher cannot be emphasised. Within the first 5 years, an average of 40% entrants quit due to the high volume of workload and subsequent stress. Hattie (2009) states that support provided by the school leaders and management is reflective of good practice but not often available for new teachers who have a parochial view of their career. Teachers are often subjected to the demands of heavy marking, detailed feedback, bureaucratic procedures and observations which contribute to stress levels, in addition to the regular responsibilities of lesson planning, assessment and evaluation. An exemplary curriculum that integrates real life practice in UK schools/colleges sums up the presentation as a recommendation to improve the training programmes henceforth. Attention to a UNESCO advocacy toolkit for teachers will be finally examined.



Table 1

## References

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