



Reflecting on continuity and change in Initial Teacher Education in a time of global pandemic from the perspectives of eight university providers from across England, UK

**Elizabeth A.C. Rushton, Simon Gibbons (Kings); Claire Ball-Smith,
(York); Lisa Murtagh (Manchester); Kate Ireland (Warwick)**

Lynda Dunlop (York); Bryony Black (Sheffield); Rachele Morse
(Southampton); Catherine Reading (Durham); Carole Scott (UCL)

UCET Annual Conference

November 2021

Introduction and Context

- Covid-19 Pandemic
- Mass Closures of Schools
- ITE Reform

8 HEIs across England, capturing the experience of training new teachers during a pandemic...

Rationale for the Study

Capturing and sharing the moment

Challenging the Ofsted (2021) discourse
regarding “Classroom Readiness”

Methodology and Data Collection



	University A	University B	University C	University D
Location (contexts)	North-east England (Rural, urban)	London (Urban, suburban)	North-west England (Urban, suburban)	North England (Urban and suburban)
Number of ITE students 2020-2021 (five-year average cohort size)	218 (210)	230 (185)	404 (340)	126 (125)
ITE Specialisms offered	<p>Primary; Primary with Mathematics</p> <p>Secondary: Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Physical Education, Physics.</p>	<p>Secondary: Biology, Chemistry, Computing, English, Geography, Latin with Classics, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Physics, Physics with Mathematics, Religious Education.</p>	<p>Primary; Primary with Mathematics</p> <p>Secondary: Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Economics, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Physics.</p>	<p>Secondary: Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Physics, Physics with Mathematics.</p>
ITE pathways offered	PGCE; School Direct	PGCE; School Direct	PGCE	PGDE; School Direct

Methodology and Data Collection



Workshop activities	Key questions/areas for consideration
Written summaries	<p>Course Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of PGCE students during 2020-2021 • Average number of PGCE students over the last five years • ITE specialisms offered • ITE pathways offered
Group discussions and written reflections	<p>How has your institution modified ITE courses delivered in 2020-2021?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course calendar and timing of different course components/activities. • School placements – number, length, mentor capacity, contrasting nature, travel/logistical issues. • School visits – online and/or in person? Did they include observation of teaching? • University-based taught sessions – online and/or in person? Assignments and assessments of academic work. • Subject specific aspects – e.g. laboratory work, field work, visits and trips. • Quality Assurance, monitoring and mentor training. • Pastoral support of ITE students and staff. <p>What were the causes of modifications to ITE course? Were these changes and modifications planned and/or reactive?</p> <p>What impacts, if any, has the COVID-19 pandemic had on 2020-2021 ITE students' classroom readiness?</p> <p>What areas of learning from 2020-2021 will you take forward?</p>

Data Analysis



- Data were analysed through a process of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun and Clarke 2019; 2020).
- When analysing the written reflections and group discussion transcript, we considered the different roles and perspectives we brought to the research
- Our analysis was situated in our familiarity with both the ITE sector, our understanding of the specific ethos and practice of our own institution's PGCE programme(s) and the wider literature (e.g. la Velle et al. 2020).

Findings- Superordinate Theme 1

Superordinate Themes	Sub-themes	Indicative quotes from workshop contributions
Reflections on continuity and change in ITE provision post-2020/21 Covid-19 period.	Central relationships (e.g. between school and university; mentor and pre-service teacher) and features (ITE calendar and sequence) remain consistent during and beyond Covid-19.	'The core parts of our programme have not changed, we have had school placements, a focus on subject specific pedagogical development and dedicated time to areas such as SEND, EAL and inclusion...we have largely kept these elements in the same sequence.' (University B)
	Rethinking the purpose and implementation of aspects of ITE to continue post-2020/21 (e.g. school visits; alternative school placement provision; assessments).	'We can see the potential of including an element of online school visits which reduce staff travel time and increase the focus on supporting effective mentoring relationships rather than scrutiny of a snapshot of a trainee's practice.' (University A)
	Increased prominence of technology in ITE teaching and learning would continue beyond pandemic period.	'Having been forced to use technology in all aspects of what we do, we've had the chance to see where the benefits lie and where these approaches would be useful to retain.' (University D)

Findings- Superordinate Theme 2

Superordinate Themes	Sub-themes	Indicative quotes from workshop contributions
Implications for those who support ECTs from September 2021 and beyond.	<p>ECTs require tailored support that is appropriate for their age phase and has subject specificity.</p> <p>ECTs have developed distinct areas of strength (e.g. lesson planning, use of technology) which need to be reflected in their ongoing support.</p> <p>ECTs will benefit from additional support to develop specific areas of practice which were constrained during their training due to Covid-19 restrictions (e.g. pastoral work; diverse range of pedagogical approaches)</p> <p>ECTs require greater clarity around their ECF entitlement, the progression between training year and ECT years and how to ensure their wellbeing is maintained.</p>	<p>'Due to Covid-19 restrictions some students have not got experience relevant to their subject, such as lab work and fieldwork, some have not taught across all secondary key stages and this needs to be considered during their ECT years, it can't be a 'one size fits all approach'. (University E)</p> <p>'I think in terms of purpose and motivation...and in some areas, for example hybrid teaching and planning, the 2021 cohort of new teachers will be strong and well-prepared. They will be flexible and able to manage the fast pace of change.' (University F)</p> <p>'Some many need ongoing support with behaviour for learning strategies, pastoral support (including dealing with bereavement) and opportunities to contribute to the wider life of the school.' (University C)</p> <p>'What I am not convinced about is the support level that they will get once they are ECTs because I think that will massively vary...that really worries me and it really concerns me that we might see people who coped well with the PGCE year, despite the circumstances, then don't cope well because an entitlement they are supposed to have isn't happening...What happens if they don't get the mentoring they are entitled to?' (University H).</p>

Findings- Superordinate Theme 3

Superordinate Themes	Sub-themes	Indicative quotes from workshop contributions
Rethinking 'classroom readiness' in light of the 2020/21 Covid-19 period.	Reliance on high-quality partnerships between schools and HEIs to ensure every pre-service teacher can develop classroom readiness.	'Through an immense number of staff hours, we know our school partners very well and this has meant we have been able to make it [school placements] work for trainees and schools during this difficult and rapidly changing time, so trainees can spend as much time in the classroom as possible.' (University H)
	Emphasis on the individual flexibility (personal, professional, pedagogical) required by pre-service teachers to develop classroom readiness.	'We had a situation where...our trainees had to be ready to adapt at a moment's notice, to deliver online, to be able to do it blended and in person, to be able to flex between those very different pedagogical domains which require different thinking, different components, how you build those relationships.' (University A)

Modifications to Practice

Some examples from our group:

1. Placement changes (CBS)
2. University based teaching (SG)
3. Remote school visits (LM)

Modifications to Practice

Placement changes (CBS) - ALTERNATIVE provision (1)

PGCE Socials

Whole School Issues (WSI)

Skills Forward - Instructions for Trainees

English

Geography

History

Maths

MFL

Science

Assessment

Assignments

School Placements

Professional Enrichment

Academic, Technical & Financial Support

Health, Wellbeing and Emotional Support

Subject Reps


Library and virtual resources

Reading Lists

E-Textbooks

Jobs & Careers

Ofsted




Alternative Developmental Training (For Self Isolation)

This folder contains training, resources and further reading materials for trainees who are on a period of enforced self-isolation.


A reminder that if you find yourself in self-isolation and/or unable to resume your placement school you must inform your CA tutor and Professional Tutor as soon as you become aware. As well as the materials here, folders with details of external training, webinars and podcasts you may access to further develop your practice are given below.

The University of York's self-isolation guidance webpage can be found here: <https://coronavirus.york.ac.uk/for-students/self-isolation-guidance>




Alternative Provision

This folder contains information, training materials and resources for trainees unable to be on placement and undertaking alternative provision.




External training courses




This folder contains links and details online courses which can provide further development opportunities.

Read through the selection of over 115 hours of WSI related training and opt for the course/s which hold most interest and value to you and your teaching practice.

Do not forget to record the details associated with these courses and/or upload any course completion evidence to Pebblepad e.g screenshot, certification.



Educational Webinars and Podcasts






Links to both live and recorded webinars related to whole-school issues.

Do not forget to make a note of these and how their content may influence future practice, this will prove useful evidence towards QTS.

Modifications to Practice

Placement changes (CBS) - ALTERNATIVE provision (2)

 **Overview of the Alternative Training Programme**  

You will undertake this alternative training programme if you are not attached to a placement.

If you have any questions about the programme please contact the SPF team: education-spf@york.ac.uk

Monday & Friday	CA work As directed by CA tutor	
Wednesday	WSI Specialist Study (am) Week by week WSI based study and tasks	WSI based training activity (pm) Training courses Webinars & Podcasts
Tuesday & Thursday (Self directed)	Research Project (select one) Cultural capital Transition in Schools Gender equality in education Diversifying and Decolonisation the curriculum	Assignment work

Alternative Provision

Modifications to Practice

Alternative Developmental Training (For Self Isolation) ✓

Build Content ▾ Assessments ▾ Tools ▾ Partner Content ▾



Week 1 enforced self isolation ✓ ⬆

Marking and Feedback



Week 2 enforced self isolation ✓

PSHE - Supporting Your Pupils in Challenging Times



Week 3 enforced self isolation ✓

Adaptive Teaching: Effective Use of Teaching Assistants



Week 4 enforced self isolation ✓

The Pastoral Role: Parental Communication



Week 5 enforced self isolation ✓

Oracy in the Classroom: Strategies for effective talk



External training courses ✓ ⬆



This folder contains links and details online courses which can provide further development opportunities.

Read through the selection of over 115 hours of WSI related training and opt for the course/s which hold most interest and value to you and your teaching practice.

Do not forget to record the details associated with these courses and/or upload any course completion evidence to Pebblepad e.g screenshot, certification.



Educational Webinars and Podcasts ✓ ⬆



🔄 Links to both live and recorded webinars related to whole-school issues.

Do not forget to make a note of these and how their content may influence future practice, this will prove useful evidence towards QTS.



Wellbeing and Remote Working ✓ ⬆



Although you will have had experience with working remotely on the PGCE, it is important that you feel confident, comfortable and equipped to do so. This folder contains details of some short courses which advise and guide you through wellbeing and working remotely whilst not on placement.

Placement changes (CBS) - ALTERNATIVE provision (3)

Modifications to Practice

Example 2 - University based teaching (SG)

- Move to online lectures, seminars and workshops
- Support from Russell Stannard
<https://www.youtube.com/c/RussellStannardTeacherTrainingVideos>
- Enhanced tutorial system to support trainee well-being

Modifications to Practice

Example 3 - Remote school visits (LM)

Implications for ECTs

- Scaffolded bespoke support due to variable ITT experience
- Increase in exposure to range of pedagogic approaches across key stages needed
- Practical work – Sci, Geog, D&T
- Pastoral care emphasis after pandemic impact on pupils
- Wider school involvement
- See <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/ecs/assets/guide-for-schools-august2021.pdf>

For Guide for Secondary Schools, *Supporting Early Career Teachers to Thrive in their First Year*, produced as part of KCL ESRC funded covid impact project.

2020-2021 Cohort Strengths

- Resilience
- Flexibility
- Planning
- Adaptability
- Dedication
- Use of IT/blended learning
- More awareness of other educational forces/developments e.g, DEC/new era teaching

Please add your comments in chat area - we will collate these for attendees and send to workshop participants.

Conclusions and Implications

- Consider purpose and methods of school visits going forwards
- Consider role of tech/digital tech in course programming
- Revisit values/strengths in ITT partnerships in light of 2020/21 experiences of training
- Think through individual trainee capacity to be flexible (personal and professional)
- Rethink what/how pedagogic practice needs to be differently adaptable: in person; remotely' hybrid teaching domains
- Consider the take-aways from the whole year NOT just in an (Ofsted) snapshot
- Work with ECF provider/TSHs to ensure that CCF-ECF continuity occurs for our grads
- Help foster professional and subject specific networks to nurture grads – they need the professional learning network to counter the generic ECF provision.

Open discussion with workshop participants on the above themes

Implications for ECF Implementation and next steps in the research

- ECF entitlement
- ECT wellbeing
- ECT subject specialist input/phase specific inputs needed
- ECT reflection time on own professional identity
- ECT workload in face of national “recovery” work with pupils

Please add your comments in chat area - we will collate these for attendees and send to workshop participants.

Next Steps for Project:

- Spring 2022 - undertake a small number of interviews with ECT mentors and/or ECTs at each institution to explore the experiences of those working with the ECF in the first year.
- Sample will be cross phase, cross route and cross subject/specialisms
- Interviews will be with ECTs, ECT mentors across and within regions.

Challenging the Ofsted discourse

Challenging the Ofsted discourse of “not ready”

“Personal, professional, pedagogical adaptability”

For trainees.....

- What does it mean to be responsible for student learning?
- What does it mean to be ready to face what school experience might involve?
- Ability/capability to “face the unknown”

For providers.....

- Importance of sharing a vision for classroom readiness with school partners
- Individual trainee experiences count: chance to develop expertise where opportunities arise; across contrasting context and age groups; taking chances to develop trainees’ flexibility skills