UK and Commonwealth Services of Remembrance in Poland 2019

In these Commonwealth Services we remember all those of the Commonwealth of Nations who gave their lives at sea, on land and in the air in two world wars.

We also remember the brave people of the Polish Armed Forces who fought and died here on their soil and abroad alongside their comrades from the Commonwealth.

- Poznań – Old Garrison Cemetery, Tuesday, 5 November 2019, 10:40am
- Malbork – Commonwealth War Cemetery, Wednesday, 6 November 2019, 10:40am
- Lidzbark Warmiński – Commonwealth War Cemetery, Thursday, 7 November 2019, 10:40am
- Warsaw – RAF Liberator Memorial Stone in Skaryszewski Park, Sunday, 10 November 2019, 10:40am
- Kraków – Commonwealth War Cemetery (Rakowicki Cemetery), Tuesday, 26 November 2019, 10:40am

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HMCI commentary: the initial teacher education curriculum

Introduction

The education inspection framework (EIF) has been underway for over a month now. Although it's early days, first impressions are that it's been well received by the leaders and staff at the providers we've inspected so far. This is down in part to the hard work and quality of our inspectors. It's also down to the work we carried out ahead of the framework change, both through consultation with the sector and our extensive research and piloting programme. The EIF is the most evidence-based inspection framework that Ofsted has ever produced.

A change of approach in one area also means that we have to think about the link through to other areas we inspect. The EIF has implications for the inspection of initial teacher education (ITE) partnerships.

Aligning the EIF with a new ITE framework

The link between inspection of education settings and the inspection of ITE has always been clear. This is as it should be. The core purpose of teacher training is to make sure that trainee teachers, in all sectors, are prepared

to a high professional standard for a career in teaching. The ITE experience must equip trainee teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach all children well, whatever their background or barriers to learning.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that we are planning to align the EIF and a new ITE framework.

The case for change

Much like our previous education framework, the current ITE framework places a lot of emphasis on data. For example, it focuses on employment rates, completion rates and individual trainees' effectiveness. Consequently, inspectors have put relatively little weight on what trainees are taught or how well the centre-based and school-based training is combined into a coherent package of learning. The reliance on other outcome measures may, therefore, cover up some kinds of weakness across partnerships, or even mask strengths.

The sector has also continued to diversify since this ITE framework began. Our [inspection outcomes data](#) shows that, although four-fifths of trainees are still training in university-led partnerships, only around a third of inspected partnerships were university-led routes. There has been a large increase in school-led routes opening since 2015. These tend to be relatively small institutions, taking, on average, 50 trainees a year. As we approach the end of the current cycle, it makes sense to look again at the ITE inspection framework to make sure we can apply it across a more diverse sector.

Finally, inspection practice needs to keep pace with sector developments to ensure a consistent approach and to avoid confusion for course leads, teacher trainers and trainees themselves. The Department for Education has a new recruitment and retention strategy and a commitment to reducing workload. It has also created the [Early career framework (ECF)](#) and is developing a new framework for ITE core content to align with the ECF. These developments are welcome and suggest that now is the right time to re-assess the ITE framework.

Our research in this area

However, given the differing contexts and institutions, we still need to ask:

- what does curriculum quality look like in ITE partnerships?
- how can we best evaluate it?

Our research team has been carrying out a 2-phase study over the course of this year to answer these 2 critical questions.

The first phase attempted to define important components of curriculum quality in an ITE context that we could use to build a testable research model. Findings from phase 1 are summarised below.

Phase 2 will involve fieldwork to establish how well this research model

assesses curriculum quality across different types of ITE partnerships.

Identifying curriculum-quality criteria

The initial starting point for the study was our [research on curriculum in schools](), which identified valid indicators of curriculum planning. We felt that these components would also be relevant in an ITE context. For instance, we would still expect curricular discussions between course leaders to take place on the sequencing, timing and depth of content, so that trainees' knowledge and skills of teaching are developed in a logical progression. However, we were also aware that, because of the structures of ITE partnerships and the needs of trainees, we would also need to identify curricular factors distinctive to ITE training programmes.

To help underpin the design of our research model, we commissioned a literature review from Sheffield Hallam University. We were looking for their review to establish:

- how ITE curriculums prepare trainees for their first years of in-service teaching
- potential best practice that we could use to develop the indicator design of our research model

A lack of references to the ITE curriculum

One of the more unexpected findings from Sheffield Hallam University's review was an absence of explicit references to 'ITE curriculum' within the research literature.

Instead, the research tended to look at different concepts related to ITE curriculum in isolation, rather than as a coherent whole. The authors could still extrapolate some useful features of ITE partnerships for our purposes.

However, the lack of detail in the literature of the broader aspects of curriculum remains interesting.

The consequence of this may be an unbalanced curriculum offer for trainees. For example, the review posits a curriculum model, aligned with the [Teachers' standards](), that provides coverage on 3 core aspects:

- learning to teach (generic pedagogy, including adaptive teaching and classroom management)
- learning to teach a subject (subject knowledge, subject pedagogies and curriculum)
- learning to be a teacher (professional behaviours and values)

However, the lack of overall discussion of ITE curriculum may mean that, in practice, these areas of learning are not always covered as deeply as they should be or that one aspect tends to take priority over the others. The time available on a course to cover all aspects, particularly in a single-year training course, is one possible explanation for this. An example of this is that some trainees are not fully prepared in understanding and applying

effective practice for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Curriculum balance, therefore, seems an important aspect of ITE curriculum that we need to investigate further.

Balance of theory and practice in the curriculum

The literature review also addresses similar issues around the balance of theory and practice in the curriculum.

The literature confirms that a joined-up approach to both classroom practice and theory is vital within an ITE curriculum. However, these links are not always explicitly made.

The review also touches on the responsibility that providers have for ensuring that trainees are well equipped for the classroom. Teacher educators and mentors are just as important as the course content in ensuring curriculum quality, both from a practical classroom orientation but also in being able to link this back to relevant theory.

This suggests that we should consider better preparation and support for teacher educators and mentors as important factors of our quality model.

Our questionnaire for the sector

We also gathered views from the sector in the phase 1 research through a questionnaire in March and April 2019. This went to:

- course leaders (n=90)
- current trainees (n=468)
- newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (n=225)

This was to triangulate the evidence from the literature review with our previous curriculum work and our own internal knowledge of ITE. Because of the limitations of the questionnaire methodology, its purpose was not to provide an overview of the sector but to give us some assurance on the indicators we would test in phase 2.

Responses from leaders

Although the responses from course leaders revealed large variability in curriculum design across providers, we also identified a pattern that conformed to the literature review's account of curriculum balance.

The preference for courses of study to cater more towards one of the 3 domains specified in the review — learning to teach, learning to teach a subject, learning to be a teacher — was notable. In general, university-led partnerships tended to be more aligned to aspects of learning to teach a subject, whereas school-based partnerships focused more on learning to teach.

A few of the responses from leaders made it clear that, although one particular approach may be prioritised, the other domains were still largely threaded through the curriculum offer. For example, aspects of learning on

behaviour management and inclusion were often specified as being embedded within a core focus of learning to teach a subject.

Other partnerships told us that curriculum progression starts with foundational pieces of knowledge for novices. In their view, this meant ensuring that trainees can 'cope and manage to know what they are teaching… and getting children to pay attention' before moving them on to thinking about better questioning and assessment practice.

We need to unpick this further in the fieldwork to determine how well curriculum balance and sequencing are sustained in practice.

Responses from trainees

Responses from some trainees, however, suggest that they experienced curriculum imbalance. A few respondents clarified that:

> the course teaches you how to be a teacher, which is great, but not how to be a teacher of a specific subject.

Common areas in which trainees felt they would have benefited from greater coverage were:

- subject-specific pedagogy
- behaviour management
- the teaching of students with diverse needs (such as SEND)

In particular, some primary school trainees felt that they did not receive enough training on the foundation subjects. This reflects the findings from our curriculum research from last year. Respondents told us that this had resulted in gaps in their knowledge and had a real impact on their preparation to teach.

In general, the trainees and NQTs were positive about their overall training experience. Responding to a question about whether the training had prepared them sufficiently well to teach, 79% of trainees and 76% of NQTs agreed that this was the case. However, the inspection profile for the ITE sector currently shows that all inspected partnerships have been judged either good or outstanding for overall effectiveness. We will investigate the reasons for this divergence in more detail during the phase 2 fieldwork.

Inconsistencies in mentoring and placements

Many respondents identified the pastoral and learning support they had received — particularly from course leaders at the centre of a partnership — as having been especially important in allowing them to make progress through the course.

They also highlighted that mentors and professional tutors from trainee placements were important to the success or otherwise of their course. In the main, the respondents regarded them as being central to establishing how

theory from the centre-based provision can be applied in practice, allowing trainees to develop competent teaching skills.

That said, inconsistency in the quality of mentors and placements, often across the same partnership, was a regular concern identified by those trainees who felt that they had received a poor training experience.

For some, the workload balance of the mentor was a mitigating factor. Other priorities could often creep into the time they had reserved for teacher training, affecting how well they could support the trainee.

In other cases, weak communication between the central provider and the placement school or setting meant that mentors did not always have the required information to support the learning needs of trainees. As a few trainees mentioned:

> mentors seem unaware of the training needs (from the course) and tend to focus purely on the content of the next lesson coming up, rather than on practising teaching techniques (learned during course modules).

This suggests that ensuring that mentors and professional tutors have adequate training, resources and time to support may be an important factor for ensuring the delivery of a quality ITE curriculum.

Sequencing of trainees' knowledge and skills

The responses to the questionnaire also highlighted issues relating to trainees from the same partnership receiving a varied experience in subject knowledge pedagogy sessions. These differences in experience tended to be largely dependent on the subject area and the expertise of the teacher educators involved. Importantly, this suggests that curriculum quality may vary by subjects within the same provider.

Trainees were clear that they valued well-considered sequencing of the knowledge and skills to be learned across the theoretical and practical dimensions. When this was managed effectively, trainees reported that it improved their understanding of practical application with pupils and learners.

However, responses from the small minority of trainees who were negative about their teacher-training experience highlighted that the quality of the training was affected when the curriculum focus in centre-based training and expectations in placements were out of kilter. As a few trainees mentioned:

> Assessment and lesson planning training have both been delivered too little and too late. It would be beneficial to receive this training prior to the second placement, especially when it comes to planning sequences of lessons.

This tended to affect university-based and school-based partnerships in slightly different ways.

Curriculum focus in school-based partnerships

Trainees were critical of a few school-based partnerships that were front-loading their courses with more theoretical or subject-based content.

That's not to say this curriculum model should be avoided, but in these cases, trainees explained that content was rarely re-visited during their placements when it would have been timely and relevant.

It was, therefore, difficult for these trainees to fully understand the purpose of their practice in a responsive way that met their learning needs. This meant they often felt underprepared to teach.

Curriculum focus in university-based partnerships

By comparison, in a few university-led partnerships, some trainees were concerned that their courses focused too heavily on theory and academic debate.

In their view, not enough attention was being given to the training of 'novice' teachers and what this implies. Often, the theory was irrelevant because the trainees were given little instruction on how it could be used in practice. As a few suggested:

> They were not targeted towards anything tangible, rather they were largely all discussion and opinion based which was not helpful all the time. It would have been nice to be shown as told things rather than it always having been an unstructured lesson.

The importance of quality assurance

In addition, in both the school-based and university-based partnerships, a small minority of trainees and NQTs felt that the teaching, curriculum and learning theories they had been exposed to were outdated. It is important that this content effectively supports trainees' progression into the early career framework, so this is also something we will explore in the next phase.

In both situations, this appeared to be further compounded by weak oversight of some partner schools and settings. A few trainees told us that school curriculum delivery often took precedence over their training needs, meaning that the link between theory and practice was rarely matched in a logical way.

Along with the evidence collected on mentors and professional tutors, we can infer from this that the quality assurance mechanisms across a partnership are likely to be an important feature of implementing an ITE curriculum effectively.

What next?

Overall, the evidence from phase 1 of the research has provided a good account of some of the things that appear to matter when it comes to identifying ITE curriculum quality and that will be essential areas of further investigation for the fieldwork.

These are:

- curriculum balance
- the sequencing of theory and practice
- mentor support and guidance
- the training of teacher educators
- the quality of communications between centre-based provision and placements

This evidence has also contributed some ideas to the methodology for phase 2. Trainee and NQT responses to the questionnaire were particularly rich, which suggests that speaking to a range of trainees during the fieldwork may be an effective means for determining the quality of curriculum. This could move us neatly away from an over-reliance on employment and completion data when making accurate assessments of impact. Additionally, variation within the same partnership in how well some subjects and aspects are taught to trainees suggests that the model of the deep-dive process from the EIF is worth testing in an ITE context.

I am very encouraged by these initial findings. They put us on the right track for designing a model of inspection for ITE that reflects the increasing diversity of provision.

We will report on the further research of this model early in the new year to support the public consultation on the new ITE framework.

[Report 14/2019: Fatal accident involving a train passenger at Twerton](#)

PDF, 4.1MB, 35 pages

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Summary

At about 22:04 hrs on Saturday 1 December 2018 a passenger was leaning out of the window of a moving train when her head came into contact with a lineside tree branch near Twerton, a suburb of Bath. The passenger suffered fatal injuries. The train, a Great Western Railway service from London Paddington to Exeter St David's, was travelling at approximately 75 mph (120 km/h) at the time.

On the type of coach making up the train, opening windows are provided to allow passengers to reach through and operate the external door handles when the train is in a station. This is the only means by which passengers can open the train doors. However, other than warning signs, there is nothing to prevent passengers from opening and leaning out of such windows when trains are away from stations and moving. The accident occurred because the passenger did this when branches from a lineside tree were in close proximity to the train.

A possible underlying factor was that Great Western Railway's risk assessment process had not historically identified the risk of passengers or staff being injured as a result of putting their heads out of windows on moving trains. Consequently, Great Western Railway had not provided adequate mitigation measures to protect against the risk.

Recommendations

The RAIB has made four recommendations and identified two learning points.

One recommendation is addressed to operators of mainline passenger trains, including charter operators, and seeks to minimise the likelihood of passengers leaning out of droplight windows when a train is away from stations. A second recommendation, is addressed to operators of heritage railways and seeks to improve their management of the risks associated with passengers leaning out vehicles.

The third recommendation is addressed to Great Western Railway and seeks to reduce the potential for hazards associated with its operations being overlooked.

The fourth recommendation is addressed to RSSB and seeks to ensure that its advice on emergency and safety signs reflects the level of risk associated with the hazard being mitigated.

The learning points reinforce the importance of undertaking regular tree inspections and the value of train operators having well briefed procedures for dealing with medical emergencies on board trains.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner.

While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.

3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

Newsdate: 16 October 2019

[Statistical data set: Tuberculosis (TB) in cattle in Great Britain](#)

Detailed statistics on Tuberculosis (TB) in cattle in Great Britain with regional breakdowns.

[Official Statistics: Historical statistic notices on the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in cattle in Great Britain, 2019 – monthly](#)

Previously published copies of the monthly statistics publications on the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in cattle for Great Britain.