

The needs of primary teacher educators across England in relation to their ITE curriculum development

A report on a case study project carried out by the Teacher Education Advancement
Network (TEAN) at the University of Cumbria.

Author and project co-ordinator: Dr Alice Hansen

Project Manager: Dr Alison Jackson

TEAN Director

University of Cumbria

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1. Introduction

This report presents the case study project undertaken by the Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN).

1.1 Contextual comment and justification for amendments made during the project:

TEAN was commissioned to undertake this project in January 2010. At that time, the Labour Government was implementing primary curriculum reforms, including the introduction of the new Primary Curriculum planned to become statutory from September 2011. However, the election of May 2010 saw a change to the political context, and on the 7th June 2010 Ministers from the new Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition announced that the Government did not intend to proceed with the new Primary Curriculum (DfE, 2010).

Although some change in focus was necessary, with two aims of the project being directly related to the new Primary Curriculum, the deliverables within the commissioned agreement required:

“A concise project report summarising the main general findings from the case studies in terms of:

- a. the development needs of ITE providers in relation to an effective ITE curriculum for primary teacher educators;*
- b. the critical issues and challenges facing ITE providers in regard to preparing teachers for primary curriculum design and implementation;*
- c. the development needs of both primary teacher educators in higher education and teacher mentors in schools”*

These outcomes were beyond any changes to the statutory curriculum and as a result the project, which had been warmly welcomed by the sector, continued after amendments were made to two of the project’s aims.

1.2 Project aims and objectives:

The aims of the project were to:

- explore the needs of ITE providers in relation to their primary ITE curriculum development¹;

^{1, 2} Wording of these aims was amended in light of political changes. In both cases, the wording “... the recent primary curriculum reforms” was replaced by “... their primary ITE curriculum development”.

- provide an insight into the critical issues and challenges facing ITE providers in regard to preparing teachers for primary curriculum design and implementation;
- Provide an analysis of the current development needs of both primary teacher educators in higher education and teacher mentors in schools;
- Provide resources for the teacher education community for delivering primary ITE in relation to their primary ITE curriculum development²

Additionally, the objective was to carry out its aims through the development, evaluation and analysis of real case studies in ITE designed to meet the challenges facing ITE providers³.

1.3 Executive summary

Method

This project ran January – July 2010 and involved workshops for 85 ITE co-ordinators, online questionnaire responses from 40 tutors from ITE providers, and three ITE providers presenting case studies.

Findings

The project's findings identify that during this period of change in education, about one quarter of ITE providers have recently completed validating some or all of their programmes, and the same proportion is about to begin. Providers' prime concern is that they prepare their student teachers for a career in teaching through quality courses that reflect the good practice they observe in their partnership schools. Five broad themes were identified as issues/challenges for ITE providers. These were:

1. Partnerships and placements
2. ITE programmes reflecting emerging diversity of schools' approaches to learning and teaching
3. Student learning
4. Subject knowledge
5. Continuing professional development for centre-based tutors

³ Wording of this objective was changed from "...of the new Primary Curriculum" to "... facing ITE providers".

Recommendations

In order to support ITE providers to address these issues/challenges, the following recommendations are made by this report:

Recommendation 1: Sharing of practice between providers is continued and strengthened, to ensure ongoing mutual support and development of ITE provision.

Recommendation 2: That improved links between ITE providers, LA consultants and schools are fostered and developed.

Recommendation 3: That further research is undertaken to identify effective forms of CPD for ITE tutors

Recommendation 4: The DfE publish, for ITE providers, as soon as practicable, clarity around: a) the future primary national curriculum; b) the future of undergraduate QTS courses; and c) any intended revisions to the ITT Requirements; in order to facilitate effective forward planning of teacher education courses.

2. The Project: Design and dissemination

2.1 Introduction

The project ran January to July 2010. The case study providers were identified early in the project and carried out their work as a 'long thin' component. The ITE co-ordinators' events provided bootstrapping to identify the challenges and issues early in the project. This further shaped the focus of the case studies and structured a core section of the online survey.

Project components and timings			
<i>January - July 2010</i>			<i>August 2010</i>
Case Studies from three ITE providers			Report completed
<i>March 2010</i>	<i>Election</i>	<i>June/July 2010</i>	Case studies published as appendices & resources for ITE community
ITE Co-ordinators Issues identified		ITE providers Online survey	

2.2 Data collection

Data were collected from three main sources, using mixed research methods.

Stakeholders	Method of data collection
ITE co-ordinators	Facilitated workshop during National Strategies ITT Co-ordinators Events (North and South) in March 2010. Notes from group discussions about the current challenges and issues they were facing were collated. A summary of the notes was re-presented to the participants for refinement or further comment. The participants (n=85) were aware of the purpose of the discussion and how the data collected would be used to inform a) the planning and design of the online survey, and b) the project report
ITE providers	Online survey (see Appendix 1 for survey questions). All ITE providers in England were invited to respond in June/July 2010. The anonymous survey required respondents (n=40) to complete multiple choice and short answer questions related to the issues they were currently facing regarding their ITE curriculum development. There was also an invitation for providers to add further comment.

Case study providers

Three providers were selected from proposals received by TEAN to design, implement and evaluate a case study related to primary curriculum reform. The case study leaders met in person on two occasions, engaged in online discussion and each met with the project co-ordinator individually to create and publish case studies that illustrated some of these issues in more detail. During the project, the focus of the case studies (but not the content) shifted to identify a focus on at least one issue identified by the ITE co-ordinators.

The case study providers were Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Cumbria, and University of East London.

2.3 Ethics and confidentiality

Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the project planning, data analysis and reporting in accordance with the British Educational Research Association's ethical guidelines (BERA, 2010). For example:

- The ITE co-ordinators were informed of the purpose of the workshop and the intended use of the data. No individuals or ITE providers are identifiable through the data.
- The online survey was anonymous. On one occasion one HEI was named. This has been removed.
- The case study providers applied to be involved and are fully aware of the open access of their case studies and accompanying materials. Each case study provider followed their own institution's ethical guidelines. Each case study provider has made every effort to gain appropriate permissions for presentation of the case studies on the internet.

2.4 Data analysis

2.4.1 Iterative data analysis processes

Where possible, data analysis was undertaken using an iterative process to ensure as rigorous and valid set of data as possible. For example:

- At the ITE co-ordinators' events, the issues were collated and checked for accuracy with the participants. Participants validated the data and were given further contact details to use if they wished to add further comment at a later stage (although no one took up this offer). Co-ordinators in the South event (n=53) were presented with the data from the North event (n=31) at the

conclusion of the workshop to check for resonance with their own experiences.

- The case studies were developed and internally validated by teams of ITE tutors at the providers involved. Additionally, case studies were scrutinised by the project co-ordinator and peer-reviewed by the case study project leaders at meetings and through online discussion. The ITE providers justify their case study methodologies and identify the limitations of their case studies in their publications. Furthermore, the providers plan to present their work to the ITE community in forthcoming conferences and articles in order that colleagues from other ITE providers can continue to scrutinise the validity and reliability of their case studies as well as consider resonance with the issues found at their own institutions/organisations.

2.4.2 Triangulation

The online survey enabled triangulation of the issues raised by the ITE co-ordinators and the case study providers. Quantitative data were analysed to identify those issues that were significant, moderate, minimal issues or not applicable to the respondents. Qualitative data were analysed by categorising key themes within the issues the respondents commented upon.

2.5 Dissemination

This report and the accompanying case studies are available on the internet at the TEAN website: <https://stream.cumbria.ac.uk/ap/tean/index.html>. This url will be circulated to all TEAN contacts within and beyond England.

Additionally, the case study project leads from the three ITE providers will be:

- Presenting the project to the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) Annual Conference in September 2010
- Writing a peer-reviewed article for the online Teacher Educational Advancement Network (TEAN) Journal

And at least one of the providers is planning to disseminate their own case study research findings through a peer-reviewed journal.

3. Findings

Section 3 presents the findings from the project. Subsections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 share the findings from the ITE co-ordinators' events, the online survey, and the case studies respectively. The most detailed of these sections is the online survey (3.2), where themes emerging are discussed, using quantitative and qualitative data for illustration.

3.1 ITE co-ordinators' events

The ITE co-ordinators' events were held in the lead up to the elections, in March 2010. Therefore, many of the issues raised were directly related to the implementation of the new Primary Curriculum. Those comments were removed for the online survey, and therefore the list includes issues that are broader and meet the scope of the project. In alphabetical order, the issues are listed below:

- a. Additional / new placements for student teachers
- b. Assessment and Assessing Pupils' Progress
- c. CPD for centre-based tutors
- d. Designing our curriculum to be flexible
- e. Developing courses to produce a generalist/specialist teacher
- f. Discrete vs cross-curricular teaching
- g. Diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools
- h. ICT embedded throughout the curriculum
- i. Identifying schools with leading practice
- j. Involving school-based colleagues in development
- k. Maintaining subject integrity
- l. Ensuring degrees prepare students for the future
- m. Mentor training
- n. Masters in teaching and learning (MTL)
- o. Modern foreign languages (MFL)
- p. Partnership
- q. Principles at the heart of course design
- r. Reflection at the core of ITE curriculum development
- s. Showing students' progression over their ITE course
- t. Subject knowledge: what it is
- u. Subject knowledge: where the responsibility for developing/monitoring it lies
- v. Subject knowledge: how can it be developed effectively
- w. Transition from EYFS to KS1
- x. ITE tutors working with LA colleagues

3.2 Online survey

40 responses were received from a range of ITE providers:

Type of provider	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
HEI	26	65
EBITT	3	7.5
SCITT	1	2.5
GTP	7	18
RTP	2	5
LLS	1	2.5

Of the respondents, 42% of the providers were not currently revalidating any of their courses. A further 23% of the providers had recently validated some of their courses, with a further 11.5% having recently validated all their courses. Of those validating some or all of their courses, all (23%) were in the early stages of revalidation. No providers were near completion of validation.

The following discussion identifies the significant and moderate issues identified by respondents on the online survey. Appendix 2 presents the raw data from Question 4, where they were asked to identify the extent to which a list of issues (from the ITE co-ordinators' events) were significant/moderate/minimal/not applicable for them.

3.2.1 Significant issue: placements

The only issue that was **significant** for over half of the respondents (61.5%) was additional / new placements. This was also the issue identified by six of the respondents as the most critical issue facing them and their colleagues. There appeared two strands to the issue. One was about achieving the number of places required and the other was about the quality of places. One respondent commented how this issue may worsen in the future as they felt that *"in a time of change, schools come under more pressure so may be less willing to take on students for school experience"*.

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- developing links and partnerships
- changing the way placements are allocated
- using filmed examples of good local practice
- having teachers contribute to modules
- developing CPD inputs for partnership schools
- developing a schools' forum to further discuss the placements issue
- widening the partnership

In the future they plan to:

- undertake outreach work and cluster development
- continue to explore creative solutions
- develop more alternative placements in museums, outward bound centres etc.
- continue working parties
- attend head teachers' conferences to encourage head teachers to be more involved and to see the benefits for their own staff

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- encouraging good links between LA consultants, schools and ITE providers
- schools being given more credit nationally for being in partnership with ITE providers
- a Governmental expectation that schools will contribute towards training teachers
- internal support: time and resources

3.2.2 Significant/moderate issues

The following issues were identified as **significant** or **moderate** by over two thirds of the respondents:

Issue	Combined % (significant or moderate issue)
f. Discrete vs cross-curricular teaching	96.2
d. Designing a flexible curriculum	92.3
g. Diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools	84.7
u. Subject knowledge: where the responsibility for developing/monitoring it lies	76.9
k. Maintaining subject integrity	77
a. Additional / new placements	73
c. CPD for centre-based tutors	73.1
p. Partnership	73.1
t. Subject knowledge: what it is	73.1
v. Subject knowledge: how can it be developed effectively	73.1
h. ICT embedded throughout the curriculum	69.3
j. Involving school-based colleagues in development	69.3
l. Ensuring degrees prepare students for the future	69.3
q. Principles at the heart of course design	69.3
s. Showing students' progression over their ITE course	69.3

Because of the high number of issues identified as significant or moderate for over two thirds of the respondents, these have been grouped where possible to ensure a more concise and effective reporting of the findings.

3.3.2.1 Discrete vs. cross-curricular teaching

When combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, this issue topped the list, with 96.2% of the respondents identifying it as an issue.

Nine respondents chose this aspect as the issue or challenge they were grappling with in their ITE provision. The main issue or challenge was regarding the balance of input related to discrete and cross-curricular teaching courses. For example, *“The notion of subject versus integrated teaching. Many schools have made the move to some form of integrated planning and teaching. At present the issue for us is whether we increase this type of input.”*; *“Do we maintain a subject based approach or do we move towards a more thematic curriculum.”*; *“Discrete v cross-curricular is easy to embed in that schools are doing a coherent version and trainees see that in detail but very difficult in that our weekly learning materials are distance-based and generic.”*

Closely aligned to this issue is ICT embedded throughout the curriculum. When combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, this issue ranked twelfth, with 69.3% of the respondents identifying it as an issue. However, no respondents identified it as the most critical issue facing them or their colleagues. Therefore there is no qualitative discussion in this report⁴.

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- reviewing current provision through consultation and development meetings
- making study guides more flexible
- involving partners from school
- development days

In the future they plan to:

- undertake course evaluation and prepare for revalidation
- trial and evaluate the increased cross-curricular work introduced
- consultation with partnership schools to ensure courses prepare students
- greater use of VLE base for flexibility and collaboration

⁴ Further discussion related to preparing student teachers to teach using 21st Century technology can be found in section 3.3.2.4: Maintaining subject integrity, although it could equally sit within subject knowledge (3.3.2.3)

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- opportunities to share practice with other providers
- funding to develop course materials
- guidance regarding what to expect with a future primary curriculum

3.3.2.2 Designing a flexible curriculum; diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools; principles at the heart of course design

When combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, designing a flexible curriculum ranked second, with 92.3% of the respondents identifying it as an issue. Very closely related to the issue to curriculum design is the diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools. Indeed, when combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, this issue ranked third (84.7%). Furthermore, the issue principles at the heart of course design achieved a percentage mark of 69.3% when **significant** and **moderate** figures were combined. Eleven respondents stated that the most critical issue or challenge for them and their colleagues were aspects of these. Because of their closely interrelated nature and their close alignment in the data analysis, these issues are brought together in this discussion.

The data demonstrated that the ITE providers were aware of variation in the ways their partnership schools were planning and working with their curricula: *“during the last year this diversity has grown and we expect it to do so in the future.”* Additionally, one respondent stated that there remained a, *“continued tension between coverage of ‘Core’ and Foundation subjects”*.

The majority of respondents were interested in supporting student teachers to develop the professional skills and knowledge required to teach effectively. For example, the main issue for one respondent was the *“principles of curriculum design, because of the diversity of practice in partnership schools”*. Another explained that it was, *“meeting the challenge of how varied the approach to curriculum delivery is in schools and ensuring that students have the skills and confidence to be adaptable and flexible in their approach”* while another stated, *“we want to prepare teachers for the future and know curricula will change ... We aim for them to be good teachers, not just good deliverers of one curriculum or framework”*.

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- teaching modules exploring curriculum design past and present and how different schools are implementing guidelines
- teaching a module on cross curricular learning but ensuring evaluation and reflection on what different curriculum approaches may offer schools, teachers and learners
- ensuring trainees are introduced to different models in centre-based training, and are asked to reflect on their experience of these whilst on school placements
- ensuring that the taught sessions encourage skills based approach to learning with a strong emphasis of reflection and how taught sessions could be applied in schools where there is a wide range of practice
- highlighting to students their philosophy of trying to produce reflective, critical classroom practitioners
- concentrating courses on aims, values and principles
- modules that place the child at the centre of learning and not the curriculum

In the future they plan to:

- adapt modules as further guidance becomes available
- continue working in subjects and professional studies
- wait until Government provides clearer direction
- consider revalidation if recently revalidated courses are not appropriate
- increase scholarly criticality
- strengthen the focus on aims, values and principles and on ideas such as how children learn and child development even further in all courses
- continue to emphasise constructivism(s) as a valid pedagogical model and the role of formative assessment in planning learning

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- clarity from the Government for schools and ITE providers

- opportunity for sharing and networking
- time with partnership schools to have in-depth discussions about the strengths of the courses and ways to ensure student teachers are able to adapt and progress in a rapidly changing school environment
- easy access to resources to support this area (e.g. readings, video)

3.3.2.3 Subject knowledge

Through the ITE co-ordinators' events, subject knowledge was divided into three distinct categories of issues/challenges:

- where the responsibility for developing / monitoring it lies
- what it is
- how it can be developed effectively

Within the online survey when combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, all three aspects were ranked highly in the table, with 76.9%, 73% and 73% respectively.

Two respondents identified aspects of subject knowledge as the critical issue or challenge they and their colleagues were currently facing. Comments included, "*the nature of subject knowledge*" and "*identifying key subject knowledge and helping students to develop this within an already intensive programme ~ building time to reflect into programmes.*"

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- revalidating courses where modules are focused on key areas
- longer modules allowing tutors to build in 'thinking time'

In the future they plan to:

- involve partnership schools in away days

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- recognition that UG programmes are different and equally important routes into primary teaching

3.3.2.4 Maintaining subject integrity

When combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, this issue ranked fifth, with 77% of the respondents identifying it as an issue.

Three respondents commented about specific subjects: *“The issue of science. Significantly less time on the recently validated courses is given to it. Now it looks as though the new government will want to prioritise it again.”* *“ML in primary is significant for me personally but virtually impossible to embed properly into my course because our schools are nationally distributed and we are school-based.”* *“Preparing students to teach children in the 21st century using the technology children use every day out of school.”*

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- engaging in debates surrounding maintaining science at the ‘core’ (alongside English and mathematics)
- introducing ICT into every curriculum area (ie. podcasts, assessments)

In the future they plan to:

- continue to debate about place of science within ITE provision
- develop a more ongoing language tuition model with tandem learning and a support pack for pedagogy
- continue to explore digital literacy and remain up-to-date with new technologies

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- recognition that UG programmes are different and equally important routes into primary teaching
- additional training for staff

3.3.2.5 CPD for centre-based tutors

When combining **significant** and **moderate** figures, this issue ranked seventh, with 73% of the respondents identifying it as an issue.

One respondent referred to this as the most significant issue for them and their colleagues. They wrote, "*Change in the curriculum has been taking place across primary schools for a number of years and will continue in any school worth its name. In revising and revalidating new programmes, the challenge is the migration of ITE tutors from their current teaching contexts and approaches to the revised programme, which emphasises child development, research in education, cross-curricular ways of teaching and learning in some curriculum areas and fostering greater independence in learning among students. We have made progress in the past 18 months but it will be another 2-3 years for development to really make progress.*"

Currently, to address this issue, this ITE provider is:

- spending considerable time in revalidation debates about the nature of the programmes and the principles underpinning them
- debating approaches to the structure of the degree and PG programmes to facilitate the revised approach we wish to take
- investing time in discussion about how timetabling and patterns of teaching will work to maintain such advice from Rose and Alexander about the balance of subject and cross-curricular aspects of the programme
- introducing the BA programmes over the length of the programmes so that development is progressive, while trialling some ideas and approaches in the 1-year PPGCE

In the future they plan to:

- continue discussion, sharing experience and developments
- use trial and error
- bring in school staff and LA advisers to contribute
- student engagement with research from early in the programmes

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- Greater openness about the Standards requirements, so that they are much reduced and not so prescribed, particularly in relation to the 'core' subjects, so that balancing a positive whole curriculum is possible.

3.3.2.6 Other issues: inclusion; diversity

When respondents were asked to identify any further issues they thought should be included, three identified diversity and inclusion as significant/moderate issues: “*diversity, global dimension, community cohesion*”, “*the lack of time to develop knowledge of SEN/disability and inclusion*” and “*giving enough time to aspects such as global dimension and SEN.*”

One respondent noted that the “*social and cultural diversity in schools*” was the most critical issue for them and their colleagues. They noted how, “*National Curriculum policies and the EYFS are largely 'diversity blind' and reduce complexity*”.

Currently, to address this issue, this ITE provider is ensuring that students understand:

- dimensions and constellations of diversity
- the impact of home-based child-rearing practices on children's orientations to schooling and to learning

In the future they plan to:

- engage students with controversial issues,
- challenge students' assumptions,
- ensure students understand complexity by contrasting theories of learning and development, and through research-led teaching

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- better exemplification materials from the DfE around dimensions of diversity

3.3.2.7 Other issues: student learning

The analysis of the online survey data revealed an issue regarding how ITE providers were challenged by ways students learn. Two respondents were focused on the student teachers having responsibility for their own learning and developing professional autonomy. A third was concerned about the workload of their students in collecting evidence of progression in their teaching.

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- developing cross-departmental team teaching
- assignments that bring in a greater diversity of material as compared with conventional assessment

In the future they plan to:

- continue
- empower students to be autonomous learners

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- flexible timetables
- more resources (no further detail given)

3.3.2.8 Other issues: research

The analysis of the online survey data revealed an issue regarding how ITE providers were challenged by ensuring their courses are research-led. Two respondents identified that “*having a research-led core to the course - for both professional studies and specialist modules - and making sure that each feed into the other*” and “*combining teaching with practice which is research-informed*” was the most critical issue for them and their colleagues.

Currently, to address this issue, ITE providers are:

- working on greater coherence on the professional studies module with specialist modules and school-based elements
- taking research leave on a rolling programme and integrate their research findings into their teaching

In the future they plan to:

- build on the successes of the professional studies module by making alterations to have clearer school-based tasks and communicating with subject tutors more explicitly
- continue ongoing research

The additional support they would like to help address this issue includes:

- time to meet as a team more often
- more resources for research

3.3.2.9 Other issues: partnership

Partnership (as a generally-termed issue) ranked eighth (73%) when **significant** and **moderate** figures were combined. Other issues related to partnership included involving school-based colleagues in development (69.3%) and identifying schools with leading practice (65.4%). One respondent also identified “*working with wider partnerships*” as a significant issue, although this was not explained further. Finally, one respondent referred to “*partnership between HEI and LA*” being a significant issue.

3.3 Case studies

The case studies can be found at <https://stream.cumbria.ac.uk/ap/tean/index.html>. These have been designed to provide a resource for ITE providers to support their course planning. They also provide further exemplification of some of the issues discussed in this report.

3.3.1 Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)

Overview:

The case study explored a unit of learning that looks at a cross-curricular approach to teaching English, mathematics, science and ICT. It focused on innovation and the teaching approaches. The unit involved collaborative working to produce a coherent programme.

Issues addressed:

- The case study represented innovation in the way MMU approach the teaching of curriculum areas.
- The main curriculum subjects that were the focus of the study were English, mathematics, science and ICT
- The unit involved tutor teams from each subject working collaboratively to produce a coherent programme

Findings:

It was found that the unit contributed significantly to students' confidence in teaching the subjects covered in the unit and developed their expertise in approaching teaching creatively and innovatively.

3.3.2 University of East London (UEL)

Overview:

The case study investigated how on-site training in an ICT leading-edge infant school impacts on PGCE students' ability to effectively integrate the use of technology across the primary curriculum. It also considered the implications for teacher training, with a particular focus on providing an exemplary model in the innovative and creative use of ICT.

Issues addressed:

- How ICT can be effectively embedded within all areas of the National Curriculum
- How partnership could be developed to provide high quality training for student teachers

Findings:

It was found that the unit contributed significantly to students' confidence in teaching ICT across the curriculum. It offers a model for possible partnership working for other ITE providers.

3.3.3 University of Cumbria (UoC)

Overview:

The case study set out to justify the inclusion of creative thinking in the curriculum and explore techniques of creative thinking, creative teaching approaches and also creative integration of subjects at a theoretical level. The intention was to enable the students to embed this theory in practice in a week-long experiential placement in local primary schools.

Issues addressed:

- The inclusion of creative thinking in the curriculum.
- Techniques of creative thinking, creative teaching approaches and creative integration of subjects.

Findings:

It was found that the module enabled student teachers to take risks, feel encouraged to try out new and innovative ideas, evaluate their practice, synthesizing theory and practice, and collaborate successfully.

3.3.4 Case study issues

The case study providers met after the completion of the individual case studies and identified the following common themes:

- Theoretical frameworks integrated with practice
- Role of the non-assessed placement within the ITE programme to present and experience 'good practice'

- ‘Subject knowledge’ – what is it, what does it look like?
- Developing creativity as integrated teaching
- Role of student teachers / role of children / role of HEIs (in training)
- Partnerships
 - revisiting what a placement might look like;
 - collaborative learning / working as a team
- Impact on stakeholders’ learning
 - children’s (progression, subject knowledge, motivation/engagement/purpose)
 - student teachers’ subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge
 - teachers
- Assessment of students’ learning

3.3.5 Using the case studies

The themes identified in section 3.3.4 resonate with the issues identified elsewhere in the report. Therefore, the case studies may be used by other providers as a useful resource to:

- Illustrate issues they may be facing
- look at ways of addressing issues
- support curriculum design discussions
- support validation discussions
- present to student teachers as part of their course to:
 - show student teachers’ work for assessments or working with children
 - show samples of children’s work from a number of curriculum subjects
- support development of collaborative partnerships
- build new partnerships and other ways of working with schools
- form the basis of discussion with mentors during mentor training about their role

4. Conclusion

Although the focus of the report was slightly amended during the data collection process due to a change in Government, what is interesting to note is that nearly one quarter (23%) of ITE providers had already completed validating some or all of their courses and that the same proportion were currently beginning the process. ITE co-ordinators were clear that their courses were reflecting the good practice evident in their partnership schools, rather than necessarily focusing on Government policy (although the two were not, and are not, mutually exclusive).

The ITE co-ordinators' events presented a detailed list of issues or challenges. This list was refined, clarified and strengthened through the online survey. It is evident that providers are clear about how they are currently addressing the issues/challenges and what they hope to achieve in the longer term. They also often identified the possible support they would welcome to help realise these. This conclusion provides a précis of the key issues/challenges identified by the ITE providers in England.

4.1 Partnership and placements

The notion of 'partnership' is widening in ITE. ITE providers are looking at developing their partnership to include non-school settings (such as museums). Placements remain the most significant issue for ITE providers and concerns are around the number of placements that are required and the quality of those placements.

4.2 ITE programmes reflecting emerging diversity of schools' approaches to learning and teaching

There is currently a lot of internal dialogue within ITE providers about validating courses that are subject-based, thematic or cross-curricular. To respond to this, ITE providers were focusing on the professional skills and knowledge required to teach effectively, rather than teaching them to deliver one curriculum or framework. This evokes much discussion around maintaining subject integrity and subject knowledge.

One key requirement for strengthening in ITE programmes identified by some ITE providers was the notion of inclusion and diversity, including the global dimension, community cohesion, and Special Educational Needs.

Some other ITE providers expressed how ensuring courses are research-led was another issue/challenge for them.

4.3 Student learning

Student teachers' having responsibility for their own learning and developing professional autonomy whilst maintaining a sensible workload are issues/challenges being discussed by ITE providers.

4.4 Subject knowledge

Subject knowledge is also a source of discussion and debate for ITE providers. They are considering what subject knowledge is, where the responsibility for developing and monitoring subject knowledge lies, and how it can be developed effectively.

4.5 Continuing professional development (CPD) for centre-based tutors

CPD around curriculum changes, child development, research in education, student-teacher independence in learning would be welcomed. This will inform discussions for validation and support change.

4.6 Support to address the issues and challenges

In order to address the issues/challenges identified above, the following additional support that would be welcomed by the sector includes:

- Improved links between LA consultants, schools and ITE providers
- Sharing practice with other providers
- Time with partnership schools to discuss the rapidly changing school environment
- Additional training for staff to remain up-to-date
- Guidance for a future primary curriculum
- Exemplification from DfE around dimensions of diversity
- Recognition that UG programmes are different and equally important routes into primary teaching
- More resources for student and staff research

4.7 Recommendations

We are in a period of uncertainty and change. However, ITE providers continue to develop their courses to support their student teachers to teach children effectively.

The following are recommendations that emerged through the findings of this project.

There was a strong feeling in the ITE co-ordinators' events, through the online survey and during meetings of the case study providers that further opportunity to share practice should be given. This could have a positive impact on aspects of ITE provision such as: partnership, placements, subject knowledge, ITE course design and delivery, student learning, and student assessment and monitoring. **Recommendation 1: Sharing of practice between providers is continued and strengthened, to ensure ongoing mutual support and development of ITE provision.**

Many of the issues and challenges that are faced by ITE providers may be addressed through improved links between the providers, LA consultants and schools. For example: identifying good practice in schools, sharing the positive impact on school development that having student teachers in school, developing the highest quality ITE programmes, or engaging students with varying dimensions of diversity can be achieved through improved relationships between these stakeholders in education. **Recommendation 2: That improved links between ITE providers, LA consultants and schools are fostered and developed.**

In order to keep abreast of current developments internationally, nationally and within more localised partnership areas, ITE providers would welcome more opportunity undertake research that directly informs their courses as well as use other methods of continuing professional development (such as discussions with the local authority and partnership schools) to ensure their courses reflect current practice and that ITE tutors are at the cutting edge of educational practice. Additionally, tutors wanted more opportunity to work with partnership colleagues to enable continuing professional development that is mutually beneficial to all parties. **Recommendation 3: That further research is undertaken to identify effective forms of CPD for ITE tutors⁵.**

⁵ TEAN's research report *The Professional Development Needs of Teacher Educators in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and School-based Mentors in Schools* commissioned by the TDA (available at <http://www.cumbria.ac.uk/TEAN/TEANDocuments/EducatorsStorehouse/TeacherEducatorsinHEIsSchools/TheProfessionalDevelopmentNeedsOfTeacherEducators.pdf>) addresses 'what' CPD is needed. This recommendation relates to 'how' CPD can be carried out to ensure the greatest impact in teacher education. This current project identifies a disparity of practice between ITE providers.

ITE providers are aware that this is an inevitable period of change for education. However, ITE providers normally require a significant time for planning and validating their courses. Therefore, ITE providers would welcome, as soon as practicable, clarity from the DfE around the future of the primary national curriculum and the future of undergraduate courses. **Recommendation 4: The DfE publish, for ITE providers, as soon as practicable, clarity around:**

- a) the future primary national curriculum,**
- b) the future of undergraduate QTS courses, and**
- c) any intended revisions to the ITT Requirements,**

in order to facilitate effective forward planning of teacher education courses.

5. References

British Educational Research Association (2004) **Revised ethical guidelines for educational research**. Southwell: BERA.

Available from <http://www.bera.ac.uk/files/guidelines/ethica1.pdf>

Department for Education (2010) **Important information on the primary curriculum and Key Stage 3 level descriptions**. London: DfE.

Available from <http://www.education.gov.uk/curriculum>

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1: Online survey questions

1. What type of ITE provider do you represent?
2. Please list the Primary ITE courses offered by your institution or organisation
3. Which of the following statements most reflects your provider's Primary Education Courses at the moment?

We are not revalidating any courses at the moment

We are in the early stages of validating some of our courses

We are in the early stages of validating all of our courses

We are nearing completion of validating some of our courses

We are nearing completion of validating some of our courses

We have recently validated some of our courses

We have recently validated all of our courses

4. Below is a list of current issues that have been identified by some ITE providers in relation to planning for ITE primary curriculum development. Please identify the extent to which each one is an issue for you.

- a. Additional / new placements for student teachers
- b. Assessment and Assessing Pupils' Progress
- c. CPD for centre-based tutors
- d. Designing our curriculum to be flexible
- e. Developing courses to produce a generalist/specialist teacher
- f. Discrete vs cross-curricular teaching
- g. Diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools
- h. ICT embedded throughout the curriculum
- i. Identifying schools with leading practice
- j. Involving school-based colleagues in development
- k. Maintaining subject integrity
- l. Ensuring degrees prepare students for the future
- m. Mentor training
- n. Masters in teaching and learning (MTL)
- o. Modern foreign languages (MFL)
- p. Partnership
- q. Principles at the heart of course design
- r. Reflection at the core of ITE curriculum development
- s. Showing students' progression over their ITE course

- t. Subject knowledge: what it is
- u. Subject knowledge: where the responsibility for developing/monitoring it lies
- v. Subject knowledge: how can it be developed effectively
- w. Transition from EYFS to KS1
- x. ITE tutors working with LA colleagues

5. With reference to question 4, are there any issues which you think should be added to the list? Please write them here and indicate, as above, whether you consider them to be a minimal issue, a moderate issue or a significant issue for you.

6. In your opinion, which is the most critical issue/challenge facing you and your colleagues, regarding preparing teachers for primary curriculum design and implementation? (Please do not state not knowing what a new curriculum under the new Government will look like. Instead, please note an issue / challenge that you are currently grappling with in your institution.)

7. What have you been doing in order to address this issue/challenge to date?

8. What plans do you have to further address this issue/challenge in the medium and longer term (as appropriate)?

9. What additional support would you like to address this issue?

10. Is there anything further you would like to comment upon?

6.2 Appendix 2: Online survey responses: Q4

Q. 4: Below is a list of current issues that have been identified by some ITE providers in relation to planning for ITE primary curriculum development. Please identify the extent to which each one is an issue for you.

Issue	Significant issue (%)	Moderate (%)	Minimal (%)	N/A (%)
a Additional / new placements	61.5	11.5	23.1	3.8
b Assessment and APP	7.7	38.5	50	3.8
c CPD for centre-based tutors	15.4	57.7	15.4	11.5
d Designing a flexible curriculum	30.8	61.5	7.7	0
e Developing courses to produce a generalist/specialist teacher	19.2	34.6	34.6	11.5
f Discrete vs cross-curricular teaching	46.2	50	0	3.8
g Diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools	38.5	46.2	15.4	0
h ICT embedded throughout the curriculum	23.1	46.2	30.8	0
i Identifying schools with leading practice	26.9	38.5	30.8	3.8
j Involving school-based colleagues in development	23.1	46.2	26.9	3.8
k Maintaining subject integrity	30.8	46.2	19.2	3.8
l Ensuring degrees prepare students for the future	38.5	30.8	26.9	3.8
m Mentor training	23.1	38.5	34.6	3.8
n Masters in teaching and learning (MTL)	19.2	34.6	38.5	7.7
o Modern foreign languages (MFL)	23.1	30.8	42.3	3.8
p Partnership	42.3	30.8	23.1	3.8
q Principles at the heart of course design	30.8	38.5	30.8	0
r Reflection at the core of ITE curriculum development	30.8	23.1	42.3	3.8
s Showing students' progression over their ITE course	30.8	38.5	30.8	0
t Subject knowledge: what it is	26.9	46.2	26.9	0
u Subject knowledge: where the responsibility for developing/monitoring it lies	26.9	50	19.2	3.8
v Subject knowledge: how can it be developed effectively	26.9	46.2	26.9	0
w Transition from EYFS to KS1	11.5	30.8	46.2	11.5
x ITE tutors working with LA colleagues	34.6	23.1	30.8	11.5

6.3 Appendix 3: Online survey responses: Q4 (Significant and moderate conflated)

Issue	Significant & moderate issue (%)	Significant & moderate issue (n)
f. Discrete vs cross-curricular teaching	96.2	25
d. Designing a flexible curriculum	92.3	24
g. Diversity of emerging curriculum models in schools	84.7	22
u. Subject knowledge: where the responsibility for developing/monitoring it lies	76.9	20
k. Maintaining subject integrity	77	20
a. Additional / new placements	73	19
c. CPD for centre-based tutors	73.1	19
p. Partnership	73.1	19
t. Subject knowledge: what it is	73.1	19
v. Subject knowledge: how can it be developed effectively	73.1	19
h. ICT embedded throughout the curriculum	69.3	18
j. Involving school-based colleagues in development	69.3	18
l. Ensuring degrees prepare students for the future	69.3	18
q. Principles at the heart of course design	69.3	18
s. Showing students' progression over their ITE course	69.3	18
i. Identifying schools with leading practice	65.4	17
m. Mentor training	61.6	16
x. ITE tutors working with LA colleagues	57.7	15
e. Developing courses to produce a generalist/specialist teacher	53.8	14
n. Masters in teaching and learning (MTL)	53.8	14

o. Modern foreign languages (MFL)	53.9	14
r. Reflection at the core of ITE curriculum development	53.9	14
b. Assessment and APP	46.2	12
w. Transition from EYFS to KS1	42.3	11