

## Initial Teacher Education Reflective - Responsive - Research-driven

### Balancing Workload and Lives Policy: 2023/24

“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.” (DfE, 2018).

In Sussex ITE we have worked with our trainees, pupils and school partners to review workloads and identify essential and non-essential components. We review paperwork yearly to ensure that we only request necessary documents and feedback from our partners and trainees suggests they are supported to manage workloads and that they feel the paperwork demands of the course are not burdensome.

Wellbeing and managing workload are embedded within the culture and ethos of our Partnership. We consider trainee workload and the workload of our school partners, drawing on the DfE (2018) Addressing teacher workload in ITE guidance. We ensure that our Mentors and Professional Tutors are aware of statutory requirements concerning workload (DfE, 2018) and that they are knowledgeable about key drivers that impact on trainee workload. This is discussed in across Mentor/Professional tutor training

#### **What have we done in response to the DfE workload in ITE?**

##### **ITE Curriculum Content**

- Our Curriculum intent makes explicit reference to workload considerations whilst also balancing this with the realities of teaching.
- We integrate workload and well-being from the start of our provision - for instance in the interview for future entrants, to explore their understanding of resilience, awareness of why it might be important in teaching and strategies they have used in the past to resolve a challenging situation in their lives
- We consider workload management through ITE content: across training provision we link workload to inputs on curriculum planning and resources, marking and assessment, mindful of any particular workload implications related to subjects (e.g. marking and English)
- Our wellbeing programme includes taught lectures on trainee well-being, mental health and university support services, increased reflection through tutorials and personal tutor sessions, sharing workload strategies in tutor group time.

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- Enabling trainees to understand and apply different ways of implementing formative feedback is a core component of our provision. For instance, encouraging trainees to use a variety of feedback methods, such as verbal feedback; encouraging Mentors to help trainees understand the assessment policy in their school and co-mark in the early stages of assessment and feedback to model high quality feedback and analyse with mentors how feedback should be specific, targeted, and developmental.
- University tutors also highlight ways in which trainees can mark and provide feedback efficiently within the framework of their school's assessment and marking policy, taking into account statutory requirements including those set out by exam boards, Ofqual and the DfE.
- Our ethos subscribes to evidence based and experiential learning to determine what works in the classroom, where data is considered but is not a driver in trainees' professional dialogue with expert colleagues around student progress. We emphasise that data should only be used when it is going to improve student outcomes and not as an end in itself.

### Timetabling

- 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 Tuition and School Direct Salaried trainees. We encourage our schools to make their Salaried trainees super numerate and allow them sufficient time to build their knowledge and skills. Maximum timetabling requirements are set out clearly in our [School Direct Salaried Partnership Agreement](#).
- Trainees on all routes have protected non-contact time and professional development opportunities planned into their timetables, including time on curriculum planning and preparation, professional development, reading time for their academic assignments, etc. Workload is highlighted on each Partnership agreement.

### Lesson Planning and Resources, Marking

- 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 alongside Mentor co-planning. As trainees become more secure in their planning, they are encouraged to evaluate existing resources to assess their quality and make decisions on which are best to use in different contexts.

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- We are committed to minimising workload but trainees still need to plan and develop excellent teaching by adapting resources and set schemes of work in school with powerful subject knowledge. It is important for trainees to understand the mechanisms of lesson planning to prepare them to be able to plan across a range of schools (2 placement model) and for the realities of the classroom as ECTs. There is a strong focus on lesson planning in across our provision with revisits made across each phase of the training.
- Trainees access shared schemes of work and resources in their schools/departments to support their planning; necessary adaptations to these resources are expected to facilitate adaptive teaching for the students that trainees have in their class and support the trainee's own delivery of a lesson. This then allows trainees to focus on evaluating published materials and schemes of work/resources.
- We consider the whole year/course and the progression a trainee will make; this is reflected in the slow build in trainee lesson planning across the phases. We suggest a set number or hours or percent of the timetable to be taught by a trainee but ensure that the Mentor is clear in the generic training that all trainees will develop at their own pace and we should be able to monitor and modify their timetables to help them.
- Trainees co-plan with Mentors in their early stages of each placement. Co-planning is undertaken by Mentors with their trainees in the initial stages of each placement, breaking down the lesson planning process with both prior learning and the needs of students in each teaching group in mind. Some mentors teach from the trainee's lesson plan (full lesson or part of the lesson) and this enables trainees to critique particular decisions they make in planning their lessons.
- Lesson plans are modelled across training and reviewed by tutors at the start of each placement to ensure that content on the plan is relevant but not over-burdensome; we can review lesson plans each week via PebblePad and as trainees grow in confidence, reduce the amount of content on the plan (where appropriate).
- Over time, some trainees develop more light touch planning over sequences of lessons in line with the principles found in the DfE (2018) report on planning and resources. This phased approach takes place when the mentor and the curriculum tutor agree that the trainee can move to a one page lesson plan in Phase D as teaching load increases.
- Mentors are expected to co-mark in the early stages of assessment and feedback to model high quality feedback and analyse with mentors how feedback should be specific, targeted, and developmental.

### **Monitoring Trainee Workload**

- Provider led tutors monitor workload for trainees through review meetings and weekly reflections on PebblePad. We monitor workload for Mentors through our school visits and our Mentor training sessions.

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- At Mentor meetings, Mentors are asked how they are managing their trainee workload (eg finding out how long trainees are spending on curriculum planning, co-planning, co-marking, helping trainees to source materials, signposting the school's shared area and helping trainees to prioritise and manage their time effectively).
- Mentors and tutors routinely seek views and experiences of trainees regarding any causes of stress and anxiety on the training programme and identify solutions and strategies to manage workload and develop time management skills with them. For instance, finding out how long trainees are spending on curriculum planning, co-planning, helping trainees to source materials, signposting the school's shared area and helping trainees to prioritise and manage their time effectively. Collaborative teacher learning and dialogue is what is most effective, strategies tailored to the needs of individual trainees.
- Professional Tutors, mentors and University tutors ensure they share examples of managing workload/time management strategies in their school context by exploring scenarios with the trainees with some schools using ECTs to provide examples of good practice.
- If a trainee decides to withdraw from the course, they have an exit interview with the course lead. The exit interview assesses whether workload was a reason for withdrawal/deferral and strategies are discussed to help the trainee to successfully complete their training.

### Course Documentation

- We have streamlined our paperwork considerably to lighten trainee workload; documentation and tasks undertaken are only those which contribute directly to improving pupil outcomes and to the effective development of the trainee. The implementation of PebblePad means that paperwork is streamlined and not replicated and is visible to all stakeholders involved in the trainee's training.

### Minimising Pressure Points

- Minimised pressure points for assignments through course structure.
  - We ensure that trainees submitted assignments are spread across assessment weeks and with consideration of holidays and on placement expectations
  - We strategical plan the use of directed Study time to support workloads.

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- We ensure a process of scaffolding for all assignments and review draft work to allow opportunity to support time management and development
- Statutory tasks such as Prevent training and Maths competencies are completed early on in the training.
- We ensure that evidence collection against the Teachers' Standards is proportionate - focus is on quality of evidence, not quantity. A small portfolio of evidence is required for purposes of moderation across the subject cohorts which the Ratification Board moderates in June.

### Useful documents to refer to:

[DfE \(2018\) Addressing Workload in Initial Teacher Education](#)

[Reducing Workload Supporting Teachers in the Early Stages of their Careers \(2019\)](#)

[School Workload Reduction Toolkit \(2018\)](#)