

## Section 2

# Sector summaries: Initial teacher education

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### Context

During 2018-2019, three regional centres of initial teacher education (ITE), the Graduate Teacher Programme and the Additional Graduate Training Programme (called 'Teach First') provided routes to become a qualified teacher in Wales. The latest public statistics show that, in 2018-2019, the three regional centres between them trained 605 primary school student teachers and 450 secondary school student teachers (Welsh Government, 2019f, p.5).

In 2019, our annual monitoring visits to the three centres focused on students' standards in planning and evaluating their teaching and the centre's assessment of their progress in meeting the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

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### Progress and standards

Generally, students make suitable progress towards achieving the standards for QTS, but there is too much variation in the quality of mentoring, support and school experiences. In many cases, this has an adverse effect on students' progress.

The assessment of student teachers' progress by tutors and mentors in their school experiences is too variable, across and within providers. Overall, the use of grade descriptors and the application of assessment criteria are too inconsistent to enable students to make the best progress.

Across the sector, providers are developing useful processes for capturing information and data on students' standards. Although this provides a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in students' standards, this information is not analysed well enough to identify specific areas for improvement. This means that ITE staff do not have a detailed enough understanding of key improvement priorities in relation to students' standards and progress.

### Lesson planning

In a majority of instances, students are conscientious in their planning. They respond positively to their tutors' and mentors' guidance.

Generally, students on primary programmes develop their lesson planning skills more effectively than those on secondary programmes.

Students' lesson planning is notably stronger in the South East Centre. These students' plans reflect effective practice to develop students' understanding of teaching on their programmes. Students also benefit from clear guidance provided by the centre to improve their skills.

In the best examples of students' lesson planning, there is a clear relationship between intended learning outcomes, lesson content, teaching approaches and the assessment of pupils' progress. However, too many students plan learning objectives for pupils that are too broad and focus too heavily on describing what pupils will do rather than what they might learn. They do not have a clear understanding of how to write precise success criteria. As a result, they are not able to evaluate the quality of learning well enough.

A majority of students demonstrate an understanding of the need to plan for the different needs of pupils in their classes. Students on primary programmes develop this skill more successfully than students on secondary programmes.

In a majority of cases, lesson planning forms do not help students to plan effectively. In particular, they do not encourage students to act on their assessment of pupils' progress, or assist students to integrate formative assessment strategies into their lesson plans. This also means that students planning over a series of lessons lack sufficient attention to pupils' progress.

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### Cardiff Metropolitan University

In Cardiff Metropolitan University (part of the South East Wales centre), PGCE students training to teach secondary Welsh and modern foreign languages visit a multi-lingual educational centre in the Basque Country to observe lessons taught in Basque, Spanish, English and French, and to study the teaching and promotion of Basque as a minority language. During the visit students develop their knowledge and understanding of effective approaches to language teaching, and consider cross-language curriculum planning that helps to prepare them for teaching the Curriculum for Wales. Through observing and reflecting on innovative multi-lingual teaching practices, the students develop their skills in teaching and learning for effective language acquisition. Their subsequent lesson planning shows the impact of creative approaches to language learning, and a good understanding of how to make imaginative connections between learning Welsh and other languages.

### Students' knowledge and understanding

Overall, most students' subject knowledge is secure and they have a sound understanding of the current curriculum requirements and foundation phase principles.

Most students have a suitable understanding of the impact the current programme of education reform in Wales is likely to have on the curriculum. This understanding is stronger on primary programmes where students have greater opportunities in their school experiences to explore thematic approaches to teaching.

Where the centre's provision emphasises creative subject and phase pedagogies, students use this knowledge to plan imaginative and interesting lessons for their pupils. In the most effective examples, students' planning demonstrates imaginative approaches to subject teaching, which include appropriate consideration of developments such as the new curriculum and the digital competency framework. However, in too many instances, students do not develop their subject pedagogies well enough.

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### **Students' skills of literacy, numeracy, ICT and their planning to develop pupils' skills**

Many students have secure skills in literacy numeracy and in ICT. In general, students on primary programmes plan useful opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. Secondary students planning for pupils' development in literacy, numeracy, ICT and Welsh in English-medium schools is less secure. Overall, students who are training to teach through the medium of Welsh improve their skills successfully throughout the duration of their programme.

### **Students' evaluation of their teaching and pupils' learning**

The quality of students' reflections in their classroom experiences is too variable. Too many students' evaluations are descriptive and do not analyse well enough the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Overall, students do not develop their critical skills well enough over the duration of their programmes.

### **Target setting for students' progress**

In the best examples, mentor and tutor feedback to students focuses clearly on the precise areas that they need to improve. However, overall, there is too much variation in the quality of written feedback to students. As a result, in too many cases, the targets set by tutors and mentors do not enable students to develop their understanding, or hone their skills to improve their teaching. In general, target-setting processes are overly complex and are not aligned well enough to help students to make the necessary improvements in their teaching.