

ITE Balancing Workload and Lives Policy: 2020/21

We are committed to high quality, evidenced-based teacher education built upon genuine partnerships, inspired by best classroom practice and we are engaged in teaching as an intellectual and ethical vocation. Our collective mission is to recognise, support and develop a generation of reflective practitioners who are ready, willing and able to improve the life chances of every young person they teach and challenge the status quo. We aim to strive for innovative practice and push the boundaries.

Our Goals

Our partnership is ambitious. Quite simply we expect our graduating teachers to make a meaningful and tangible difference; raising the achievement of all their pupils by being innovative, challenging and creative in their teaching. Equally we all have a responsibility as credible role models to share fresh ideas, foster a hunger to learn and empower our young people to thrive as lifelong learners. **We aim to ensure that the well-being of our pupils, teachers, trainees and staff is valued.** We want teacher education and all those involved to enrich the fabric of the school, contributing beyond the classroom, engaging with wider communities and valuing the whole child within them. (Sussex ITE Mission statement 2020)

High workload is one of the most commonly cited drivers for teachers leaving the profession and can be a disincentive for potential new teachers to join. The most effective actions to reduce workload are those that encourage better teaching – by focusing on what makes the most difference, supported by evidence, and making best use of teacher time. At Sussex University, we have worked with our trainees, pupils and school partners to review workloads and identify what we feel is genuinely important and how we can encourage our teachers and trainees to focus on what they need to. We review paperwork each year to ensure that we only request documents if they are absolutely needed. We review and utilise technology to avoid over duplication. Feedback from our partners and trainees suggest we are doing a good job on this as mentors, professional tutors and the trainees have all reported that they feel the paperwork demands of the course are not burdensome.

What have we done?

- Reviewed all of the individual tasks that tutors give to trainees and set an agreed minimum and maximum for additional tasks. This is reviewed and checked through termly rep meetings.
- reduced the expectation on trainees to develop their own individual lesson plans and curriculum resources for every lesson they teach; instead trainees should focus on evaluating, using and adapting (where necessary) existing high quality resources, schemes of work and textbooks;

- adopted a phased approach to supporting trainees develop curriculum planning skills, including planning sequences of lessons. Curriculum planning at the early stages of teacher training may require a more structured approach, including encouraging the use of high quality curriculum resources and textbooks to plan a sequence of lessons. As trainees become more secure in their planning, they should be encouraged to evaluate existing resources to assess their quality and make decisions on which are best to use in different contexts; and
- ensured that only once trainees have a good knowledge of existing resources and sequencing of lessons, should they then start to develop their own plans when these are required. Over time, trainees should also be encouraged to develop more light touch planning over sequences of lessons in line with the principles found in the independent report on planning and resources. This phased approach takes place when the mentor and the curriculum tutor agree.
- We have removed the requirement to present copious files as evidence for their teaching standards. The mentors are given the responsibility for assessing their evidence through lesson observations and weekly mentor meetings. They summarise their own progress towards their standards through PP forms at the end of each phase. Our tutors then triangulate the judgments in the final RPK assignment.
- Email Etiquette: we outline at the beginning of the year our email policy. We ask them to not send any emails after 17:30 or the weekends and to not expect tutors to respond after those times.
- Our programme was reviewed and developed to minimise pressure points for assignments. We ensure that they can take two weeks breaks for Christmas and Easter with no assessment requirements. We moved the hand in for their main APK assignment to the week following a week of Directed Study time. We introduced a phased build up of teaching requirements through our PHASEs A-E.
- Workload for trainees is monitored through our termly reviews and we monitor workload for mentors through our two school visits and our mentor training sessions.
- We always monitor the teaching timetables for every student two weeks after they begin placement to ensure no-one is having an excessive timetable. This includes our School direct training and salaried trainees. We do encourage our schools to make their salaried trainees super numerate and allow them sufficient time to build their knowledge and skills.

Useful documents to refer to:

The Workload Reduction Toolkit, the 'Reducing Workload:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit> . Supporting teachers in the early stages of their career' advice and 'Ways to reduce workload in your school' advice.

Smithers and Robinson (2003); Teachers' Analysis Compendium (2017); Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Homer, Mitchell, Biddulph, Giannakaki, Rose, Pell, Roper, Chambers and Tomlinson, 2007 (Newly qualified teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-early-career-teachers-reducing-teacher-workload>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook/ofsted-inspections-myths> currently under review.