

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PRE-PUBLICATION COPY OF THE
FINAL REPORT IN ENGLISH

Title: Pandemic-related assessment experiences and innovations: implications for initial teacher education

A research study commissioned by the Welsh Government

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

OGL © Crown Copyright Digital ISBN xxxxxxxx

Title: Pandemic-related assessment experiences and innovation: implications for initial teacher education

Subtitle: A research study commissioned by the Welsh Government

Author(s): Dr Alex Morgan^a; Emmajane Milton^a; Prof David James^a; Dr Judith Kneen^b; Dr Jennie Clement^b; Dr Anna Bryant^b; Prof Gary Beauchamp^b.

^a *Cardiff University*

^b *Cardiff Metropolitan University*

Full Research Report: <surname>, ; Authors (date). <i>Title</i> . Cardiff: Welsh Government, GSR report number xx/201x.> Available at: <hyperlink: http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/... >
--

Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

For further information please contact:

Name:

Division:

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

Tel:

Email: [name.surname@gov.wales](mailto: name.surname@gov.wales)

Table of contents

List of Tables	2
List of Figures	3
Glossary	5
Executive Summary	6
1. Introduction and Background	9
2. Design and Method	18
3. Findings	27
4. Conclusions	77
5. Recommendations	82
References	84
Annex A	88
Annex B	93
Annex C	96
Annex D1	100
Annex D2	108
Annex E1	116
Annex E2	120

List of tables

Table 1: Summary of interview participants	21
Table 2: Role of survey respondents (numerical breakdown)	23
Table 3: Total number of survey respondents by Initial Teacher Education Partnership (numerical breakdown)	24
Table 4: Student teachers' responses (n=222) to the question: Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for students who have completed, but were affected by COVID-19 related adjustments, their teaching qualifications are....	74
Table 5: Teacher educators' responses (n=158) to the question: 'Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for 'typical' students affected by COVID-19 related adjustments the final qualification outcomes are:	75
Table 6: Net ranking of organisations seen as responsible for working with new teachers to support them in the near future	76

List of figures

Figure 1: Role of survey respondents (n=465)	23
Figure 2: Total number of survey respondents by Initial Teacher Education Partnership (n=465)	24
Figure 3: Recent and current ITE students: Perceptions of impact on the duration of total placement time in school by total response (originally planned to be 120 days) (n=223)	44
Figure 4: Current and recent student teachers' agreement/disagreement with the statement: ' <i>I feel I missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to my skills and/or confidence as a teacher</i> ' (n=223)	51
Figure 5: Current and recently qualified student teachers' indications of which of the five professional standards for teaching and leadership had been the most difficult to evidence in their own case (n=219)	64
Figure 6: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes (n=159)	70
Figure 7: Current and recently qualified student teachers' indications of the extent to which they felt confident and competent to support learners in the age group they had trained to teach, specifically in terms of their roles in learner assessment (n=223)	71
Figure 8: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes, by total response (n=159)	72
Figure 9: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes, by percentage (n=159)	72
Figure 10: Student teachers' responses (n=222) to the question: ' <i>Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for students who have completed, but were affected by COVID-19 related adjustments, their teaching qualifications are ...</i> '	73

Figure 11: **Teacher educators' responses (n=158) to the question: '*Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for 'typical' students affected by COVID-19 related adjustments the final qualification outcomes are...*'** 74

Glossary

Acronym	Definition
ALN	Additional Learning Needs
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BAME	Black Asian and Minority Ethnic
BERA	British Educational Research Association
DT	Design Technology
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EWC	Education Workforce Council
FSM	Free School Meal
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GERM	Global Education Reform Movement
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
KS2	Key-Stage Two
LAC	Looked After Children
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE	Physical Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate of Education
PLP	Professional Learning Passport
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
WM	Welsh Medium

Executive Summary

- The purpose of the research was to provide understanding of the impact of pandemic-related changes on Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the implications for ITE in the future. Accordingly, it pays attention to both of the main learning environments involved, i.e. schools and Higher Education Institutions, and the interaction between these.
- The study made use of mixed methods, combining co-constructive workshops, interviews and an online survey, to investigate pandemic-related experiences, adjustments and innovations in schools and in ITE, and their implications. The study was undertaken with participants from across Wales and from all ITE partnerships.
- The research found key changes to the school environment, with assessment moving from marginalisation to dominance, and an erosion of assessment for learning. Whilst schools, teachers, parents, children and young people had shown great resilience and forbearance, there was a marked 'hollowing out' of pedagogic practice. We also found that whilst inequities were exacerbated, there were also subtleties in how a broad range of learners were negatively affected.
- In ITE, partnership working was prominent in responses to the pandemic. However, there were serious reductions in the time that ITE students spent in schools, with just over 25 percent of students gaining around a quarter or less of their planned placement time.
- Our data shows a serious narrowing of assessment experiences. Whilst the rapid expansion of online learning provided some new professional learning opportunities, this was outweighed by the loss of other opportunities of a practical nature. We report a series of related concerns on the part of both student teachers and teacher educators.
- Our analysis demonstrates that the assessment of student teachers was characterised by innovation and creativity, but that there are grounds for concern about the sufficiency of the evidence-base available for judgements about the meeting of professional standards. In addition, our data suggest a likely widespread lack of shared understanding or agreement in relation to

how the new ITE Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership are to be enacted or evidenced. Pandemic-related adjustments also brought fundamental changes to the way in which research featured in the student teachers' programmes.

- Teacher educators, whether school or Higher Education Institution (HEI) based, were strongly of the view that the overall quality of teacher education programmes had been adversely (or profoundly adversely) affected, and over half of them also felt that the qualifications gained by the 'pandemic cohorts' were probably less valid than in previous cohorts.
- There was consensus across participants that employing schools, the Welsh Government and ITE Partnerships (in that order) were the organisations most responsible for supporting new teachers whose ITE had been disrupted.
- The study ends with four recommendations, namely:

Recommendation 1.

As a matter of urgency, Welsh Government (working closely with the Education Workforce Council, Regional Consortia, ITE Partnerships and schools) should lead work to devise a sustained, flexible, responsive programme of individually-tailored support for newly qualified teachers. This should be spread over at least two years and be aimed at those from both 'pandemic cohorts' who are entering employment.

Recommendation 2.

Welsh Government (working closely with the Education Workforce Council, and Regional Consortia) need to pay specific attention and give considerable thought to how individuals from the 'pandemic cohorts' can be supported to secure jobs in the profession.

Recommendation 3.

Across the profession at all levels and in ITE Partnerships, work should be undertaken to further develop shared understandings of the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and how they can be used to support professional growth.

Recommendation 4.

Schools should examine their own pandemic-necessitated changes to assessment practices and consider how these align with their values in terms of pupils' education. Where schools are engaged in teacher education and/or supporting NQTs (Newly Qualified Teachers), they should also consider how such changes impact upon the professional formation of trainee and early career teachers.

1. Introduction and Background

The research reported here is one of six related Welsh Government-commissioned projects focused on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) provision in Wales. It was designed as a response to a call (Annex A) which was first available on 16th June 2020. Following a rapid process based on Expressions of Interest, the commission was awarded on 13th July 2020.

- 1.1 Early in March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared that COVID-19 was a global pandemic. Soon after this, all those working in education systems and institutions had to make changes, often at short notice, in response to a range of shifting restrictions designed to respond to this to a major public health emergency. Some of these responses took the form of trying to preserve elements of routines and interactions that were quite suddenly disrupted, whilst others were less ambitious (though perhaps more realistic), seeking to maintain more focused forms of contact, support, engagement and activity. In Wales such changes came in a period in which wide-ranging and major educational reforms were being introduced and/or were still bedding down, including a new curriculum, re-designed teacher education, reconceived professional standards and a National Approach to Professional Learning (Welsh Government, 2020). Further aspects of planned reform, in the area of assessment, were yet to be introduced (see for example Qualifications Wales, 2020).
- 1.2 The study was designed to respond directly to a question stated in the call, namely ‘how enhanced ITE provision should reflect...how assessment can best be adapted to meet the needs of changed teaching and learning contexts’. As the study progressed the team found a degree of ambiguity in this goal, in that whilst the call headline clearly focused on ITE provision, the subdivided research studies – and, especially, subsequent requests to augment research questions - appeared to warrant a focus on school provision itself. To keep the main focus firmly in view, the team adopted the project title *Pandemic-related assessment experiences and innovations: implications for teacher education*. Discussions with Welsh Government representatives during the project underlined a core purpose to understand the impact of pandemic-related changes on ITE and the implications for ITE in the future. Schools and HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) are the two vital parts of the learning environment for those learning to be professional educators,

and it was important to examine key changes to that learning environment. We did this mainly through the lens of assessment.

1.3 Relevant recent and past research

There are a great many research-based studies with a bearing on the core concerns of this research, though work with a specific focus on the impact of COVID-19 tends to be limited in the depth of insight it can offer. Here we have focused on the three areas of research that we consider most pertinent. These are concerned with:

- the impact of COVID-19 on education provision, equity and learner wellbeing;
- teacher professional formation in Wales;
- the place of assessment in teaching and learning and therefore as a key part of ITE provision.

1.4 *The impact of COVID-19 on education provision, equity and learner wellbeing.*

During 2020 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published a brochure on the impact of COVID-19, drawing on elements of its regular *Education at a Glance* data for the same year (Schleicher, 2020). This highlighted that whilst the virus ‘has affected people regardless of nationality, level of education, income or gender...the same has not been true for its consequences, which have hit the most vulnerable hardest...Education is no exception’ (:4). The introduction states:

‘The lockdowns in response to COVID-19 have interrupted conventional schooling with nationwide school closures in most OECD and partner countries, the majority lasting at least 10 weeks. While the educational community have made concerted efforts to maintain learning continuity during this period, children and students have had to rely more on their own resources to continue learning remotely through the Internet, television or radio. Teachers also had to adapt to new pedagogical concepts and modes of delivery of teaching, for which they may not have been trained. In particular, learners in the most marginalised groups, who don’t have access to digital learning resources or lack the resilience and engagement to learn on their own, are at risk of falling behind’ (Schleicher, 2020: 4)

- 1.5 Few would disagree with this general analysis. However, the latter point about inequality is left unexplored, and is immediately followed by a narrowly economic interpretation of these changes as amounting to a ‘loss of the equivalent of one-third of a year of schooling’, also declaring that ‘learning loss will lead to skill loss’ which ‘relates to productivity’ to the extent that ‘gross domestic product could be 1.5% lower...for the remainder of the century...(and) the total cost would amount to 69% of current Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the typical country’ (:4). Whilst the economic impacts of COVID-19 are of great importance, this form of human capital reasoning which equates ‘learning’ with ‘earning’ is highly questionable and has been challenged for its narrow and simplistic view of education, learning, inequality, the nature of labour markets and indeed its utility for informing policy (e.g., Brown, Lauder & Cheung, 2020; Brown & James, 2020).
- 1.6 Perhaps more helpfully in the context of the current report, the OECD document offers an overview that draws on snapshots of the responses in different countries to providing online platforms, especially for young people in schools, noting both similarities and differences in, for example, the level of autonomy that schools retained. There is also useful commentary on the preparedness of teachers to work with digital approaches and the questions this raises for the nature of existing professional development.
- 1.7 Some research-informed commentary assembles compelling evidence of the exacerbation of inequalities as COVID-related changes have taken hold. Writing mainly about England, Reay (2020) argues that the pandemic accentuated longstanding fault-lines in education. One of these is between seeing education as a public good/end in itself, as opposed to seeing it primarily – or even solely - as a contributor to the efficiency and effectiveness of the labour market. Reay argues that there has been an increase in the prevalence of the latter in policy discourse. Another ‘fault-line’ is the drive to privatisation, visible in many governmental remedies in education and health. Reay illustrates how the already stark inequalities in access to information technology equipment and connectivity amongst children and young people from working-class and Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds has been amplified. For example:

‘When education goes online, the poorest, who are disproportionately from BAME backgrounds...are the most adversely affected...recent analysis of

data from the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment found that while more than 70% of advantaged secondary school students in the United Kingdom had access to online learning platforms, only 40% of their disadvantaged peers had the same access (OECD, 2020)' (Reay, 2020: 313).

- 1.8 Reay (2020) also cites research showing that home-schooling means very different things to children and young people in different circumstances, and that parental willingness for children to return to school early differs along lines of relative affluence (with poorer families being significantly less willing). Her analysis suggests that whilst the cessation of physical school attendance has taken away routine and a daily meal from some disadvantaged children, for others, schools have not always been the warm and welcoming places that we perhaps like to assume they are. Furthermore, schools vary a great deal in other ways: a study by Cullinane & Montacute (2020) showed 'that while 60% of private and 37% of state schools in affluent areas had online platforms to receive pupils' work, only 23% of schools in the most disadvantaged areas had such facilities' (Reay, 2020: 315).
- 1.9 Recognising the potential importance of impacts on young people's wellbeing and mental health, the Welsh Government commissioned a Rapid Evidence Assessment that could inform policy in the area of support for school-aged children. This drew on both COVID-specific studies and on the international literature on disasters, examining in particular 'the potential impacts of lockdown on pupil wellbeing to inform considerations about what support will be needed when schools re-open and whether support needs will differ between primary and secondary schools' (Williams, 2020: 8). The report notes that whilst most studies pertaining to COVID-19 are limited by the absence of baseline data, they do however point to certain effects. International studies suggest that:
- Children confined to their homes may have high rates of depressive and anxiety symptoms.
 - Generally, isolation is a greater worry than school closure or risk of infection for children and their parents. Isolation may produce an increase in behavioural problems as well as some new pro-social behaviours, amongst children.
 - Parental wellbeing is related to children's wellbeing, with probable dependence of the latter on the former.

UK-based studies suggest that:

- ‘...children from lower socio-economic backgrounds seem to be at greater risk of falling behind in their education compared to their peers’, and
- ‘Limited research suggested that UK children with additional needs seem to be at risk of greater mental health difficulties’
- ‘Limited evidence suggested that secondary school aged children are more likely to have greater wellbeing and mental health difficulties than primary school aged children’ (:5)

1.10 *Teacher professional formation in Wales.*

Following a series of key reviews (e.g., Tabberer, 2013; Donaldson, 2015; Furlong, 2015), and as part of much wider set of fundamental reforms, the last few years have seen the establishment of new principles and practices for ITE in Wales. The model is distinctive for its adoption of partnership working and its embracing of research (c.f. BERA/BSA, 2014). It is also linked to a reconceptualization of professional learning and associated standards (Welsh Government, 2018; 2019) that move away from earlier and more atomised ideas of measurement.

1.11 There is a wealth of international research that indicates that the transition from ITE to the teaching profession is a complex process for early career teachers (Feiman-Nemser 2012; Hobson et al. 2009; Langdon et al. 2014). In addition, Waters et al. (2018) argue there is an explicit connection between the professional learning experienced by new teachers and their capacity to provide long-term, high-quality and sustained impact in schools. Central to the retention and professional growth of new teachers is the provision of high-quality professional learning and mentoring that adopts an educative approach, which foster learning from the teaching experiences in which they are immersed on a day-to-day basis. Without these it is likely the role may seem overwhelming, and retention may be negatively impacted (Milton et al. 2020).

1.12 It should be acknowledged that experiences of early career teachers are likely to be highly variable because of the nature of schools as ‘complex sites for professional learning’ (Milton et al. 2020 :3), which are as described by Langdon et al. (2017) as ‘multi-faceted’ (:6) and part of ‘multi-layered systems’ (:2). Successful professional learning experiences for early career teachers need to be nested within strong

school cultures that privilege providing the conditions to discuss and de-privatise their classroom experiences in a way that helps to reframe and learn from them. As part of this, rich and shared understandings of professional standards are vital in supporting trainee and early career teachers to assimilate into the profession. These shared understandings enable policy and other codified requirements to be contextualised and translated so that that make sense in amongst the norms and expectations of negotiated everyday practices (Wenger, 2015).

- 1.13 Early experiences both whilst training and as a Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) can have a lasting impact on the professional formation and identity of teachers and can influence their professional growth and development both positively or negatively as they negotiate the 'reality shock' of entering into the profession (Hobson & Malderez, 2013 :3). Often a lack of alignment between their reality and their ideals can leave early career teachers feeling ill-equipped and like they need to simply 'survive'. This in turn can encourage the unquestioning adoption of existing practices and established orthodoxies and the potential to surrender to 'the inertia of the way we do things round here' (Macbeath, 2019: 43).
- 1.14 Core to professional formation is social engagement and participation in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Ideally early career teachers should have opportunities to share and examine their practice collaboratively with others in order to become 'adaptive experts' (Daly et al. 2020 :654), essential to progressing their development, refining their practice and meeting learners needs. This might prove even more challenging in the current context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic when considered alongside the other factors shaping the current context in Wales, including the amount of significant and aspirational change taking place in the education sector; the still present Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) (Sahlberg, 2011) pressures and the changing political dynamic.
- 1.15 Global challenges in terms of the retention and recruitment of teachers have led to greater consensus regarding the need to provide sustained, contextualised professional learning for early career teachers that addresses their needs as new teachers, supports their developing expertise and the quality of their practice in terms of improved learner experience (Cater, 2017; Sutcher et al., 2016; OECD, 2011).

- 1.16 These insights provide an important viewpoint from which to examine responses to the pandemic in terms of both their immediate impacts and effects and their probable and potential longer-term consequences.
- 1.17 *A focus on assessment.*
There are two principal reasons for making assessment a central concern in a study of the impact of COVID-19 on ITE. The first is that assessment – in the sense of all the many processes and systems that contribute to sorting, ranking, certification and accountability – often dominates thinking about curriculum and pedagogy. This occurs in lay, professional and policy discourse and is also a major area of policy intervention (Harrison et al., 2015). The second reason is that formative assessment (more specifically, *assessment for learning*) appears to be the most widespread of the many pedagogical perspectives that can inform teaching and learning and which are necessary to conceive, plan, understand and evaluate any encounter with an educational purpose.
- 1.18 It is now well over 100 years since the first influential theorisations of the crucial role of feedback in learning, from Bloom and others (William, 2011). William notes that there is a constant tendency to oversimplify the term ‘feedback’ and to use it as if it referred only to information given to learners. In order to *be* feedback, the information needs to be in a ‘feedback loop’, in which it can have an effect on future actions of *both* teachers and learners. Boud & Molloy (2013) made a similar point in respect to the use of the feedback concept in higher and professional education assessment, arguing that some of its original conceptual sophistication had been lost in the process of its translation from fields like engineering.
- 1.19 In the UK, the strongest conceptualisation of formative assessment came to prominence around two decades ago and had considerable and lasting impact on education policy. Black & William’s meta-reviews and analyses confirmed that impressive changes in measured learning could be attributed to the deliberate integration of assessment in ‘instruction’. As they put it:
‘We use the general term assessment to refer to all those activities undertaken by teachers—and by their students in assessing themselves—that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities. Such assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is

actually used to adapt the teaching to meet student needs' (Black & Wiliam, 1998: 140)

- 1.20 Drawing on this and a range of related work, a group of leading assessment experts, the *Assessment Reform Group*, declared a preference for the term *assessment for learning*, defined as:
- ‘...the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there’ (Broadfoot et al., 2002: 2-3).
- 1.21 Whilst they do have distinctive meanings, the terms formative assessment, diagnostic assessment and assessment for learning are sometimes used interchangeably. This is because they collectively signal an important area of professional scope and responsibility for teachers and can have close affinity with a range of other pedagogical perspectives that shape, inform and inspire practice. For example, the concept of ‘scaffolding’, derived from Vygotsky’s work, provides a clear rationale for the teacher to pay constant attention to learners’ current understandings and to adapt the next focused encounter so that it builds on those understandings and is achievable with support (see for example Malik & Wiseman, 2017). Or again, a strong concept of reflective practice depends upon frequent and honest appraisal of whether teaching is being shaped sufficiently by current learner needs (see for example Pollard, 2018). Some concepts of creativity, when applied to teaching, depend entirely on having an accurate grasp of how learners are currently understanding something (see for example Ashcroft & James, 1999). For similar reasons, a host of other philosophical, psychological and sociological work has paid attention to the centrality of relationships that enable sufficient levels of communication and trust for successful learning to take place (e.g., Biesta, 2019; Boylan, 2010; Hall & Hall, 1988).
- 1.22 It is clearly beyond the scope of this study to understand the impact of pandemic-related changes through a wide range of pedagogical lenses. At the same time, whilst interpretations do vary, our view is that practices associated with assessment for learning are sufficiently identifiable to both new and established professional educators that they provide a useful focus as we seek to understand the nature and extent of changes to teaching and learning.

1.23 Initial research questions

The Aims and Objectives of the research can be seen at the beginning of the original call issued by Welsh Government (see Annex A). After adjustments requested by the funder at the start of the project, the research began with the following eight research questions:

- I. What range of changes, adaptations and innovations constitute the main trends in recent school adjustments to summative, formative and diagnostic assessment, and how do these relate to the extant research evidence?
- II. What are the potential implications of these changes for equity and opportunity for learners, including in Welsh Medium settings?
- III. What are the greatest challenges for learners, teachers, leaders, schools in regard to assessment?
- IV. Has COVID-19 - related disruption given rise to new forms of creative or innovative assessment on the part of teachers or schools, and how do these relate to distance and blended learning?
- V. Which features of ITE programmes do most to support student teachers' understanding and capacities in respect of summative, formative and diagnostic assessment?
- VI. What additional and/or augmented curriculum provision is required in ITE programmes to prepare student teachers for an immediate future characterised by new forms and practices of assessment?
- VII. What are the implications of all the above for policy and practice with regard to the summative, formative and diagnostic assessment of (and with) student teachers themselves?
- VIII. What are the implications for professional formation and the meeting of the revised professional standards?

2. Design and Method

- 2.1 The research was conceived in two phases, though the originally planned schedule was subject to some slippage owing to COVID-19 related difficulties faced by many participants, especially those working in schools and those with school-age children. The **first phase** (originally conceived as July 2020 – December 2020, then extended to February 2021) drew on data from across two ITE Partnerships in Wales¹ and the context in terms of the wider policy, professional and regulatory frameworks². This phase provided a rich and detailed evidence-base of changed practices in ITE and in schools. School-based colleagues in the Partnerships were involved from the outset via the co-constructive workshops (see below), and this built upon the now-widespread goal of ITE Partnerships in Wales to build research capacity and awareness across their structures. The majority of the semi-structured interviews with a cross-section of the key stakeholders (see below) took place in this phase, an exception to this were interviews undertaken with current 20/21 cohort ITE students in order to allow time for them to maximise the length of their ITE experience prior to interview.
- 2.2 An overlapping **second phase** (originally conceived as November 2020 – March 2021 but revised to become January - April) used outcomes of phase one to frame data gathering with a cross-section of the key stakeholders in parallel ITE arrangements across Wales. This took the form of an online survey aimed at both ITE students (current and recent), and staff concerned with ITE provision (both HEI and School-based). We originally envisaged further interviews with stakeholders from the wider policy, professional and regulatory frameworks: in the event, these proved to be beyond the resources available to us. The main purpose of the second phase was to complement the depth of analysis developed in the first phase, enabling us to arrive at a Wales-wide understanding. We envisaged that the two phases would provide a robust analysis that will fulfil the twin aims of the call, providing both research-based evidence on the implications of the disruption for enhanced provision of ITE, and a major contribution to research capacity and

¹ ITE Partnerships in Wales – are a partnership between a university and schools who work together to provide the professional education and development of student teachers, preparing them for work in school.

² Professional framework as understood by the 'Professional standards for teaching and leadership' and regulatory framework as overseen by Qualifications Wales who regulate qualifications, other than degrees, in Wales.

activity in keeping with the emerging *National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry*.

2.3 The project therefore adopted a mixed-method design (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Torrance, 2012) and combined three methods of data-gathering that were related progressively and iteratively: co-constructive workshops incorporating focus groups; semi structured interviews; a survey instrument.

2.4 Co-constructive workshops. Co-constructive workshops were already an established way of working within the ITE Partnerships on issues such as collaborative planning of provision. An open invitation was sent to Partnership schools (within one Partnership) and a separate invitation sent to special education schools to participate in the online after school Co-constructive workshops. Participants typically included staff from lead partner and clinical practice English and Welsh medium schools as well as HEI ITE staff. For this research project, three dedicated workshops were undertaken, drawing on representation from secondary (n =4), primary (n =6) and special education sectors (n =4). Each workshop lasted approximately one hour and was led by a member of the research team. A copy of the invitation/specification including the topic guide can be seen in Annex B. Each of the workshops provided three important functions, enabling school staff to:

- (i) inform each other and the research team of the nature of major changes in key aspects of school provision;
- (ii) inform each other and the research team about current and recent changes for ITE students;
- (iii) contribute to shaping the research project as it was first forming, by informing the development of the research instruments.

In more general terms, the team also felt that co-constructive workshops had the benefit of encouraging teacher agency (Sinnema et al., 2020) and fostering engagement with more meaningful professional learning (Egan et al., 2019). Whilst the timing and rapidity of the commissioning process did not allow a design that would engage headteachers / teachers as full members of a research team, we nevertheless felt that the project could contribute to longer-term goals of realising more collaborative forms of teacher professional enquiry (Welsh Government, 2020). To this end, the research project was outlined within one ITE Partnership

Board and a brief discussion contributed to its final shape. There are plans to share and discuss the outcomes directly with ITE Partnerships.

- 2.5 **Semi-Structured Interviews** were conducted with a purposive sample of the key stakeholders within two ITE Partnerships, including partnership school leaders, teachers and those in schools with specific ITE roles (such as ITE Coordinators, Senior Mentors and Research Champions and their equivalent); HEI-based ITE staff including those with leadership, governance and coordination responsibilities; current and recently graduated student teachers. It is important to note that some of these stakeholders had direct experience of more than one ITE partnership – this is because many schools in Wales have partnership arrangements with several ITE partnerships simultaneously (indeed within our sample a number had relationships with three). Interview questions were shaped in team discussions which took direct account of the outcomes of the co-constructive workshops together with aspects of: current commentary on the effects of COVID-19 in schools and HEIs; research literature on professional learning and assessment in schools and HEIs; our proposed research questions. The interview schedules can be seen at Annex C. The sampling frame was constructed to provide a balanced cross-section of participants (headteachers; subject / phase leads; ITE coordinators/ mentors/ research champions and their equivalent; current ITE students and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and ITE HEI programme staff) from nursery, primary, secondary and special settings; geographical locations in relation local authorities and consortia; urban/rural schools; national categorisation status; language medium (Welsh/English/Bilingual) and faith schools. We were not able to realise an initial ambition also to interview a selection of key national figures in the policy, professional and regulatory frameworks; however, the team has had some contact throughout with relevant individuals in the Welsh Government, Qualifications Wales, Local Authorities, Regional Consortia and Estyn, partly via meetings facilitated by Welsh Government.
- 2.6 The interviews were conducted online using either *Zoom* or *Teams*, and most lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. They were conducted in the language preference (English / Welsh) of the interviewees. They were semi-structured, in that all interviewers used the schedules (Annex C) to ensure coverage of key areas, but interviewees were encouraged to range more widely within the general topic or

sometimes addressed questions that were yet to be asked. The online nature of the interviews reduced their capacity to generate and convey some of the rich contextual and non-verbal data that can often be had from face-to-face interviews (Thomas, 2013). It is also worth noting that for most interviewees and for all interviewers, the online interview was within a mode of interaction which had come to fill most of their working life during the preceding nine months. Interviews were translated (where necessary) and transcribed in full and shared by the team using a secure online file storage facility. We conducted a total of 38 interviews, summarised in Table 1.

2.7 Whilst participants were identified because of the role they held as indicated in Table. 1 it is worth noting that many held other responsibilities (e.g., within a school, heads who were senior mentors or research champions who were assistant heads, etc.). They therefore responded to questions (as is understandable) holistically rather than disentangling their responses by their specific roles. In two interviews the schools requested that two staff attended the interviews as they felt this would present the different perspectives that were important in their context. This also demonstrated their recognition of the importance of the research and their wish to support it.

Table. 1: Summary of interview participants

Participant category	Number	Phase (where relevant)	English	Welsh / Bilingual
Headteacher / Senior Leader, (Primary Secondary, Special)	8	Secondary	2	1
		Primary	3	1
		Special	1	
Teacher (Primary, Secondary, Special)	9	Secondary	3	1
		Primary	2	1
		Special	2	
ITE Partnership Leads	2			2
HEI Teacher Educators	3		1	2
NQT & student teacher 2019/20	4	Secondary	1	1
		Primary	1	1
Student teacher 2020/21	5	Secondary		1
		Primary	4	
School-based Teacher Educators (Primary Secondary, Special)	3	Secondary	1	1
		Primary	1	
School-based Teacher Educators (Primary Secondary, Special)	6	Secondary	2	1
		Primary	3	
	40*			

*Note: The numbers here do not exactly relate to the total number of interviews conducted because there were two instances where two staff from the same setting participated to present alternative perspective and roles for that setting, therefore the total number of interviews are 38 whilst the total number of participants were 40.

2.8 The design of the **online survey instrument** built upon a first-pass analysis of the interview data. The instrument took the form of a short online *Qualtrics* survey aimed at current and recent ITE students, and those staff whose work included ITE provision in HEIs and in schools. It was distributed through each of the ITE partnership across Wales, following direct and personal communication and agreement with lead staff within each of the ITE partnerships. In addition it was shared via a range of other established networks across Wales including members of the Wales HEI Education Research Alliance (WHERA), Regional consortia, the National Academy for Educational Leadership, the International Professional Development Association Cymru and via social media channels e.g Twitter. The aim of this approach was to maximise the response rate at a time when the sector was being asked to complete other COVID-19 related education surveys. The survey collected contextual demographic data and contained a mixture of attitudinal, experiential and evaluative questions requiring categorical or Likert-style responses, and open text questions. The latter provided respondents with the opportunity to provide a more nuanced response to the specific prompts from the scale questions, as well as any additional thoughts they had on the issues raised. In addition, as well as generic questions to all respondents, the survey provided branches of questions to explore the specific contexts of student teachers, teacher educators or school-based staff. The survey was designed to be completed quite quickly, a point we signalled clearly in the invitation so as to encourage response. A copy of the survey instrument, together with the general invitation, can be seen at Annexes D1 and D2. Partly to avoid clashes with other Wales-wide data collection known to us, we timed the survey to run as late as possible in our research project, sending it out in the two weeks before Easter 2021. A total of 465 responses were made. Figure 1 below shows an initial breakdown of these by role of respondent with Table 2 providing the associated numerical breakdown. Figure 2 below shows their distribution across the ITE provision/partnerships in Wales with Table 3 providing the associated numerical breakdown.

Figure. 1: Total number of survey respondents by role (n=465)

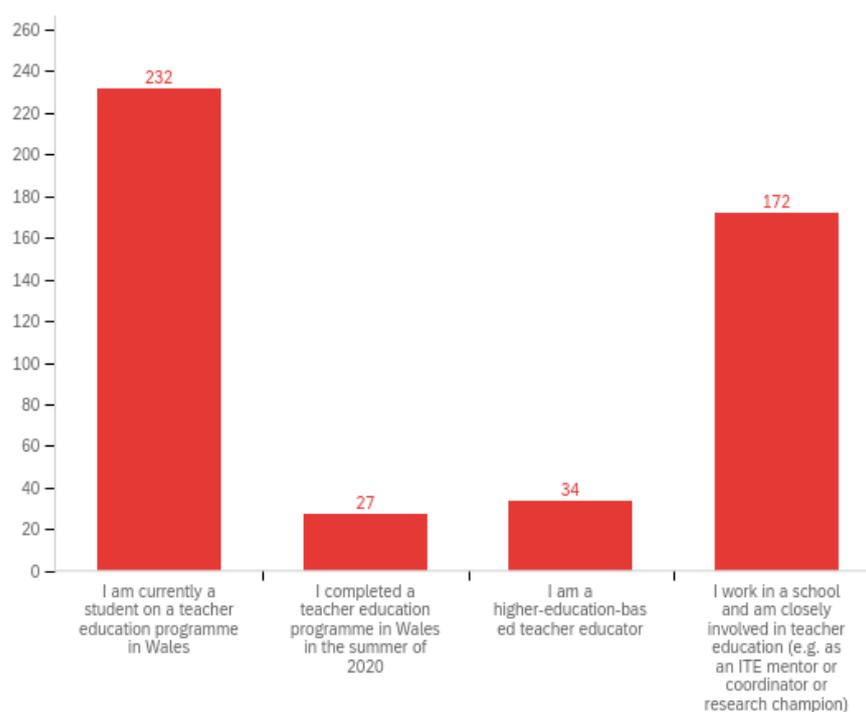


Table. 2: Role of survey respondents (numerical breakdown)

Statement	Percentage	Total no
I am currently a student on a teacher education programme in Wales	50%	232
I completed a teacher education programme in Wales in the summer of 2020	6%	27
I am a higher-education-based teacher educator	7%	34
I work in a school and am closely involved in teacher education (e.g., as an ITE mentor or coordinator or research champion)	37%	172
Total	100%	465

Figure. 2: Total number of survey respondents by Initial Teacher Education Partnership (n=465)

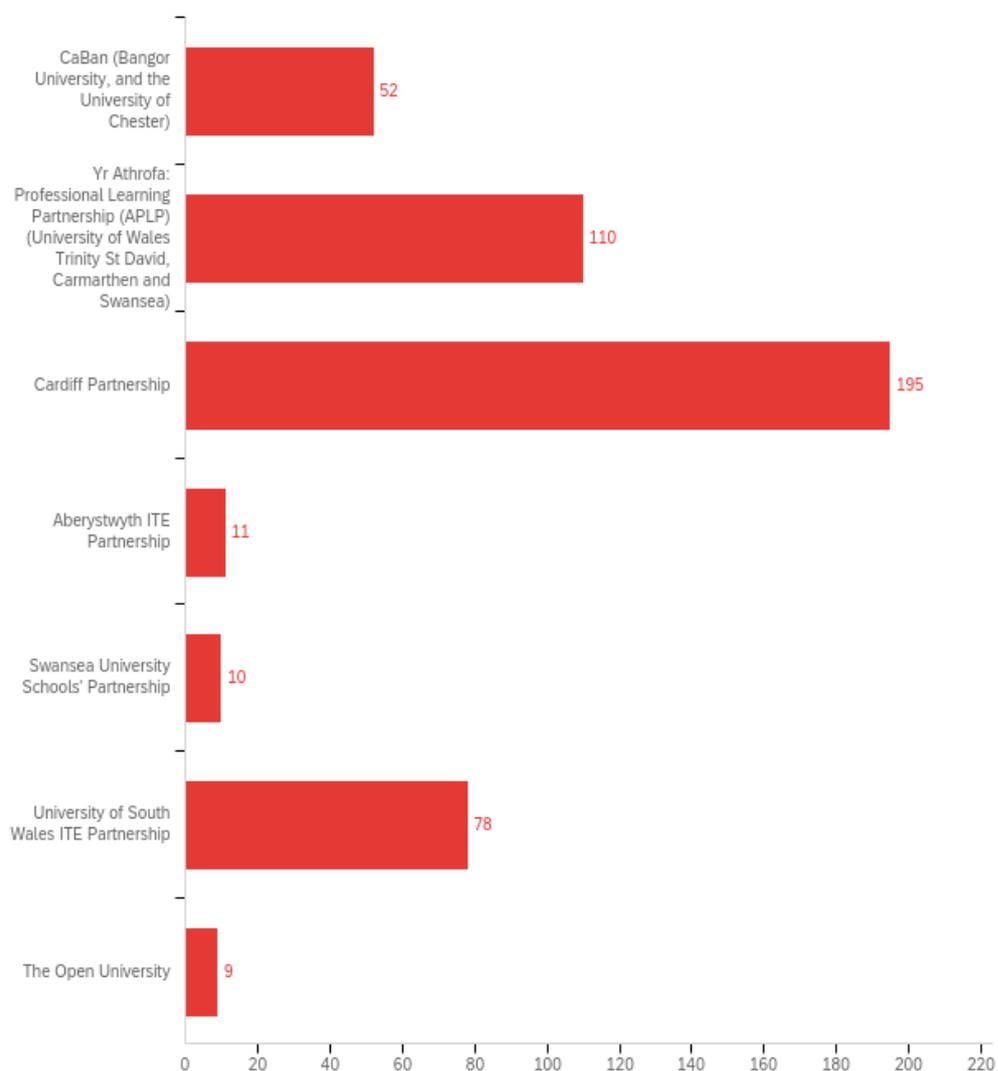


Table. 3: Total number of survey respondents by Initial Teacher Education Partnership (numerical breakdown)

ITE partnership	Percentage	Total no
CaBan (Bangor University, and the University of Chester)	11%	52
Yr Athrofa: Professional Learning Partnership (APLP) (University of Wales Trinity St David, Carmarthen and Swansea)	24%	110

Cardiff Partnership	42%	195
Aberystwyth ITE Partnership	2%	11
Swansea University Schools' Partnership	2%	10
University of South Wales ITE Partnership	17%	78
The Open University	2%	9
Total	100%	465

2.9 Data analysis

Analysis of interviews had several stages and began with a perusal of transcripts against themes arising from the original co-constructive workshops. Later stages included team members specialising in reading all transcripts for what they would illuminate against the original research questions, leading to cross-team discussion of draft analytical notes in which there was opportunity for both confirmation and challenge. This process of qualitative analysis was team-based and drew on the 'constant comparison' element of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Thomas & James, 2006) and on general guidance for qualitative analysis (e.g., Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). The group-based thematic analysis included between-member checks for reliability. Whilst the process has resulted in an account that has the individual and collective endorsement of the team members, it is worth noting that team-based analysis of qualitative data is more difficult online than in face-to-face meetings. The process was helped greatly by pre-existing collaborative work between most team members, a good level of established trust, and by systematic features such as frequent team meetings followed by clear notes summarising agreements (Fernald & Duclos, 2005). Survey data were analysed via normal descriptive means, with some elements of cross-tabulation.

2.10 Ethical approval and data-sharing

The research project was submitted to the School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on 22nd September 2020 and a favourable response received on 20th October 2020. The participant information sheet and consent forms are shown at Annex E. Key ethical considerations such as issues of recruitment of participants, recording of informed consent, participants rights to anonymity and to opt out at any stage of the process until publication, storage of research data were scrutinized in accordance with British Educational Research Association (BERA) 2018 guidelines and Cardiff University's policies with regard Ethics and

subsequently noted by Cardiff Metropolitan University. A Collaboration Agreement which includes clauses relating to data-sharing was drawn up in February 2021 and signed by both universities.

2.11 **Research team**

The research team was drawn from the established Cardiff ITE Partnership Research Advisory Board, which is the key mechanism for enhancing research activity, awareness and application in the Cardiff ITE Partnership's strategy and operation. It included high-level expertise and experience in the following: assessment research; the design, delivery and leadership of teacher education; teacher education research; Welsh medium expertise; further professional learning; leadership of work with school Research Champions; research leadership and quality assessment. Team members were: Dr Alex Morgan (CU); Emmajane Milton (CU); Prof David James (CU); Dr Judith Kneen (CMU); Dr Jennie Clement (CMU); Dr Anna Bryant (CMU); Prof Gary Beauchamp (CMU).

3. Findings

- 3.1 As noted in the introductory section, the list of research questions extended during early negotiations, giving a broader focus than that originally proposed. Whilst data were gathered in respect of all research questions (and all research questions contribute to the analysis presented), this final report reflects adherence to the Welsh Government's original aims and objectives (see Annex A) and therefore has as its main focus *understanding the impact of pandemic-related changes on ITE and the implications for ITE in the future*. Schools and HEIs are the two vital parts of the overall learning environment for those becoming teachers, and it was important to describe and understand key changes to that learning environment. We did this mainly through the lens of assessment.
- 3.2 Accordingly, this section is organised in three main parts. In part one we present an analysis of key changes to the school environment, particularly around teaching, learning and assessment. In part two, we examine how these changes, together with those in HEIs, altered the nature of ITE. In part three we seek to make sense of all these changes and implications in the light of some key concepts introduced earlier, including equity, teacher professional formation and assessment.

3.3 Findings part one - Key changes to the school environment, particularly around teaching, learning and assessment

In attempting to understand the key changes to school environment and particularly teaching, learning and assessment it is necessary to acknowledge the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the inequalities experienced by learners. These were reported by interviewees to have become far more acute and widespread as a result of the pandemic. Without doubt interviewees were clear that already disadvantaged learners were particularly negatively impacted both during periods of lockdown and once back in school. In addition, a number of important subtleties were also consistently reported, including:

1. The variation in experiences for learners is impacted by so many individual factors that school staff felt it was difficult to discern any overall pattern to this.
2. The attributes that commonly tend to confer advantage in educational settings (such as, social class, cognitive ability, high levels of parental interest and support, gifted and talented students) did not seem to be as protective in light of the learners' experiences during the pandemic to date.
3. Familiar categories such as Free School Meal (FSM), Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Looked After Children (LAC), English as an Additional Language (EAL), etc were viewed having high levels of variation within them – with some pupils excelling, some making limited or no progress and some pupils regressing in their learning.
4. Each school's response was different, based on a myriad of complex and interrelated factors and exacerbated by the ongoing individual patterns of disruption faced by pupils and/or classes needing to self-isolate and this impact this had on continuity for learners.

3.4 These themes were illustrated across several of the accounts, illustrated by the following grouped extracts:

'the variation was unbelievable... when they were talking about, you know, some of the experiences [in schools] ... compared to the others, then you could see that there was, you know, quite a large, you know, difference. And I think I was quite surprised if I'm honest... by the differences.'

Senior Leader Secondary School

‘it’s important that the schools identify and know the children who have fallen behind. Not perhaps your ones who have support anyway with additional learning needs but the children perhaps who would not have been on your radar prior to lockdown in terms of needing a little boost ... As a Welsh medium school I would say their language [was adversely affected] ... I would worry about if we were to go into a period of lockdown again.’

Senior Leader Primary School, Welsh Medium

‘[We have] lots of professional parents who are working. We were a hub school ... and we had children here from 11 different schools. But we did try to do their home learning with them. I know there wasn't an expectation there but we felt that these children were missing out because, bless them, their parents were on the frontline.’

Headteacher Primary School

‘within our bubbles, once somebody had caught it, the bubbles were off. So initially we were year group bubbles. So if one child went, the whole 220 went. Then we were lucky at Key Stage 3, we split it into half year group bubbles, but towards December, I think, when we actually finished, and we finished early, we had one and a half year groups left in school.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.5 *From marginalisation to dominance of assessment in schools*

From March to July 2020, along with other day-to-day features and processes of learning, assessment was significantly disrupted and marginalised for the majority of learners in schools. In many cases assessment almost disappeared as teachers had to prioritise keeping in contact, learner wellbeing and supporting pupils and families to get online:

‘I think during the spring... (and) the summer term last year, so much of the work planned, it was very much on supporting pupil and parent wellbeing.’

Headteacher Primary School

‘...basically any iPads we had in school, any laptops in school, we sent out. They went out to all the kids. So we made sure that every family had at least one device in the home... That they could use. But again, you know, where there’s three children in a family... You know, they share it.’

Senior Leader Secondary School

3.6 From September 2020 most schools appeared to be able to make a concerted effort to understand and evaluate the impact of the first lockdown on learners, to ascertain ‘where they were’ and what needed to be done to support them in moving forward. Many interviewees in both primary and secondary settings described a new and different emphasis on assessment, driven by the need to have data to be able to make judgements, more than the need to plan and design learning. In primary contexts leaders reported an increase in emphasis on assessment on the basis of needing to understand ‘where their learners were’ and to inform strategic plans for catch up. The shift was however most pronounced in secondary schools, where the move to centre-based assessments appeared to have driven an increase in frequency and intensity of assessment of learners. Some staff and students described assessment as having become constant and undifferentiated, blurring the distinctions between diagnostic, formative and summative forms.

3.7 This intensification of focus on assessment is much more than a change in just one aspect of provision and experience, and it is part of a wider and fundamental change in the nature of teaching and learning. We heard of some pupils in secondary contexts who now perceived *all* work undertaken as likely to inform summative assessments, making them reluctant to ‘have a go’ because they risked ‘getting it wrong’:

‘We’ve been trying for ages to get kids to understand that it’s okay to make mistakes and that’s how you learn. But now making a mistake is so high stakes...’

Teacher Secondary School

3.8 In primary settings, responses indicated a range of consequences, including for those pupils who had been working intensively with parents during lockdown. Where some children returned to school having made great strides forward, others

had a fresh reluctance to 'make mistakes', perhaps due to pedagogic approaches in the home which discouraged the taking of risks and learning from mistakes:

'...you can see that nervousness, of kind of, 'can I do it'? 'Can I get it wrong'? And because we try to get this culture of...it's okay, mistakes are good, you know? If you make a mistake, you're one step closer to learning...I don't think parents, or all parents, were able to portray that with their children...and probably got frustrated with them a little bit more than we do as professionals. So we've seen a little bit more reluctance, and we've had to work on our kind of classroom ethos again to instil that it's okay. You know, 'you're doing well, let's try another way. Let's come at it a different angle'...and that's no, you know, bad reflection on the parents. They tried their best.'

Teacher Primary School

- 3.9 It seems that the rapid shift in circumstances and the associated affordances and constraints imposed by those circumstances have shaped changes in both practices and perceptions around assessment. We consider it likely that this may signal something much broader and deeper brought about by changes to experiences of dialogue, physical space and relationships - which has caused a shift in emphasis in terms of the nature of pedagogy and the working conceptualisation of learning itself.
- 3.10 The initial closure of schools and the continued need for online provision, together with social distancing practices, have resulted in a lack of face-to-face dialogue and discussion. These often surface in our data as challenging aspects of the assessment practices adopted during and immediately after pandemic lockdowns, and they seem to represent an imposed shift away from pre-pandemic practice that was relational, dialogic and which made particular use of space. There was recognition that formative assessment when face-to-face involved 'feeling' and 'reading people', and this relational aspect was compromised in the new 'virtual environment':

'So for example, checking for understanding in a room in a very formative, very sort of quick way, actually to do that in a virtual environment where you remove some of the feeling in the room, you remove some of the, you know, just the ability to be able to read people's faces. Added to that, it may...I think it's making assessment in all its capacity just far more challenging.'

3.11 Some interviewees reflected on how the loss of physical classroom space and the creation of virtual spaces was creating challenges for pupils and teachers trying to engage in dialogue and discussion:

‘We’re marking the pieces of work that are being uploaded, but it’s not the same. If you were in school...you would hear the conversations that are going on, whereas that isn’t possible and...I want to ask...every child...a question to see where they are, but you know, a lot of children are not very happy speaking on the computer. So we might get the... (child who is) really underconfident, so then you’re not going to directly ask them, so I don’t think they’re having the experience, because...you’re missing out on what you can hear... (and normally) you learn an awful lot from listening to peer assessments. So it’s very, very different. We’re marking the work, they’re given feedback, they’re doing all that, but it’s not the same.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.12 A minority of teachers spoke about instances of pupils who are typically reluctant to engage out loud in school commenting and responding more frequently to lesson content online than they ever did in physical classrooms. This was attributed to the facility to contribute anonymously, which reduced the risk these students may perceive in appearing to be too knowledgeable in front of their peers. However, and by contrast, we heard the opposite tendency mentioned more often. As one secondary teacher put it:

‘The truth is that children in secondary schools DO NOT LIKE TO SPEAK OR COMMUNICATE much when on-line! It’s a job to get them to do this even with the upper sixth form. It’s a real job to get them to do this.’ (Original emphasis)

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.13 Some schools reported a closely-related unintended consequence in rising levels of anxiety about assessment, amongst pupils, staff and parents. Anxiety was expressed in respect of

- pupils, particularly in their exam years, who had become subject to seemingly constant assessment;

- staff, who felt responsible but were unclear about the 'rules of the game' in terms of summative assessments;
- parents, concerned for example that children's achievements would not be equivalently recognised in terms of paper qualifications.

3.14 It is important to recognise that raised levels of anxiety will fundamentally alter the nature of the relationships that are core to productive teaching and learning. Some teachers described how they had to consider their approach to assessment in light of pupil perceptions that they were continually being assessed in ways that might impact the grades of their future qualifications.

'I think probably the biggest change is we are as a profession now incredibly... I guess nervous is the right word, of assigning grades to work, and (we are) being very, very careful about how we talk to pupils, and also... what we put in front of them as an assessment because pupils are just feeling literally... particularly in exam classes, they are feeling that everything they do is being kind of assessed in some way and will go some way to shape their centre assessed grade... that has really, really shaped how they see school and assessment in particular... as teachers... we're having to be so, so careful about the language we use, about how we assess in the classroom. And where you might not have thought twice about just doing a kind of quick test or a quick who can remember this, and you wouldn't have thought it would do any damage whatsoever if they didn't. Now actually we're having to think really carefully, because with some students it's really stressing them out if they feel that they haven't done well on what they perceive as an assessment.'

Assistant Head Secondary School

As another secondary interviewee put it, where students undertake what would normally be just routine, day-to-day tasks, all of a sudden those tasks appear to be 'high accountability and high stakes, even when they're not'.

3.15 *The erosion of assessment for learning*

Many teachers were confronted with changes, challenges and frustrations in regard to assessment for learning, and these took three main forms. Firstly, concerns were

highlighted about the possibility of meaningful assessment for learning when working remotely, and this included worries about the provenance of the completed work (and therefore what it could be taken to signify about the pupil's learning), but also about a seemingly sharper distinction between engagement and non-engagement amongst learners. These concerns were especially acute amongst those working with the youngest children or in special schools:

'It's a lot harder for the littlies, especially when you're setting practical tasks where you're saying...(for example) go out on a walk, find five different colours. Can you make a set of this and that? You don't actually know if they've done it. And these lovely photographs come in and you think, well, Mum and Dad might have done that. Did they then spend the time and count them? Or did they say, yeah, that's five, there we go. Take a photo, you know? It is really, really hard. So I think...it's a lot easier to gauge in key stage two than in the foundation phase, for work that we saw. And...for the online platforms, the things...that...(were) coming back in from them, yeah, I think that helped us to understand and have that dialogue back and forward with the children, for those that are engaged. And then there were a whole void of children that did nothing. And they're the children that concern me the most.'

Headteacher Primary School

'but for our pupils with multiple learning difficulties, it's extreme... you know, it was extremely difficult for families to be able to continue the learning even though we provided all of the programmes that were necessary. We provided instructions and, you know, support and advice, and all of that. It's still very difficult to expect a parent of a child with extremely special needs to understand what progress looks like for those pupils ... You know, a lot of the work that we do with our pupils, you have to be very close to them. You have to be engaging in a very sensory and animated way. And that's quite difficult to emulate virtually.'

Headteacher Special School

- 3.16 A second set of concerns pertained to the physical return of pupils to school in the Autumn term in 2020. Here, assessment for learning in its broadest sense was

impacted, as COVID-19 social distancing restrictions reduced or eliminated teachers' ability to be 'hands-on' in supporting learners in formative ways whilst engaged in physical classroom teaching. In Key-Stage 2 (KS2) and above 'teaching from the front' or 'behind the line' meant that interactions and support of a more individual, subtle or targeted nature were almost impossible. Interviewees also spoke about how with all children 'facing the front' there were significantly reduced opportunities for pupils to engage in peer assessment and formative learning through collaboration. The following accounts express views that were widely shared:

'Within schools, initially teachers were really nervous and really anxious about marking books and having that...you know, the possible transmission (of the virus) from a book if they're getting too close...Also being able to lean over a child and mark, and say, 'It's really great what you're doing there but you need to do this, that and the other'. So that social distancing has had an impact on immediate feedback too.'

Headteacher Primary School

'Normally as a teacher, you know, you wander around the room...you read the room. You go and stand next to the pupil who is misbehaving, or you go and stand next to the pupil who is really struggling and give them some subtle, surreptitious help if you like. That's really hard to do when you've got to stay in a yellow box at the front of your room. I think that connection, that kind of normal stuff we do without thinking, I think it does mean that it's more difficult for children to perhaps be picked up and be given help in a timely way.'

Assistant Head Secondary School

- 3.17 A third set of concerns focused on the difficulties generated by hybrid practice, where teachers were working in both physical and virtual environments simultaneously. In some interviews in both primary and secondary contexts, teachers highlighted the challenges and in particular the problems this posed for providing high quality, focused and timely feedback to all learners. Particular concerns were raised about managing workload related to this kind of formative assessment whilst hybrid teaching:

‘Class teachers, you know, if they’re in school and children are self-isolating, if a child uploads a piece of work, I have said to my staff they've got 48 hours to respond because they are still teaching and dealing with their day-to-day stuff as well as supporting blended learning. So ...having that immediate feedback is not always there.’

Headteacher Primary School

- 3.18 Such challenges were seen to be magnified for early years and special schools, with interviewees highlighting their need to be in shared physical spaces with their pupils, to effectively engage in formative assessment practices:

‘You know, the basic thing of an assessment and teaching is...you're teaching, they're interacting, you're responding, you're assessing because you're watching...I think all teachers, not just our teachers but all teachers have lost that (when teaching) virtually to some degree. But for mine it's compounded by the fact that there's communication difficulties, there's hearing and vision impairments...all of that makes it very difficult to do without being right in front of the child.’

Headteacher Special School

- 3.19 In secondary contexts there was a clear view that where assessments were happening online these were dominated by written pieces, as anything practical couldn't take place. This was clearly of particular significance in subjects with strong practical elements such as Science, Physical Education (PE), Art, Design Technology (DT), yet it was also a marked change in other subject areas too, where practical or physical group-based activities, often formatively assessed, would be a normal part of a varied and creative approach to teaching and learning.
- 3.20 It is difficult to sum up these multi-faceted changes in the nature of school-based education. On the one hand it is clear that in many instances reported in the interviews schools, teachers, children and young people have shown remarkable resilience and commitment in coping with severe disruptions, and there are some reports of examples of interesting adaptations and positive innovations. Nevertheless, there is also another clear theme running through the accounts we have gathered: it is that a net effect of responses to the pandemic has been a restricted or hollowed out version of pedagogical practice and an increased

separation between the plans and wishes of professionals and the actual experiences of learners. For example, 'teaching from the front' may appear to some people to signal some sort of 'return' to something 'traditional', but any level of familiarity with pedagogic and curriculum theory or contemporary professional practice shows it to be the imposition of a particularly narrow and even stereotypical view of what it is to teach and learn.

- 3.21 Our main findings with regard to the key changes to the school environment, particularly around teaching, learning and assessment, are therefore twofold. The first is that pandemic-related changes have done more than weaken or dilute the character of educational encounters: responses to COVID-19 have radically altered what is happening in the name of teaching, learning and assessment. The second is that whilst our data confirm the general findings of other work on equity and wellbeing, there are also important subtleties in how a broad range of learners have been affected.
- 3.22 Given the core purposes of our study, it is important to acknowledge that the changes we have outlined are also changes in the school as a learning environment for students in initial teacher education, to which we turn in the next section. The importance of this cannot be overstated: as the research on professional formation cited earlier in this report illustrates, the schools and classrooms experienced by trainee (and early career) teachers have a deep impact on how they build, hone and refine their ideas of what is normal and expected in relation to the nature of teaching, learning and assessment of pupils.

3.23 Findings part two – The impact of responses to COVID-19 on Initial Teacher Education

Recent educational reforms in Wales have been wide-ranging, and amongst other things have led to new arrangements for the provision of ITE characterised by partnership working between HEIs and schools and a new emphasis on research-informed practice. Also significant for our concerns in this report is the fundamental shift in how professional standards are conceived, described and measured, which may be summarised as the replacement of a ‘threshold competence’ model with a more process-oriented ‘professional learning’ model. This means that the learning environment for ITE students has been evolving in the last two years or so. More than before, this learning environment encompasses both the school and HEI settings *and* the ways in which these relate and interact. In this section we present what we have learnt from the cross-section of key stakeholders that participated in both our interviews and survey about changes to these joint and mutually dependent learning environments.

3.24 *Context: responding in partnership*

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant changes for ITE Partnerships. These changes were complex, challenging and resulted in different experiences for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 ITE cohorts. Overall, some groups of students were impacted more than others, including: those who were from vulnerable groups and had a personal support learning programme; those with mental health issues; those who had been ill and missed days; those who were international students; those with mentors who had been ill; those in classes who had to self-isolate more than others.

3.25 ITE student teachers (and current NQTs) had highly variable experiences depending on the schools they were placed in and how these responded to COVID-19 and the associated restrictions, as outlined in Part One above. Many school-based teacher educators voiced concerns about the ways in which student teachers had missed out or were continuing to miss out:

‘there can’t be a blanket thrown over this at the moment, you know, that...(it’s) got to be sort of looked at school level because, you know, a school a few miles down the road might have had... have had a term that was fine last term,

you know? So, and I think that's just... that's... that's the hard bit with this, this is the hard bit to juggle, isn't it? If...they're all going to have different experiences...I think, you know, they're going to have lots of gaps in...in their toolkit, if you like because they haven't had the experience ... I don't think they've had...particularly with our Key Stage 4 students and Key Stage 5, I don't think they've had hardly any experience really there, you know? I... I think staff have been very reluctant/cautious that to... to just hand over those classes, because they're desperately trying to get content... content finished, they're not knowing what the end outcome is, you know? So, I think they have missed out big time there.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.26 We heard about schools that had made it clear that their key priorities at this time were their learners and staff, and that the student teachers on placement were less of a concern. Some schools enabled a broad range of learning experiences online and encouraged student teachers to be fully involved in delivering these whereas others provided more limited experiences, sometimes complicated by safeguarding issues in relation to access to equipment or by school or local authority policies on teaching live lessons.

'I suppose, we've [been] faced with lots of difficulties because, of course, you can't use your own device at home, so we gave out Chromebooks to all our student [teachers], because we got laptops as teachers not standalone computers, and we didn't have enough laptops for students [student teachers], so everybody that comes with us has got a Chromebook, but then, of course, with a Chromebook you can't blur your background, and unless you're invited in the right way into a Team I've got to make sure that student teacher is part of my Team or they can't see the chat. So, I mean, it's just been huge implications using Teams for all of them.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.27 Specifically for the 2020/21 Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) cohort their experience was dominated by a front-loaded teacher education model which participants acknowledged was not in keeping with what is known about the most effective types of ITE models internationally. In addition, the dominant practice in

school, due to COVID-19 restrictions, of teaching 'from the front' and 'behind the line' were perceived to potentially have lasting implications for student teachers even once restrictions are lifted. For many this will have been their only experience of teaching pupils. For students within these cohorts this presents a lack of opportunity to teach pupils in ways that are typical of that which is widely recognised to be good, pre-pandemic, face-to-face classroom practice.

'The other difference in terms of schools, talking to some other teachers, is that the pedagogies they're starting to see now in schools are different. It's much more structured because of Covid, as in everybody faces the front, you know? So it's more traditionalist and that's a worry as well.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.28 Concerns were articulated specifically about the limited opportunities student teachers had to engage in typical assessment activities, which some identified as likely to present ongoing challenges for these trainees as they enter the profession.

'So [in terms of pupil assessment] there's some things they're doing, but, again, I think they'll need support even next year to do that successfully ... [it's] hard to see how they're going to have the experiences of those to make accurate teacher judgments... Obviously assessment for learning, but actually assessment of the pupils is quite difficult... we've got some evidence here, but I think it's impossible to do virtually ... they're obviously going to be behind where they would have been, I think. I just feel so sorry for them, I really do.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.29 Our data indicates that overall, Partnerships had well-established and extensive systems and mechanisms to support these groups of student teachers, for example, through personal tutors, university tutors, Programme Directors, School mentors. A full discussion on the impact and complexity of the pandemic and an overview of the process Partnerships had adopted to ensure they could run ITE programmes is beyond the scope and focus of this work. The following will provide insights drawn from stakeholder perspectives on the processes adopted and experienced to educate and assess student teachers during this time.

3.30 Despite challenges associated with the pandemic, the key features of principle and of practice in ITE partnership working (such as joint accountability, joint decision

making and co-construction) were reported to have remained evident throughout the pandemic period. We do not have sufficient data to offer a definitive view on whether some Partnerships were more successful than others in this regard, though some of the open comments we invited at the end of the survey suggest that there was variation. Our interviews show that the key features mentioned above were crucial to enable ITE Partnerships to operate, run programmes and place student teachers on placements in schools, as illustrated in the following examples:

‘From the day the pandemic stopped everything, I’ve still had constant contact through my QA meetings, through my regular lead school meetings, right through. There was no dropdown in engagement from the lead schools.’

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

- 3.31 Similarly, there were examples of universities and schools co-constructing the redesign of ITE programmes to deliver them in partnership throughout the pandemic as highlighted in the example below:

‘Co-constructive workshops with ITE staff and schools were conducted in the summer of 2020...We were keen to plan with schools how the teacher and professional leadership standards could be achieved in an online world. And the schools were brilliant, you know? We had four different workshops, one around research and enquiry, one around the school led training days, two around clinical practice with two different options for each one. So that gave us a lot of confidence.’

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

- 3.32 These collaborative workshops provided a valuable and generally well received opportunity for schools and HEIs to work together - at pace - to adapt the programme to meet students’ needs and in response to the rapidly changing landscape:

‘I took part in the university co-construction meetings. So, I attended the school led training day one, I attended the clinical practice one and I attended the research...one. And I think the people that attended those sessions generally were positive for the opportunity and how we could adapt the programme and how we could facilitate virtual placements.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Primary

3.33 Importantly, this collaborative and supportive element was also evident in work associated with assessments as shown in the following example:

‘I think there’s been a huge amount of thought given to how...(HEIs) can support schools in providing provision for ITE students. So, for example, we’ve had numerous meetings with our senior mentors. We’ve had support around the new clinical practice guide, we’ve had meetings around assessment, virtual webinars around using the professional learning passport and assessment, we’ve had webinars around using the assessment guidance. There’s been head teacher meetings around Covid restrictions and how the university have approached... the sort of policy and practice around Covid.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Primary

3.34 Our data suggest that the formative and summative assessment that would normally take place as part of ITE was also seriously impacted. To some extent there was evidence of the development of new forms of online support that went some way to facilitating communication between students and teacher educators in online taught university sessions:

‘[with regard to] formatively assessing student teachers as you would in any kind of lesson environment, we’ve got a lot better at that through *Teams*, you know, using the chat function teams of two. So yeah, somebody would lead, somebody would be manning the chat and then they’d been lots of sort of dialogue between the two tutors and you know, bringing students in to comment and that sort of thing.’

HEI Teacher Educator

‘Microsoft *Teams* was always a good platform to use, like that was the one that we always used for lectures, and they always worked, you know, well whenever we’d use it ... I mean we’d get like updates about lectures and things like that on Twitter, but apart from that I think *Teams* was the big thing to communicate with us.’

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Secondary

3.35 *Reduction of in-school time for student teachers*

The various phases of pandemic-related restrictions had an impact on the availability of school-based experience for student teachers. In most instances where in-school placement was not possible this was replaced by varied opportunities for virtual placements. Whilst it was acknowledged that these alternative arrangements were not and could never be the equivalent of in-school, face-to-face experiences they did enable student teachers to gain experience of and develop their online practice. The balance of in-school and virtual placements was a complicated picture, with differential effects on student teachers depending on which cohort they were part of, in which Partnership they were located, and especially, whether they were undergraduate or postgraduate: the latter will have had some part of their placements affected in both the 2019 and 2020 cohorts. Normally, ITE programmes leading to qualification require a total of 120 days of school placement. The following illustration is from a student teacher interviewed in April 2021:

'So, by the point where schools were shut [December], I'd taught one full lesson, and the second lesson... I did teach two lessons, but the second one they only had about ten pupils in because the rest of the class was self-isolating. So, yeah two lessons I had done from December until this week [April 2021]'

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Secondary

3.36 Our survey respondents included 223 people who were a mixture of current and recent ITE students on both degree and postgraduate programmes across Wales. We asked them to tell us 'how was the duration of your total placement time in school (originally planned to be 120 days) impacted'? Overall, 14 percent (32/223) of respondents reported that their placement time had not been reduced at all. Nearly 24 percent (53/223) said that they had experienced at least three-quarters of their in-school placement time (physical face-to-face), but a further 35 percent (78/223) said that at least one-half of it had taken place. Around 26 percent (60/223) reported that their in-school placement time had been reduced to around one-quarter or less of what had been planned (in nearly 7 percent (15/223) of cases, to zero).

Figure. 3: Recent and current ITE students: Perceptions of impact on the duration of total placement time in school, by total response (originally planned to be 120 days) (n=223)

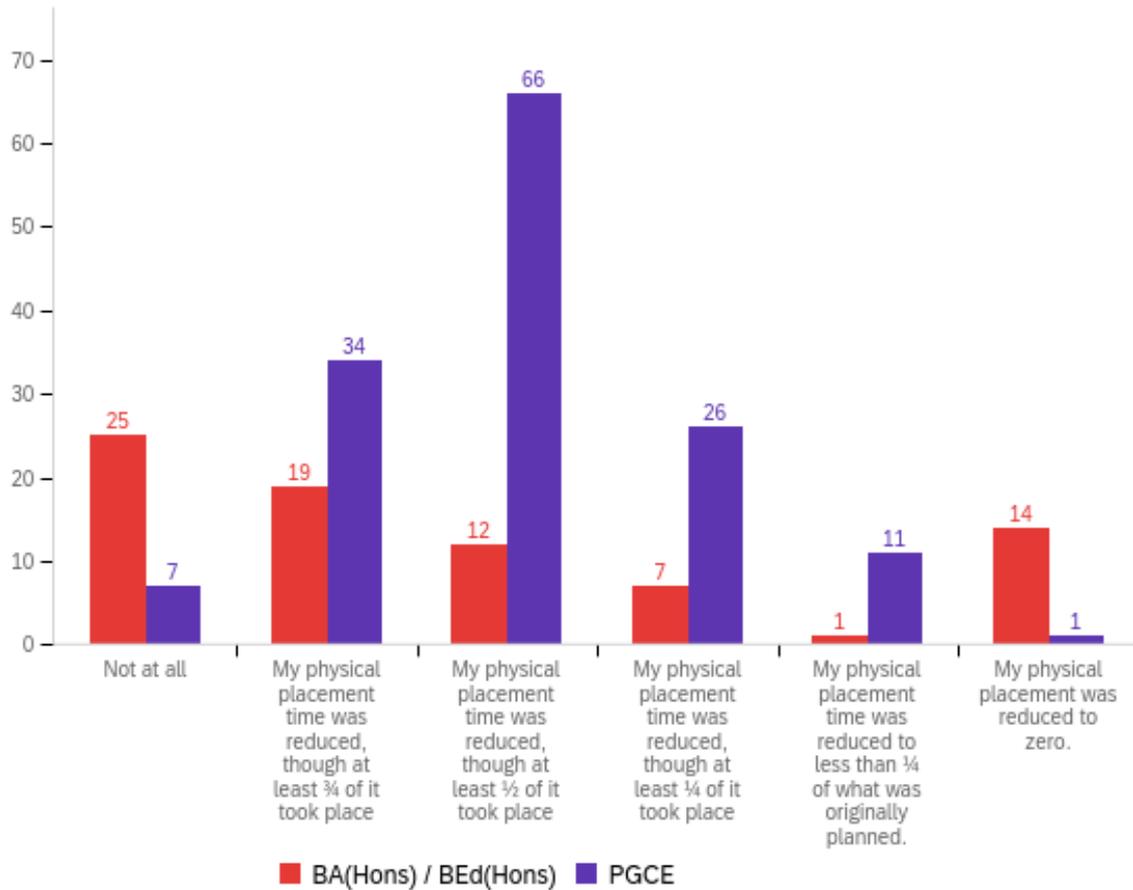


Figure. 3 above also shows differences in how undergraduate and postgraduate students report they were affected. For example, undergraduates were the great majority of those indicating that their placements were unaffected, which is what we would expect given that on those programmes placements are more widely distributed over a longer timescale. It must however be borne in mind that these data are a somewhat crude snapshot because a great many varied arrangements and circumstances lie behind the reported experiences. What is clear is that collective student experience shows a major impact and that in just over 26 percent (60/223) of all responses, school placement was somewhere between zero and around a quarter of what had been planned. We can be certain that for the 2019/20 postgraduate cohort, no ITE students will have experienced any further school placements beyond mid-March 2020. For the 2020/21 postgraduate cohort with in-

school placements typically not commencing until mid-November and then being followed by another extended lockdown period (for most or all of the Spring term) they too will have experienced a significant reduction in in-school experiences.

‘we went into school in the middle of November. It was meant to be slightly later but then it got pulled forward. I was... we were in for two days on the first week and then I unfortunately caught Covid in class. So I was straight off for two weeks obviously, and the whole class was isolating because the teacher had had it and everyone had had it pretty much. And then we went back then until Christmas. And then after Christmas, ... we were meant to be going back but then obviously they closed the schools and so we ended up doing a lot online.’

PGCE student teacher 20/21, Primary

3.37 The narrowing of assessment experiences in the classroom

Earlier in this report we outlined some of the changes to assessment processes in schools, and what they may indicate about pedagogy in a more general sense. For both secondary and primary student teachers there was unanimous concern regarding the range of experiences and opportunities that they had ‘missed out on’ in the classroom, particularly those related to assessment. This concern related to both 2019/20 and 2020/21 cohorts but appeared especially acute for the latter. Many PGCE student teachers had only had a few weeks on placement in the Autumn term (which was significantly disrupted) prior to subsequent lockdown and did not begin to return to physical school placements until late-February (Foundation Phase), mid-March (KS2) or mid-April (secondary) 2021. This was a varied picture for student teachers across Wales dependent on school context. This was especially unfortunate timing in terms of their experience of the cycle of assessment activity in secondary schools:

‘I mean the big thing I missed out on was going into exam season. I think that was the big thing I wanted to (do)...you know the run up to exams and like preparing for that, I feel like I missed out on that. So now that I’ve got a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) class it’s kind of like I

have to... I know what happens in the first stage of the year in year 11 but at the end of the year it's kind of like I'm going to have to wing it a bit!

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Secondary

'They didn't experience that...sort of surge of...energy around exam time. ...And that kind of starts, (in) March, with...with coursework and practice (exams) and whatever. And so...just at the time that they came out of schools was the time when literally everything was about to sort of get going around that run up to exams...As a teacher that is, especially in the secondary context, you know, that is such a major part of the job...that surge of energy that you have to have. So yeah...that's an interesting perspective, that they've not had a little dry run of that, as students, you know, alongside their mentors. And they've not kind of felt that pressure. And it is, you know, that pressure to sort of get students...pupils, you know, to that point.'

HEI Programme leader

- 3.38 This HEI Programme leader went on to point out that as well as being denied this pivotal opportunity, student teachers were then largely removed from the subsequent negotiations and processes that became so central for many teachers as they put in place systems that would have great reliance on coursework and other indicators, to replace examinations. Student teachers, it appeared, would in many instances miss out on *both* a critical period of the assessment cycle and then also on the core of a process whereby a group of experienced professionals worked together to resolve it as best they could. Some interviewees alluded to student teacher opportunities having diminished as a consequence of schools coping with very difficult adjustments, leaving 'gaps' in the student teachers' 'toolkit':

'Particularly with our Key Stage 4...and Key Stage 5, I don't think (student teachers) had hardly any experience really there, you know?...I think staff have been very reluctant, cautious...to just hand over those classes, because they're desperately trying to get...content finished, they're not knowing what the end outcome is, you know? So, I think...(student teachers) have missed out big time there.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.39 Similar concerns were prominent in primary settings. As one primary headteacher put it, where normally student teachers would look closely at formative assessment, assessment for learning and summative assessment, then also at pupils with additional learning needs and how they are tracked and assessed, the pandemic cohort ‘had a very limited experience of pupil assessment...what they missed last year was actually being a part of that’ (Headteacher Primary School). Similarly, a newly-qualified teacher whose job began in September 2020 spoke of a ‘daunting gap in knowledge’, having only had brief and superficial exposure to assessment via observation, with ‘not much focus on pupil tracking or pupil assessing’. She compared this to what would have happened otherwise reflecting on how she feels this has made it more difficult in transitioning from student teacher to a teacher with responsibility for pupil assessment and progress:

‘...I know in the past you had to track a pupil for your whole first placement, which I feel is something that, looking back, probably would have benefitted all of us even if it wasn’t in great detail. But having that experience would have been useful. Whereas now, in the transition period, it’s sort of been like oh, this is what you need to do.’

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Primary

3.40 Notable were the impoverished opportunities to undertake or participate in the normal cycle of assessment-related activities (e.g., marking books, participating in parent evenings, undertaking report writing, supporting external exam preparation activities and conducting classroom and national tests) - all of which are generally regarded as key in learning about and building strong understandings of making, recording and communicating professional judgements about learning, understanding learner progress, designing and implementing differentiation, sharing outcomes of assessment, and so forth.

3.41 A school-based teacher educator pointed to the centrality of assessment for learning strategies and also discerning levels and outcomes, and how student teachers will have missed opportunities to develop in these areas:

‘A significant number of things they (student teachers) will have experienced, but perhaps the more refined skills of using those assessment for learning strategies in a confident way, in their own teaching and being able to then level or outcome where children are in terms of their learning, perhaps that

would be less developed, because that's traditionally something that might come a bit later on.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Primary

3.42 Whilst most of our data point to these various forms of narrowing of exposure and opportunity for student teachers, it is also the case that some benefited from being able to get involved in school-based strategies that innovated in the realm of using technology to support pupil assessment:

'one thing we have done as a school is to move all the children's work on to Google Classrooms and the homework and so on is uploaded on to Google Classrooms, so we don't have to quarantine it for 72 hours before being able to mark it and so on. So, the trainees (student teachers) will have experience of that...it has increased too with more using Google Docs, so they can see the live element of a child working. Because if you go into Google Docs you can actually see the child typing and give feedback that way.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.43 *The impact of online working on learning to teach*

Across our interview data there were many examples of general enthusiasm for teaching and learning online. In particular, the experience student teachers gained of teaching online was often viewed as valuable, and sometimes as a welcome boost to a set of skills that were already important. However, online working of this sort was highly variable in nature, incorporating a range of platforms and a wide range of scales of operation and of purposes. Teachers, students and ITE educators were all of the view that teaching online was *not equivalent* to physical classroom teaching and could not be regarded as an adequate replacement for physical classroom teaching in the process of becoming a competent practitioner. Several respondents drew attention to its problematic nature, and one summed up several of the shared concerns in the following way:

'...If you think the quality and consistency of pedagogical practice was varied before this, I'm going to go out...not even on a limb, I don't think controversially, and say I think that (the) gulf is massive between schools who can and are able to do this, and schools who just haven't got a clue. So I

think...the danger...(is that) to train people to...[teach online] properly takes a huge amount of time. And would you be doing it at the expense of the actual classroom practice that is traditionally taught? And, you know, fingers crossed this is not something that will continue. And it's, kind of, what do you want them to be? Do you want them to be good online teachers and be a wiz at doing a webinar, or do you want them to be good classroom practitioners? Because they are different things. And it's where do you put your emphasis? I think I would probably argue that the emphasis needs to be on classroom practice because that's probably... that's what they want to be. That's what they're going to do for their career.'

Assistant Headteacher Secondary School

3.44 Whilst some of the published commentary celebrates the impetus that the pandemic has given to various forms of online working in education, it is important to consider what can be omitted as well as what may be enhanced as part of digital innovation in educational settings. Our data shows that pandemic-related adjustments and the shift to online working meant that some student teachers were unable to gain essential experience of teaching the practical aspects of their subjects. This seems particularly problematic for those teaching subjects such as: Science, PE, Art, DT, Drama and Music. One Secondary-based mentor spoke of a PE student teacher, on placement, who had produced some excellent online content on health and safety, but had yet to teach a lesson in the gym. Whilst we recognise that these student teachers will have had the opportunity to return to in-school placements since mid-April, it is highly likely that some of these types of physical and hands-on practical experiences will continue to be impacted, as social distancing and pandemic related health and safety requirements remain in place.

3.45 *Learner voice on loss of school-based experiences*

Our interviews with student teachers indicated some real concerns about the impact of the loss of school-based experiences. The following account was from a current PGCE primary student:

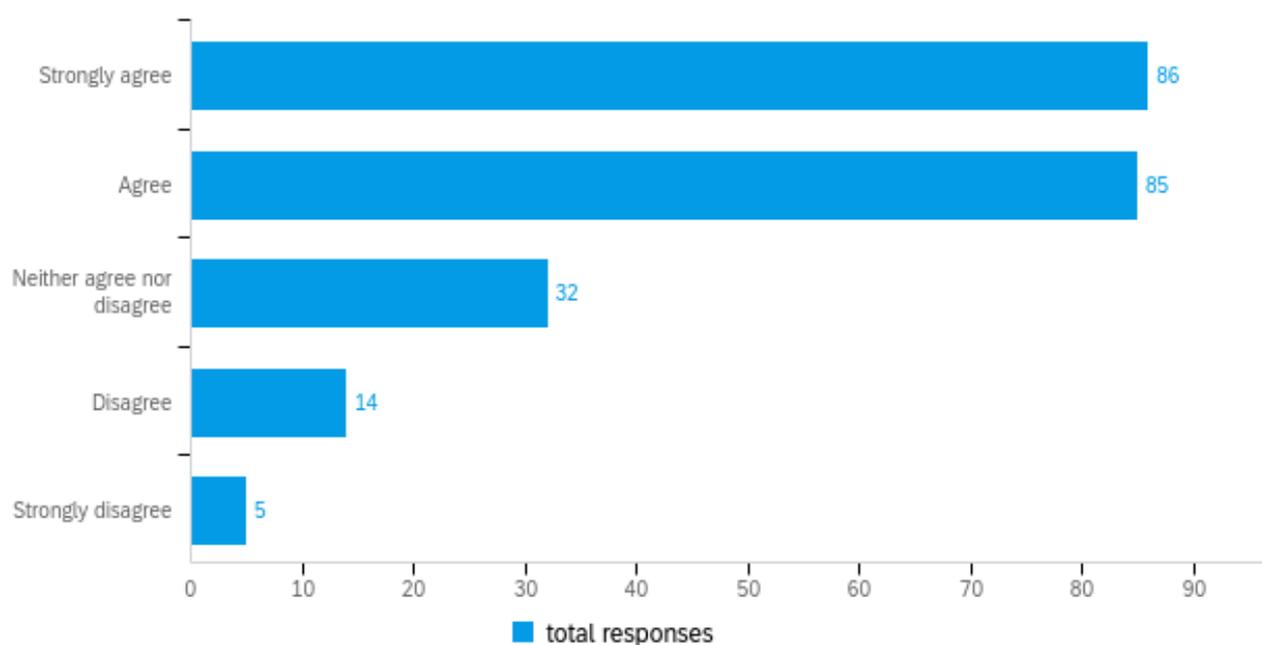
'I feel like what I'm quite lacking... I think a lot of students would think this anyway, but obviously not teaching a full class it is then quite overwhelming when you're presented with 30... I only taught three full lessons to a full class.'

Three, that's it, before everyone went off, and then I was teaching eight people. Six to eight people, which is very different. You're sat around a table. So I think it's more like the... I feel okay at putting together a lesson. But then it's delivering it to 30 people. And I think around kind of differentiation, I worry, because I haven't been doing that on a large scale. Yeah, and managing... not necessarily behaviour but like noise. Just all the things that come with all the people. So I feel quite competent to produce a lesson. It's just quite nerve racking, I would say, getting up now. Still I feel that we should at this point be, you know, becoming quite confident. And what I would say though is I wouldn't... if someone put me in foundation phase, I'd have no idea. If I got a job, I wouldn't know how to run class. I don't know how foundation phase classes... I... I've heard it's very different, but I would have no idea and that is a worry that if I got a job and I was placed, I genuinely would have no idea. And because we haven't got to go into other classes at all.'

PGCE student teacher 20/21, Primary

3.46 In our survey we asked current and recently qualified student teachers to tell us whether or not they felt they had missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to their skills and/or confidence as a teacher. As shown in Figure 4 below, the overwhelming majority, (171/223, some 77 percent), agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, and just below 9 percent disagreed with it.

Figure. 4. Current and recent student teachers' agreement/disagreement with the statement: 'I feel I missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to my skills and/or confidence as a teacher' (n=223)



3.47 A similar picture emerged when we put the same question to teacher educators, of whom 87 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement '*On balance I feel that many students missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to their skills and/or confidence as a teacher*'.

3.48 It is however important to note that other data in the study suggests that a small majority of student teachers felt that they were able to participate fully in the teaching, learning and assessment activity that was actually taking place, including online: perhaps the point to underline is that there was less of it in which to participate. Similarly, some students thought that disruptions to placements had some positive as well as negative ramifications. Nevertheless, the findings outlined above give strong grounds for concern in relation to the opportunities these students to have had to develop their skills and feel confident to enter the profession.

3.49 *The assessment of student teachers' classroom practice*

The assessment of ITE students was seriously disrupted from March 2020, and from this point school-based classroom assessment was not able to take place. The approach for the 2019/20 PGCE cohort saw a sudden and marked shift from established practice in terms of gathering evidence to meet the standards.

Interviewees reported that the evidence available was used creatively to calculate an 'imagined' or 'likely' trajectory of how the students might have met the standards had they completed the programme in pre-pandemic conditions. This seems to be a variant of widespread 'no detriment' adjustments, common across the UK higher education sector. It was however challenging in terms of assessing all students and particularly difficult when applied to borderline students who might have benefitted from more time in the classroom or from extra support to develop their understanding and practice.

3.50 In our data, many student teachers regardless of programme type and cohort reported having fewer than the expected observations, and less feedback on practice from mentors and university tutors. They also reported that the list of activities that 'counted' for observations was broadened and more flexible, including for example lesson planning documentation and pre-recorded lessons. The majority of students who responded to our survey, indicated they and their peers had received no assessments of their classroom practice from University staff. In one interview a mentor reported on undertaking a joint assessment with the University Tutor remotely via video link – however this was caveated that the video camera had to be positioned only showing the teacher, to comply with school policy.

'And I don't know also if normally there's more kind of quality assurance. But I didn't see any of that ... I spoke to my university tutor, because I was really worried that my mentor had really overmarked me. And I just didn't feel like it was reflective... reflective of where I was at, but I was her very first student and no one else watched me ... because we're, you know, not meant to be mixing and stuff, but I also worry about that because I do think is there... what... how are they making sure everyone is like on the same... because I think normally, university tutors might come in or senior mentors. I don't know. But I think that's normal. But for us it was just our class teacher.'

PGCE student teacher 20/21, Secondary

3.51 A secondary mentor spoke of students missing out ‘totally’ on participating in teacher assessment and of having to making judgements in relation to that in the second of two placements: the students’ exposure to these matters would have been very indirect and limited to attending meetings and observing classrooms in the first placement. One school-based teacher educator described that for the 2019/20 cohort the experience of making an assessment on a slender evidence-base:

‘We were asked...because it was the second placement as well, they (student teachers) would have had one official observation, and we were asked, really, were they a cause for concern, and did we think that...you know, with experience (they) would...do we think that they would have been okay? You know, would they have passed? And I think that the answer, luckily for all of them, was, for us, yes. They had a lot of the basics. I wouldn’t say that they would have been...would have been where they were when they finished, no, but I think that with support they all would have made the standard. Is that okay? We had, I would say, very little evidence, really, to make that judgment.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.52 A similar concern was expressed by another secondary-based mentor, whose comment also acknowledged how the issues could continue to resonate: ‘There’s a concern, you know...I asked the question with our university tutor the other day, about what if we don’t have the evidence for them by...the time they finish, what... what do we do then? And the answer sort of came back that, well, it’s not their fault, you know, they’re in a situation...they can’t necessarily fail because of, they haven’t been given the opportunity to do it, you know? So...it’s such a tricky one, a minefield, isn’t it? You know, really complicated...And as you say, next year, they’re potentially your NQTs and...and will adjustment be made there?’

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.53 *Impact on student teachers’ research assignments*

We mentioned earlier that research-informed practice had become more central to ITE as part of the recent reforms in Wales. One of the practical manifestations of this is that research-based assignments have become pivotal elements in ITE programmes. All partnerships had to make adaptations to their research-based

assignments as a result of pandemic-related restrictions. The amount of 'lead time' available to do this differed a great deal between the two pandemic-impacted cohorts:

'Normally the students would do an action research piece. Well, that wasn't possible in the circumstances. So, what happened at the end of last year was that the assignment was modified to do a desk-based type study and a critical evaluation of six sort of research articles.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.54 The data suggest that overall, HEI teacher educator perceptions were that the management of these rapidly reformulated assignments in 2019/20 was successful, however student teachers reported more varied experiences of these changes:

'it was the most stressful, as everybody had planned their assignment and had an outlook, and they were on a path that they thought they knew what they were doing, and it all got very derailed. As I said I feel that our tutors were really helpful and did a lot to help us. Like they would reply to emails really quickly and they would offer us sort of checking or drop in Q&A sessions which were really helpful. But I think that was, again, the big change as well, just having to all do the whole assignment on your own.'

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Secondary

3.55 For one student teacher, the use of an online teaching and learning platform made a substantial contribution to their clarity about the nature of the assignment and the expectations of tutors:

'having recorded information about how to go round the assessment was much more useful than just having a PowerPoint... But I also really like then on [*Moodle*] I know some lecturers decided to use a function where they would upload any question they got emailed and the answer that they gave. So, before you went to email the lecturer you could just on the *Moodle* page for that module and there was a tile then that had assessment questions, and you could see what answers they'd given to frequently asked questions. And I just thought that was really helpful.'

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Primary

3.56 At the same time, HEI staff reported seeing the need to further develop the research-based assignments for the 2020/21 cohort:

‘So, we’ve followed a similar process this year with a critically annotated bibliography. As part of this assignment instead of students doing an executive summary, the student teacher was required to do a written assignment and either do a narrated Power Point or an infographic that gets feedback to the school and senior management teams, with the view that hopefully it’ll impact on practice.’

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.57 Despite this during interviews some student teachers indicated they were not clear about the relevance of this research-based assignment to the development of their practice:

‘I don’t know how relevant it was for kind of actually using it in school, because there wasn’t that much out there and I think the most relevant things happening in blended learning were literally happening in the schools. I’m sure in a year or two that literature will be incredible and what people found. But really, I felt it was very text based ... So I think I personally didn’t take loads from it.’

PGCE student teacher 20/21, Secondary

3.58 Some school-based teacher educators reported a notable and positive difference between these assignments and the equivalent ones in the previous year, with the work produced by students showing a marked rise in quality:

‘They did their presentations (research assignment critically annotated bibliography and visual presentation)...last week and I was just blown away by them, they were brilliant. And it just... you know, it just shows that actually...because they’ve had a lot of time really, to be able to really look into their...research, whereas...(previously they would have been)...trying to juggle it usually with a mass of planning and...everything. I felt the quality of it was...so much better this year actually, so, you know, there is...there...(are) some positives... And they spoke really passionately, you know, about...their findings.’

School-based Teacher Educator, Primary

3.59 This difference may have been attributable to the additional lead-in time which in 2020/21 allowed a more focused re-interpretation of the assignment scope and purpose, and for this to be clearly articulated for students; however, it could also be

due to the student teachers themselves having more time to focus on the assignments whilst some of their other usual commitments were reduced.

3.60 The general experience of this shift to a *designed* 'COVID-proof' research assignment is interesting for its potential to change practices longer-term. An ITE leader articulated how current thinking in one Partnership was triggered by recent experiences:

'I think the support around the research enquiry has increased and has changed as a result of some feedback also last year. So, there's more seminar sessions, opportunities for drop-ins and asking questions... Obviously it's so important that students generally get experience of action research enquiry, but I think one of the challenges that they've found from previous years is that perhaps the students weren't always research ready to do a full project. For example, they had to get their head around the lit review, the method, ethics, data collection, analysis...and it was too many things whilst also on placement. And then it therefore ended up being maybe an average job rather than trying to do a very good job of one area of research such as a critical review of the literature.'

And

'oh, actually, this could be a better change that we'd keep this, you know...we never would have been able to make these changes without Covid. And actually, that there's...more of a link between the students' research and the school and the school benefitting and vice versa.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.61 For PGCE students in both 'pandemic cohorts' the disruption to physical school placements had the effect that written assignments quite suddenly lost much of their designed connection to practice. The assignments of BA students seemed to have been less disrupted by the national lockdowns. In the following extract, a 2019/20 cohort student teacher describes what it was like to manage a fundamental transition in the nature and scope of a major written assignment:

'I think the major change for me was they had to change my assignment... basically the whole assignment, because I was no longer going to be able to have pupil data...my second assignment was supposed to be the research

project at the lead partnership school. And it was at a point in the year where I was just about to collect my data...I'd planned what I was going to do, and the following two weeks before the half term were going to be my data collecting period, so I had no data to complete the assignment. So having had all of the lectures saying this is how we want you to do for the assignment, this is some guidelines of how to go about it, and then having to have all of that changed while I was at home and then not being able to actually go into university and say I'm not sure what's going on any more, was really difficult.'

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Primary

3.62 As well as identifying the difficulty in the change of the nature of the assignment itself, this student goes on to point out a change of experience in preparing for the research assignment. The shift from on-campus teaching and support to online sessions brought about a situation where students felt they had flexibility whether to attend live sessions or to consult recordings later. With fewer students attending sessions (perhaps because of the nature of online interaction) this student found there was less opportunity for listening to others and hearing different perspectives, seeing this as a loss. The student however highlighted how much she appreciated tutor support:

'I can't speak for other tutors, but our tutors were really helpful. And they made sure that, even with derailing the whole assignment and being given a new one, that everybody did manage to pass the assignment with a good level.'

NQT & 2019/20 student teacher, Primary

3.63 *The Professional Learning Passport (PLP) which utilises Pebblepad*

The Professional Learning Passport is an online bilingual portfolio tool that uses PebblePad software where student teachers keep their planning and evaluations, assemble their evidence against the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, record their personal and professional development, house their assessment forms and record their attendance. It was first introduced as a compulsory feature in ITE in September 2019 and is the place for student teachers to record their journey to Qualified Teacher Status. The PLP follows them into the profession if they stay as a teacher in Wales. The arrival of COVID-19 related

restrictions elevated the importance of it (for PGCE and final year BA students) as it became the dominant way for student teachers to demonstrate they had ‘experiences’ related to the standards required for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS):

‘I think...(in respect of) the PLP, the one thing that we weren’t very good at last year and we need to improve is using the PLP formatively. Because obviously there’s the function in the PLP to give, you know, formative feedback...on any document. A couple of our staff were good at it. A few mentors were, you know, made some entries, but I would say the majority of us...were not good at using the PLP formatively. So we saw it as a sort of summative repository of forms that we would use at those assessment points. But actually it’s got so much more potential to a formative tool that we are now realising and are going to... you know, obviously build in, you know, in the future. But we weren’t good at it, back in June... March to June.’

HEI Programme leader

- 3.64 Use of the Professional Learning Passport (PLP) to support reflection became perceived as an invaluable tool for teacher educators in HEIs in the absence of normal and established ways of working:

‘All of a sudden Covid happened, and so, you know, then the PLP became this kind of absolutely essential repository for all of us. Because that was a thing that we all had access to. It was a thing that students were uploading their evidence of the standards. Mentors were uploading all their assessment forms. So, I think one of the positives to come out of it was the fact that the relationship with the PLP became so much more positive because of Covid. And now, you know, September, October, November, you know, with our current students, we’re in such a better place around understanding the PLP as staff, how to kind of present it to our students, how to present it to our mentors, you know? So that...has been... it just almost became my lifeline really, in terms of the collective way that everybody involved in students’ assessments.’

HEI Teacher Educator

- 3.65 The HEI teacher educator interviewees suggested that those engaging with the PLP as teacher educators (in schools) developed a more in depth understanding and ability to use it. The evidence uploaded to the PLP supported the quality assurance

visits between mentors and university tutors for both pandemic impacted cohorts. Pre COVID-19 the quality assurance included a university tutor and mentor watching half a lesson and then discussing the evidence. During the pandemic:

‘Rather than going in and watching half a lesson, everything else can take place. The scrutiny would be on the PLP. The Senior Mentor and the University Tutor would look at that, look for the evidence that they’ve hit the...targets we have set. Then the Senior Mentor and the University Tutor would have a discussion around that student or around the sample of those students.’

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.66 Additionally, HEI teacher educators perceived that student teachers were doing a lot more independently regarding their professional development than they might have previously, and felt this was specifically associated with engaging with the PLP.

‘about that independence and the students having to take ownership of their own professional development...I did find this. You know, once we were in lockdown they were engaging in courses, online courses that we were suggesting, gaining extra qualifications and, perhaps, specifically in relation to the PLP.’

HEI Teacher Educator

‘that responsibility for students... we’ve always asked them to self-assess, but all of a sudden they were being challenged on their self-assessment and really asked to produce that evidence. I think there was a definite shift there, last year.’

HEI Teacher Educator

3.67 Student teacher views of the PLP were more mixed, ranging from the wholly positive to more critical. For example, for one student teacher, the PLP had been invaluable as a tool in their transition into becoming a newly qualified teacher:

‘We had our PLP as well. That was one of the main things. A lot of our evidence went through the PLP, which was very, very beneficial, because I now... like I am working on my PLP now as an NQT. And it's so unbelievably beneficial.’

NQT & student teacher 2019/20, Primary

For others however, difficulties were experienced:

‘So, using PebblePad/PLP in general I found...students found it difficult to navigate, and especially Welsh medium. The Welsh medium one wasn’t developed to the same standard as the English one and it was a really big barrier. We felt we had to do a lot more work than the English side already. Because you knew that the pass or fail of the year was all riding on a portfolio that someone else was going to look at ...So I think that was really difficult, just knowing that everything was riding on this one digital platform that you won’t have seen anybody else’s because you haven’t seen anybody for months, so you couldn’t compare.’

NQT & student teacher 2019/20, Primary, Welsh Medium (WM)

‘I think in terms of collecting the data and putting it onto the professional learning passport, I think we definitely could have done with more guidance on how to use the PLP at the beginning of... at the beginning of the year ... So for me probably more the element of knowing what to put into it.’

PGCE student teacher 20/21, Primary

3.68 *Impact on the Teaching and Leadership Standards*

At the time of the initial spring lockdown 2019/20, ITE providers and the Welsh Government worked together to devise a national approach to respond to the need to assess ITE students during the pandemic:

‘We worked together as a group of providers to devise the ‘trajectory to pass’...therefore those that were on that trajectory to pass rather than having met the standards, were passed.’

Initial Teacher Education Lead

3.69 From a student teachers’ perspective, the developmental support adopted around the process was welcomed:

‘I know they changed...(the arrangement). I know we were supposed to be able to meet QTS by the end of the year, and I think it was really good that they changed that. Because I do think it was unrealistic to expect all of us to have gained QTS standard by the March when we were supposed to be there till the June...And I did think that that helped a lot of us when we were assessing ourselves then, to still feel like that we had made the progress that

we should have made in that time. But it's not to feel like we'd sort of failed the PGCE year by not meeting the criteria set out in the beginning because we had less time...When we were doing our own assessment and being assessed by the schools, I think that they really understood this as well. And I got a lot of positive feedback on what I'd been able to achieve in the short amount of time, and I did get some steps on how I would then be able to go about improving myself in the first couple of months of my job, so that I would then be able to gain the QTS sort of standard by Christmas...I felt that was helpful.'

NQT and Student teacher 2019/20, Primary

- 3.70 However, the suddenness and timing of the first spring lockdown in 2020 meant that ITE Partnerships were left with specific challenges that impacted on evidencing the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, as captured by a school-based teacher educator in the following example:

'Lockdown happened very suddenly. So, bless them (student teachers), they sort of finished. They were in the middle of their assessment processes with us. The university worked very closely with us towards the end of the academic year, and I was in a meeting where we discussed grades and we discussed students who we had concerns with the Standards up until February, March.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

- 3.71 Our data include several examples of the difficulties that arose as assessment activities that would contribute to meeting the Standards were suddenly curtailed. School based staff went to considerable lengths to assemble what they could, including by piecing together testimony from several colleagues who had worked with or alongside the student teacher. Nevertheless, this process was felt to be difficult, and the following account from a senior mentor is typical in how it relates some of the difficulties:

'It worked differently (between)...the two (student teachers) who were with us. One was quite good at completing things and sending everything in on time and the other – well she wasn't as good and tended to send me the same thing back every time. And in truth it didn't show what I wanted it to show. So, that was awkward in a way because I didn't feel that we had enough evidence

to say – “Yes it’s fine to award her a pass.” But neither did we have enough evidence to say that she wasn’t good enough to pass. I just felt we didn’t have enough information about her...I almost think it would have been easier to go back to their first school and relied on where they were at when they left and then place them on a trajectory as to where they would have been so that we could pass them or whatever. But ah well, we coped!’

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.72 This situation also resulted at times - particularly with respect to the 2019/2020 cohort - with both schools and universities questioning their judgements:

‘[A major difficulty] ...was knowing how accurate we were in our judgement of them. These assessments are subjective and from my experience of doing this for many years, in that four or five final weeks, you can see a massive amount of progress, the final weeks they had missed.’

HEI Teacher Educator

3.73 In the vast majority of cases it seems that student teachers found sufficient evidence to demonstrate that they were on a trajectory to pass. However, there were a very small number of students who did not meet the threshold and were afforded additional support and time to meet the standards in the following academic year 2020/21.

3.74 In turning to the 2020/21 ITE cohort, the increasing complexity of the situation was amplified by differences between schools, for example whether they were working physically or virtually, the level of technology in the school, their age phase and the incidence of COVID-19 illness within the school. Some ITE partnerships approved an individual, tailored and flexible approach for schools to reassure them and maintain positive relationships amongst partners – essentially schools had flexibility to decide when it would be best, within a three-week window, for student placements to commence. However, the preparation and opportunity to learn from the initial lockdown resulted in Partnerships feeling more prepared and confident for 2020/21 year despite the ongoing and daily challenges:

‘I think this time is very different. We are seeing their lesson plans, we are seeing, you know, where they’re...where they’re trying to incorporate assessment. You know, we’ve got more information this time. They’re not going to hit... if things carry on as they are, they’re not going to have evidence

for every standard, I don't think, which is difficult, but I think we'd have a much better idea this time of whether they're suitable teachers for the future or of the standard to go forward, although...they're obviously going to be behind where they would have been, I think.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

3.75 To further support and reassure student teachers and schools, one ITE Partnership Lead said that there was an attempt to 'Covid-proof what we're doing'. This entailed sticking closely to the principles of a clinical practice model, and also 'having pretty clear principles around virtual placement.' The latter included keeping a clear focus on the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership for all student teachers, and trying to emphasise a level of consistency of experience and expectations for student teachers despite the variety in school contexts:

'what we focused on for consistency were the teaching professional and leadership standards, and in the first instance we used...(internal targets related to the standards) as a starting point. What we did was give schools the flexibility but asked them whatever their situation with low technology or high technology and context to focus on this. We then provided some support and ideas of how student teachers might be able to achieve the standards virtually or physically.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.76 *Learner voice on evidencing standards during ITE*

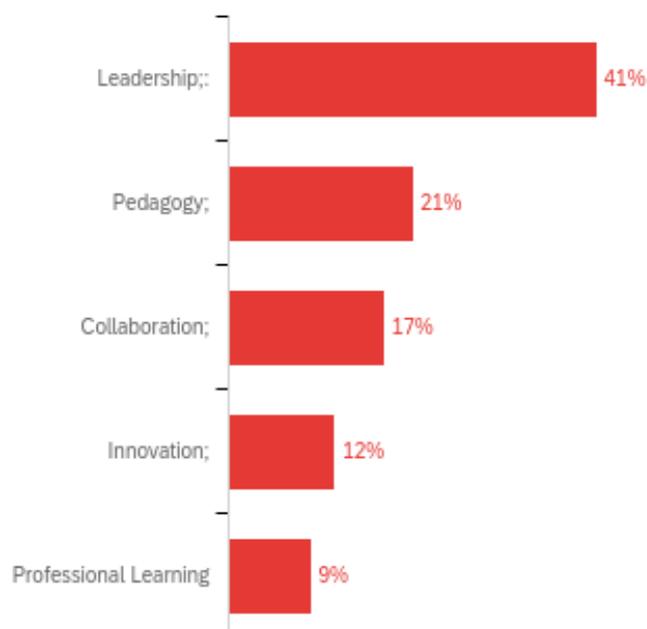
Our survey asked current and recently qualified student teachers to tell us which of the five areas of the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership had been the most difficult to evidence. As can be seen in Figure. 5 below the most frequently chosen was 'leadership', at 41 percent, and our qualitative data offers some clues that this may be due to the diminished intensity of contact that student teachers had with leaders and teachers working in teams. The next most frequently identified was 'pedagogy', at 21 percent. This is the area of the standards in which assessment experiences probably make their greatest contribution.

'But before Easter I was thinking, classroom management is one of the standards and I was thinking well how do you demonstrate classroom management? How do you prove classroom management? ... it has been

difficult, especially in terms of some of the standards related to like leading your co-workers, leading projects. Well, things like that, I'm a musician so usually I'd be helping out in the school orchestras or things like that you can't do, but it's difficult.'

PGCE student teacher 2020/21, Secondary

Figure. 5. Current and recently qualified student teachers' indications of which of the five professional standards for teaching and leadership had been the most difficult to evidence in their own case (n=219).



3.77 It is interesting to compare Figure. 5 above with the responses we gained from school and HEI-based staff engaged in teacher education, around 64 percent of whom indicated that they thought it was harder in the period of COVID-19 to put together evidence that 'typical students had achieved (or were achieving) the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership'.

3.78 Student teacher interviews provided some illumination of the detail that lies behind the kind of overview that we see in Figure. 5 above. The following participant commented on assessment specifically:

'Assessment, actually I was looking at my Pebble Pad, so it's the online portfolio we have, today and assessment is definitely one of the things that I need to work on. Just because obviously, I haven't done live lessons and haven't been in the classroom. My assessment for learning hasn't had a

chance really to develop at all. So, that's definitely something at the moment I don't feel confident in. But hopefully by the end of the ten weeks I'll be yeah pretty much... but definitely that's a target and that's something I haven't had much experience in yet.'

PGCE student teacher 2020/21, Secondary

- 3.79 Other accounts from the interviews gave insight with regard to students' experiences and indicate the difficulties there are in achieving clarity when the opportunities for joint meaning-making are reduced. With something as 'high stakes' as arriving at shared understandings regarding expectations for evidencing the standards, it is unsurprising that some students would feel stressed and anxious:

'If I'm honest I feel that we haven't had much guidance by the university. I think everyone's in the same boat, so...what I gather from the university they don't want to give out [i.e. specify] a certain number of [items of] evidence for each standard. So, they don't want to say you need this... amount of evidence for each standard. But what that means then is we can end up stuck not knowing what to aim for. So, I know some of my friends have got about 30, 40 [items of] evidence tagged for some standards, but I've been told that we only need six or seven of a high quality. Then obviously the question of what is high quality? ... So, things like that which I think could have had more clarity, especially considering the year, I think we could have done with a lot more support.'

PGCE student teacher 2020/21, Secondary

'I think in terms of collecting the data and putting it onto the professional learning passport, I think we definitely could have done with more guidance on how to use the PLP...at the beginning of the year...My senior mentor had an okay idea of like what the PLP was for but my class teacher and mentor like didn't really know anything about the PLP which...so I was kind of going in there kind of expected to explain to her everything that was expected of me with the PLP ... I think we were being told how important this PLP was and they kept saying over and over again make sure you're doing (your) PLP and things. It didn't always feel like there was a lot of elaboration. But again, I don't think it's necessarily the university's fault because I do think it is just

because everything was changing so on the spot...it would have been nicer having a better understanding of how to use it earlier on because it felt really daunting and I know a lot of people in my group especially like really started to struggle with stress and their mental health was not ideal for a lot of people on the course.'

PGCE student teacher 2020/21, Primary

3.80 *Other indications of uneven opportunity with the standards*

Our interview data show us that the pandemic resulted in some standards and their sub-elements being impacted more than others, for example, it was suggested that the lockdown period lent itself to evidencing the standards around blended learning (Pedagogy – blended learning experiences), research (Professional Learning - wider reading and research findings) and reflection (Pedagogy - reflection on learning). However, other and potentially more complex standards allied to the many facets of assessment, fundamental to quality learning and teaching experiences and supportive of identifying learner need, (such as assessment for learning, formative assessment practices, tracking and communicating pupil progress etc.) were impacted more than others and led to gaps in student teachers' portfolios that both student teachers and teacher educators themselves identified would need to be addressed during the NQT year. This was identified by students in both impacted cohorts of student teachers:

'My summative assessment experience is potentially quite limited. I mean, in the nursery it's pretty... it's not... it's not very prevalent anyway, summative assessment. It is all formative. Formative assessment I think is definitely something that I've come a long way with ... So I think formative assessment is an area that I'm growing in confidence in for sure. Summative probably less so but I think that's just because I haven't really had any experience with it yet.'

PGCE student teacher 2020/21, Primary

'So, because it hit when it did, you know, they didn't really get...that chance to really sort of get that level of skill and experience that they...would usually have done...about the student body globally, then I would say that probably of most of the standards, assessment would be (the) one that affected them

most of all, because of the pandemic and that lack of, you know, contact...real contact with schools and pupils.'

HEI Teacher Educator

'The effect on last year's cohort was the lack of experience in being able to do it [assessment]. And I think in observing the NQTs this year, where three of them were on the course, it's true to say that for 66% of those that I observed, that I revisited their assessment for learning as priorities for them for next term. Mainly because the stuff I observed seemed a bit superficial and needed to lead to deeper learning.'

School-based Teacher Educator, Secondary

'There were aspects that they would ordinarily have covered had they got to the end of the placement. Typically, I'm thinking about things... some of the harder to reach standards... maybe long-term tracking of pupil progress, maybe communicating with parents. Some of the things that are typically done more towards the end of a school placement. In the pedagogy standards, we were definitely looking about the recording and reporting and those sorts of aspects in assessment that students just hadn't had the opportunity to do.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

3.81 One ITE partnership lead talked about how their relationship with the consortia enabled them to plan for student teacher / NQT transition in a way that took account of the students' individual pandemic training experiences. The 'targets for development' here pertain to drawing up a Career Development Profile toward the end of the programme:

'To make sure that [remaining] targets for development, which were more considerable than they would have been had the student got to 24 weeks, were recorded, you know, robustly in a way that would feed into the support that the Regional Consortia were offering...(the) NQT coordinator for the consortia came in to meet the students online to reassure them and talk about the transition and to get them onboard and he said that that was really good. That often students are not in touch with him as an NQT lead...So that contact with him coming in meant that there was a smoother transition.'

Initial Teacher Education Partnership Lead

- 3.82 This appeared to be a positive step in recognising and recording those areas in which further sustained attention and support were likely to be necessary. However, the extent to which this process was echoed in other ITE partnerships is unknown.
- 3.83 We mentioned earlier that the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership are part of a series of recent a fundamental reforms that had not had very long to become established. Across our data there is evidence of inconsistencies in understanding of the Professional Standards in terms of how they are to be used and how they are to be evidenced. This raises questions about the extent to which shared meanings have developed in and across the communities using the standards. The new standards have a process orientation, delineating modes, types and focus of development, and they represent a sharp conceptual departure from the preceding model's list of competences and outcomes. This research into the impact of the pandemic on ITE provision has revealed instances where shared understandings or agreements are underdeveloped, particularly in relation to how the new standards are to be enacted or evidenced. In some cases, the unexpected pressures of pandemic-related adjustment appear to have led to some schools reinterpreting the new standards in a way that reverts to a tick-box checklist of competences.

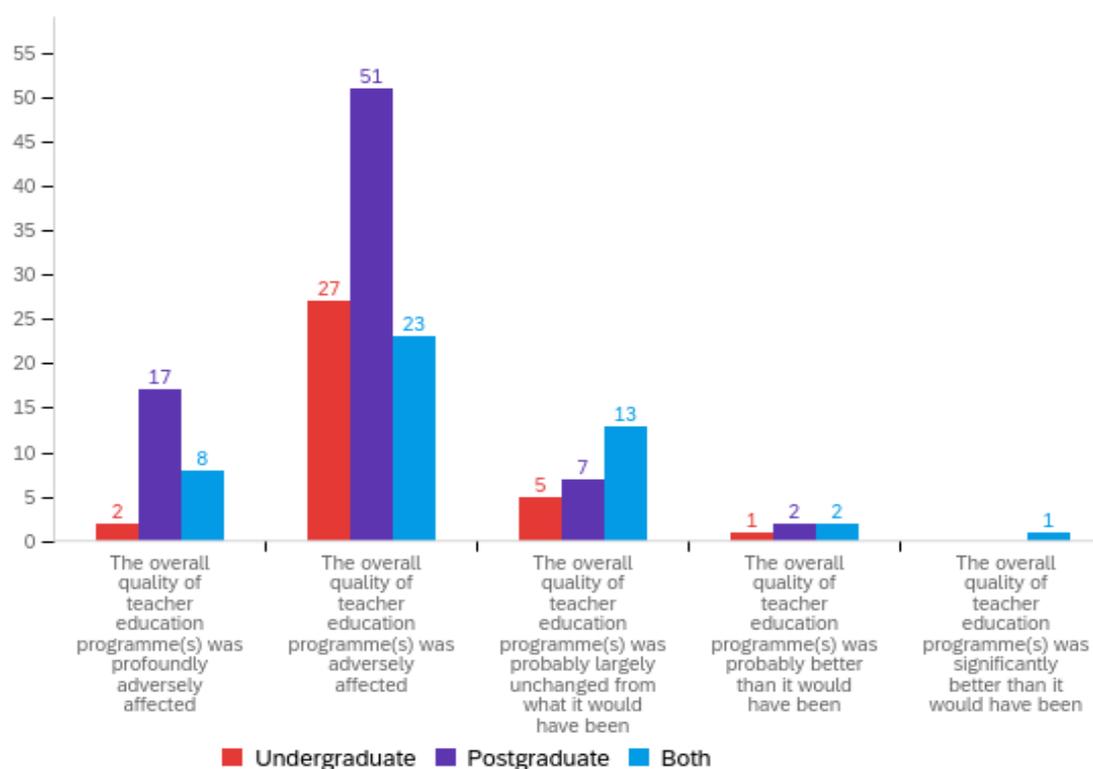
3.84 Findings part three - Implications for Initial Teacher Education

The earlier parts of this report set out what our data tells us about changes in schools and changes to the nature of ITE provision in Wales that followed the many responses to COVID-19 since March 2020. In this part we present some further insights derived from those of our survey questions that sought impressions, experiences and assessments of impact and implications. This takes us to our concluding part in which we offer a brief discussion of all our findings in the light of the three background concerns outlined in the Introduction, which were: (1) the impact of COVID-19 on education provision, equity and learner wellbeing; (2) teacher professional formation in Wales; (3) the place of assessment in teaching and learning and therefore as a key part of ITE provision.

3.85 *The impact of restrictions and adjustments on the quality of ITE*

We asked school and HEI-based teacher educators to indicate which of a series of statements would most closely fit with their view of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions and adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education. Figure 6 below shows raw numbers. Expressed as percentages, more than 80 percent (128/159) indicated that the quality of teacher education programmes was either 'adversely affected' (64 percent or 101/159) or 'profoundly adversely affected' (17 percent or 27/159). Of the other responses, under 16 percent indicated that the quality was 'probably largely unchanged'. Given the points raised earlier in this report about differences in the proportions of school placement missed depending on programme, it is also interesting to note that in percentage terms, responses indicating either 'adverse' or 'profoundly adverse' effects are roughly the same for those identifying working mainly in undergraduate programmes (83 percent or 29/35) and postgraduate programmes (88 percent 68/77).

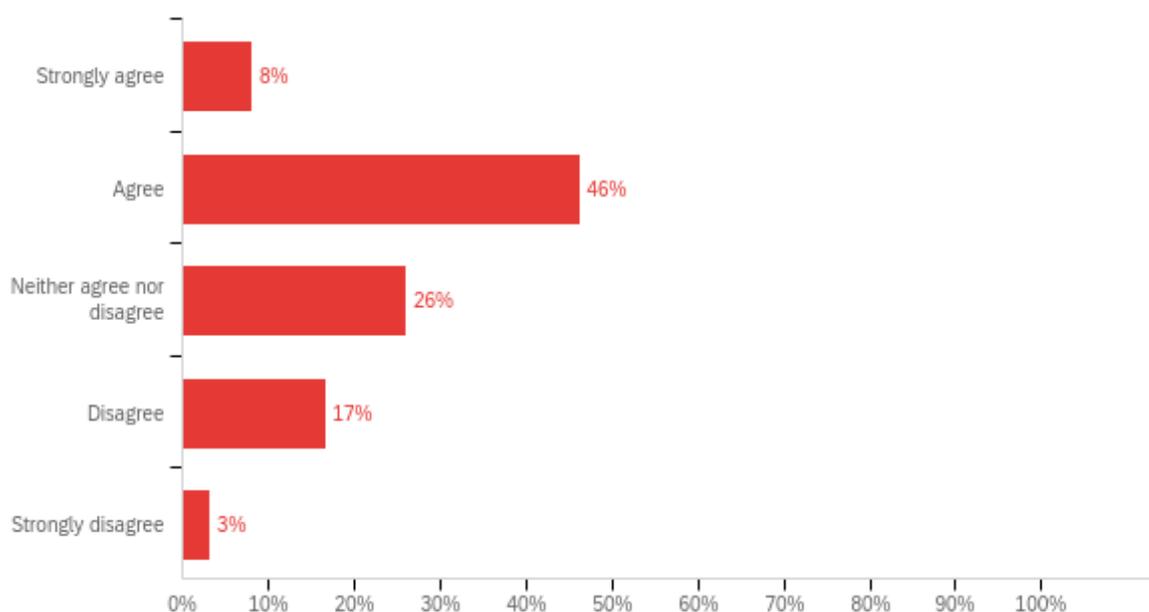
Figure. 6: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes (n=159).



[Note: in Figure 6 above teacher educators are shown in one of three groups depending on whether they worked mainly on ‘undergraduate’ or ‘postgraduate’ programmes, or on ‘both’]

3.86 Relatedly, we were interested in the extent to which student teachers felt ‘confident and competent’ as teachers with specific reference to learner assessment. The student teacher respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement ‘I feel confident and competent to support learners in the age group I trained to teach specifically in terms of my roles in learner assessment’. As Figure. 7 below shows, the largest group of responses were those agreeing and strongly agreeing, at just over 54 percent (120/223). Some 26 percent (58/223) neither agreed nor disagreed, whilst nearly 20 percent (44/223) indicated that they did not feel confident and competent in this way.

Figure. 7: Current and recently qualified student teachers’ indications of the extent to which they felt confident and competent to support learners in the age group they had trained to teach, specifically in terms of their roles in learner assessment (n=223)



3.87 There was a striking contrast between these self-perceptions and the views of HEI and school-based teacher educators. We asked teacher educators a connected question, namely ‘compared to previous cohorts, do you think that on average, students are as confident and competent in their use of formative and summative assessment in schools as they would have been at this stage in previous years?’ Under 4 percent indicated ‘yes’, and a further 31.5 percent ‘yes, partially’. However, 58.5 percent indicated that they did not think students were as confident and competent in this area as previous cohorts.

3.88 Also striking was the difference between the perceptions of HEI educators and school-based educators in terms of the impact of COVID-19 on the overall quality of teacher education programmes. In Figure. 8 below the difference in perception is shown by total response (raw numbers). What can be seen clearly in this graph, and also by percentage in Figure 9 below, is the high proportion of school-based teacher educators who felt the overall quality of teacher education programmes in this period had been ‘profoundly adversely affected’ or ‘adversely affected’ (88 percent or 115/130). A far smaller proportion of HEI educators felt the same way (45 percent or 13/29).

Figure. 8: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes, by total response (n=159).

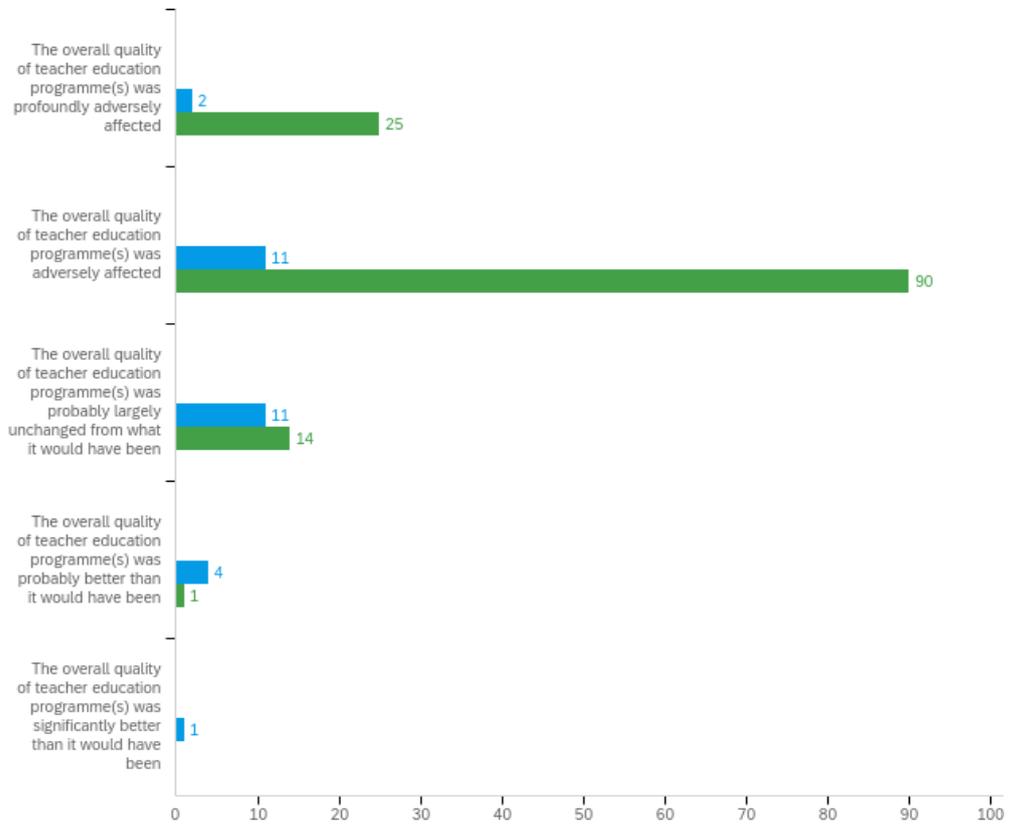
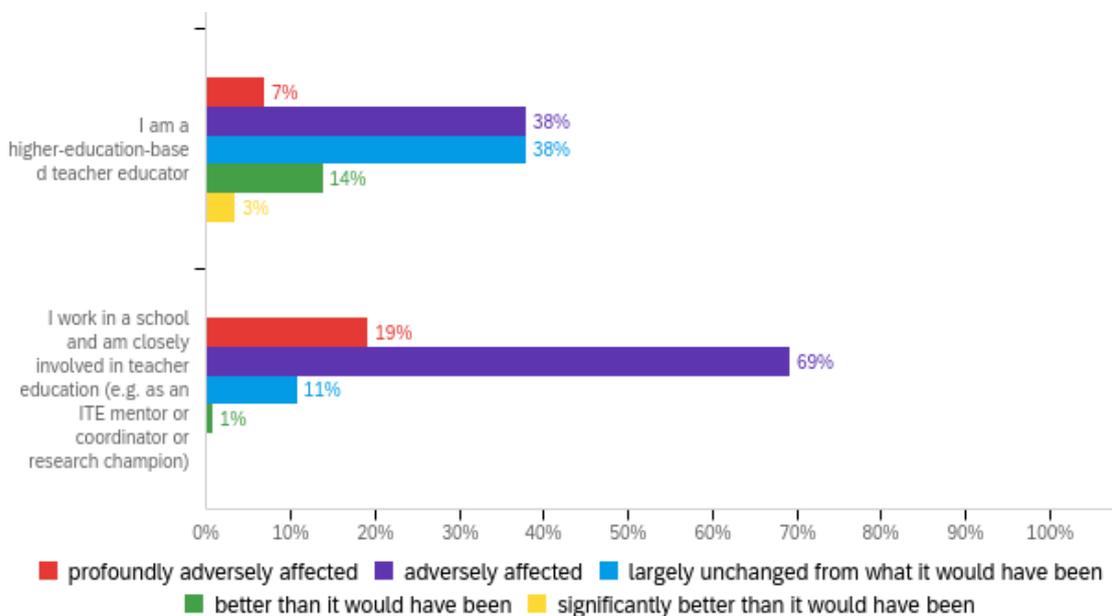


Figure. 9: School and HEI teacher educators' views of the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions or adjustments on the overall quality of teacher education programmes, by percentage (n=159).



3.89 Perceptions of the validity of teaching qualifications

In a further related line of enquiry, we were interested in both student teachers and teacher educators' perceptions of the general validity of teaching qualifications that were gained during the period affected by COVID-19 related adjustments. Figure 10 and Table 4 below shows the responses made by student teachers, whilst Figure 11 and Table 5. below shows those made by teacher educators.

Figure 10: Student teachers' responses (n=222) to the question: 'Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for students who have completed, but were affected by COVID-19 related adjustments, their teaching qualifications are ...'

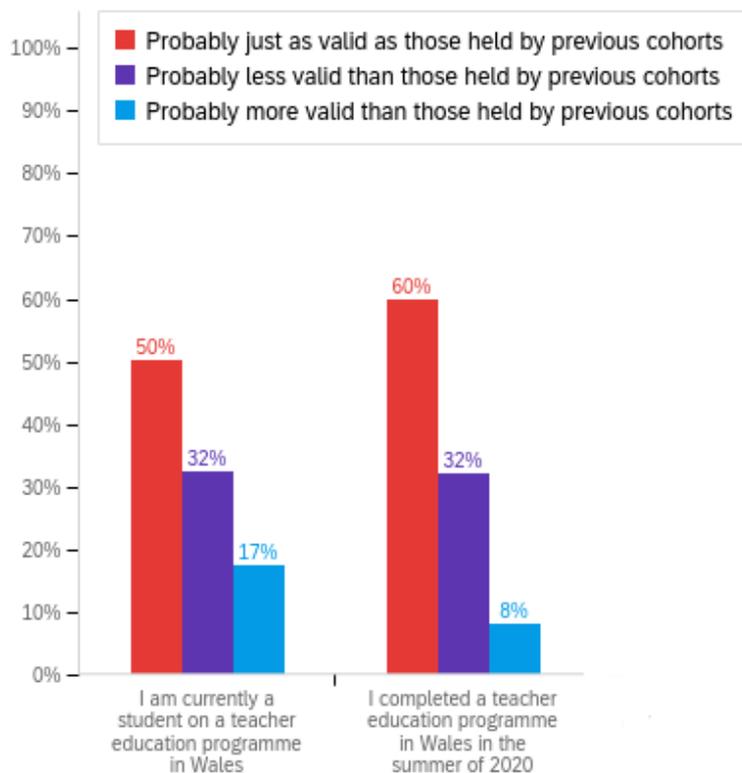


Table. 4: Student teachers’ responses (n=222) to the question: Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for students who have completed, but were affected by COVID-19 related adjustments, their teaching qualifications are:

	Currently studying on a teacher education programme in Wales		I completed a teacher education programme in Wales in the summer of 2020	
	Percentage	Total number	Percentage	Total number
Final qualification outcomes are probably just as valid	50%	99	60%	15
Final qualification outcomes are probably less valid	32%	64	32%	8
Final qualification outcomes are probably more valid	17%	34	8%	2
		197		25

Figure. 11. Teacher educators’ responses (n=158) to the question: ‘Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for ‘typical’ students affected by COVID-19 related adjustments the final qualification outcomes are:

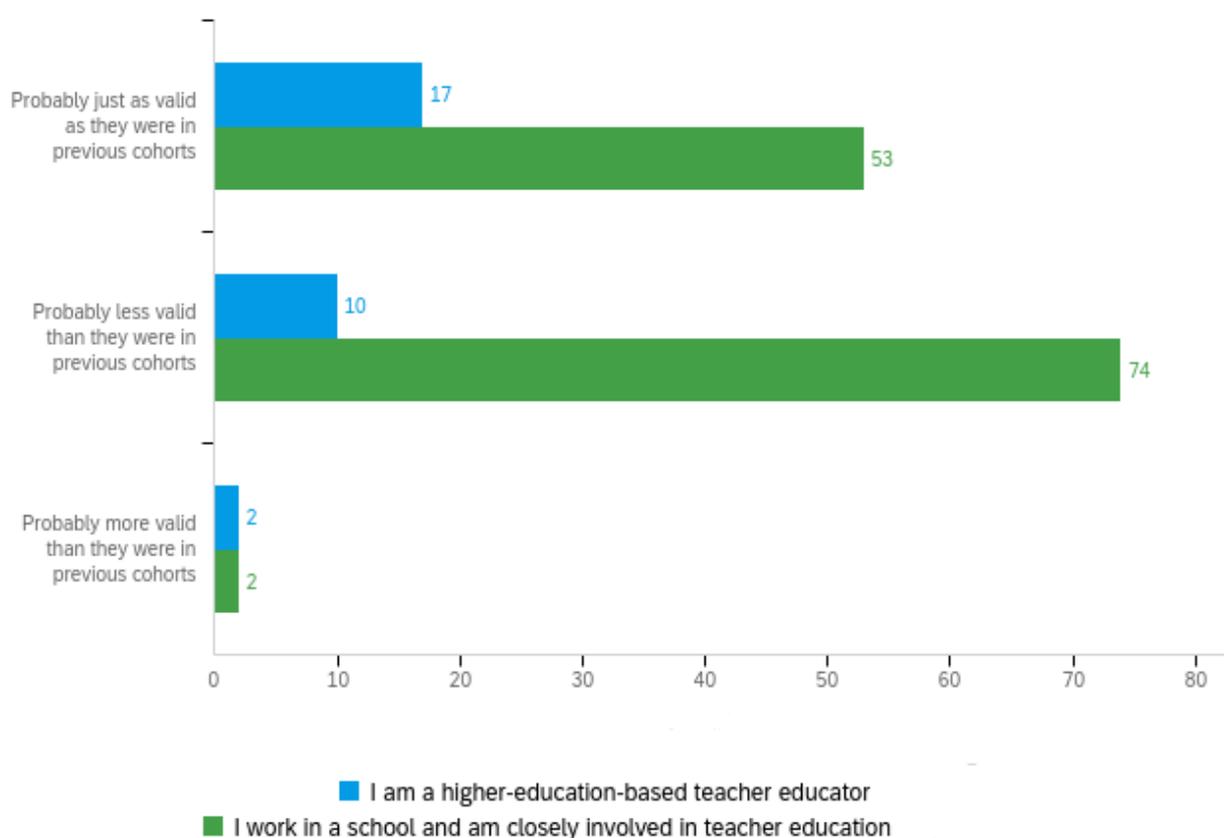


Table. 5: Teacher educators’ responses (n=158) to the question: ‘Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for ‘typical’ students affected by COVID-19 related adjustments the final qualification outcomes are:

	I am a higher education teacher educator		I work in a school and am closely involved in teacher education	
	Percentage	Total number	Percentage	Total number
Final qualification outcomes are probably just as valid	59%	17	41%	53
Final qualification outcomes are probably less valid	34%	10	57%	74
Final qualification outcomes are probably more valid	7%	2	2%	2
	100%	29	100%	129

3.90 Comparing Figures. 10 and 11 above with the associated Tables. 4 and 5, it is notable that when asked to generalise about the pandemic-affected cohorts, teacher educators were somewhat more cautious than student teachers about the validity of the teaching qualifications gained.

3.91 *Responsibility for providing further support to new teachers*

If we accept that areas of the professional formation of teachers have been compromised this begs a further question about the organisations that may provide extra support in the near future, enabling ‘pandemic cohort’ teachers to further develop their knowledge, understanding and skills, particularly experiences that were absent or lost in their ITE experience. We asked both teacher educators and student teachers who they felt was responsible for supporting these pandemic-impacted cohorts in the future. Participants were asked to rank-order amongst six options, in order of responsibility. The following shows their responses:

Table 6. Net ranking of organisations seen as responsible for working with new teachers to support them in the near future.

Net rank	Teacher educators	Student teachers
1	Employing schools	Employing schools
2	Welsh Government	Welsh government
3	ITE Partnerships	ITE Partnerships
4	Consortia	External provider or mentor
5	External provider or mentor	Consortia
6	Supply agencies	Supply agencies

*Note: Unfortunately, the survey did not include the Education Workforce Council (EWC) by name amongst the list of options, though it is likely that most respondents would see the EWC as part of the 'Welsh Government' in this instance.)

4. Conclusions

4.1 In the Introduction we offered a brief indication of other work focusing on (1) the impact of COVID-19 on education provision, equity and learner wellbeing; (2) teacher professional formation in Wales; and (3) the place of assessment in teaching and learning and therefore as a key part of ITE provision. In this section we highlight some key themes in our research under each of these ‘background concerns’. It should be noted that the timing and remit of the commission and this study was focused on ITE assessment practices and experiences during the pandemic, and that the research was conducted entirely during the pandemic and under pandemic related restrictions. This constraint should be acknowledged in terms of what can be extrapolated from the analysis to provide insights about ITE assessment practices in the future, in the hopefully more normal times that lie ahead.

4.2 Equity and wellbeing

Our study confirms many of the general conclusions reached by others that have sought to make sense of the effects of the pandemic on schooling, on equity and on learner wellbeing. A net effect of the pandemic has been to exacerbate social inequalities, and we heard about children with inadequate access to online learning owing to a lack of hardware or connectivity, or households that were already in financial difficulties where there were COVID-19 related job losses. Such factors have a direct bearing on wellbeing and on the nature of engagement with school. We also heard about considerable variety between schools in the nature and character of their contact with, and support for, their pupils. Even in schools that appeared to be expending great efforts to maintain a high level of contact with learners, there were instances of serious loss of contact.

4.3 With regard to school pupils’ learning, it is also of note that the data includes several instances of what might be termed a counterintuitive diminution in opportunity. A widespread example of this would be where some professional workers found themselves to be ‘key workers’ in roles that had expanded due to the pandemic; not only were they unable to provide home-schooling for their own children but they also found it difficult to support their child’s learning as much as they normally

would. Other less visible examples include learners who had been ‘high fliers’ but who had become highly anxious about assessment and whose motivation and engagement diminished as pandemic-related adjustments took hold. Our net impression is that the factors that normally seem to confer advantage in educational settings were, in a number of instances, less ‘protective’ under pandemic conditions.

4.4 Our data includes rich information on some issues of equity and wellbeing amongst ITE students. The data on how school placement time was affected shows great disparity, even within each type of programme (undergraduate or postgraduate). Whilst there are always differences between schools, our data suggests that these widened and that this introduced a further un-evenness in the learning opportunities available to ITE students. Some teacher educators told us about rich developmental opportunities afforded to student teachers as they unexpectedly found themselves working alongside experienced teachers to solve unprecedented and challenging problems. However, just as often we heard examples of the very opposite, where school staff needed to prioritise elements of their work directly with pupils, and this did not involve student teachers in a direct sense. These uneven effects arose despite ongoing commitment and effort of HEIs and Schools to work closely in partnership, and it seems reasonable to suggest that they would probably have been worse had ITE been organised under earlier models.

4.5 **Teacher professional formation**

In the introduction we outlined the research that demonstrates the ongoing significance for teachers of their early professional learning experiences, and how these early experiences continue to resonate, having an impact upon their capacity and the quality of their work in the longer term (Waters et al, 2018; Milton et al, 2020).

4.6 Whilst there is a great deal to be celebrated about the way in which ITE Partnerships have worked, bringing schools and HEIs together to find solutions to immense difficulties that have arisen since March 2020, we should not let this obscure what our data also shows quite clearly, which may be summarised as follows. Overall, crucial features of the arrangements for ITE in Wales have been

jeopardised by the unavoidable responses of schools and HEIs to pandemic-related restrictions and adjustments. Examples include:

- a serious reduction in the volume and variety of practical experience the student teacher was able to gain, and therefore diminished opportunity for professional learning;
- a shift away from assessment spanning a series of professional tasks over time, to the estimation of likely trajectory, sometimes on the basis on very limited evidence;
- a shift away from students engaging in empirical school-based investigation, towards desk-based types of research

These are all matters of great consequence in the light of core characteristics of reformed Welsh ITE, which is designed to have at its centre (a) partnership working, (b) a process-oriented definition of professional standards, and (c) engagement in research.

4.7 Arriving at a balanced understanding of these issues requires the acknowledgement and weighing competing interests. For example, on the one hand it can be argued that it is fair to student teachers to adapt systems that assess their progress and attainment of professional standards in such a way that a major disruption to their programme, which is no fault of their own, does not prevent them from qualifying in (or roughly in) the originally envisaged timescale. This may also reduce concerns about interruptions in the supply of new teachers. On the other hand, if we accept that the programmes and systems in place were carefully designed to support the student teachers in their learning and attainment within the professional standards, and that the professional standards are a reasonable proxy for the attainment of professional competence and capacity (as well as its further growth), then we must acknowledge that some of those becoming qualified are, put simply, less than ready to take up a post as a newly-qualified teacher. Adding to this complexity is the underdevelopment of shared understandings across all ITE Partnership stakeholders in relation to the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership.

4.8 Where the first argument in the above paragraph is learner-centred in respect of the student teacher, the second is learner-centred in respect of children and young

people in schools, and perhaps also acknowledges a wider notion of public and societal interest. As mentioned earlier, some of the published research suggests that the quality of the first thorough engagement with professional learning will impact directly on whether or not new teachers choose to stay in the profession, which may add a further economic argument to the second line of reasoning introduced above. It may also be instructive to draw comparisons with other professions, for example considering whether we would think it reasonable if the professional preparation of nurses, doctors, police officers or judges were to be adjusted in a similar way to teacher education.

4.9 Our research suggests a need for attention and resources to be devoted to supporting the ‘pandemic cohorts’ during a substantial period of their work as a newly-qualified teachers. Such support will need to be tailored to individual students, given the wide variety in their experiences of reduced, diminished or lost opportunities for professional learning thus far.

4.10 **The place of assessment in teaching and learning in schools**

Assessment, and in particular assessment for learning, has remained an important focus throughout the research. Our data are rich in examples of the changing nature of assessment in a range of school settings, where we noted that there had been a marked shift from the initial marginalisation of assessment to its dominance in particular forms. We also suggest that the changing position of assessment is a signal of a deeper and wider set of shifts in how relationships, dialogue and the use of space figure in the school. We noted an ‘erosion of assessment for learning’ which is indicative of a ‘hollowing out’ of pedagogical practices under pandemic conditions.

4.11 These are vitally important findings in the context of schools. Nevertheless, our main concern in this study has been to address the core aims and objectives set out by Welsh Government for this research (see Annex A), and accordingly our main emphasis is on the impact of such changes on schools as learning environments for those engaged in teacher education. Reductions of in-school time for student teachers had a major impact on their exposure to the wide range of practices normally available. This was especially disruptive for postgraduate students. There

was a narrowing of assessment experiences in the classroom, including those that would build familiarity with pupil progress, differentiation or the use and communication of assessment outcomes. The assessment of student teachers themselves was deeply affected, both in terms of their classroom practices and across the assembling of evidence towards meeting the professional standards.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Whilst we are aware Welsh Government have already initiated plans to provide additional support for NQTs in the coming Autumn term we end this report with recommendations that go beyond our understanding of what this planned support entails. Our recommendations are firmly grounded in the analysis of the data that we have gathered.

Recommendation 1.

As a matter of urgency, Welsh Government (working closely with the Education Workforce Council, Regional Consortia, ITE Partnerships and schools) should lead work to devise a sustained, flexible, responsive programme of individually-tailored support for newly qualified teachers. This should be spread over at least two years and be aimed at those from both ‘pandemic cohorts’ who are entering employment.

We feel this may be achieved in a number of different ways, either as a free-standing initiative or through adaptation or augmentation of existing provision for professional learning and/or mentorship. What is essential is that the provision can be bespoke enough to take into account the individual needs of each NQT. Recent international literature on professional learning suggests in order for it to be most impactful and productive it should:

- draw on the nuances of NQTs and beginning teachers’ specific contexts,
- be supported by school based colleagues with expertise in teacher education and professional learning for beginning teachers,
- be situated within a safe, supportive environment,
- have sufficient externality from the specific employment context to enable and privilege honest and reflective conversations about the complexities and missed experiences of practice. This feature is critical given the prevalence of fixed-term temporary contracts and early career job insecurity.

Recommendation 2.

Welsh Government (working closely with the Education Workforce Council, and Regional Consortia) need to pay specific attention and give considerable thought to how individuals from the ‘pandemic cohorts’ can be supported to secure jobs in the profession.

This second recommendation is important because: (a) ITE partnerships indicated an over-recruitment to their programmes in 2020-2021, meaning that overall new teacher supply will increase; (b) there is a danger that new teachers whose programmes have been disrupted will suffer some level of stigmatisation as a result of perceptions of them having incomplete ITE experiences.

Recommendation 3.

Across the profession at all levels and in ITE Partnerships, work should be undertaken to further develop shared understandings of the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and how they can be used to support professional growth.

This is important to provide the necessary time and space to embed the new ITE Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, in the way they were envisaged to be (i.e. more orientated to the process model rather than a threshold competence model) as the necessary time to do this was inevitably cut short by the pandemic.

Recommendation 4.

Schools should examine their own pandemic-necessitated changes to assessment practices and consider how these align with their values in terms of pupils’ education. Where schools are engaged in teacher education and/or supporting NQTs, they should also consider how such changes impact upon the professional formation of trainee and early career teachers.

This is important because of our key finding that suggests a shift from marginalisation to dominance of assessment practices along with an erosion of assessment for learning and a ‘hollowing-out’ of pedagogical practices.

References

- Ashcroft, K. & James, D. (1999) (eds) *The Creative Professional: learning to teach 14-19 year-olds*. London: Falmer Press
- BERA/RSA (2014) *Research and the Teaching Profession: building the capacity for a self-improving education system*. Final report of the BERA-RSA Inquiry into the role of research in teacher education. London: British Educational Research Association.
- Biesta, G. (2019) 'Should Teaching be Re(dis)covered? Introduction to a Symposium', *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 38 :549-553.
- Broadfoot, P. M., Daugherty, R., Gardner, J., Harlen, W., James, M., & Stobart, G. (2002) *Assessment for learning: 10 principles*. Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge School of Education.
- Black, P. & Wiliam, D. (1998) 'Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment'. *Phi Delta Kappan* 80(2): 139–148.
- Boud, D. & Molloy, E. (2013) *Feedback in Higher and Professional Education*. London: Routledge
- Boylan, M. (2010) 'Ecologies of participation in school classrooms', *Teaching and Teacher Education* 26 (1) : 61-70.
- Brown, P. & James, D. (2020) 'Educational expansion, poverty reduction and social mobility: re-framing the debate', *International Journal of Educational Research* 100, article number: 101537. ([10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101537](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101537))
- Brown, P., Lauder, H. & Cheung S. (2020) *The Death of Human Capital? Its Failed Promise and How To Renew It in an Age of Disruption*, New York: Oxford University Press. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-death-of-human-capital-9780190644314?cc=gb&lang=en&>
- Cater, J. (2017) *Whither Teacher Education and Training?* Higher Education Policy Institute, HEPI Report 95. Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute.
- Cullinane, C. & Montacute, R. (2020) *COVID-19 and Social Mobility Impact Briefing: school shutdown*. London: Sutton Trust.
- Daly, C., Milton, E. & Langdon, F. (2020) 'How do ecological perspectives help understand schools as sites for teacher learning?' *Professional Development in Education* 46(4): 652-663 <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1787208>
- Donaldson, G. (2015) *The Donaldson Review of Curriculum and Assessment*. Cardiff: Welsh Government

- Egan, D., Bryant, A., Gordan, B., Loudon, G. & Aldous, D. (2019) Professional Learning Enquiries Research Project. Report prepared for Welsh Government (unpublished)
- Feiman-Nemser, S. (2012) 'Beyond solo teaching' *Educational Leadership* 69(8): 10-16.
- Fernald, D. H. & Duclos, C. W. (2005) 'Enhance Your Team-Based Qualitative Research', *Annals of Family Medicine* 3(4): 360-364.
- Furlong, J. (2015) *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers: options for the future of initial teacher education in Wales*. Oxford University.
- Hall, C and Hall, E. (1988) *Human Relations in Education* London: Routledge
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2019) *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (4th Edition). Abingdon: Routledge
- Harrison, N., James, D. & Last, K. (2015) 'Don't know what you've got 'till it's gone? Skills-led qualifications, secondary school attainment and policy choices' *Research Papers in Education* 30(5): 585-608
- Hobson, A.J., Malderez, A., Tracey, L., Homer, M.S., Ashby, P., Mitchell, N., McIntyre, J., Cooper, D., Roper, T., Chambers, G.N. & Tomlinson, P.D. (2009) *Becoming a Teacher: Teachers' experiences of initial teacher training, Induction and early professional development (Final report)*, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Nottingham.
- Hobson, A. & McIntyre, J. (2013) 'Teacher fabrication as an impediment to professional learning and development: the external mentor antidote.' *Oxford Review of Education* 39(3): 345–365. doi:10.1080/03054985.2013.808618.
- Johnson, R., and Onwuegbuzie, A. (2004) 'Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come'. *Educational Researcher* 33(7): 14–26.
- Langdon, F. J., Alexander, P. A., Ryde, A. & Baggetta, P. (2014) 'A National Survey of Induction and Mentoring: How it is Perceived Within Communities of Practice.' *Teaching and Teacher Education* 44: 92–105. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2014.08.004.
- Langdon, F.J. (2017) 'Learning to Mentor: unravelling routine practice to develop adaptive mentoring expertise.' *Teacher Development* 21(4): 528–546. doi:10.1080/13664530.2016.1267036.
- Macbeath, J. (2019) *The future of the teaching profession* (second edition). Education International. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08920206010150030901>
- Malik, S. A. & Wiseman, A. W. (2017) 'Revisiting and re-representing scaffolding: the two gradient model', *Cogent Education* 4(1), DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2017.1331533

Milton, E., Daly, C., Langdon, F., Palmer, M., Jones, K & Davies, A. J. (2020) 'Can schools really provide the learning environment that new teachers need? Complexities and implications for professional learning in Wales', *Professional Development in Education*, 1–14. doi:10.1080/19415257.2020.1767177.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2011) *Teachers Matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Pointers for Policy Development*. Paris: OECD. Online. www.oecd.org/education/school/48627229.pdf (accessed 28 September 2018).

Pollard, A. (2018) *Reflective Teaching in Schools*. (5th Edition) London: Bloomsbury Academic

Qualifications Wales (2020) *Qualified for the future: Decisions on how we will shape the future qualifications for 16 year-olds in Wales*. Available at: <https://www.qualificationswales.org/media/6019/our-decisions.pdf>

Reay, D. (2020) 'English education in the time of Coronavirus', *Forum* 62(3): 311-322.

Sahlberg, P. (2011) 'The Fourth Way of Finland' *Journal of Educational Change* 12(2): 173-185. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-011-9157-y>

Schleicher, A. (2020) *The impact of COVID-19 on Education*. Paris: OECD

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of qualitative research, grounded theory procedures and techniques*. London: Sage

Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., and Carver-Thomas, D. (2016) *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Tabberer, R. (2013) *A Review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/review-of-initial-teacher-training-2013.pdf>

Thomas, G. (2013) *How to do your research project* (2nd edition). London: Sage

Thomas, G. & James, D. (2006) 'Reinventing grounded theory: Some questions about theory, ground and discovery', *British Educational Research Journal* 32(6): 767-795.

Torrance, H. (2012) 'Triangulation, Respondent Validation, and Democratic Participation in Mixed Methods Research.' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6(2): 111–123.

Waters, M., Jones, M., and Macdonald, A. (2018) *Teaching: A valued profession working towards a career, conditions and pay framework for School Teachers in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Welsh Government (2018) *National Approach to Professional Learning*. See for example: <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-approach-to-professional-learning/>

Welsh Government (2019) *Professional Standards*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/professional-standards>

Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger-Trayner, E., Fenton-O'Creevy, M., Hutchinson, S., Kubiak, C. and Wenger-Trayner, B. (2015) *Learning in Landscapes of Practice. Boundaries, identity, and knowledgeability in practice-based learning*. London: Routledge.

William, D. (2011) 'What is Assessment for Learning?' *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 37: 3-14.

Williams, Z. (2020) *Review of the impact of mass disruption on the wellbeing and mental health of children and young people, and possible therapeutic interventions*. Cardiff: Welsh Government, GSR report number 62/2020. Available at: <https://gov.wales/review-impact-mass-disruption-wellbeing-and-mental-health-children-and-young-people>

Annex A

RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON THE FUTURE PROVISION OF INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Summary

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Wales who are involved in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) are invited to submit expressions of interest to undertake research studies focused on the implications of the COVID 19 pandemic for enhanced provision of ITE in Wales. The research will be funded through the Collaborative Grant mechanism and HEIs are, therefore, strongly encouraged to consider collaborative submissions. They will also be required to work with their lead ITE partnership schools in undertaking the research so that they can draw upon the experience of these schools.

Context

Welsh Government are seeking to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the implications resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic on specific areas of the Welsh education system including the enhanced provision of ITE. HEIs in Wales are, therefore, invited to submit expressions of interest in undertaking one or more research studies as part of a collaborative process.

Aims and Objectives

The **aims** of the research would be to:

- Provide research-based evidence on the implications of the disruption resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic for enhanced provision of ITE.
- Contribute to the development of research capacity and activity in Wales in line with the objectives of the *National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry*.

The **objectives** of the research would be to:

- Provide high quality evidence on the implications resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic on enhanced provision of ITE.
- Draw upon the experience of ITE lead partnership schools and other schools within the system.
- Contribute to wider research and evaluation activity in this area.
- Demonstrate the capacity of the higher education sector to respond in an agile and collaborative manner to the needs of the education system in Wales.

Specification

1. ITE will in the immediate future have to operate in a context significantly impacted by the effects of COVID 19. Welsh Government wishes, therefore, to commission research studies on how enhanced ITE provision should reflect the following:
 - Research Study 1: An increased emphasis on distance/blended learning.
 - Research Study 2: The impact of this on learners including disadvantaged learners.
 - Research Study 3: The impact of this on learners in Welsh-Medium education, particularly those who live in English-Medium homes.
 - Research Study 4: How teachers, schools and external partners, including Universities, can collaborate to produce high quality learning resources.
 - Research Study 5: How assessment can best be adapted to meet the needs of changed learning and teaching contexts.
 - Research Study 6: The enhanced importance of parental engagement in education and the home learning environment.
 - Research Study 7: The health and wellbeing of learners and practitioners.
 - Research Study 8: The importance of multi-agency provision for children and families.
2. We would also be prepared to consider additional areas if HEIs can demonstrate that these are applicable to enhanced provision of ITE in the new context faced by education in Wales.
3. The participating HEIs should undertake this research within a given timescale, using a mix of methodologies and focusing on a range of research questions. Further details on each of these is provided below.
4. Participating HEIs are encouraged to opt for research studies where they have demonstrable interest/strength and can commit experienced research staff to undertake the work.
5. As with previous uses of the collaborative grant process, HEIs are invited to indicate in which areas they are interested in undertaking research and to support their expression of interest with a brief indication of their interest/expertise in the area and an outline methodology including proposed research questions. Collaboration between HEIs to produce joint proposals is strongly encouraged.
6. The overall focus of the research studies will be on the implications of the disruption on the enhanced provision of ITE. In scope will be the experience of:
 - All learners.
 - Practitioners including headteachers, teachers, support staff and others working with children and their families.
 - Parents.
7. The following principles will underpin the collaborative process:

- All the HEIs in Wales will decide if they have the interest and capacity to be involved or not involved.
- The participating HEIs will work with Welsh Government staff to develop the final design of the studies through an inception process.
- A repository of existing secondary literature and data sources being established by KAS in Welsh Government will be shared with participating HEIs.
- Participating HEIs will work with Welsh Government staff to report on progress with and completion of the studies.

Research Questions and Methodologies

8. Specific research questions for each study will be agreed with the HEI (s) as part of the commissioning process. They should be framed within the following generic questions:

- What evidence is available in this area, including the experiences of lead partnership schools and other schools within the system?
- What effective practice can be identified?
- What challenges exist?
- What conclusions can be drawn?
- What are the implications for enhanced provision of ITE in Wales?

9. Specific methodologies for each study will be agreed with the HEI (s) as part of the commissioning process. They might include:

- Review of available evidence sources.
- Evidence drawn from ITE lead partnership schools and other schools in the system.
- Interviews with key local, regional and national stakeholders including local authority services, Regional Education Consortia, Estyn, NAEL, Education Workforce Council, Health Boards, Public Health Wales, Professional Associations and the voluntary sector.
- Focus groups with learners, parents and professionals within ITE partnerships schools and other schools.

Timescales

- June 2020: Commissioning of the studies and agreement on final specification.

- July 2020-December 2020: Initial data collection leading to interim report to Welsh Government.
- January 2021- 31 March 2021: Second phase of data collection leading to final draft and final report to Welsh Government.

Outputs

1. An interim report to Welsh Government submitted by the end of December 2020 presenting emerging findings and interim recommendations.
2. A final draft report to Welsh Government submitted by 12 March 2021 presenting final draft findings and recommendations.
3. A final report to Welsh Government submitted by 31 March 2021 presenting final findings and recommendations.
4. Report should be submittedf to the following format:
 - Executive Summary
 - Introduction
 - Sections on each of the research questions.
 - Overall findings
 - Recommendations
 - References
5. Participation in two collaborative seminars to discuss emerging findings and recommendations: the first to be held in early January 2021 following the submission of interim reports and the second to be held in the week beginning 14 March 2021 following the submission of final draft reports.

Resource

A total budget of £400,000 is available and will be allocated to research studies that meet the award criteria. Each HEI involved in a successful proposal will receive a minimum of £30,000.

Award Criteria

1. Demonstration of a clear understanding of the need for the research.
2. Appropriate research questions.
3. Appropriate outline methodologies including the involvement of lead partnership schools.
4. Appropriate outline project plan.
5. Appropriate research team.
6. Collaboration with other HEIs
7. Overall value for money.

Next Steps

1. HEIs should submit their expressions of interest by 26 June 2020.
2. If HEIs decide not to submit an expression of interest, they should inform Welsh Government by this date.
3. HEIs may submit as many expressions of interest as they choose.
4. Collaborative bids between two or more HEIs are strongly encouraged.
5. Expressions of interest should be a maximum of two sides of A4 setting out:
 - HEI (s) Name
 - Contact Point
 - The Lot being applied for
 - Proposed Research Questions
 - Proposed Research Methodologies (including the involvement of lead partnership schools).
 - Outline Project Plan
 - Research Team

Expressions of interest should be submitted to Rachael Hicks at Rachael.hicks003@gov.wales

Annex B

The Preliminary Workshops on 20th October 2020

This note is to help shape the three parallel preliminary workshops being held at 16.00-17.00 on 20th October, facilitated by Anna, Jennie & Judith.

Suggested structure for the meeting:

1. Begin by welcoming those attending and thanking them for their time and contribution. Get them to introduce themselves. (You could invite them to say who they are, where they work, what their role is, and what kind of day they have had so far...).
2. Explain the nature and purpose of the session. Maybe use the following, which is taken from the invitation that was sent out:

Welsh Government Research - Project Pandemic-related assessment innovations: implications for teacher education (PAIR-ITE)

This research project is one of six **Welsh Government-funded studies** on the impact of the **COVID-19 Pandemic** on the **Future Provision of ITE**. Its main concern is to understand challenges, responses and adjustments in a range of **summative, formative and diagnostic assessment** activity in Welsh schools, and how ITE provision and practice is adapting or needs further adaptation. The study is likely to have an impact on policy and practice.

The project runs between now and March 2021. Core project team members are drawn from the Cardiff ITE Partnership, and come from Cardiff Metropolitan and Cardiff universities.

It is fundamental to the design of the project that **colleagues based in schools** are involved throughout, and especially those who have familiarity with either or both:

- **changes in assessment** since March 2020;
- **changes in initial teacher education (ITE)** since March 2020.

This session will last an hour. It is informal. The main focus is on your experiences and views of what you and others have had to do since the Pandemic first changed the way we all work. The workshop's main purpose is to help shape what we include in the research interviews we will be doing with teachers and other stakeholders during November.

QUESTIONS

3. **Firstly**, start with a general question about major changes of all kinds for teachers and learners when schools moved to having remote contact with learners.
4. Having heard all participants, follow up by asking some or all of them for more detail where that helps you understand what they are describing. Try to keep such requests short, e.g., 'could you say a bit more about what that was like'?
5. A **second** major question could then focus on assessment, e.g., 'Assessment in its many forms is a normal part of teaching and learning on a day to day basis. As schools found new ways of working from late March 2020, it seems likely that assessment will have changed. Can you give an example of how assessment changed for you, your learners or your school'?
6. Again, if each participant answers this in turn, you could follow up with asking for more detail about some or all of the examples given, using brief prompts. They may well think of more examples once they have heard those of others.
7. A **third** major question could focus on their view on what teaching staff found most difficult or problematic about assessment when schools moved to having remote contact with learners.
8. This could be followed up with inviting any examples (however small or specific) of what they feel went well – or even improved – as schools moved to remote contact with learners.
9. A **final** question could then ask for suggestions about skills, capacities and qualities that new teachers need more of, in order to work well in situations where there is greater reliance on blends of face-to-face and online teaching and learning.

NOTES for facilitator:

- (a) The preliminary workshop is not an attempt to gather data that will directly answer any of our research questions, but is an opportunity for school-based colleagues to shape what we go on to include in the design of the study.

Ideally, the suggested structure will assist in getting a free-flowing discussion going. It contains useful ground to cover but could be augmented in various ways. The main goal is served by hearing the experiences and perceptions of the school-based colleagues them

Annex C

Interview questions for the project *Pandemic-related assessment experiences and innovations: implications for teacher education*

Overview: This study examines the pandemic-related challenges that schools are facing, and their responses, in formative, summative and diagnostic assessment. The main purpose is to arrive at an understanding of how Initial Teacher Education can best adapt and respond to the changed circumstances.

A. Interview Checklist for School Heads/Assessment Leads/Teachers

Introduction/Preamble. Thank them for agreeing to take part. Brief account of nature of project, who is doing it and who funds it. Draw attention to the Information Sheet, and read through each of the numbered points with each participant. Check they are OK with the session being recorded. Reiterate anonymity – i.e. no individual or institution will be identifiable in anything coming from the project, and we hope that they will feel able to be frank. Check we have their consent to take part. Say that the interview should take no longer than 45 minutes.

Questions.

1. Lots of things changed for schools, learners and teachers with the move to online and blended provision in Spring 2020. Focusing on assessment, what would you say was the most significant change? (*Prompt, if needed: Can you give a specific example of that?*)
2. Many thanks. The change you just mentioned sounds mainly about (*formative/summative/diagnostic*) assessment. Were there also things that changed in (*formative/summative/diagnostic*) assessment? (*This is a 'dynamic' question which will need to be adapted to what they said under question 1, but also needs to be sensitive to the context, especially the type of school (primary, secondary, special etc.)*)
3. ***EITHER (a) for teachers:*** Focusing on a particular year group, how would you say that the learning experience changed for your learners? In particular, how did their encounters with assessment change? ***OR (b), for heads/assessment leads/similar:*** How would you say that the learning experience changed for learners, overall? In particular, how did their encounters with assessment change?

4. Would you say that different learners or groups of learners have been affected differently as part of these changes? If so which learners, and how? (*Prompt if needed: For example, children of key workers, or young people in different social or economic circumstances?*)

5. What would you say were the biggest difficulties or challenges for teachers in your school in the area of assessment? (*Prompt, if needed: How about other kinds of assessment, i.e. formative, summative, diagnostic?*)

6. Are there any particular online platforms or applications which you think have been especially useful in the period since Spring 2020 in supporting learning and assessment for school pupils? (*Prompt if needed: If so, how and why was it/they useful?*)

7. Since Spring 2020, has there been any assessment-related development or innovation that you feel was positive? This might relate to the whole school, a particular class or group, or just to one or more individual learners.

8. Thinking of your immediate professional colleagues in the period since Spring 2020, what qualities, characteristics, knowledge or skills have seemed most important in maintaining a reasonable level of support for learners?

9. If pandemic-related restrictions were to continue in some form for the next 12 months, do you think that the education of new teachers should change in some way? If so, in what way?

10. More specifically, if pandemic-related restrictions were to continue in some form for the next 12 months, do you think that new teachers need to prepare in new ways so they can best support assessment and understand children and young peoples' progress?

B. Interview Checklist for key people involved in Partnership ITE (including ITE leads, HEI staff, recent students, ITE coordinators, senior mentors and Research Champions).

Introduction/Preamble. Thank them for agreeing to take part. Brief account of nature of project, who is doing it and who funds it. Draw attention to the Information Sheet, and read through each of the numbered points with each participant. Check they are OK with the session being recorded. Reiterate anonymity – i.e. no individual or institution will be identifiable in anything coming from the project, and we hope that they will feel able to be frank. Check we have their consent to take part. Say that the interview should take no longer than 45 minutes.

Questions.

1. ***EITHER (a) for staff:*** Lots of things changed for many of those in schools and universities with the move to online and blended provision in Spring 2020. Thinking generally about your role in teacher education (ITE), what was the most significant change in relation to supporting and preparing ITE students? ***OR (b) for recent graduates:*** Lots of things changed for many of those in schools and universities with the move to online and blended provision in Spring 2020. Thinking about your experiences in teacher education (ITE), what was the most significant change you saw in how students were being supported and prepared?
2. How was ITE student involvement or contact with schools affected? In your experience were some ITE students or groups of ITE students more affected than others, and if so how?
3. Were any schools known to you less willing or able to take part in ITE programmes and activities as a result of pandemic-related changes to their use of time, energy and resources? (*Prompt if needed: If so why do you think this was?*)
4. Thinking in particular about change or disruption to programmes and activities of ITE students, in what ways do you feel their experiences with pupil assessment were impacted?

5. Assessment of ITE students themselves is a normal part of ITE provision. What major changes to assessment did you experience and observe around you as we all moved to remote contact? (*Prompt, if needed: Can you give a specific example? Further prompt if needed: What about with other kinds of assessment?*)
6. What would you say were the biggest difficulties or challenges for those engaged in ITE provision in the area of assessment of ITE students? (*Prompt, if needed: How about other kinds of assessment?*)
7. Was there any assessment-related development or innovation within the ITE provision that you feel was positive? This might relate to the whole programme, a particular segment, or just to one or more people.
8. Have you used or come across any online platforms or applications that you consider to be especially useful to support the learning, development and assessment of ITE students? (*Prompt if needed: If so, how and why were they especially useful?*)
9. If pandemic-related restrictions were to continue in some form for the next 12 months, do you think that the education of new teachers should change in some further way? If so, how?
10. Do our experiences with ITE during the pandemic have any lessons for how we continue to nurture, develop and assess *professionalism* and/or *professional standards* amongst those becoming teachers?

Annex D1

NOTE: Please in Annex D1 and D2 there are no missing questions as it was designed as a branch survey so not all questions are relevant to all participants and therefore the numbers may appear to be out of sequence.

Pandemic-related assessment project - ITE staff survey

Q1

Thank you for taking part in this short survey. It forms part of a collaborative research project carried out by Cardiff University and Cardiff Metropolitan University funded by the Welsh Government on the impact of COVID-19 on teacher education. We have completed around 30 in-depth interviews with a range of people involved. This short survey will enable us to gain a better picture of experiences across Wales and will contribute to our recommendations to the Welsh Government.

I understand that:

- my participation is voluntary;
- all my responses will be anonymised and it will not be possible to identify me or where I work or study/studied
- survey data will be stored securely on a password protected system.

Due to the anonymous nature of an online survey, it will not be possible to withdraw your data at a later date.

By continuing with this survey you are giving informed consent to take part in the study and to the the anonymous use of data in project articles, reports and other dissemination activities.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Q4 Which of the following would best describe you?

- I am currently a student on a teacher education programme in Wales
- I completed a teacher education programme in Wales in the summer of 2020
- I am a higher-education-based teacher educator
- I work in a school and am closely involved in teacher education (e.g., as an ITE mentor or coordinator or research champion)

Q5 Which Initial Teacher Education partnership are/were you most closely associated with?
(please tick one)

- CaBan (Bangor University, and the University of Chester)
- Yr Athrofa: Professional Learning Partnership (APLP) (University of Wales Trinity St David, Carmarthen and Swansea)
- Cardiff Partnership
- Aberystwyth ITE Partnership
- Swansea University Schools' Partnership
- University of South Wales ITE Partnership
- The Open University

Q23 Please indicate the nature of the teacher education programmes you are involved in:

- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate

Both

Q24 Is your focus on

Primary

Secondary

Both

Q25 Following the arrival of COVID-related restrictions or adjustments from Spring 2020 onwards, and taking into account all aspects of the teacher education programme(s), which of the following would most closely reflect your view:

The overall quality of teacher education programme(s) was profoundly adversely affected

The overall quality of teacher education programme(s) was adversely affected

The overall quality of teacher education programme(s) was probably largely unchanged from what it would have been

The overall quality of teacher education programme(s) was probably better than it would have been

The overall quality of teacher education programme(s) was significantly better than it would have been

Q26 Since Spring 2020, how was the total placement time in school for 'typical' students (originally planned to be 120 days) impacted? (If you work on more than one programme, please choose that most affected):

Not at all

- Physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of it took place
- Physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of it took place
- Physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of it took place
- Physical placement time was reduced to less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of what was originally planned.
- Physical placement time was reduced to zero

Q28 Would you describe any such change to the placements as having affected students' preparation to become a teacher?

- (a) Yes, with largely positive effects;
- (b) Yes, with largely negative effects;
- (c) Yes, with a mixture of positive and negative effects;
- (d) No;
- (e) Not applicable.

Q29 If at least part of the total placement time in school was shorter than originally planned, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

'Although there was a reduction in physical placement time in school, I feel that most students were able to participate fully in the teaching, learning and assessment activity that was taking place, including online'.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q30 Please indicate the your level of agreement with the following statement:

‘The many recent changes to teaching, learning and assessment in schools have on average given students a rich set of experiences and have added to their confidence as professional teachers’

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q31 Please indicate the your level of agreement with the following statement:

‘On balance I feel that many students missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to their skills and/or confidence as a teacher’

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q32 Compared to previous cohorts, do you think that on average, students in these Pandemic cohorts are as confident and competent to teach as they would have been at this stage in previous years?

- Yes, fully
- Yes, partially
- No
- Don't know

Q33 Compared to previous cohorts, do you think that on average, students are as confident and competent in their use of formative and summative assessment in schools as they would have been at this stage in previous years?

- Yes, fully
- Yes, partially
- No
- Don't know

Q34 Please indicate the your level of agreement with the following statement:

‘COVID-related changes to ITE programmes made (or are making) it harder for us to put together evidence that ‘typical’ students have achieved (or are achieving) the professional standards for teaching and leadership’

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Q35 Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for 'typical' students affected by COVID-related adjustments the final qualification outcomes are:

Probably just as valid as they were in previous cohorts

Probably less valid than they were in previous cohorts

Probably more valid than they were in previous cohorts

Q36 If COVID-affected teacher education has left some new teachers with significant gaps in their experience, who do you feel is responsible for working with these students to support them in the near future? (please click and drag items to move up and down to rank in order of responsibility)

_____ Employing Schools

_____ External provider / mentor

_____ Supply agencies

_____ Consortia

_____ ITE Partnerships

_____ Welsh Government

Q37 Optional Comment: If there is something else you think particularly important about how COVID-related changes have affected teacher education programmes, please describe it in a sentence or two below. In particular you might wish to comment on the range of students' experiences and their respective progress, or your experience of different

programmes i.e. Bachelor of Arts (BA), Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) and (if applicable) different partnerships you work with:

Annex D2

Pandemic-related assessment project – Student / NQT survey

Q1

Thank you for taking part in this short survey. It forms part of a collaborative research project carried out by Cardiff University and Cardiff Metropolitan University funded by the Welsh Government on the impact of COVID-19 on teacher education. We have completed around 30 in-depth interviews with a range of people involved. This short survey will enable us to gain a better picture of experiences across Wales and will contribute to our recommendations to the Welsh Government.

I understand that:

- my participation is voluntary;
- all my responses will be anonymised and it will not be possible to identify me or where

I work or study/studied

- survey data will be stored securely on a password protected system.

Due to the anonymous nature of an online survey, it will not be possible to withdraw your data at a later date.

By continuing with this survey you are giving informed consent to take part in the study and to the to the anonymous use of data in project articles, reports and other dissemination activities.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Q4 Which of the following would best describe you?

- I am currently a student on a teacher education programme in Wales
- I completed a teacher education programme in Wales in the summer of 2020
- I am a higher-education-based teacher educator
- I work in a school and am closely involved in teacher education (e.g., as an ITE mentor or coordinator or research champion)

Q5 Which Initial Teacher Education partnership are/were you most closely associated with?
(please tick one)

- CaBan (Bangor University, and the University of Chester)
- Yr Athrofa: Professional Learning Partnership (APLP) (University of Wales Trinity St David, Carmarthen and Swansea)
- Cardiff Partnership
- Aberystwyth ITE Partnership
- Swansea University Schools' Partnership
- University of South Wales ITE Partnership
- The Open University

Q6 Is your current or recent teacher education programme

- BA(Hons) / BEd(Hons)
- PGCE

Q7 Are you/were you preparing for:

- Primary
- Secondary

Q8 Following the arrival of COVID-related restrictions or adjustments from Spring 2020 onwards, and taking into account all aspects of your teacher education programme, which of the following would most closely reflect your view:

- The overall quality of my teacher education programme was profoundly adversely affected
- The overall quality of my teacher education programme was adversely affected
- The overall quality of my teacher education programme was probably largely unchanged from what it would have been
- The overall quality of my teacher education programme was better than it would have been
- The overall quality of my teacher education programme was significantly better than it would have been

Q9 How was the duration of your total placement time in school (originally planned to be 120 days) impacted? (Please tick one of the following categories)

- Not at all
- My physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of it took place
- My physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of it took place
- My physical placement time was reduced, though at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of it took place
- My physical placement time was reduced to less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of what was originally planned.

My physical placement was reduced to zero.

Q10 Would you describe any such change to your placements as having affected your preparation to become a teacher?

yes, with largely positive effects;

yes, with largely negative effects;

yes, with a mixture of positive and negative effects;

No;

Not applicable

Q11 If at least part of your total placement time in school was shorter than originally planned, please indicate how much you would agree/disagree with the following statement: 'Although there was a reduction in my physical placement time in school, I feel that I was able to participate fully in the teaching, learning and assessment activity that was taking place, including online'.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Q12 Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statement:
'The many recent changes to teaching, learning and assessment in schools have given me a rich set of experiences and have added to my confidence as a professional teacher'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q13 Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statement:
'I feel I missed out on vital school-based experiences that would normally have contributed to my skills and/or confidence as a teacher'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q14 Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statement:
I feel generally confident and competent to support learners in the age group I trained to teach.

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q15 Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statement: I feel confident and competent to support learners in the age group you trained to teach specifically in terms of your roles in learner assessment

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q17 Generally speaking, do you feel you have had support that has enabled you to assemble evidence of achieving the standards despite COVID-related changes to your programme?

- Yes
- Yes, in part
- No

Q18 Which of the five professional standards for teaching and leadership is/has been the most difficult to evidence in your own case?

- Pedagogy;

- Collaboration;
- Leadership;:
- Innovation;
- Professional Learning

Q19 Which of the five professional standards for teaching and leadership is/has been easiest to evidence in your own case?

- Pedagogy;
- Collaboration;
- Leadership;:
- Innovation;
- Professional Learning

Q20 Thinking about all the ways in which student teachers are/were assessed in the programme, would you say you feel that for students who have completed, but were affected by COVID-related adjustments, their teaching qualifications are:

- Probably just as valid as those held by previous cohorts
- Probably less valid than those held by previous cohorts
- Probably more valid than those held by previous cohorts

Q21 If COVID-affected teacher education has left some new teachers with significant gaps in their experience, who do you feel is responsible for working with

these new teachers to support them in the near future? (please click and drag to move items up and down to rank in order of responsibility)

- _____ Employing Schools
- _____ External provider / mentor
- _____ Supply agencies
- _____ Consortia
- _____ Initial Teacher Education Partnerships
- _____ Welsh Government

Q22 Optional Comment: If there is something else you think particularly important about how COVID-related changes have affected teacher education programmes, or if you want to add something in respect of any question above, please describe it in a sentence or two below:

Annex E1



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University



Cardiff
Partnership

for Initial Teacher Education

Partneriaeth
Caerdydd

ar gyfer Addysg Gychwynnol i Athrawon

Participant Information Sheet

An invitation for you to take part in research on pandemic-related assessment experiences and innovations: implications for teacher education

1. Who is doing the research?

This research is being undertaken by a team of researchers from Cardiff Metropolitan University and Cardiff University, it is funded by Welsh Government. The work is being led by Professor David James (Jamesdr2@cardiff.ac.uk).

2. Why is it being done?

This is a Welsh Government-funded research project on **the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Future Provision of ITE: how assessment can best be adapted to meet the needs of changed learning and teaching contexts.**

Education-related responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have had to be conceived and implemented at speed across the UK as in many other settings. Some of these have taken the form of trying to preserve the routines and interactions that were quite suddenly disrupted, whilst others have been less ambitious (though perhaps more realistic), seeking to maintain more focused forms of contact, engagement and activity. In Wales such

responses have also taken place just as key elements of major educational reform have been introduced, such as a new curriculum, re-designed teacher education, reconceived professional standards and a National Approach to Professional Learning (Welsh Government, 2020), amongst others. Government guidance (e.g., <https://gov.wales/examinations-and-assessments-coronavirus#section-38836>) has closely framed adjustment to certain assessments with a high profile (e.g., GCSEs and A levels). These however constitute a small fraction of the total assessment activity across primary and secondary schools. **The main concern of this research project is to understand challenges, responses and adjustments to the wider cross-section of summative, formative and diagnostic assessment activity in Welsh schools, and how ITE provision and practice needs to adapt.**

3. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are a key stakeholder within the education sector in Wales.

4. Will my taking part in this research project be kept confidential?

All information collected from you during the research project will be kept confidential and any personal information you provide will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

5. What will happen to my Personal Data?

The procedures for handling, processing, storing and destroying the data you provide will be compliant with data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. All information which is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Cardiff University is the Data Controller and is committed to respecting and protecting your personal data in accordance with your expectations and Data Protection legislation. Further information about Data Protection, including:

- your rights.
- the legal basis under which Cardiff University processes your personal data for research.
- Cardiff University's Data Protection Policy.

- how to contact the Cardiff University Data Protection Officer.
- how to contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

can be found at <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection>

6. What happens to the data at the end of the research project?

The data from this research project will be analysed by the research team. All data will be stored securely on the Cardiff University secure server for up to 5 years as per the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The data will not be made available outside of the research team.

7. What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of the study will be reported back to Welsh Government in an internal written report. Some of the main outcomes of this research are also likely to be made available in academic journal articles which are accessible to the public, or in conference presentations. You or your organisation will not be identified in any report or publication and any quotes used within the reporting of the results will be anonymised and any potential identifying information will be removed.

8. What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak with the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions (Jamesdr2@cardiff.ac.uk) If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally to someone outside of the study team you should contact Cardiff University's School of Social Science Ethics Officer Professor Alison Bullock (socsi-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk). Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might suffer will be addressed.

9. Who has reviewed this research project?

This study was given a favourable ethical opinion on 20th October 2020 by the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee 02 (REF: SREC/3875).

10. Further information and contact details

If you want further information, have any questions or you would like to take part in an interview you can email (morgana24@cardiff.ac.uk) who provides general research assistance for this study.

Thank you for considering taking part in this research project.

Annex E2



Taflen Wybodaeth Cyfranogwr

Gwahoddiad i gymryd rhan mewn ymchwil ar brofiadau asesu ac arloesi sy'n gysylltiedig â phandemig: yr oblygiadau ar gyfer addysg i athrawon

1. Pwy sy'n cynnal yr ymchwil?

Caiff yr ymchwil yma ei gynnal gan dîm o ymchwilwyr o Brifysgol Metropolitan Caerdydd a Phrifysgol Caerdydd. Caiff ei ariannu gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Yr Athro David James (Jamesdr2@cardiff.ac.uk) sy'n arwain y gwaith.

2. Pam mae hyn yn cael ei wneud?

Project ymchwil a ariannir gan Lywodraeth Cymru yw hon ar **effaith Pandemig COVID-19 ar Ddarpariaeth AGA yn y Dyfodol: sut gall asesiad gael ei addasu er gwell i ddiwallu anghenion dysgu sydd wedi newid a chyd-destunau dysgu.**

Mae ymatebion mewn perthynas ag addysg i bandemig COVID-19 wedi gorfod cael eu dychmygu a'u gweithredu yn gyflym ar draws y Deyrnas Gyfunol yn debyg i sefyllfaoedd eraill. Cymerodd rhai o'r rhain ffurf o geisio cadw'r un drefn a rhyngweithiadau a amharwyd arnynt mor sydyn. Ceisiodd rhai eraill i fod yn llai uchelgeisiol (er efallai'n fwy realistig), gan geisio cadw at ffurfiau mwy canolog o gyswllt, ymgysylltiad a gweithgarwch. Yng Nghymru,

mae ymatebion o'r math hefyd wedi digwydd wrth i elfennau allweddol diwygiadau addysgol mawr gael eu cyflwyno. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys y cwricwlwm newydd, addysg i athrawon wedi ei ail-ddylunio, safonau proffesiynol; wedi eu hail-gynllunio ac Ymagwedd Genedlaethol tuag at Ddysgu Proffesiynol (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2020), ymhlith pethau eraill. Mae cyfarwyddyd y Llywodraeth (e.e. <https://gov.wales/examinations-and-assessments-coronavirus#section-38836>) wedi fframio addasiad yn agos at asesiadau arbennig gyda phroffil uchel (e.e. TGAU a Lefelau A). Fodd bynnag, canran fach iawn o'r holl weithgarwch asesiad ar draws ysgolion cynradd ac uwchradd yw hwn. **Prif nod y project ymchwil yma yw deall heriau. Ymatebion ac addasiadau i draws-doriad mwy eang o asesiad gweithgarwch adolygol, ffurfiannol a diagnostig yn ysgolion Cymru, a sut mae angen i ddarpariaeth ac ymarfer AGA addasu.**

3. Pam ges i fy ngwahodd i gymryd rhan?

Fe'ch gwahoddwyd i gymryd rhan oherwydd eich bod yn rhanddeiliad allweddol o fewn y sector addysg yng Nghymru.

4. Beth yw peryglon posib cymryd rhan ?

Nid ydym yn rhagweld unrhyw beryglon wrth gymryd rhan yn y cyfweiliad . Bydd eich ymatebion yn gyfrinachol a chânt eu defnyddio'n unig gan y tîm ymchwil i hysbysu a diweddarau'r canfyddiadau a roddwyd i Lywodraeth Cymru ac mewn cyhoeddiadau mwy eang.

5. Beth fydd yn digwydd i fy Nata Personol?

Bydd y gweithdrefnau ar gyfer trin, prosesu, cadw a dinistrio'r data fyddwch chi'n ei roi yn cydymffurfio gyda deddfwriaeth diogelu data gan gynnwys y Rheoleiddiad Diogelu Data Cyffredinol (GDPR) a'r Ddeddf Diogelu Data 2018. Caiff yr holl wybodaeth a gesglir yn ystod yr ymchwil ei gadw'n hollol gyfrinachol.

Prifysgol Caerdydd yw'r Rheolwr Data ac mae wedi ymrwymo at barchu a gwarchod eich data personol yn unol â'ch disgwyliadau a Deddfwriaeth Diogelu Data. Gellir dod o hyd i fwy o wybodaeth ynglŷn â Diogelu Data, gan gynnwys:

- Eich hawliau.
- Y sail gyfreithiol mae Prifysgol Caerdydd yn prosesu eich data personol ar gyfer eich ymchwil.
- Polisi Diogelu Data Prifysgol Caerdydd.

- Sut mae dod i gyswllt â Swyddog Diogelu Data Prifysgol Caerdydd.
- Sut mae dod i gyswllt â Swyddfa'r Comisiynydd Gwybodaeth.

ar <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection>

6. Beth sy'n digwydd i'r data ar ddiwedd y project ymchwil?

Caiff y data o'r project ymchwil hwn ei ddadansoddi gan y tîm ymchwil. Bydd yr holl ddata'n cael ei storio'n ddiogel ar weinydd diogel Prifysgol Caerdydd am hyd at 5 mlynedd yn unol â'r Rheoleiddiad Diogelu Data Cyffredinol (GDPR). Ni fydd y data hwn ar gael i unrhyw un tu allan i'r tîm ymchwil.

7. Beth fydd yn digwydd i ganlyniadau'r project ymchwil hwn?

Caiff canlyniadau'r astudiaeth eu hadrodd yn ôl i Lywodraeth Cymru mewn adroddiad ysgrifenedig mewnol. Bydd rhai o brif ddeilliannau'r ymchwil yma yn debygol o fod ar gael mewn erthyglau cyfnodolion academiaidd sydd ar gael ac yn hygyrch i'r cyhoedd, neu mewn cyflwyniadau cynadleddau. Ni chewch chithau na'ch sefydliad eu henwi mewn unrhyw adroddiad neu gyhoeddiad a bydd unrhyw ddyfyniadau a ddefnyddir o fewn yr adroddiad yn cael eu dienwi ac unrhyw wybodaeth a allai olygu eich bod yn cael eich adnabod ei ddileu.

8. Beth os oes yna broblem?

Os oes gyda chi bryder ynglŷn ag unrhyw agwedd o'r astudiaeth hon, dylech ofyn am gael sgwrs gyda'r ymchwilwyr fydd yn gwneud eu gorau i ateb eich cwestiynau (Jamesdr2@cardiff.ac.uk). Os digwydd eich bod yn parhau i fod yn anhapus ac yn dymuno cwyno' ffurfiol i rywun tu allan i'r tîm astudio, dylech ddod i gyswllt â Swyddog Moeseg Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol Prifysgol Caerdydd, Yr Athro Alison Bullock (socsi-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk). Caiff unrhyw gŵyn ynglŷn â'r ffordd y cawsoch eich trin yn ystod yr astudiaeth neu unrhyw niwed posib a allwch fod wedi ei ddiodef ei gyfeirio ato.

9. Pwy sydd wedi adolygu'r project ymchwil yma?

Cafodd yr astudiaeth yma farn foesegol ffafriol ar Hydref 20, 2020 gan Bwyllgor Moeseg Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol Prifysgol Caerdydd 02 (REF: SREC/3875).

10. Gwybodaeth Bellach a Manylion Cyswllt

Os hoffech wybodaeth bellach, neu od gyda chi unrhyw gwestiynau neu yr hoffech gymryd rhan mewn cyfweiliad, gallwch e-hebu (morgana24@cardiff.ac.uk Dr Alexandra Morgan, sydd yn cynnig cymorth ymchwil cyffredinol ar gyfer yr astudiaeth yma.

Diolch am ystyried cymryd rhan yn y project ymchwil yma.