Teacher Education Futures: Developing Learning and Teaching in ITE across the UK

May 19th 2006

St. Martin’s College
Lancaster
Welcome to the 2nd ESCalate Annual ITE Conference

We are delighted to welcome you to St. Martin’s College for our second ESCalate Annual Initial Teacher Education Conference. During the morning you will be able to choose from a wide range of symposia and in the afternoon there is a choice of workshops. In this booklet you will find a copy of the programme and details of the two keynote speeches. There is also information on all the symposia and workshops to help you make an informed choice of which ones to attend. E-mail contact addresses of most of the presenters can be found at the back of this booklet.

ESCalate

ESCalate is the Education Subject Centre of the Higher Education Academy. Its aim is the advancement of learning and teaching in education in order to enhance the student experience. It is, like its partner Subject Centres, a unique service which offers practical advice, networking, a means to find, collect and disseminate useful information and a means to challenge orthodoxies. The ESCalate partnership includes Bristol University, St.Martin’s College and Stirling University. To find out more visit the website at www.escalate.ac.uk for latest news, the events diary, resources, projects, funding, membership and book reviews.

ESCalate at St. Martin’s

St. Martin’s College is responsible for the Initial Teacher Education section of ESCalate and we offer a wide range of support and advice on pedagogy, curriculum enhancement and staff development in relation to teacher education. We identify and disseminate good practice through publications, conference and seminar events and liaise with other organisations involved in teacher education. We want to hear from you about anything you are doing, would like to do or have done and want to help to disseminate your good practice and to forge new and beneficial links throughout the community. Please contact us at www.escalate.ac.uk/stmartins or e-mail escalate@ucsm.ac.uk for general information and a.g.jackson@ucsm.ac.uk for specific queries. You will find details of the ESCalate ITE team on the back of this booklet.

The ESCalate ITE Conference

This Conference provides an opportunity for professionals working in ITE to share examples of practice relevant for the ‘Futures’ agenda, with a particular focus on new and innovative approaches to pedagogy. It has generated considerable interest and we are grateful to all our contributors for giving their time and expertise to make this conference a success. We will produce a booklet of conference proceedings, like last year, where you will be able to read about the symposia and workshop items in full. This will be available in hard copy and on the website. Any follow-up information from the day will be on the website as soon as possible after the event … and please start thinking ahead to next year’s event!
Conference Programme

9.30 a.m.  Registration (Refreshments available)

10.00 a.m.  Welcome

10.10 a.m.  **Keynote Address: Committed for Life? Variations in Teachers’ Lives and Effectiveness**
*Professor Chris Day, University of Nottingham*

10.50 a.m.  Refreshment break

11.10 a.m.  Parallel Symposia (eight sessions)

1.00 p.m.  Buffet lunch

1.45 p.m.  **Keynote Address: Every Teacher Matters: the relationship between context, role and identity in becoming a teacher**
*Dr Samantha Twiselton, St. Martin’s College*

2.15 p.m.  Parallel Workshops (seven sessions)

3.15 p.m.  Refreshments and departure

n.b. Symposia and workshops for the conference are offered on a first come, first served basis, with numbers limited by the constraints of the room. You therefore need to sign up for them when you register on arrival.
Abstracts for Keynotes, Symposia and Workshops


Keynote Address – Every Teacher Matters: the relationship between context, role and identity in becoming a teacher.

Symposium 1- Using blended learning to enhance learning and reflection

1. Using Asynchronous Discussion to support the reflective thinking of ITE students.  
2. Redefining planning for online interaction with ITT students: what can be learned by separating 'discussion' from 'board'?

Symposium 2 – Working in partnership – schools, universities and researchers

1. Strategies to support a developing partnership.  
2. Enquiry groups: Are they an effective means to develop successful continuing professional development within the primary school? - A case study.

Symposium 3 – Doing things Differently!

1. The involvement of Creative Practitioners in the Primary B.Ed Initial Teacher Training programme at the University of Chester.  
2. Developing Understanding of Meta Cognition through Problem Based Learning in a Museum Context.

Symposium 4 – PODS, BLOGS, PDAs and DVDs: Using the potential of New Technology

1. 'Special Features': a DVD pilot project to deliver training to placement schools.  
2. Identifying the Potential of Handheld Computers with Internet access to support Initial Teacher Training.  
3. Teaching 2.0: learning in the new information world.
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Keynote


It is generally accepted that the quality of teachers and their teaching are the most important contributory factors to pupils’ learning and achievement (OECD, 2005). Yet it is known that teachers vary in their effectiveness, that there are difficulties in sustaining effectiveness over the long term, and that the quality of the environment in which they work can impact, positively and negatively. This keynote paper will present the principal research questions and findings from a four year, DfES funded mixed methods study which focussed upon, ‘Variations in Teachers’ Work, Lives and their Effects on Pupils (VITAE), conducted with 300 primary and secondary school teachers in 100 schools across 7 Local Authorities. The findings suggest that, if issues of teacher quality, preparation, retention, renewal and effectiveness are to be addressed, what is required is a better understanding of the moderating and mediating factors which enable teachers, not simply to remain in teaching, but, more importantly, to sustain that commitment, resilience and, therefore, effectiveness over the whole of their careers. They suggest, further, that such understandings need to permeate the work of teacher educators and those responsible for the ongoing management and continuing professional development of teachers.

Speaker:
Professor Chris Day
Professor of Education and Co-Director of the Centre for Research on Teacher and School Development
University of Nottingham
Keynote

Every Teacher Matters: the relationship between context, role and identity in becoming a teacher.

Strong pre-existing notions about teachers, classrooms and schools appear to influence how they perceive the role of the teacher and schooling. They are driven by a need for ideas – tasks that will make them feel confident, purposeful and authoritative in the classroom. However, effective teaching involves responsively scaffolding learners in a way that is tuned to their needs. In doing this teachers draw on a range of types of teacher knowledge including an understanding of the subject, the child and the context. This appears to involve what Tochon and Munby, (1993) identify as a 'synchronic time epistemology', in which knowledge is combined and connected by teachers. This ‘bringing together’ of knowledge to meet the needs of the individual is in tune with the need for a broader understanding of how to support children expressed by the Every Child Matters Green Paper and clearly requires a concept of the teacher that goes beyond overseeing tasks or ‘delivering’ a curriculum.

This presentation will explore the relationship between student teacher identity and the concept of the role of the teacher implied by ‘Every Child Matters’. It will draw on a study which has at its centre the relationship between student teachers’ behaviour and their underlying thoughts and beliefs as they learn to teach in the primary school. Specifically it will address the following questions: What are the main roles student teachers identify as central in their teaching of primary school children? How might this relate to the challenges presented by ‘Every Child Matters’ and the developing role of the teacher? What does this mean for Initial Teacher Educators?

Speaker:
Dr. Samantha Twiselton
Principal Lecturer in Education, Primary PGCE Programme Leader
St. Martin's College
Symposium 1 – Using blended learning to enhance learning and reflection

1. Using Asynchronous Discussion to support the reflective thinking of ITE students.

There is a distinctiveness that is supportive of ITE students’ reflective thinking which blended learning can offer their training. It is the asynchronous nature of online engagement, in particular, but not exclusively, in the use of discussion boards, which determines the value and effectiveness of blended e-learning with ITE students as well as others.

Using a comparative case study the workshop will present an analysis of the online discussions of two cohorts of PGCE students using online discussion boards which demonstrates the degree of reflection that takes place in discussion boards linked to reading journal articles and to trainees’ developing practice. The significance of the practice of constructing online discussion tasks is evaluated in the light of the reflective thinking found in exchanges between Trainees.

A further analysis of the views of those students on their experiences of using discussion boards as novices shows that there are commonly valued aspects of the VLE of which asynchronous working patterns are accorded a relatively high worth, linked to which, more broadly, is the facility online content management allows trainees to revisit earlier learning.

The findings of the case study will be shared as key factors influencing future planning. One of the key arguments will be that the predominant need is to ensure that technology is transparent, at best the servant of pedagogy. The existence of models for online teaching will be discussed briefly.

Presenter:

Dr Ruth Lee
Lecturer in History
University of Leicester
2. Refining planning for online interaction with ITT students; what can be learned by separating ‘discussion’ from ‘board’?

What happens when novices use online discussion in relation to their experiences on a one year ITE course? There are distinguishing features between online and face-to-face discussion in a learning context that can inform practice in blended learning.

Our very notions of discussion can determine the extent to which learners engage with online interactions. The role of the tutor and the students on a one year ITE training course are analysed to show how separating the ‘Discussion’ and ‘board’ notions can help develop flexibility and freedom for learners that distinguishes online engagement in the learning context. Divorcing the board from discussion, gives it freedom to be something else....

Learners assume roles, modes and styles of online communication. This session will show how the online behaviour of a tutor can influence the online behaviours of students in how they communicate with each other particularly where learners are accorded greater freedom and less structure in which to engage. A key focus in this work is the emotional support occurring in a cohort of ITE students over nine months where emotional presence helps determine the inter-relationships of online behaviours, particularly when on school placement.

At the focus of understanding how blended learning can support ITE students is an analysis of the style, mode and roles of learners’ online engagements; patterns of engagement and interaction are studied in a way that includes the content of online ‘posts’.

Presenters:

Dr Ruth Lee
Lecturer in History
University of Leicester

Judith Enriquez
Researcher
University of Aberdeen
Symposium 2 – Working in partnership – schools, universities and researchers

1. Strategies to support a developing partnership.

UEL Secondary programmes were set up as new provision in 2001 with an initial allocation of 40 trainees. The last five years have seen an expansion to 220 trainees on both PGCE and employment based training routes. The management of this rapidly growing partnership and the strategies for development are of interest and relevance to other providers of initial teacher training.

UEL has an overarching commitment to education in east London and the secondary team has linked with schools to develop communities of practice with a wider remit such as supporting specialist status bids, working with schools in special measures, joint research projects e.g. KS3 Effective use of plenaries, developing e-learning communities, MFL partnership project.

The presentation will be delivered by current trainers, including a school based professional tutor and will share key features of our partnership development and consider how these could be built on by other providers.

- Development of coherent training programmes, both centre based and school based
- Development of course materials, including blended learning
- Partnership consultation events
- Supporting tutors through Continuing Professional Development in-house
- Induction into research
- Use of virtual learning environment to enhance aspects of provision
- Mentoring programme
- Management of growth (schools, team, university context, reputation management)
- Networking (London Providers Group, Oxford Brookes University, University of Birmingham).

Through a series of activities participants will be able to interact and comment on materials and processes that have been instrumental in the development of our partnership. Finally we will reflect on our strategy for the future of the partnership and consider the challenges.

Presenter:
Kathy Wright
Director
Secondary ITT
University of East London

Other presenters:
Neil Herrington
Principal Lecturer
UEL

Caroline Brennan
Director GTP
Secondary Programme
UEL
Symposium 2 – Working in partnership – schools, universities and researchers

2. Enquiry groups: Are they an effective means to develop successful continuing professional development (CPD) within the primary school? – A case study.

The purpose of the ongoing research project is to explore and consider local action in the use of enquiry groups by teachers and other adults within primary schools. It also aims to contribute to the discussion of the literature in relation to effective CPD for teachers.

This presentation investigates the work of an enquiry group of teachers, set up as part of a consortium of three primary schools who have gained ‘training school’ status. It will be of interest to teachers, managers and others involved in the professional development of teachers. The use of enquiry groups as a vehicle for the continuing professional development (CPD) of school teachers and some of the key elements for creating an effective learning community are explored.

The first part of the presentation will provide an opportunity to discuss the practical arrangements and rules for the enquiry group scheme. Some examples of the development of classroom practice undertaken by enquiry group participants will be presented and these focused on approaches to the application of assessment for learning within the classroom context. This will be followed by a presentation of the preliminary analysis of data collected through documents, interviews with teachers, with managers and observation by the researcher as a participant in a case study enquiry group.

Early findings suggest that the voluntary nature of the enquiry group and the ownership by participants of the practitioner action research activities in the classroom have been critical. The most significant outcomes appear to be in the way that the teachers began to behave more like researchers in their classrooms by observing, listening and responding to children more carefully. From a very practical starting point they entered an action learning spiral in which critical engagement with the literature and with practice in the classroom affected their own learning.

Presenter:
Liz Elliott
Senior Lecturer in Education
St. Martin's College

Other presenter:
Matthew Berresford
AST
Stramongate Primary School
Kendal
Symposium 3 – Doing things differently!

1. The involvement of Creative Practitioners in the Primary B.Ed Initial Teacher Training programme at the University of Chester.

This presentation will explore the learning approaches adopted for the new Creativity theme on the B.Ed. programme at the University of Chester. The Creative Partnerships programme enabled partnership working with creative and cultural professionals. Secondly, the presentation will show how that partnership working was of benefit to the BED teacher trainees and to school-based mentors. Finally, the presentation looks at the implications of ‘Mentoring for Creativity’. Key findings will be shared and their relevance to delegates examined including:

• ways in which creative and cultural professionals can work in an effective partnership with HEI in the training of both teachers and school-based teacher trainers
• the value of involving creative and cultural practitioners in the design and delivery of teaching training courses
• the challenge of ensuring ‘good quality mentoring for students while in school’ – identified in the NACCE Report (1999)¹
• deepening understanding of the trainees understanding of creative learning and teaching through partnership opportunities
• how to place teaching and learning for creativity as a ‘standard’ within a teacher training programme
• increasing trainees’ confidence, freedom to innovate and develop creative teaching skills
• deepening school based mentors understanding of creativity and its importance to educating children and young people
• mentors working alongside creative and cultural professionals.
• Implications of research into creative people² with reference to teaching as a creative enterprise and trainees as creative practitioners.

Neither the notions of creativity explored nor the approaches adopted are driven by the TDA standards and therefore of interest to any UK nations.

2. Developing Understanding of Meta Cognition through Problem Based Learning in a Museum Context.

Leeds Metropolitan University has pioneered the development of partnership modules. These modules seek to bridge the two communities of practice identified in the conference aims. In partnership modules students work with established clusters of schools which are already used for placements. One school in the cluster is a Training School. These modules are planned, staffed and assessed by university and school based staff.

Students are placed in large numbers in classes and work in pairs with small groups of children. Theory taught in the University part of the module is immediately contextualised in professional practice in the school-based part. Assessment is not based on practical teaching but on students’ developing ability to reflect theory and research in the classroom. Trainees are encouraged to think outside the constraints of the strategies and QCA schemes. Evaluations from all stakeholders of this approach are very positive.

One student wrote “why can’t all the course be taught like this.” In this exemplar module students consider the development of children’s thinking about thinking. They have to plan and teach a small group of children in the museum.

PBL is used as the dominant pedagogy by module tutors and students often use this as an approach to the work with children. Students start with the museum context and then plan and teach activities in English, Science and Mathematics. They introduce children to the aspects of learning from Excellence and Enjoyment and explore the development of the children understanding of these aspects within the context of their learning in the museum and in the ‘follow up in schools’. The assessment is a display and a reflective report in which they draw upon the theory and research introduced in the University component of the module to comment on children learning and their own professional development against the TDA Standards.
1. ‘Special Features’: a DVD pilot project to deliver training to placement schools.

The Scottish Executive Education Department's stated goal in their 2005-6 Business and Improvement plan is to ‘ensure teacher numbers have increased to 53,000 in September 2007, and target these additional teachers on reducing class sizes in S1/S2 Maths/English and in P1’. This ambitious goal has seen a rapid increase in the target figure for admissions which has had major implications for ITE delivery in the establishment. This has of course necessitated a degree of extra training for and mentoring of new staff. However, the greatest training need lies in schools. Prior to this session, ITE establishments liaised directly with schools, creating close partnerships with those schools which regularly accepted students. Conversely, there were many schools who did not accept students with which the establishments had little or no contact.

The new arrangements put in place by the SEED in 2005 required local authorities to appoint a coordinator who would liaise with schools and ITE establishments. As a result, schools had to account for their decision not to take students to their employers, and many departments which had historically refused to accept students now found themselves obliged to do so. In addition, many schools in the remote Borders and Highlands now found themselves asked to take students, a welcome development in areas where the available pool of staff is small, and where new teachers are desperately needed.

With many new schools which had no experience of students on board, the training requirements were significant. It proved impossible to plan a training day for up to 160 Principal Teachers of English to come on campus for training – the difficulty of finding cover staff in authorities was alone enough to prevent this – and the huge distances involved made on-site training impracticable. Consequently, the decision was made to pilot a DVD-ROM of resources which would be sent out free to schools taking English students. The content of the DVD will be presented in the session.

By May 2006, the DVD will have been produced and sent out to a sample of schools for evaluation. It is the process to date which will be described in the session. Delegates will view sections of the DVD and discuss its application to their own context.
Symposium 4 – PODS, BLOGS, PDAs, and DVDs: Using the potential of New Technology

2. Identifying the Potential of Handheld Computers with Internet Access to support Initial Teacher Training (ITT).

The presenters will discuss the ways in which handheld computers or PDAs were found to support science PGCE students during their training. For instance, initial use of the devices was high, we recorded many positive impressions and the devices were well used. Several applications, in particular the use of the calendar, task list, email and internet search facilities were found to be supportive by the PGCE students to both their teaching and learning. Other successes were bespoke software programs to record attendance, grades and behaviour, to perform scientific calculations and to provide information from the periodic table of elements. At this point in the course the trainees were moving regularly between school - for observation and teaching practice - and university - for subject teaching and reflective discussion sessions.

However, unless the teacher trainees were heavy personal users of the PDAs for activities like online shopping, MSN etc their use dropped during the main 12 week block of teaching practice when they were placed in schools full-time. Some trainees reported that under pressure of time and workload they are reverting to use of paper and pen to organise themselves and plan their teaching. Also some schools are unsupportive of the need to synchronize PDAs with a desktop PC to copy trainees’ presentations and worksheets to the school network.

The presentation will be directly relevant to teacher educators across the UK whose trainees follow a programme involving lengthy placements in schools as the presenters will highlight electronic communication issues arising from the role of the initial teacher trainee and their school context and discuss how their situation impacts upon their freedom to explore how a PDA can support them as they develop as a teacher.

Presenter:
Dr Jocelyn Wishart
Lecturer
Graduate School of Education
University of Bristol

Other presenters:
Professor Angela McFarlane
Graduate School of Education
University of Bristol

Andy Ramsden
Institute of Learning and Research Technology
University of Bristol
Symposium 4 – PODS, BLOGS, PDAs, and DVDs: Using the potential of New Technology

3. Teaching 2.0: learning in the new information world.

Ewan McIntosh was one of the first teachers in Europe to engage learners with blogging and podcasting and was given an action research grant in 2005 to see how these bleeding edge technologies could impact positively on the teaching and learning of Modern Foreign Languages. Social software – blogs, podcasts, social bookmarking, wikis and photo sharing – emerged as powerful (and often free) tools, engaging students of all abilities in their learning. Now students are not just receiving knowledge but, as the tools allow for the first time, are involved in its creation and dissemination. The term Web 2.0 has been coined to describe these new Internet tools. McIntosh coins Teaching 2.0 to describe the changing teaching practice emerging worldwide. This is a move beyond the current top-down, forum-led VLEs which often fail to engage learners and lack the personalised social space of the real world.

Here, learning can be done in the classroom, at home and on the move through a variety of mixed media. Social software allows more experts to become involved in the education of students and for students to become experts themselves. Rather than information being transmitted, teaching and learning are shared, criticised and taken on to new levels of collaboration and empowerment.

The power of these tools is evident for those using them. In this talk McIntosh explains what the tools are and their potential, hoping to engage and enthuse those who may or may not have used them in personal or professional circumstances and show how they, too, can create a dialogue with their students and professional peers.

Presenter:
Ewan McIntosh
Development Officer for the Modern Foreign Language Environment, Scottish CILT, University of Stirling
Symposium 5 – The implications of ‘Every Child Matters’

1. Developing Early Years Education ITT Provision to match Every Child Matters.

The Programme Leader and members of the Faculty of Education’s Early Years Academic Development and Research Cluster who designed and have delivered this programme since September 2005, will share their experience of developing and delivering a new and unique programme, specifically designed to meet the needs of Initial Teacher Trainees training to teach across the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The programme puts specific emphasis on working with a wide range of Early Years settings to provide provision based training in the private and voluntary sector as well as in settings and schools, using current policy, practice and research and ensuring that trainees have a detailed knowledge of Birth to Three Matters. The programme has a spine of Professional Values and Practice Modules which are linked to provision based training and to uniquely developed curriculum Area of Learning modules which construct the trainees HE experience in such a way that it models effective curriculum practice in schools. There is a strong focus on learning through play, planning and assessment. Across the curriculum Trainees also develop a strong Subject Specialism in the Early years. This includes modules in:

- The developmental processes of learning
- Young Children and their Families
- Childhood, Children’s Rights and transition
- Historical and Legislative Perspectives
- Management and Leadership in the Early Years

The Programme was looked at as part of the short inspection of Primary and Early Years provision at Edge Hill in January 2006. Members of the same development group are now developing three Foundation Degrees in Early Years Leadership, Early Years Education (with a specific ITT focus and link to the degree described) and Early Years Practice to match the needs of the Common Workforce Development Strategy and likely new professional statuses as Early Years Professionals and Graduate Leaders and Managers.

Presenters:
Angela Milner
Senior Associate Dean
Edge Hill

Sue Rogers
Early Years Programme Leader
Edge Hill

Other presenters:
Carol Calcutt
Linda Griffiths
Nichola Callendar
Ann Gordon
Greg Parker
Karen Hartley
Edge Hill
Symposium 5 – The implications of ‘Every Child Matters’

2. Interprofessional and Interagency Learning within Teacher Education: The Student Conference.

The development of interagency and interprofessional working in the context of Every Child Matters has highlighted two major issues. Firstly there is a long-standing acknowledgement that successful and effective services depend on both integrated management and integrated front line delivery. Secondly this integrated ideal is not readily achievable but rather vulnerable to the complexities of transition, both personal (e.g. location and colleagues within a team) and professional (e.g. role and identity change). It is apparent that initial professional education needs to respond to this by embracing the notions of interagency and interprofessional learning within programmes so that students have not only experienced this type of climate whilst training but are importantly equipped to progress the integrated agenda.

Video excerpts from 'Diary Room' interviews with participants of our student conference will be shown to highlight the impact of this integrated learning experience. The student conference is one example from the interprofessional portfolio within the Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences. The Faculty is in the unique position to provide interprofessional learning opportunities that are appropriate and reflect the service developments in response to Every Child Matters.

The key messages of this presentation are;

- The experience of workplace change and how that must be incorporated into the training practitioners
- The community informing the interprofessional learning (including ITE provision) at the University of Derby
- The development of the children and family interprofessional theme within the Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences.

Presenter:
Dr Des Hewitt
Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences
University of Derby

Other Presenter:
Dr Katie Cuthbert
Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences
University of Derby
Symposium 5 – The implications of ‘Every Child Matters’

3. Implications of Every Child Matters: opportunities and challenges for ITE training.

Context - ECM sets out a vision for the future of children and young people’s services and identifies 5 outcomes under which all services, including education will be inspected. The benefits of integrated services centred around the child and the family which are easily accessible at an early stage and take account of the views of children and parents are highlighted, raising fundamental changes for all of those working in children’s services.

Background – Policy into practice -
• Models of good practice exist in early years provision
• Government initiatives including: Extended schools: Workforce reform and Common core training

Liverpool Hope University – Curriculum -
• Early Childhood Studies teaching team includes staff from education, social care, health and counselling backgrounds. The multidisciplinary team covers all the compulsory modules within the pathway. Education staff deliver professional studies to QTS students whilst modules reflecting different aspects of early years are taught to BAC students by the team.
• Benefits of a multidisciplinary team include: breadth and relevance of curriculum; modelling of interagency partnership and cooperation; ability to respond more readily to changes; opportunity to use specialist knowledge to contribute to Professional Studies and CPD.

Student experience –
• Students adopt a holistic view of the child and study alongside others who will work with this age group in many different roles. This widens their understanding, ensures effective communication and enables them to learn how to work together effectively.
• Case example of the Legislation and Social Policy in Early Childhood module which provides the opportunity to observe and engage with issues of inter-disciplinary working in a practical way which means students are well placed to meet the challenges of ECM when moving into work environments.
• Highlight the student experience through reference to student evaluations

Challenges for those teaching ITE students - The need to ensure students:
• engage with the ECM agenda and have the knowledge, skills and confidence to work in partnership with other agencies to achieve the 5 outcomes
• understand and are able to work with support staff in schools
• receive training that encourages them to ‘think outside the box’.

Presenter:
Sue Kay
Senior Lecturer Education Deanery Liverpool Hope University

Other presenters:
 Faith Line
Senior Lecturer Education Deanery Liverpool Hope University
Kath Orlandi
Senior Lecturer Education Deanery Liverpool Hope University
Symposium 6 – Blended learning, making a difference

1. ‘Blended’ Learning and History Education: making a difference?

This presentation will be relevant not only to ITE tutors with a background in history education but also to those with a wider interest in learning technology and its application. It is anticipated that more experienced participants will be prepared to contribute their own insights and personal reflection on practice.

The example used borrows from practice and experience derived from comparative models employed in other subject-specific and teaching and learning settings.

The presentation will firstly review the component parts of an online resource that attempts to build a closer correspondence between the academic study of history and curriculum practice in the primary classroom.

It will explore the pedagogic and design principles that informed the construction of this Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) as an effective learning environment rather than as a passive repository for the electronic storage of materials. To that extent, this presentation will draw on a wider context of theoretical and case study perspectives. In particular it will review how ‘social constructivist’ approaches to learning can be mapped on to and deployed within an e-learning context.

Finally, the presentation will review alternative methodologies for evaluating the distinctive learning benefits that are associated with ‘blended’ learning strategies.

Presenter:

Dr Graham Rogers
Reader in Educational Development
Edge Hill College
Symposium 6 – Blended learning, making a difference

2. Why we value our virtual learning environment.

The session will begin with presenting the issues faced when I came into Higher Education five years ago to lead the large Secondary History PGCE course.

The structural challenges faced were not unique. These included

- large number of trainees
- placed in schools in a wide geographic region
- long periods when I had very little contact with the trainees
- reactive pastoral support for problems resulting from the trainees perceived sense of professional isolation

I needed a way to address these challenges. But as urgent as these were, there were more important pedagogical questions that I was keen to resolve.

- How could we close the gap between learning about teaching from our university sessions and our learning to teach from our school experience?
- How could we make the PGCE a continuous journey of learning, rather than one punctuated by periods in university and periods in school?
- How could we model collaborative learning, with each trainee sharing their journey and together constructing resolutions (however temporary) to the here and now pressures of the intensive learning on a PGCE course?
- How could the university tutors make greater use of formative assessment to support the learning process?

The session aims to explore the practice of blended learning. The ongoing developing use of our virtual learning environment (VLE) has been a means by which both the structural and pedagogical challenges of leading this PGCE course are being addressed. This has not been achieved simply by having the technology. Careful application of pedagogical practice from face to face teaching and learning have been developed and deployed to build the capacity for the VLE to become much more than a vehicle to disseminate information but a vehicle to build a learning community.
Symposium 6 – Blended learning, making a difference

3. The effective use of a VLE in a secondary PGCE environment.

The Salmon model which identifies five developing levels of e-learning might be a pattern which applies to more conventional ‘academic’ courses where e-learning is either an alternative to traditional delivery or is used to compliment or enhance teaching and learning. Experience suggests that the nature of a one year PGCE course has limitations in the way that a VLE may be developed. PGCE provision can best be described as being a web supplemented course, perhaps with elements of our provision being web dependant. The reality or relevance of Salmon’s 5 stage development model might be open to question, but it provides a useful starting point. If this model is applied to the PGCE experience there is an immediate difficulty; it implies a gradual development, where learners become familiar or comfortable with on line learning methodologies and develop levels of competence; such a gradualist approach necessarily imposes limits on teaching. The pace of familiarisation and instruction on the PGCE programme is such that trainees might reasonably be expected to move from zero to level three in the space of half a days teaching.

There is evidence that trainee engagement with the e-learning resources is sporadic and the materials and resources are not fully utilised and trainees rapidly develop a utilitarian approach to Web Ct use. In a further attempt to increase trainee engagement this year a series of different strategies have been employed making more extensive use of discussion forums and integrating the role in more formal taught sessions. This paper analyses trainee engagement with web ct during the autumn term and attempts to identify strategies which can make more effective use of a VLE within the constrains of a one year PGCE course.

Presenter:
Ian Phillips
History PGCE Course Leader,
Teaching & Learning Fellow
Faculty of Education
Edge Hill
Symposium 7 – The effective use of VLEs across primary and secondary ITE

1. Technology and Creative Teaching

*What is our role as teacher educators?*

The aim of this session is to explore roles university lecturers play in enabling beginning teachers to 'connect their learning' through VLE.

We will set the scene with a discussion of different perceptions of the changing role of university lecturers in initial teacher education and explore views on important roles.

*Do new technological resources (specifically WebCT and IWBs) have the potential to encourage creativity?*

We will provide an outline of the approach used on our project, with examples of the contributions of students from a variety of subjects.

The Secondary PGCE team at Roehampton University has embarked on a project to use WebCT to establish a Creative Teaching Network. We aim to use the subject WebCT sites to encourage discussion amongst students whilst they are at university and in school, to make links with students from previous years and to draw teachers in to act as e-mentors.

The use of WebCT has been linked to the use of Interactive Whiteboards with the intention of students disseminating a variety of teaching resources they have produced.

*What sort of communities can we establish to support trainees?*

We will focus on the networking aspects of the project and issues of selecting resources for teaching from the plethora of material available.

The network has the potential to enable students to:
- respond to events in each other's classrooms whilst on placement
- revisit university content to reflect on experience
- make explicit the connections between student concerns and current research

In some subjects at Roehampton, teaching resources are not only shared through the VLE, but also debated and developed, sometimes by other students, but also by NQTs, and mentors based in school.
Symposium 7 – The effective use of VLEs across primary and secondary ITE

2. What is the role of the tutor in stimulating useful communication on a VLE? A case study of use on a PGCE Primary course.

Many ITE institutions are adopting VLEs for enhanced access to resources. Their use for communication is sometimes less well developed and less well understood. In this presentation we will explain what we learnt about effective tutor involvement during our highly successful pilot year with the 2004-5 Primary PGCE cohort, which has been commended by OFSTED for enhancing communication and student experience on the course. It attracted over 2000 ‘postings’ to the discussion forum and over 220,000 ‘hits’ on the communications area of WebCT.

Tutors used the communication facility for a variety of purposes: as an interactive notice board to encourage comment and feedback on issues; to prepare students for forthcoming taught sessions; as a means of sharing resources; and to provide clarification, help and support at short notice. The nature of these postings was key to their success. A supportive and encouraging tone was used throughout, a tone which students themselves quickly adopted. Students benefited from and appreciated the support and reassurance provided, both during their time in college and on placement. They increasingly provided this support for one another and shared experiences on a practical and emotional level. The VLE provided a forum for expressing shared interests, taking discussions and ideas further than was possible in face-to-face sessions.

Interaction analysis was used to explore the impact of subject specialist tutors’ involvement in discussion and the use of questioning by them.

The presentation will explain and illustrate the above with examples and we will invite comment and discussion from delegates on the issues raised. In the course of this, the way in which we achieved clarity in the purpose and design of the VLE to facilitate purposeful discussion will be seen.

Presenter:
Kate Cleary
PGCE Primary Course Leader
School of Teaching, Health and Care
Bradford College

Other presenter:
Margaret Meredith
Senior Lecturer in ICT
Bradford College
Symposium 8 – ‘Challenging schools’ revisited

1. ITE and the emerging relationship of beginning teachers to urban schools in ‘challenging circumstances’.

This paper reports on findings arising out of a series of research and development projects. These investigated the experiences of trainee teachers as they make their transition from initial training to working in schools in intense urban settings. The projects reported upon include a North West based development project producing learning materials for trainees teachers preparing to teach in a number of designated schools in challenging circumstances and a research project focusing upon the experiences of trainee teachers seeking to work in schools in challenging circumstances. The paper begins by examining the policy context in England in relation to the work of urban schools described as being in challenging circumstances. This is carried out within the framework of international literature relating to notions of both the urban in general and urban education more specifically. The policies pursued by UK governments relating to both initial teacher training and urban schools in ‘challenging circumstances’ are then examined in the light of this literature.

Following this, the paper examines the emerging professional identity of ITT trainees and the nature of their relationship to urban schools in challenging circumstances in particular. One particular theoretical focus of the research relates to the concepts of collective and personal identities and in particular the mediating effect identities have on the way trainee teachers understand the nature of the pedagogical relationship with young people in the classroom. The paper concludes by considering the role of multi media resources in preparing trainee teachers to work in urban schools in challenging circumstances.

Presenter:
David Hall
Senior Lecturer in Education
School of Education
University of Manchester
Symposium 8 – ‘Challenging schools’ revisited

2. Preparing teachers for a Challenging Context
Towards a New Professionalism: Teach First Project

This session will give an overview of one of the most innovative models of initial teacher education in the UK and raise some important questions about the changing nature of teacher professionalism and a reconceptualisation of teaching as a public service ethos for graduates of the twenty-first century.

Following an initiative of London First and Business in the Community, two business membership organisations dedicated to community involvement, Teach First was formed to develop a programme targeted at top graduates, using the support of business and education leaders into challenging London Schools for at least two years’ service.

Aimed at high quality graduates, who would not have considered teaching via conventional training routes, the project, underpinned by funding and support from business sponsors, the DFES and TTA, was one reaction to the crisis in teacher recruitment in the Capital’s schools. The project which has challenged a number of assumptions around initial training includes: direct recruitment at major universities, a rigorous selection procedure, an intensive six week summer school and ongoing training and support for participants during their training year as they work as unqualified teachers, preparing for Qualified Teacher Status.

In addition to initial teacher training, the Teach First scheme offers a tailor made ‘Foundations of Leadership’ programme taught during participants’ induction year. Aimed at developing future leaders across the sectors, the vision for the project was to not only put outstanding graduates into challenging classrooms but also to develop participants’ knowledge, skills and networks so that they can in the long term lead in careers both inside the classroom and outside in a range of other sectors.

To date the scheme has attracted around 250 graduates per year since 2003 and in being rolled out nationally to other cities from 2006. It has gained an excellent reputation with Headteachers and London schools and has reached a high rank in the league of Times Top 100 Graduate Employers.

This symposium seeks to ask a number of questions. In the light of the Teach First Project, what implications, if any, does it have for the future of initial teacher education? What is the changing role of a) schools and b) higher education in any future construction of initial teacher training? What innovative aspects that Teach First has developed could be usefully adapted for other mainstream training routes? What tensions remain in employment routes between theory and practice?

Presenter:
Kevin Morris
Curriculum and Quality Assurance Coordinator, Teach First Project Canterbury Christ Church University
Symposium 8 – ‘Challenging schools’ revisited


Wolverhampton LA, in collaboration with the University of Wolverhampton, is currently training a small group of PGCE students in schools facing challenging circumstances (SfCC) with a view to employing them in those schools at the end of their training. Participants to the scheme actively chose to train in SfCC following university-based presentations from the project team. They have been subject to an intensive residential training programme and specialist mentoring and coaching during their final school placement. In return for this they will receive incentives as employees of the LA.

In parallel to the PGCE trainees is a group of NQTs who are receiving the same support and training during their induction year. Evaluation of their experience is informing the development of the project.

This presentation will outline and evaluate how trainees were selected and what their experience has been to date. The perceptions of the school-based tutors, who were given enhanced mentor training to take on the role, will be explored. The key problems faced by the trainees will be identified and some solutions proffered.

Participants in the session will have the opportunity to debate the question: can enhanced training and support in ITT and the induction year provide a solution to recruitment and retention problems in SfCC?

This presentation will be of interest to ITT providers who work with a number of challenging schools and to all those interested in exploring solutions to the problems faced by SfCC in ensuring the achievement of every child in their school.

Presenter:
Lesley Cartwright
Secondary Partnership Co-ordinator
University of Wolverhampton

Other presenters:
Helen Singh
School Improvement Consultant, Wolverhampton Local Authority
Sharon Churm
School Improvement Consultant, Deansfield High School Wolverhampton
Afternoon Workshops

1. The Teacher Training Resource Bank.

The TTRB website consists of reviews and summaries of TDA partnership projects, research and development awards, systematic and narrative literature reviews, video material, initial teacher education professional resource networks and subject induction materials. These have been categorised making use of the British Education Thesaurus of over 8,000 words and other schemas including QTS standard so that they are readily accessible. This session will outline the scope of these resources and provide an opportunity for hands on evaluation followed by a discussion of how the resource has been applied and might be further developed.

Presenter:
Simon Hughes
Canterbury Christ Church University
Afternoon Workshops

2. Blended learning and ‘New academic teams’ – developing potential in the ITE context.

As highlighted in the aims for this conference, the pedagogy of teacher education faces unprecedented challenges in the coming years. In addition, ‘blended learning approaches are being developed to provide greater flexibility in programme delivery yet questions are still unanswered regarding how well a virtual learning environment can successfully substitute for face-to-face activity in professional development’. Consequently, the pressures upon teacher educators in this context, and in relation to their own skills, development and support, can appear overwhelming. This workshop paper explores the ‘new academic team’ approach to developing blended learning and as such will be of relevance to teacher educators across the UK. The principles, practices and lessons learnt to date will be disseminated and will stimulate debate on good practices in developing blended learning, on CPD for teacher educators, and upon multi-professional team approaches.

The focus in the workshop will be upon a key aspect of the SOLSTICE model - the deliberate drawing together of a range of professionals within the higher education context into a ‘new academic team’. This team has constructed a method of programme delivery and support from a social constructivist pedagogy, building on existing experience, knowledge and skills of the students. It uses blended learning to promote active learning and interaction between learners, with multimedia, debate and communication. The SOLSTICE model has highlighted the need to rethink existing curricula, to return to the aims and learning outcomes of programmes in deciding on methods of teaching, learning facilitation and assessment, and how online technologies can be deployed to impact on deeper learning. It is a bespoke process of alignment of provision of learning experiences with the needs and contexts of each unique audience.

In summary, the workshop will encompass:

- An overview of SOLSTICE and its relevance to ITE
- ‘New academic teams’ and blended learning: possibilities and practice
- Implications for continuing professional development of teacher educators and other professionals involved in ITE
- Case study of the new academic team in practice in an ITE context
- Discussion as to how new academic teams can be fostered and supported.

Presenter:
Sue Roberts
Director of SOLSTICE Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Edge Hill

Other presenters:
John Davey
SOLSTICE Manager
Edge Hill
Afternoon Workshops

3. Managing ITE to achieve school outcomes.

Much of the research on the school-based component of ITE has focused on how to improve training outcomes by improving the effectiveness of mentoring. As the numbers of trainees in schools has grown there is growing concern to ensure that school-based training is compatible and supportive to school improvement. The aim of this workshop will be to open up discussion on the areas where ITE contributes positively to school outcomes and then to identify areas of tension and what might be done to overcome them.

The workshop will begin by presenting an inventory of how trainees can impact upon schools. Positive effects of trainees include: they increase effective staffing, bring new knowledge and skills, increase scope for individual and group work, reflective process of mentoring as mid-career CPD, increase teacher retention, provides income for resources and aids recruitment in shortage subjects. Negative ones include: trainees on average are less effective than experienced teachers, there is a greater risk of disasters which affect the climate of learning and they compete with students for mentors’ time. We present findings from a pilot questionnaire to mentors in north-west schools. Discussion will centre on how we can showcase the benefits to schools of ITE involvement whilst overcoming aspects that might be problematical to schools.

Presenters:
Barbara Craig
Manchester Metropolitan University
Malcolm Dixon
Liverpool John Moores University
Steve Hurd
The Open University
Marion Jones
Liverpool John Moores University
Olwen McNamara
Manchester University
Afternoon Workshops

4. Video as a tool to support practitioner enquiry.

At Newcastle University our new PGCE is integrated with the M.Ed Practitioner Enquiry. As a result our secondary PGCE students complete a portfolio called Thinking Through Teaching worth 40 credits at M. level. A critical component of this is the use of video to record student teachers' lessons to enable a more enquiring approach to lesson evaluation. This includes analysis of transcriptions, ecological analysis and critical incident analysis and is combined with a structured review process involving the mentor and student. In this workshop we will present an initial review of this work, highlighting the way that it has developed the mentoring process and the students' understanding of action research tools.

This will be contextualised within the presenters' research areas on the use of video in professional learning and the development of communities of practice based on the processes of enquiry. The main focus of the workshop will be the degree to which our approach both supports student teachers in their initial development and enables them to make the transition from novice to expert. The workshop will provide an opportunity for discussion of the use of video in initial and continuing professional development, for example by comparing the use of video in peer coaching and student mentoring. It will also consider the degree to which teachers might be encouraged to develop a more action research based approach to their own professional development as a result of working alongside students engaged in this process.

Presenters:

Rachel Lofthouse  
Director of Secondary PGCE  
Newcastle University

Vivienne Baumfield  
DPD M.Ed. Practitioner Enquiry Route  
Newcastle University

Steve Wilkes  
Head of Geography, Subject Mentor for PGCE students, King Edward VI School, Morpeth

Liz Kellerher  
Student teacher, King Edward VI School, Morpeth
Afternoon Workshops

5. The Partnership Team: a new initiative in collaborative practice between one HE and the Local Authority.

The Partnership Team at Canterbury Christ Church University was established within the Faculty of Education in September 2005. Developed in response to the University’s aim of working collaboratively with the local professional community, the team aims to develop and strengthen relationships with Area Education Officers, Local Education Officers, Clusters and individual schools, through a range of initiatives. The team members, entitled Partnership Team Leaders (PTLs), are drawn from a range of Departments within the Faculty of Education, and as such, bring varying perspectives and areas of expertise to the role. There are six PTLs, one for each area in the Local Authority.

The Partnership Team is an entirely new concept, aiming to realise ‘partnership’ in its broadest terms. Phase One of the team’s work was to work out into the field and engage with fellow professionals in schools and the Authority in order to get a sense of key developments and possible ways of working collaboratively. This early work was central to the development of a strategic plan. The team is just entering Phase Two, which, in addition to individual work in areas, has at its heart a collaborative research project. The impulse for this research project was an agreed need to work in creative ways with intending Mentors in the Authority. Additionally, the team felt that a small, time restricted research project would enhance our collective identity and be the springboard for further initiatives.

This workshop paper aims to disseminate the tensions, issues and key themes that are emerging as the Partnership Team seek to develop a community of practice with the Local Authority through individual work, but more specifically, through the Mentor Validation research project in Kent. Set within the broader panoramic reform agenda of Every Child Matters, this Partnership Team initiative seeks to engage and enhance the work of professionals from across disciplines.

Presenter:

Sue Field
Partnership Team Leader

Kerry Jordan-Daus
Partnership Team Leader
Afternoon Workshops

6. Rising to the challenges of building an e-learning community in initial teacher training (ITT).

There will be some initial input on the development of e learning communities, followed by sharing of practice on e-learning initiatives that have been successfully implemented on secondary ITT programmes run by UEL. Participants in the workshop will be invited to consider some scenarios which will locate this work within their own experience of initial teacher training.

The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform at UEL is WebCT and is supported across the institution as an integral part of the university’s e-learning strategy. Since 2001, all ITT programmes at UEL have used WebCT for administrative purposes, dissemination of learning materials and the electronic distribution of assessment forms with varying degrees of engagement among participants.

This project saw the redesign of the existing UEL template to meet the particular needs of the ITT partners including tutors, trainees and mentors. This included subject-specific areas in addition to the core programme and the development of a community of practice beyond a tool of dissemination. The sustainability of any community of practice depends upon the critical mass of participants and we will explore the strategies used to promote active engagement by stakeholders using discussion boards and chat rooms as follows:

- Importance of intervention and mediation,
- Training of moderators, development of moderating skills
- Document repositories, issues of interactivity
- Parameters of communication
- Issues of quality and control, management of risk
- Induction – establishing initial contact
- Strategies for engaging mentors as longer term members of the community
- Impact of VLE on quality of trainee achievement and quality of mentoring

The development work aimed to enhance the quality of existing training provision. UEL secondary provision was newly established in 2002 and is the only London provider to be awarded Ofsted Grade 1 Management and Quality Assurance for two consecutive years. The strength of the partnership is due in no small part to the work described above and is therefore of interest to other providers of PGCE, undergraduate programmes and employment based routes.
7. Developing an institutional approach to Every Child Matters.

This workshop will be relevant to colleagues who are developing their own institutional approach to Every Child Matters: Children for Change. The workshop will provide a case study in relation to one institution’s action planning approach to this visionary agenda covering:

- Identification of a Project Leader
- Identification of a key Core Project Group
- Working in an inter disciplinary manner
- Awareness raising activities across the institution
- Balancing Faculty and institutional requirements
- Identification of a range of new or modified provision
- Auditing institutional potential in relation to this significant agenda
- Validation proposals and procedures
- Ensuring the best use is made of internal and external expertise
- Ensuring regular communications internally and externally
- Working with external partners
- Working together internally
- Staff Development initiatives
- Action planning in the short and medium term for these developments
- Production of an institutional framework response to Every Child Matters
- The Five Key Outcomes and the six areas of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge
- Developing an effective marketing plan and enquiries flow chart
- Diversifying provision to meet the requirements of Every Child Matters
- The relationship between Every Child Matters, Remodelling the Workforce and Extended Schools
- Every Child Matters and the OfSTED Inspection Framework
- Changes made to ITT curricula to match Every Child Matters
- Consultancy and Research and Knowledge Transfer potential in relation to Every Child Matters

The presentation will identify effective and not so effective approaches to incorporating this significant and changing legislation into HEI & ITT provision and the opportunities and challenges responding to this agenda within existing institutional systems and structures can present.

Presenter:
Angela Milner
Senior Associate Dean (Quality, Academic Standards, Developments and Research)
Faculty of Education
Edge Hill
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