



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Towards a new vision for initial teacher education in the post compulsory education and training sectors: a review for Welsh Government

## Final Report

Dr Steve Bell  
March 2023

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## Preface

We expect a lot from our teachers, lectures, tutors – practitioners - in the post-compulsory education and training sectors in Wales. They are charged with developing young people leaving school and preparing them for further study at university or for entering the workforce as chefs, hairdressers, mechanics, technicians or the hundreds of other roles that lead to fulfilling lives and a productive economy. They teach adults returning to learning later in life, or work in our museum education departments, prison education services or as professional trainers in the armed forces, police or NHS.

But the initial training for practitioners in these sectors has not received the attention, support or resourcing it needs to give them the very best start. We don't know enough about the impact of initial training in these sectors or even - until recently - basic information, such as how many people train every year. Despite the best efforts of teacher educators in the sector, trainees get patchy experiences of teaching during their training and not all benefit from the support of a mentor to guide them. Very few do any of their teaching in Welsh.

Taken as a whole, the recommendations I set out in this review lay a path for a new vision for PCET initial teacher education in Wales. The review proposes a reform process for PCET initial teacher education which is founded on stronger partnerships between universities and further education colleges, and is inclusive of the work-based learning, adult community learning and wider PCET sectors. Its intention is to improve, in particular, trainees' access and experience of mentoring and teaching practice, to give all new PCET practitioners at least a grounding in how to teach bilingually, and to build bridges between initial training and the rest of a PCET practitioner's career.

This review comes at a moment of opportunity. Reforms of initial teacher education for our school sector are gaining momentum and we see models of new partnership approaches beginning to bear fruit. The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research is being established with a strategic duty to promote continuous improvement in the tertiary sector, including learning and development of the workforce. And there is a clear will from the PCET sector to build on the work already done in professionalising the workforce and improving the quality of its professional learning.

We are right to expect a lot from our PCET practitioners, and it is only right that we offer them a comprehensive and coherent start to their careers and so the best experiences and opportunities for their learners.

## Acknowledgements

I have carried out this review while 'on loan' from Estyn to Welsh Government, working in an independent capacity. Thank you to Owen Evans, Jassa Scott and Jackie Gapper at Estyn for enabling this, and for respecting my independence throughout; and to my colleagues for shouldering my work while I have been engaged with the review.

I am very grateful for both administrative support and policy insight from the Welsh Government officials who formed the core team for the review, Helen Scaife and Rhian Pound-McCarthy. I thank them for their support, and commend them for their tenacity in developing professional learning policy for PCET practitioners in Wales and their willingness to grasp nettles long un-grasped.

An important part of this work has been to make sure there has been representation from across the PCET sectors. Members of the Welsh Government Professional Learning Steering Group have offered a consistently helpful and cross-sector perspective. Thank you to the members of this group.

I've worked closely with a small Reference Group who have made a huge contribution to the review, through testing ideas with their respective sectors, reading and responding to drafts and providing detailed information at short notice.

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My thanks to Lisa Drury-Lawson, Bryony Evett, Hayden Llewellyn, Jackie Mathias, Mel Smith, Kathryn Wing and Michelle Wright. Professor Bill Lucas has acted as an adviser to the review. My thanks to Bill for his input and his thoughtful and constructive critical friendship.

Finally, the theme of co-construction appears frequently in this document and in the review's proposals for a reform process. Thank you to the many trainees, practitioners, leaders and others who have contributed to the work of the review.

**Steve Bell – March 2023**

# Executive Summary and recommendations

Wales rightly has high aspirations for its post compulsory education and training (PCET) sector and its learners. Critical to making these aspirations a reality are the lecturers, teachers, training advisors and tutors of our further education colleges, work-based learning providers and adult community learning partnerships – collectively referred to here as ‘practitioners’ – who work with our young people and adults to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to flourish.

However, initial teacher education (ITE) for practitioners in the PCET sector in Wales has suffered from a long-term lack of strategic oversight and is not currently providing the sector’s teaching staff with the best start or the support they need to set them on a path of career-long professional learning.

Section 1 of this report sets out the challenges faced by PCET practitioners and PCET institutions and the potential prize of a coherent system for PCET ITE initial teaching education, and the benefit to the learners, people and economy of Wales that would follow.

Section 2 describes the background, guiding principles and methodology of the review. Section 3 discusses the international evidence for what works in PCET initial teacher education and compares this with the current situation in Wales. Section 4 outlines the structure of the current PCET ITE sector in Wales with its arrangement of direct delivery by higher education institution (HEIs) in both part-time and full-time modes, and through franchise and partnership arrangements between further education institutions (FEIs) and HEIs.

Section 5 is organised thematically to illustrate the current position and make recommendations for change. Under each theme the intention of the recommendations is identified, allowing an opportunity to reflect on the extent to which the recommendations fulfil the guiding principles of the review.

If implemented as a whole, the recommendations set out here would lead to a five-year planned reform process for PCET ITE. This would allow time for each of the stages of the reform to be planned, implemented and evaluated, with course corrections made along the way as required. In consultation with the sector, the PCET professional standards would be enhanced so that they could be used to help structure initial training and early career development.

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Stronger delivery partnerships would be developed, requiring clear collaboration from HEIs and FEIs, with each partnership having at least one HEI and at least one ‘anchor FE college’. An accreditation process would be established to accredit partnerships’ programmes to ensure they meet a threshold for ensuring equitable access to good quality mentoring and teaching practice experiences.

A core curriculum for PCET ITE would be co-constructed with stakeholders, to ensure that trainees have a consistent core of skills and knowledge, irrespective of their provider. The core would contain an element focused on developing bilingual pedagogy, whatever a trainee’s linguistic starting point. PCET ITE awards would have a consistent structure and be consistently named.

A new status for PCET practitioners would be developed – with a working title Qualified Practitioner Status, QPS (PCET) - which would be available to those who have completed a PCET ITE award and are working in a teaching role in a PCET setting. Practitioners who had completed a PCET ITE award would have access to an induction programme, with the support of a mentor and with an assessment process to confirm they are fulfilling the expectations of the PCET professional standards. This would set them on a sound path for career-long professional learning and growth.

The review also recommends further work and the development of a means to address the long-standing disparity of opportunity for practitioners with a PCET ITE award who are not qualified to teach in schools, whereas their colleagues who have completed school ITE and attained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) are qualified to work in further education colleges.

Finally, the review recommends developing an in-service part time BA Education programme for PCET practitioners and enhancing the existing national Masters programme, to help practitioners build links between their initial teacher education, early career induction and fully fledged teaching practice. The intention is to ensure that PCET practitioners have structured opportunities to deepen their understanding of education, enhance their careers and strengthen their dual professionalism.

## Summary of recommendations

Twenty-two recommendations are set out under six themes:

### Establishing a national, collaborative, evidence-informed and evaluative reform process

1. Welsh Government should commit to a planned five-year reform process for PCET ITE
2. Establish a high-level standing advisory group to advise on the reform process
3. Develop a unifying vision for PCET initial teacher education in Wales
4. Refine data collection processes to record the number of trainees in training and appropriate demographic information, trainees' outcomes and their destinations. Publish annual statistics relating to PCET ITE
5. Estyn should carry out a series of sector reviews to inform the review process and evaluate its progress
6. Establish a professional network for PCET ITE teacher educators

### Build and strengthen partnerships to give trainees rich, diverse and high-quality experiences and mentor support

7. Establish an accreditation panel, criteria and process for PCET ITE, including arrangements for quality assurance and inspection
8. Accredite PCET ITE programmes. Ensure that any accreditation process requires provision to be delivered by HE-FE partnerships, with each partnership having at least one HEI and at least one 'anchor' FE college
9. Improve the quality of, and access to, mentoring for PCET ITE trainees
10. Improve the quality of trainees' teaching practice experience

### A coherent and comprehensive PCET ITE curriculum, linked to the professional standards, and a consistent award structure

11. Ensure that PCET ITE awards have consistent titles, levels of demand and credit values.
12. Develop a core curriculum, linked to the professional standards, that would be delivered by all providers
13. Using the existing PCET professional standards, develop additional criteria and guidance which can be used to describe the expectation of PCET practitioners on completion of their ITE programmes, and during their induction

### Prepare trainees to teach in a bilingual society

14. Develop differentiated modules, as part of the core curriculum, which promote, encourage and support Welsh medium and bilingual teaching and learning
15. Ensure that any future incentive programme for PCET ITE trainees includes incentives for trainees to teach or study bilingually or through the medium of Welsh
16. Develop opportunities for trainees carrying out teaching practice experience or studying through the medium of Welsh at any institution to have a community of peers and benefit from collaborative experiences with colleagues
17. Ensure that trainees carrying out teaching practice experience or studying through the medium of Welsh have access to a teaching mentor with expertise and experience of bilingual delivery

### Recognise and enhance professional status and prepare trainees for career-long professional learning and development

18. Establish a professional status, Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET) - abbreviated to 'QPS (PCET)' - for practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award
19. Develop an induction process for early career PCET practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award, which both supports professional learning, reflection and development, and gives assurance that practitioners meet the PCET professional standards
20. Review and update the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002 so that they reflect the new qualification structure

### Enhance PCET practitioners' opportunities for career development within the PCET sectors and across the broader education system

21. Investigate and develop a methodology and regulatory framework for PCET practitioners to be employed as qualified teachers in maintained schools
22. Develop PCET practitioners' opportunities for in-service degree- and postgraduate-level study in the field of education



# 1. Introduction: The challenge and the prize

**At the heart of everything we do is the need to ensure our students gain the skills and qualifications they need to flourish and to progress seamlessly along the range of qualification levels - as we aim for a single, integrated skills system. (Welsh Government, 2022<sup>1</sup>)**

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Wales rightly has high aspirations for our post compulsory education and training sector and its learners. Of course, critical to making these aspirations a reality are the lecturers, teachers, training advisors and tutors of our further education colleges, work-based learning providers and adult community learning partnerships – collectively referred to here as ‘practitioners’ – who work with our young people and adults to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to flourish.

Practitioners in this sector teach across a remarkable diversity of settings: science laboratories and state-of-the-art engineering facilities, beauty salons, care homes and creches, history classrooms, milking parlours, warehouses, prisons, construction sites, restaurant kitchens, welding shops, community centres, museum education departments, online. The range of learners and their levels of study is no less diverse. From school-aged learners experiencing vocational learning for the first time at their local college, young people entering the world of work through employability programmes, vocational

learners studying technical, service, trade and craft skills, apprentices in work developing their skills base and qualifications, A level learners preparing for university, foundation degree students studying part-time, adults taking a second chance to improve their reading or numeracy, to older people keeping healthy and active, learning how to bank online or use their mobile phones to stay connected with their families.

PCET<sup>2</sup> practitioners themselves come from a wide range of subject and vocational backgrounds. They typically start on their professional teaching careers later than school teachers. Many have had successful careers before they start teaching and bring with them a wealth of vocational and subject knowledge and life experience. About a third of those taking their initial training, while being experts in their vocational field, will not have a degree.

At their best, practitioners in the post compulsory education and training (PCET) sectors exemplify, to the limits of their own agency, the values the minister set out for the FE sector in his speech: a focus on learners, collaboration, adaptability, wellbeing and resilience, and leadership. But we are not currently giving PCET practitioners the best start to their teaching careers. Initial teacher education (ITE) for PCET practitioners in Wales has been long overlooked. There is little public, political or academic discourse in Wales about how we train PCET practitioners. We do not know with confidence how many people train annually, and of those, how many continue into PCET teaching careers. We know little of the impact of initial training on trainees’ practice, or their learners, and we do not systematically support newly qualified PCET practitioners with a structured induction that sets them firmly on a path of reflective practice and professional growth.

This is a period of unique challenge for the PCET sectors that requires more than ever from its teaching staff. Young people are entering their post-16 learning still affected by interruption to their learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on their mental health, motivation and wellbeing. Participants in this review have consistently noted the challenge to PCET practitioners of supporting their learners through this period, and that it “requires a completely different skills set”. The dramatic step forward in digital delivery that was prompted by the pandemic has led to the new challenge of using digital where it has the most impact, with the best tools and with the most appropriate teaching approaches. The new suite of made-for-Wales vocational qualifications are beginning to place new demands on learners and on those who teach and support them.

The ALNET Act (Welsh Government, 2021) places new responsibilities on providers and teaching staff to ensure the very best experiences and outcomes for learners with additional learning needs. There is the enduring challenge of offering more provision through the medium of Welsh and supporting staff and learners to use the Welsh language as an everyday part of their teaching and learning. The Curriculum for Wales is being progressively introduced in schools and will roll out year by year until it includes year 11 by 2026. We can anticipate that learners who have experienced the innovative ways of learning emerging from the new curriculum will require similar innovations from PCET practitioners as they progress into their post-16 learning. And not least, there is the challenge of maintaining and enhancing 'dual professionalism', a principle that is well supported across the PCET sector, that 'practitioners can be both subject and vocational specialists and leaders of, and experts in, teaching, learning and assessment' (Welsh Government, 2017). This challenge is particularly acute for vocational specialists who need to maintain their currency in what are often fast moving vocational or technical fields, and the pedagogy required to teach them.

In addition to the challenges that directly affect practitioners in their daily professional lives, institutions from across the PCET sector universally reported to this review challenges in recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled and qualified staff.

The clear message from this review, which echoes the consensus from the wide range of participants who contributed, is that PCET initial teacher education is not currently meeting the needs of the sector, nor equipping trainees who will go on to be the PCET practitioners of tomorrow with the knowledge, skills and tools that will allow them to meet the many challenges they will face, and so provide the best experiences and outcomes for their learners.

The Estyn report that, in part, led to the commissioning of this review (Estyn, 2021a), noted some strengths in the PCET ITE sector but identified a series of concerns linked by an overall lack of strategic direction and oversight. This review confirms the thrust of Estyn's findings. The shortcomings are not due to a lack of commitment from the staff who lead and deliver PCET ITE awards at universities and further education colleges. From these, there is a tremendous commitment to trainees and to the importance of PCET teacher training, but a sense of frustration at their inability to make the system changes they see as vital to their sector. Senior leaders at PCET providers express a clear recognition of their role in training tomorrow's practitioners, but a sense of disconnection with the processes that develop and qualify their staff.

Wales has the opportunity to develop a new vision for how we prepare, support and develop the professionals who teach the young people and adults in our further education colleges, work-based learning providers, adult learning in the community partnerships and elsewhere.

We can build on the sector's existing strengths and the ongoing commitment to professionalise their workforce, and draw on the good practice being developed in our school initial teacher education system. The prize would be a coherent system for PCET ITE initial teaching education which would bring immense benefit to its learners, the people and the economy of Wales. No factor has more impact on the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of education and training organisations than the expertise of its staff.

## 2. Background and guiding principles for this review

This review was commissioned by the Welsh Government, following recommendations from the Post-16 Professional Learning Scoping Study (Welsh Government, 2019a) and a subsequent thematic review of post compulsory education and training (PCET) initial teacher education (ITE) by Estyn (2021a).

The review is concerned with how the people who teach in the PCET sector are initially trained. The PCET sector is not straightforward to define. For the purposes of this report, it includes further education institutions (FEIs), work-based-learning (WBL) providers who deliver apprenticeship programmes and youth employability programmes such as Jobs Growth Wales Plus, adult community learning (ACL) providers, sixth-form colleges, justice sector education services, private training providers who offer training such as first aid or manual handling, the training departments of public sector bodies such as the armed forces or the NHS, or education departments of museums or similar organisations. Higher education institutions (HEIs) can also be considered part of the PCET sector, although since only a few university lecturers and teaching staff carry out their initial training through the routes discussed here, the initial training of university lecturing and teaching staff is not within the scope of this review.

The focus of the review is on the main education and training awards and qualifications for those wishing to teach in the PCET sector in Wales, the PCE, PgCE and PGCE<sup>3</sup>, the universities and further education colleges that deliver them and the structures which support this process – collectively referred to in this report as the ‘PCET ITE sector’. The review is linked to the work of the Welsh Government Post-16 Professional Learning Steering Group and commenced in April 2022. Working with a small reference group made up of representatives from across the PCET sectors, the review established a set of guiding principles to inform its work and to help frame the recommendations from the review. Any recommendations should:

- improve the quality and consistency of initial training for practitioners in the PCET sectors, which ultimately results in improved outcomes and experiences for learners
- enhance the professional status of practitioners in the PCET sectors
- support and enhance the notion of parity of esteem between practitioners and institutions in the PCET sectors and those in the compulsory education sectors
- build on the well-supported concept of dual professionalism embodied in the current PCET professional standards

<sup>3</sup>There is some variation between providers in the exact titles of the awards, but broadly, they are the Professional Certificate in Education (PCE), the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PCCE). Throughout this report, they are referred to collectively as ‘ITE awards’ or ‘ITE qualifications’. Please see the glossary for more information on the distinction between the use of these terms, and Appendix A for more information on the range of titles currently in use.

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- learn from and build on successful approaches already employed in Wales, while recognising and respecting differences between the PCET and school sectors. Where necessary, develop analogous approaches that meet the needs of the PCET sectors and avoid defaulting to ‘one-size fits all’ approaches for the sake of simplicity or conceptual tidiness
- align with related policy developments for PCET professional learning and the broader education system in Wales
- take into account international best practices in PCET ITE.

The review has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders<sup>4</sup> from across the PCET sectors, including the representative organisations and networks of the further education, work-based learning and adult learning in the community sectors, senior and curriculum leaders of FE colleges, current and recent trainees, union representatives, and ITE delivery teams from HEIs and FEIs. An interim report was produced and circulated in October 2022, to which 24 written responses were received. These, and follow-up meetings during late 2022 and early 2023, have been reflected in this final report.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix B for stakeholders



### 3. What does international evidence tell us about what works in PCET initial teacher education and how does Wales compare?

The OECD study, *A Flying Start: improving initial teacher education systems* (OECD, 2019a) draws together the findings from reviews of initial teacher education for school systems in seven countries, identifying six interconnected groups of the key challenges for effective systems and strategies to face them (highlighted in bold below). It notes that the evidence on effective teacher education is growing but is still not conclusive. ITE in the post compulsory education and training sector<sup>5</sup> is less well studied (eg OECD, 2022; OECD, 2021; Crawley, 2018; Hanley and Thompson, 2021; Perry et al, 2019), and perhaps more difficult to draw general conclusions about what is most effective, not least because it is very specific to individual educational jurisdictions and their cultural, social and economic contexts (eg Keller et al, 2021; Barabash and Watt-Malcolm, 2012; Schweich et al, 2021). Nevertheless, the key messages from *A Flying Start* are a helpful framework for considering our own PCET ITE system.

**Effective governance of an ITE system requires a shared vision of practitioner learning as a continuum, strategic governance of knowledge and capacity building at all levels.** A shared vision, placing the idea of a continuum of professional learning at its centre, can help systems sustain their teaching workforce, cohere better and improve quality. The evidence base about the system is strengthened by collective ownership and co-construction. Coherent systems establish partnerships that cross institutions and build capacity at institutional, organisation and system levels.

**ITE systems should be informed by evidence.** ITE systems are under researched. This is particularly the case for PCET ITE systems. A coherent strategy for the production, sharing and use of information about the system is a key component. Accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms can contribute to self-improving systems as long as they encourage processes which lead to continuous improvement rather than focussing only on outcome measures or achieving minimum benchmarks.

In order to ensure a **balanced workforce**, a robust approach to gathering information about ITE at every level (national, regional, institutional, sectorial) is required. OECD reports that focus on the PCET [VET] workforce (OECD, 2021; OECD, 2022) note that shortages in the supply of PCET practitioners are common across OECD countries. PCET practitioners' skills can be in high demand in occupations other than teaching, making it harder to recruit and retain PCET teachers in the related subjects. This is not only the case for teachers of vocational subjects, but also for those teaching general education subjects in PCET programmes. Key elements to recruiting, training and sustaining a balanced PCET workforce include: increasing the attractiveness of PCET teaching careers, providing flexible pathways into PCET teaching, enabling industry professionals to teach in PCET and improving the monitoring system of PCET workforce dynamics.

**Initial teacher education should mark the beginning of, not the end of the process of professional development.** ITE should be seen as a continuous process starting with attracting candidates, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills through quality training, certification and registration, and then supporting them through their early career development.

**Early professional development involves research-based reflections on teaching and learning and should be embedded in a continuous professional learning culture.** Practitioners in their early careers benefit from engaging in reflection and evaluation of their practice, drawing on research evidence, information about their learners and first-hand experience. Where initial teacher education and early career support are not well aligned, the 'transition shock' from training to practice is exacerbated. Support from an effective mentor and other expert input, and measures such as a reduced workload and peer support help improve the experience of early career practitioners and improve the quality of their practice.

The sixth of the key challenges and strategies identified in *A Flying Start* relates to **equipping practitioners with updated knowledge and competencies.** A coherent and comprehensive ITE curriculum covers both content and pedagogical knowledge and develops the practical skills linked to theoretical knowledge. It equips practitioners with the tools to reflect and develop their own practice and links with ongoing professional learning throughout their careers.

The international literature identifying exactly what constitutes a 'coherent and comprehensive' ITE curriculum for PCET practitioners is less comprehensive than that for school teacher ITE (Crawley, 2018). Much focusses on the 'dual professionalism' required of PCET practitioners – that they must be, 'both subject and vocational specialists and leaders of, and experts in, teaching, learning and assessment' (Welsh Government, 2017). Practitioners in the PCET sectors require multiple layers of skills and experience. They need to have both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, and often, relevant professional experience in the field they teach. They also need the capacity to teach learners these subject-specific skills and knowledge, and the modes of thinking native to that profession (OECD 2022; Hanley and Thompson, 2021; Orr et al, 2019).

The diversity of post-compulsory education and training in itself represents a challenge to identifying a comprehensive curriculum for PCET ITE. Practitioners need to be able to work with learners of different ages, backgrounds, motivations and aspirations. PCET practitioners must also be flexible enough to work with learners who themselves may be less engaged by traditional forms of teaching and learning or who are at risk of discontinuing their post-16 learning. In many countries, including Wales, learners often enter post-compulsory education with gaps in their literacy or numeracy skills, and PCET practitioners need to be able to identify possible basic skills gaps and contribute to closing them, as well as extending the skills of those learners who already have strong literacy and numeracy. PCET practitioners have a role in developing their learners' 'transversal competencies' such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication (Calero and Rodriguez-Lopez, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2015). The tension generated between the requirement to have strong subject-specific teaching skills, to teach, for example, plastering or hairdressing or computer programming (Hanley and Thompson, 2021; Hanley et al, 2018), and the ability to apply general pedagogical principles in the multidisciplinary and highly diverse environment of PCET settings (Lucas, 2007; Lawy and Tedder, 2012) is an acknowledged challenge.

The recommendations of the BERA-RSA inquiry into the role of research in teacher education (BERA-RSA, 2014) relate to the spectrum of education providers, including PCET settings such as further education (p5). The inquiry concludes that, to be at their most effective 'teachers and teacher educators need to engage with research and enquiry – this means keeping up to date with the latest developments in their academic subject or subjects and with developments in the discipline of education'. They need to be equipped to engage in enquiry-oriented practice and that this practice needs to be sustained during initial teacher education programmes and throughout their professional careers, so that innovation and collaborative enquiry become the normal way of teaching and learning, rather than the exception.

There is a developing understanding of how practitioners can best choose pedagogies to match the desired outcomes of their teaching and the breadth of methods available to them (Lucas et al, 2012), the theoretical underpinning of vocational pedagogies and the large repertoire of methods to choose from, for example, problem-based approaches (eg Jabarullah and Iqbal Hussain, 2019) or digital and blended methods (Artacho et al, 2020; OECD, 2021; OECD, 2022).

Learners' motivation, wellbeing and engagement, and PCET practitioners' role in fostering these, is also a component of the complex mix of knowledge and skills required by a PCET practitioner. Smothers et al (2021), for example, describe enacting the principles of care - for example, integrity, authenticity, equality, empathy - as part of meeting a learners' basic psychological needs, and in this way enhancing a learners' self-motivation, engagement and wellbeing. These affective elements of an ITE curriculum are easily overlooked but relate directly to the challenges identified in the introduction to this review.

## How does the current provision for PCET ITE in Wales compare?

Estyn's (2021a) report is the only published systematic review of PCET ITE in Wales. The report noted strengths in the sector but identified a number of shortcomings, the thrust of which has been supported by the evidence presented to this review. The connecting factor for the shortcomings is a lack of national strategic oversight for the PCET ITE sector. This is compounded by the fact there is little systematic information available about the sector as a whole, including very basic information such as the number of trainees who enrol on programmes annually, their outcomes or destinations. At present, PCET ITE Wales is not informed by a shared vision and is not informed by systematically gathered evidence.

Partnership approaches do exist. Four HEIs work in franchise or partnership arrangements with further education colleges. Two HEIs offer direct delivery of PCET ITE programmes where trainees carry out teaching practice in experience in further education colleges or other PCET settings. While Estyn found examples of strong partnership working, they noted - and the evidence presented to this review supports this observation - that the quality of partnership working is variable and that this has a detrimental effect on trainees. It is most evident in respect of:

- the quality, availability and diversity of teaching practice experience. These often relied on ad-hoc arrangements, the personal contacts of course leaders, and the goodwill of providers to host trainees
- provision for mentoring on teaching placements and the impact this has on trainees general teaching skills and confidence, and their development of subject specific pedagogy
- the extent to which the ITE curriculum is co-constructed and meets the needs of trainees. Senior leaders and those who deliver ITE courses in FE colleges described, despite recent improvements, a lack of their own sense of ownership of the PCET ITE programmes that train their staff.

The current model of provision does offer flexible routes of entry into initial training. Part-time and full-time, in-service and pre-service routes are available. The award outcomes (PCE, PgCE and PGCE) allow non-graduate vocational specialists as well as graduates to work towards a recognised PCET teaching qualification with an appropriate level of demand. However, there is not a clear and recognised route for people wishing to develop their teaching skills and qualifications over time from a lower level to the point where they are ready to start a PCET PCE, PgCE or PGCE. Currently, the variation both in award titles and the level of demand between universities is not helpful in maintaining a clear brand for PCET ITE. On completing a PCET ITE award PCET practitioners are not awarded a recognised professional status such as the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) awarded to newly qualified school teachers on completion of their ITE award.

One of the clearest departures from the good practice identified in *A Flying Start* is the lack of cohesion between initial training and the rest of a PCET practitioner's career. Unlike school teacher ITE (with QTS) in Wales, there is no structured induction process for those who complete an ITE award, beyond the probationary employment processes of individual PCET employers. PCET practitioners in their early careers are not therefore systematically guided to develop their skills of reflection or in their professional learning. The PCET professional standards, while in general supported by the sector, do not describe the expectations of practitioners as they complete their initial training or as they develop in their early professional practice.

Estyn reported that only 4% of trainees carried out any aspects of their teaching experience through the medium of Welsh. This proportion was substantially lower than the proportion of Welsh speakers in the existing PCET workforce and is not enough to realise the sector's ambition to increase the quantity of Welsh medium and bilingual provision.

## 4. The PCET ITE Sector in Wales

The main ITE awards for trainees wishing to teach in the sector in Wales are the Professional Certificate in Education (PCE – at level 4/5), the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE – at level 5/6) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE – at level 6/7).

National data relating to the number of trainees taking PCET ITE programmes is not regularly or systematically collated or published. Estyn reported that 899 trainees were on PCET ITE courses in October 2019 – a figure determined by asking individual providers directly. Most trainees were employed or intended to be employed in the FE sector, but there were also trainees from work-based learning (WBL), adult community learning (ACL), private training companies, public sector organisations (eg NHS, police), higher education institutions and private individuals. Annex C of this report presents previously unpublished data, extracted from the HESA dataset, which shows the overall number of trainees taking PCET ITE programmes between 2017 and 2021. This indicates between 1000 and 875 trainees enrolled annually on PCET ITE programmes, with a declining trend in enrolments over the period.

A notable feature of PCET initial teacher education is that it is often carried out in-service. Providers recruit teaching staff with the necessary vocational experience, skills and qualifications, although not necessarily teaching experience or qualifications. The range of vocational and subject backgrounds for these staff is of course as wide as the provision of the PCET sector: hairdressers, chemists, mechanics, carpenters, electricians, chefs, accountants, engineers, historians, equine specialists, beauty therapists, dental technicians and so on. Newly appointed practitioners then carry out their initial training, on a part-time basis, usually over two years, typically at the college or provider where they are employed.

An important consideration is that practitioners in this sector may be highly experienced vocational experts but often have subject qualifications below degree level. Estyn reported that about one third of the 899 trainees in 2019 were non-graduates and nearly all of these were studying part-time. For many non-graduate trainees their ITE award will be highest level of academic study they have undertaken.

Six HEIs – shown in Table 1 - offer programmes, either through direct delivery or through franchise or partnership arrangements with FEIs. There are two modes of delivery:

- **direct delivery** by HEIs, where trainees are enrolled directly with the HEI and attend block theory sessions at the HEI. HEIs accredit their own programmes. Trainees attend teaching experience placements arranged by the HEI, usually at FEIs. Trainees are usually pre-service. Estyn reported about 250 trainees were studying in this mode. Programmes are usually full-time over one year.
- **franchise or partnership delivery**, where delivery takes place at FEIs, in franchise or partnership arrangements with HEIs. Programmes are accredited by the HEI. Estyn reported about 650 trainees were studying in this mode. Programmes are usually part-time over two years. Trainees on these routes are often in-service. This is the most common route for non-graduate vocational specialists. Nearly all FEIs offer these programmes.

Four of the HEIs offer direct delivery, either through full-time or part-time routes, or both. Two of these offer direct delivery routes only. These are Cardiff Metropolitan University and Wrexham Glyndŵr University.

Four HEIs have franchise or partnership arrangements with FEIs. The largest franchise is held by the University of South Wales who have seven FEI partners. The University of Wales Trinity Saint David have two FEI partners. Aberystwyth University and Bangor University do not offer direct delivery, but each have franchise or partnership arrangements with one FEI.

All the FEIs in Wales, with the exceptions of St David's Catholic Sixth Form College and Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales (a specialist provider of adult community learning provision), offer PCET ITE programmes through franchise or partnership arrangements with HEIs.

**Table 1**  
Summary of PCET ITE Providers

HEI	Direct full-time delivery	Direct part-time delivery	Franchise or partnership arrangement with FEI(s)	FEI(s) in franchise or partnership arrangements (Full-time (FT) / Part-time (PT) provision offered)
Aberystwyth University	No	No	Yes	Coleg Cambria (FT & PT)
Bangor University	No	No	Yes	Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (PT)
Cardiff Metropolitan University	No	Yes	No	-
University of South Wales	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bridgend College (PT) Cardiff and Vale College (PT) Coleg Gwent (PT) Coleg y Cymoedd (PT) Gower College Swansea (PT) Neath Port Talbot College Group of Colleges (PT) The College Merthyr Tydfil (PT)
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	Yes	Yes	Yes	Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion (PT) Pembrokeshire College (PT)
Wrexham Glyndŵr University	Yes	Yes	No	-



## 5. Recommendations for change: towards a vision for PCET ITE in Wales

This review proposes a reform process for PCET ITE in Wales. One of the first tasks for that reform process will be to develop a unifying vision that will set the frame for the reforms and help collaboration between different partners.

In working towards that vision, the review proposes that:

- Reforming initial teacher education for the PCET sectors should be a national, collaborative, evidence-informed and evaluative process
- It should build on and strengthen partnerships that already exist between universities, further education institutions and other PCET providers to give trainees rich, diverse and high-quality teaching practice experiences and mentor support
- It should provide a coherent and comprehensive PCET ITE curriculum, linked to the professional standards, and a consistent award structure
- It should prepare trainees to teach in a bilingual society
- It should recognise and enhance professional status and prepare trainees for career-long professional learning and development
- It should enhance PCET practitioners' opportunities for career development within the PCET sectors and across the broader education system

The remainder of this section is organised under these thematic headings. For each theme, the existing situation is described, along with recommendations and their intended impact.

### Establishing a national, collaborative, evidence-informed and evaluative reform process

There has been a long-term lack of national strategic leadership for PCET initial teacher education in Wales. Unlike initial teacher education in the school sector in Wales<sup>6</sup>, no unifying vision or policy framework exists for how and why we train and develop new practitioners in the PCET workforce. This lack of strategic direction connects the shortcomings identified in this report.

There is little public, political or academic discourse in Wales about how we train PCET practitioners. There is little published research or consideration into the impact of PCET ITE in Wales, in contrast to the comparative wealth of information and reviews carried out in relation to ITE in the school sector (see, for example, Furlong et al, 2006; Tabberer 2013, Furlong, 2015; OECD, 2017; Waters, 2020).

The only published systematic review of the sector is Estyn's (2021a) thematic report into PCET ITE. Neither Estyn nor any other body currently inspects or reviews PCET ITE and so there is little systematic intelligence about the sector or of the impact of initial training on PCET practitioners and their learners.

Currently, no systematic annual reports are compiled or published about the number of trainees taking PCET ITE programmes. While information is collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and by the EWC through its registration processes, the range of data collected is not differentiated enough to identify important demographic information. At present, we do not know with confidence from which occupational backgrounds trainees come, their outcomes or their progression – or not - into PCET teaching careers after training. This lack of a national picture inhibits planning and means that potential problems are not identified early enough. An example of the impact of this is the very low numbers of trainees who carry out any aspect of their training or teaching practice experience through the medium of Welsh – which the Estyn report identified at only 34 in 2019.

In the school sector, data about workforce demography, teaching post vacancies and a range of other factors feed into a teacher supply model which informs desired levels of recruitment into school ITE programmes (see, for example, Education Workforce Council, 2022e; Gosh and Worth, 2022; StatsWales, 2022). Similar processes do not apply to PCET ITE programmes.

<sup>6</sup>See the recent Welsh Government public consultation on the refresh of the criteria for the accreditation of school initial teacher education in Wales (Welsh Government, 2022g).



Currently, recruitment onto PCET ITE programmes is not coordinated nationally. The demand is largely driven by in-service part-time ITE from FE colleges and by individuals choosing to study PCET ITE programmes.

Estyn noted that there were too few opportunities for those who deliver PCET ITE in colleges and HEIs – ‘teacher educators’ - sector to meet, develop pedagogy and share good practice. Evidence presented to this review confirms this finding. Neither is there a strategic forum where government, sector representative bodies, providers and stakeholders can meet to determine policy.

### Recommendations

1. Welsh Government should commit to a planned five-year reform process for PCET ITE
2. Establish a high-level standing advisory group to advise on the reform process
3. Develop a unifying vision for PCET initial teacher education in Wales
4. Refine data collection processes to record the number of trainees in training and appropriate demographic information, trainees’ outcomes and their destinations. Publish annual statistics relating to PCET ITE
5. Estyn should carry out a series of sector reviews to inform the review process and evaluate its progress
6. Establish a professional network for PCET ITE teacher educators

### A planned reform process

To make a meaningful improvement to PCET ITE, it will require from Welsh Government a commitment to a planned and consultative reform process. The changes this review proposes will take time and planning, and further consultation and co-construction with the PCET sector. Taking the example of the Furlong (2015) review of school ITE, there has been an inevitable period of bedding-in between the review, the consequent reforms and their impact. Recent reports indicate evidence of positive impacts, with clear leadership structures and a commitment to collaboration in the new school-HEI partnerships (see, for example, Estyn, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c). A similar period for PCET ITE reform is appropriate and would allow time for the different stages of the reform process to be planned, consulted upon, enacted and evaluated.

The reform process will need to be owned and will need sufficient human, departmental and financial resource.

Initially, the Welsh Government team with oversight of PCET professional learning – the Post-16 Workforce Development Branch, part of the Further Education and Apprenticeships Division – was a time-limited project. To ensure it is best placed to take forward a reform process for the sector, the Welsh Government will need to continue to support the resourcing of a team with a specific focus on the development of the PCET workforce. The question for the Welsh Government is whether this continues to be a stand-alone branch, or whether there is added value in it being integrated into the wider Pedagogy, Leadership & Professional Learning Division, which would provide the opportunity for a more holistic view over the entire education workforce. Either way, a long-term focus on post-16 workforce development will be necessary to plan and deliver the reforms effectively.

Once established, the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) will also have a role to play. One of its strategic duties will be to promote continuous improvement in tertiary education including, ‘ensuring that members of the tertiary education workforce are capable of providing tertiary education of a high quality’ (Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act - Welsh Government, 2022b). In part, CTER has been established to improve the coherence in planning and delivery across the PCET sectors and it could be argued that CTER should be the body which owns PCET ITE reform.

Alternatively, the process could be jointly owned by Welsh Government and CTER, with policy development and work that is tied to changes to regulation or legislation within the Welsh Government, and work related to delivery within the scope of CTER. This review also proposes a significant new role for the EWC which would require some legislative amendments to the EWC’s powers. In any case, it will be important that the reform process is planned and constructed with the PCET sectors. The Welsh Government should establish a standing advisory group<sup>7</sup> and identify a unifying vision to frame the reform process.

This review is making a deliberate attempt to establish analogous and complementary structures for PCET ITE and schools’ ITE, in order to develop coherence and draw on the best from both sectors. It will be critical, if the reform is to have full impact, that this coherence is not lost, and that thinking processes about the reform do not become ‘siloed’. Equally, the reforms must strike the right balance to ensure that the PCET ITE works well for the PCET sectors and not default to models that work for school ITE, but not for PCET. There is already a degree of helpful collaboration, both formal and informal, between providers within the PCET ITE sector. The intention is to foster these collaborative relationships and benefit from the collective will of the PCET ITE sector to improve the experience and outcomes for trainees and, in turn, PCET learners.

## Systematic data collection

Accurate and timely statistical information about PCET ITE provision will be crucial to informing the reform process. HEIs currently return data about PCET ITE trainees through the HESA data collection process. However, it has not been systematically analysed or published<sup>8</sup>. Welsh Government should publish annual statistics which include appropriate demographic information about trainees, their outcomes and destinations. This may require development of bespoke data fields, such as occupational background and employed status, to develop a full and useful picture of the demography of PCET ITE trainees. The EWC also collects data about registrants which could be enhanced and used to add detail to the picture.

When this information is available, it will be possible to evaluate whether a teacher supply model, analogous to that currently employed for school ITE, would be helpful for PCET ITE and the PCET sector, or if the existing market model is sufficient.

## External quality oversight and evaluating the impact of the reform process

It will be important to establish a baseline of information about the quality of PCET ITE provision and the progress and impact of the reform process. Estyn currently inspects school ITE partnerships and synthesises a summary of the state of the sector in its Annual Report (see for example, Estyn, 2021b, p93). Estyn has statutory powers to inspect a range of education and training provision in Wales under the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022, although additional enabling regulation would be required for Estyn to carry out inspections of PCET initial teacher education. Perhaps the most helpful approach during a period of reform would be a series of reviews of the PCET ITE sector, which take an overview of the sector's starting points and progress through the reform process, rather than focus on individual providers. This approach would help build both confidence in the process and capacity across the sector, as providers learn from each other.

A further, ongoing role for Estyn in quality assurance of partnerships' provision is also proposed, below, in the section on Building and strengthening partnerships.

While Estyn has a role in evaluating the impact of PCET ITE through its inspection and review processes, the sector itself has an opportunity to reflect on what it wants from initial teacher education and how it can best support trainees and practitioners in the early part of their careers. The proposals outlined in this review are intended to give a stronger voice to PCET providers

who host trainees and employ newly qualified practitioners. HEIs through their research, practitioners and trainees who carry out action or academic research as part of their own training or professional practice should fulfil their role in contributing to the discourse about how best to develop PCET ITE.

An evaluation strategy which takes into account the range of information being generated about the reform process should be developed, with opportunities for course corrections as necessary.

## Establish a professional network for PCET ITE course teams

This review proposes a stronger national strategic approach to PCET ITE, and for the sector actively to be involved in designing its future. The lecturers in HEIs who deliver the university-based component of ITE programmes and the course teams who deliver the equivalent in FE colleges will be important agents in the co-construction process.

Crawley (2016, 2018) and others (for example, Hadar and Brody, 2016) argue strongly for the value of networks of PCET 'teacher educators'. In FE colleges in particular, these staff often have combined roles as teacher educators as well as being subject or vocational practitioners. They often have 'low visibility' and may have fewer opportunities to engage in research or to carry out professional learning in relation to their teacher educator role than their colleagues in HEIs. The intention of this recommendation is to establish a professional network for the teacher educators who deliver PCET ITE, with membership from both HEIs and FEIs. The network would be aligned to the work of the reform process and would help shape the discussion around, for example: pedagogy for PCET ITE, the content of a future core curriculum, the role and training of mentors; or to share research findings. It would also act as useful forum for identifying and coordinating the professional learning needs of the teacher educators themselves.

Colegau Cymru have already expressed an interest in principle in hosting such a network.

## Build and strengthen partnerships to give trainees rich, diverse and high-quality experiences and mentor support

The delivery structures outlined in Table 1 reflect a long-standing pattern of direct delivery, franchise and partnership arrangements between HEIs and FEIs in the PCET ITE sector.

Because there has been no systematic inspection process it is difficult to say with certainty what are the strengths and weaknesses of the current arrangements. From both Estyn's report and from the evidence presented to this review, some trainees have very positive experiences of their initial training through PCET ITE programmes and feel well prepared to teach in the sector. Senior leaders in the PCET sectors recognise the value of ITE in developing their practitioners and contributing to the principle of dual professionalism. Teacher educators in both FEIs and HEIs are passionate about their work and go the extra mile in helping trainees get the most from their programmes. Trainees are highly appreciative of the work their tutors and mentors carry out.

However, a consistent message from the evidence gathered for this review is that there are structural weaknesses in the sector that ultimately impact on the quality of initial training; in particular, on trainees' experience of mentoring and of the quality of their teaching practice experience. In focus groups for this review, trainees described a spectrum of experiences of mentoring and teaching practice, ranging from, "very well organised and helpful", to some trainees having to "scrabble around for teaching hours", describing this process as, "exhausting, on top of the challenges of preparing and delivering my teaching."

Principals and senior leaders from FEIs reported frustration that they have limited influence over the structure, content and delivery of PCET ITE programmes. As employers, they felt there is too much inconsistency in what newly qualified practitioners from different programmes and providers know and are able to do.

Although course leaders from HEIs have made efforts over recent years to increase the extent to which they co-construct their programmes with colleges, senior leaders from FEIs, ITE course leaders from colleges and representatives from other PCET employers in the work-based learning and adult community learning sectors expressed that they do not feel full partners in the initial teacher education process.

At present, four of the six HEIs who deliver PCET ITE work in formal franchise or partnership arrangements with FEIs. These arrangements are perceived by their members largely as funding and accreditation relationships. None of these entities sees itself as a united or coordinated partnership whose function is to deliver high quality PCET initial teacher training. And partly because FE colleges do not feel they have a full voice in the ITE programmes that they host and deliver, their commitment to providing high quality teaching placements and mentors to support trainees in their development is not consistent. The experience of trainees too often depends on the approaches of individual departments, managers and other practitioners at their teaching experience placement.

Two of the six HEIs who deliver PCET ITE do not have franchise or partnership arrangements with colleges and offer direct delivery only. For these providers, ensuring that trainees have sufficient teaching practice experience of good quality and mentors to support their development is a particular challenge.

As a result of the Furlong review (2015) of school ITE, new school-HEI partnerships were established. An ITE accreditation board – under the parent body of the EWC – accredits and monitors partnerships' programmes, according to criteria developed by Welsh Government collaboratively with the sector (Education Workforce Council, 2022a). This establishes a threshold that programmes and the partnerships that deliver them need to meet before programmes can run. Recent evidence from OECD (2019) and Estyn indicates that this approach is beginning to show positive outcomes (Estyn 2021b, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c).

### Recommendations

- 7.** Establish an accreditation panel, criteria and process for PCET ITE, including arrangements for quality assurance and inspection
- 8.** Accredite PCET ITE programmes. Ensure that any accreditation process requires provision to be delivered by HE-FE partnerships, with each partnership having at least one HEI and at least one 'anchor' FE college
- 9.** Improve the quality of, and access to, mentoring for PCET ITE trainees
- 10.** Improve the quality of trainees' teaching practice experience

### An accreditation process for ITE partnerships

The intention of these recommendations is to shift the culture of PCET initial teacher education towards a stronger partnership approach, where partners have a clear and agreed focus on delivering high quality PCET initial teacher education. Partners would each have a voice in the structure, content and delivery of programmes in their partnership. This approach is explicitly intended to improve the quality of teaching experience placements and mentoring.

It is proposed that each partnership would need to consist of at least one HEI and at least one FEI. This would ensure that the partnership, through the HEI(s), has specialist PCET ITE staff and the necessary authority to accredit and be funded for higher education programmes; and also has at least one 'anchor college' with a pool of potential teaching experience opportunities and the depth and breadth of experienced staff both to deliver training and to support and mentor trainees.

It is envisaged that some partnerships could map straightforwardly over existing franchise and partnership arrangements. However, HEIs who currently do not have a formal relationship with an FE college – an anchor college – would need to establish one or join another partnership.

Partnerships could include more than one HEI and more than one anchor college. Partnerships could also include as full partners PCET employers who are not FEIs, but who nevertheless regularly host or employ PCET ITE trainees, such as work-based learning or adult community learning providers, or training establishments such as police forces or private training companies.

The constitution and leadership of the partnership would be determined by its members, but it is anticipated that it would be a collaborative leadership structure with equitable representation from all partners. This is a deliberate intention to ensure that all partners are fully involved in the partnership's decision making, the quality of its provision and are accountable for its outcomes.

A partnership would need to present itself, with a constitution that sets out the roles and responsibilities of each partner, details the programmes offered by the partnership, the mechanism for the disbursement of funding within the partnership and, in particular, how the partnership will ensure high quality teaching placements and mentoring for trainees.

It is intended that a stronger culture of partnership would bring additional benefits, especially in opportunities for connecting in new ways trainees working or studying in different institutions. For example, it should be possible to establish networks of trainees studying specific subject or vocational areas and connect these with subject experts to help address the concerns of the traditional generic delivery models referred to earlier; or to connect trainees in different institutions who are teaching or studying through the medium of Welsh.

It is important that PCET ITE can still accommodate trainees who do not work, or who do not intend to work in one of the larger PCET sectors and who may wish to carry out their teaching practice in less common settings (for example, museum education departments, professional trainers, self-employed tutors, private training providers). For this reason, it is not proposed that trainees *must* carry out their teaching practice experience within one of the full members of the partnership, but rather that the partnership will use its breadth to support these trainees by, for example, providing supplementary teaching practice experience opportunities.

A panel analogous to that which accredits ITE programmes in the school sector should be established, with oversight from the EWC, to identify

appropriate criteria and to accredit, monitor, withdraw accreditation and reaccredit PCET ITE programmes.

Currently, in school ITE, the ITE accreditation board and its parent body, the EWC, have statutory powers to accredit, monitor, withdraw accreditation and reaccredit ITE programmes. Estyn also has statutory powers to inspect ITE partnerships and carry out link visits or other monitoring activity. Both bodies currently carry out these functions. Participants in this review have argued that this has the potential to create duplication of effort and overburdensome regulation processes. The EWC and Estyn are currently developing a methodology for a joint approach to accreditation, inspection and monitoring, with the intention of developing a single, coherent process that avoids unnecessary burden on partnerships, supports improvement and embeds a culture of co-construction.

This review proposes a new role for Estyn in ongoing inspection of the partnerships once they have become established. By the time this step becomes relevant, which is likely to be a few years into the reform process, it will be possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the joint approach currently being developed for school ITE by Estyn and the EWC, and to develop an appropriate approach for PCET ITE accordingly.

The model proposed here – both the partnership approach and the establishment of an accreditation panel – is analogous to that which has been established for school ITE in Wales and which is beginning to show positive outcomes. Identifying the full range of criteria for accrediting a partnership's programmes is beyond the scope of this review. In establishing an accreditation panel and accreditation criteria, and in the process of accreditation, stakeholders will need to be mindful of the guiding principles of this review. In particular, to learn from and build on collaborative approaches already employed in Wales, and recognising and respecting differences between the PCET and school sectors. The recent Welsh Government consultation on refreshing the criteria for accreditation of school ITE partnerships (Welsh Government, 2022g) contains useful insights into the lessons learned from the first round of accreditation process for this sector.

Getting the approach and the criteria right for the PCET sector will be critical to the success of the reform process.

### **Improving mentoring and teaching practice experience**

Recommendations 9 and 10 are placed in the section of this report relating to strengthening partnerships because this is the area where improved partnership working is anticipated to bring quick and tangible benefits for trainees.



Effective teaching placement mentors play a vital role in the development of teachers and practitioners (Kools and Stoll, 2016; OECD 2019a, Chapter 5; Glover et al 2022). They provide a bridge between the theory and practice elements of trainees' programmes, they act as models of strong practice for trainees to observe, they guide, challenge and support trainees in planning and delivering their teaching and, not least, provide moral support and encouragement as trainees encounter the inevitable challenges facing a new practitioner. In PCET ITE, where ITE trainees usually experience a 'generic' delivery model, the guidance of a subject-specific mentor during teaching practice experience is particularly important for developing subject-specific teaching skills.

Estyn noted inconsistency of the availability and quality of mentoring during teaching practice experience as one of the shortcomings of PCET ITE in Wales. This criticism is not unique to this sector, or to Wales (see, for example, Ofsted, 2009), and is a significant challenge for all ITE programmes. In a 2018 review of the role of mentoring in school ITE in Wales, Estyn noted strengths in mentoring, but concerns in relation to: mentors' understanding of their role as teacher educators, mentors not having a good enough knowledge of the most effective approaches to teacher education and mentor training placing too much emphasis on completing documentation rather than the skills, knowledge and understanding required to mentor effectively (Estyn, 2018).

A few, although not all, of the PCET ITE providers currently provide training for teaching placement mentors, although even in these cases, the provision is patchy. There is a substantial literature in relation to mentoring: see for example, Hobson and Maxwell (2020) and Thompson (2016) for a discussion of mentoring in PCET settings, principles and guidance for mentors in education settings produced by Welsh Government (Welsh Government, 2014, 2015), and reflections on mentoring in school ITE programmes in Wales (Glover et al, 2022). There is also good practice to build on. For example, all FE colleges currently have expertise in mentoring through teams of specialist mentors for their existing staff. Frequently, but not always, these are also deployed as mentors for ITE trainees. Developing training materials, training mentors and improving access to mentoring should be a priority in the reform process.

Improving the quality of mentoring in PCET ITE is not an insignificant challenge: it requires the time of skilled and experienced staff and so comes with a cost. The proposals in this review to improve partnership working and joint ownership of PCET ITE programmes are driven, in part, by the intention to improve commitment to providing mentors but also to ensure that the resource required to provide them is properly recognised, and that they are trained properly for their role.

In relation to teaching practice experience, Estyn noted, 'Teaching experience placements often relied on ad-hoc arrangements, the personal contacts of course leaders, and the goodwill of providers to host trainees. In a few cases, difficulties in relationships between ITE providers and local colleges mean that trainees are not able to access appropriate teaching placements local to them' (2021a, p17).

The intention of Recommendation 10 is that partnerships have a clear commitment and develop effective mechanisms to ensure trainees have sufficient good-quality teaching practice experience. This presents different challenges depending on whether a trainee is studying pre-service or in-service. In-service trainees have, by definition, a teaching timetable and so having sufficient quantity of teaching practice is not usually a problem. For these, the challenge is ensuring trainees are not overwhelmed by too much teaching, too soon. This needs to be balanced with ensuring trainees have opportunities to experience a variety of teaching approaches with different types of learners that broaden their perspective and enhances their ability to develop flexible approaches in their own teaching. In practice, this means ensuring trainees have a balanced timetable, with opportunities to teach - or at least observe - outside their normal teaching environment. Partnerships should consider how they can facilitate teaching practice or observation in different providers within the partnership - or with providers outside the partnership. Teaching or observing in more than one provider is a common feature of school ITE programmes and is also an expectation in PCET ITE programmes elsewhere. For example, the new level 5 Diploma in Teaching (FE & Skills), developed in England by the Education and Training Foundation, includes an expectation that trainees will teach or observe in at least two locations (Education and Training Foundation, 2022b).

For pre-service trainees, whether they are carrying out their programmes through direct delivery by HEIs, or at FEIs, the challenge is securing appropriate teaching experience placements. In the main, teaching placements take place at FEIs. Estyn noted that where there was a lack of a formal arrangement between HEIs and FEIs, or where placement was on a 'goodwill' basis, the capacity of the HEI to stipulate the conditions of the placement was reduced. The intention of the proposals relating to partnerships is to ensure that these relationships are clear.

The programme accreditation criteria for partnerships proposed here should include consideration both of how trainees will receive appropriate mentor support and have opportunities for appropriate teaching practice experience.



## **A coherent and comprehensive PCET ITE curriculum, linked to the professional standards, and a consistent award structure.**

Currently, the six HEIs who offer PCET ITE programmes determine their own curriculum for their direct delivery programmes and for programmes offered through their franchise partners.

All providers map their programmes to the PCET professional standards (Welsh Government, 2017). A minority make use of the Professional Learning Passport (PLP), which is hosted by the EWC, to identify and record how assessments and teaching experience contribute to a trainee's development towards the goals of the standards.

The PCET professional standards are well supported across the sectors, but are generally underused. They embody the concept of 'dual professionalism', that, 'practitioners can be both subject and vocational specialists and leaders of, and experts in, teaching, learning and assessment' (p. 8). Unlike the standards for teachers in the school sector (Welsh Government, 2019b), the PCET standards were not intended to be statutory, or as a means of assessing competence, but rather to provide a framework for continuing professional learning, promoting improved practice through self-reflection and collaboration. The standards, as currently structured, are of limited value in describing or evidencing a trainee's progress towards becoming a fully competent and independent PCET practitioner.

While all HEIs include the development of fundamental teaching skills into their programmes, leaders of the FE colleges and other PCET providers who employ newly trained practitioners reported to this review that there is too much variation in what trainees from different providers know and can do. While course leaders in HEIs with franchise partners have made efforts to consult about course content and assessment with their delivery colleagues in FEIs, ITE course leaders at FEIs report that course content is still 'handed down' from their HEI and is not always relevant to their trainees or is assessed in ways which do not allow trainees to demonstrate their ability to best effect.

Providers of PCET ITE currently offer broadly equivalent programmes at three different levels. This is well supported across the sector and this review does not propose changing this model. However, the titles and level of demand of apparently equivalent awards are different between providers<sup>9</sup>. This variability in titles and in the levels of demand for what are treated as equivalent awards is not helpful to maintaining a clear brand for PCET ITE. Potential trainees and employers may confuse the titles or not be aware of the differences between level outcomes of the different offers.

## **Recommendations**

- 11.** Ensure that PCET ITE awards have consistent titles, levels of demand and credit values
- 12.** Develop a core curriculum, linked to the professional standards, that would be delivered by all providers
- 13.** Using the existing PCET professional standards, develop additional criteria and guidance which can be used to describe the expectation of PCET practitioners on completion of their ITE programmes, and during their induction

The intention is to present a clear and consistent brand for PCET ITE awards and to give assurance to trainees and employers that those who complete PCET ITE awards at different institutions will have experienced programmes of comparable content and demand. PCET ITE awards would correspond well to the existing PCET professional standards, would be collaboratively designed and constructed, and should produce practitioners who are better prepared for teaching in the PCET sectors, ultimately with the aim of improving the experience and outcomes for learners.

## **A consistent award structure and terminology**

Flexible opportunities for potential trainees to engage with ITE are an important component of PCET programmes (OECD, 2021, p36). The proposed award structure would broadly retain the existing PCE, PgCE and PGCE outcomes, but use consistent terminology for award titles and the number of credits at each level. Awards would retain the total credit value of 120. Full-time and part-time, pre-service and in-service routes would be retained. The PCE, PgCE and PGCE would have similar structures, including an introductory module at a lower level than the rest of the award. Each award would have a consistent number of credits of 'core' modules (including the introductory module) which would be common to all providers.

The remaining credits would be 'non-core' in that the provider would have a choice in developing its own module content. This would give providers opportunity to develop content appropriate for practitioners across the full range of contexts in the PCET sectors, including further education, work-based learning, justice sector or adult community learning. All programmes would have the same minimum teaching practice experience hours and an expectation that trainees would contribute to the wider life of their teaching practice settings, such as attending meetings or parents' evenings, or taking part in professional learning or internal quality assurance sessions.

All programmes would include a requirement for trainees to observe a minimum number of teaching sessions, including sessions outside their own subject or vocational specialism. The partnership approach proposed by this review would also enable better opportunities than currently exist for trainees to carry out observations or teaching practice experience across a range of institutions and to see a wider variety of the full range of activity that takes place in the PCET sectors.

In all cases, the introductory, core and non-core modules would need to be mapped against the PCET professional standards so that a trainee progressing through the programme would have an opportunity to fully meet the PCET professional standards at the standard expected for practitioner attaining an ITE award.

### The proposed three awards would be:

- Professional Certificate in Education (PCET) - **PCE (PCET)**. This award would be for candidates who have at least a level 3 vocational qualification and/or vocational experience in their chosen subject on entry. In total, it would have 120 credits, including a 10 or 20 credit introductory unit assessed at level 4. The remaining credits would be assessed at level 5. Of these, an agreed number would be core modules, common to all providers of PCET ITE. The remaining credits would be non-core in that the provider would have a choice in developing its own module content.
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PCET) - **PgCE (PCET)**. This would require candidates to have a degree on entry. It would have a similar structure and content to the PCE, including an introductory unit assessed at level 4, and an agreed number of credits of core modules. The remaining credits would be non-core. Sixty credits would be at level 6, with an introductory module at level 4, and the remainder at level 5.
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PCET) - **PGCE (PCET)**. This award would usually require candidates to have a degree or higher degree on entry. It would have a similar structure and content to the PCE and PgCE. However, the introductory module would be assessed at level 5 in order that HEIs can maintain their stipulation that a single programme cannot cover more than three levels. Sixty credits would be at level 7, with an introductory module at level 5, and the remainder at level 6.

The proposed structure builds on existing models, with the intention of increasing consistency between providers and offering graduated entry points for trainees from the wide range of vocational and academic experience that is typical of PCET practitioners. The PCE award is intended for non-graduate vocational specialists. The PgCE and PGCE routes are intended for graduates. The latter has a structure with credit values which analogue to school teacher ITE PGCE awards that confer QTS.

Each award has an introductory module at a level below the main level. The intention of this is to provide an 'on ramp' for trainees to develop the necessary skills to access the award's main level of demand. Introductory modules could also be standalone introductory awards as a 'taster', or for those not intending to qualify as fully qualified PCET practitioners. The level 4 introductory unit could be offered by other providers and awarding organisations and could be suitable for recognition of prior certified learning through credit transfer.

### A core curriculum

A high-level 'common core' should form the basis of all providers' programmes. The core should be co-constructed with input from an appropriate range of stakeholders, including experts in the field of ITE, teacher educators from the HEIs and FEIs who provide PCET ITE programmes, the PCET providers who employ trainees, trainees and recently qualified PCET practitioners. The core and non-core modules which will together make up a trainee's ITE programme should form a coherent and comprehensive curriculum, appropriate for a PCET practitioner at the start of their teaching career.

Initial training is of course the first step towards attaining the full professional capacity of an experienced practitioner. It should not be considered as an end-point. This review will also propose the development of an induction process for those who have completed a PCET ITE award in which they can continue to develop and be supported as practitioners in the early part of their careers, a process described by the OECD as 'critical' to becoming a professional (OECD, 2019b, p101). The core and the non-core modules should be considered as part of a continuum of learning that will extend into a practitioner's induction period and into their professional practice throughout their career.

It is beyond the scope of this review to specify the detail of the core – it is intended that this is co-constructed by stakeholders as part of the reform process - but the following considerations are offered.

The curriculum should ensure that trainees engage with a comprehensive range of different sources of professional knowledge, including<sup>10</sup>:

- Intellectually based knowledge – learning 'about' teaching. Trainees are introduced to knowledge from research and from theory and have the opportunity to examine examples of good practice locally and internationally
- Knowledge gained through 'indirect' practice. For example, trainees may examine current curriculum requirements, develop model session plans, or carry out 'micro teaching'. These are in effect, simplified simulations of 'real' teaching experiences

- The knowledge of expert practitioners. Trainees have opportunities to work alongside experienced practitioners. These act as mentors but also model good teaching, engage in joint planning and teaching, act as co-inquirers in some aspect of teaching practice. Through these interactions, trainees gain access to experienced practitioners' expertise, that in turn helps them develop and refine their own 'knowledge in practice'
- Integrated knowledge – learning 'through' teaching. This gives trainees an opportunity to learn in a way that brings practical and theory approaches together. Trainees take part in carefully planned practical experience and at the same time engage with a wide range of other forms of evidence including evidence from research, from theory and from practice elsewhere
- Personal, subject and vocational knowledge. As adults, trainees bring with them their life experience and, very often in a PCET context, extensive vocational and wider work experience which will have a significant role in shaping their learning.

It should:

- Foster the principle of dual professionalism – that PCET practitioners are both subject or vocational specialists, and experts in teaching, learning and assessment. The curriculum gives trainees appropriate opportunities to develop strong subject or vocational pedagogy knowledge as well as the interdisciplinary pedagogies required for working in the PCET sector
- Develop trainees' understanding of their professional identity and agency as an educator (Atkins and Tummons, 2017), of their professional responsibilities and as a collaborator with other practitioners and professionals
- Enhance trainees' resilience and prepare them for the challenges of a teaching career
- Develop trainees' understanding of learners' needs, and of their wider pastoral role in supporting learners' personal development, safety, mental health and wellbeing
- Develop strong habits in career-long professional learning and enquiry, reflection and innovation
- Equip trainees to teach in a bilingual society, whatever their linguistic starting point. This is explored further in the section below, *Preparing trainees to teach in a bilingual society*.

It should not:

- Be too strongly influenced by the processes or practices of any one institution. Even though trainees may be carrying out their ITE in-service and are therefore employees of a particular institution, their initial teacher education should give them a broad perspective, not just an understanding of 'how things are done here at Coleg X or Provider Y'.

The core should link coherently to the professional standards. This review proposes enhancing the professional standards to describe the expectations of trainees at important waypoints in their development: on completion of their initial ITE award and as they complete their induction. The standards were not designed as the frame on which an ITE programme is hung, or to be used as tick list of atomised criteria for evidencing a trainee's competence. Neither does this review propose that they are used in such a way. The core and the proposed developments to the standards will need to be developed in tandem to ensure that the demand and content are compatible. The core should allow trainees holistically to demonstrate they 'meet the standards' at the appropriate waypoint. Careful design of the core and its assessment will minimise additional evidence gathering for trainees.

Designing the core curriculum presents an opportunity to reflect both on the content of the curriculum and its conceptual underpinning. For example, how can the research-informed approaches being developed in school ITE in Wales (Welsh Government 2022g, p13; BERA-RSA, 2014) contribute to the PCET ITE curriculum and how would this look in Wales? How might research-informed approaches be differentiated to meet the needs of PCET trainees with very different vocational backgrounds and experience of academic study?

To what extent will the core curriculum develop trainees' subject-specific pedagogy? Currently, PCET ITE programmes in Wales are generic: trainees are taught in mixed subject specialism groups. Trainees study a range of learning theories and the broad principles and strategies of teaching and assessment, and of organising learning. In this model a trainee's specialist subject or vocational knowledge is assumed from their prior experience and qualifications, and their ability to teach this specialism to their learners is developed through applying these broad principles in their teaching practice experience. This contrasts, for example, with the traditional approach to school ITE where trainees are taught in subject specific groups and there is an emphasis on the subject-specific pedagogy. Participants in this review have argued that a generic model better fits the flexible and often interdisciplinary nature of teaching in PCET settings, and of the realities of employment in the PCET sectors, especially for practitioners at the start of their careers. It also allows for viable ITE group sizes. High quality teaching experiences and the opportunity to reflect on them with the support and challenge provided by a vocational or subject mentor are critical to helping trainees develop strong subject or vocational teaching skills. In PCET ITE, the tension between a generic model of delivery and a model of delivery which has a stronger emphasis on subject-specific pedagogy has received considerable attention.

Put simply, the discussion centres around how effectively PCET ITE prepares practitioners to teach learners their 'subject', be that hairdressing, gas fitting,

mathematics or flower arranging, and also to develop the modes of thinking and vocational habits of that subject or profession. The issues are reviewed in Thompson (2014), Hanley et al (2018) and Hanley and Thompson (2021).

To what extent will the core promote trainees to consider digital, innovative and developing pedagogies that may be outside their own experience? For example, the recent OECD review, *Teachers and Leaders in Vocational Education and Training* (OECD, 2021, p120) points out, 'Pedagogical approaches such as inquiry-based, project-based and collaborative learning can help develop fundamental soft skills such as critical thinking, creativity, team work and communication. These pedagogical approaches can incorporate innovative elements such as gamification, blended learning and experiential learning. The use of innovative technology such as robots, virtual reality, augmented reality and simulators allows teachers to develop students' vocational skills while also fostering their digital and soft skills'. Jisc's 2030 digital standards (Jisc, 2020a) provide a useful framework for considering digital and blended pedagogies (see also Jisc, 2020b).

Partnerships would be able to specify the content of the 'non-core' modules. Content would need to be mapped to the PCET professional standards. Non-core modules would allow an opportunity for differentiation and innovation in the market. They would give opportunities for more diverse content, for example, though modules tailored for WBL or ACL practitioners, practitioners in the justice sector, in HEIs or professional trainers; modules focused on digital or innovative pedagogies, additional learning needs, subject-specific pedagogy, advanced bilingual pedagogy, individual research or specialist pedagogies such as ESOL or essential skills.

Developing non-core modules would allow for providers to differentiate their offer. However, the opportunity for collaboration within and between partnerships on the design and even the delivery of modules should not be dismissed. Collaborative design or delivery of non-core modules related to subject specific pedagogy (for example, engineering, construction, motor vehicle, catering) would help to address the criticisms of the generic model of PCET ITE and at the same time allow viable class sizes.

In the current school ITE model in Wales, the high-level content of the ITE curriculum is specified in the 'Criteria for the accreditation of ITE in Wales' document (Welsh Government, 2022g). A similar approach could be taken with the PCET ITE core content. The process of co-constructing the PCET ITE core curriculum could be carried as part of developing the PCET ITE accreditation criteria or it could be integrated into those criteria when the process is complete.

## The PCET professional standards

The PCET professional standards (Welsh Government, 2017) were written to support and inspire practitioners rather than as means of evidencing competence. Participants in this review expressed a consensus that the standards reflected the knowledge, values and skills required of practitioners in the PCET sectors well. Participants also recognised the potential and value of adding further detail, exemplification and criteria to the standards for the purposes of describing expectations of trainees on completion of their PCET ITE programmes; and to further professional learning and development of PCET practitioners when they are employed in an induction period after their initial training.

This review proposes developing the standards in this way; to help describe the expectation of PCET practitioners on completion of their ITE programmes, and during their induction. The process would help build connections between the practice carried out as part of a trainee's initial training and their developing practice during the early part of their careers. It is intended to improve the consistency in trainees' knowledge, values and skills and also to improve the external perceptions of the rigour of PCET ITE programmes - that they produce practitioners who are proficient, ready to do the job and equipped with the knowledge, skills and habits for career-long reflective professional learning.

The professional standards for school teachers in Wales (Welsh Government, 2019b) are already used in this way – to map and evidence a trainees' progress through their ITE programme and induction period. Similar models are in use, for example, in the professional standards for Scotland's teachers (General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2021) or the Australian professional standards for teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2012)

There are some risks inherent in codifying and using the professional standards in this way. For example, Nasta (2007) critiques the use of the legacy FENTO and LLUK standards in FE colleges in England, and Harper (2009) and Thomas (2016) offer perspectives on the use of the legacy standards in Wales. Professor Mick Waters (2020), in his review of school teacher induction in Wales, identifies limitations in the use of the school professional standards in the induction process.

Risks include:



- The standards and the ITE programmes not being developed in tandem and so not being mutually compatible, leading to unhelpful ‘gap filling’ exercises
- Programmes become unhelpfully bureaucratic paperchases for evidence or the standards being ‘used as a documentation tool for each of the various levels of scrutiny ... to bring evidence of completeness’ (Waters, 2020, p18)
- Programmes with a narrow interpretation of what ‘meeting the standards’ means and so rejecting the wide diversity of opportunities trainees may have to show their abilities
- The standards become interpreted as a de facto competence curriculum and limit practitioners’ aspirations rather than inspire and stretch them
- Losing sight of the original purpose of the standards with experienced teachers, where the intention is to stimulate discussion, reflection and professional growth.

These risks will need to be safeguarded against during the reform process.

## Prepare trainees to teach in a bilingual society

The EWC Annual Education Workforce Statistics for Wales (Education Workforce Council, 2022b) show that in 2022, 17% of FE teachers declared they were fluent or fairly fluent Welsh speakers and 12% declared they were able to work through the medium of Welsh. For WBL practitioners, the respective values were 13% and 10%.

Estyn (2021a) reported that only 34 of the 899 trainees (4%) on programmes in 2019 either carried out teaching practice experience or completed aspects of their programmes through the medium of Welsh. If this is typical of the number of trainees who train annually through medium of Welsh, it is clearly insufficient to meet the sector’s aspirations of increasing the capacity of the PCET workforce to support bilingual and Welsh medium provision.

Estyn also reported that 25 of the 34 trainees carrying out teaching practice experience or completing aspects of their programmes through the medium of Welsh were studying at one FEI. The remainder were spread throughout five different institutions. This suggests that, for the latter group, establishing at any one institution a community of trainees teaching or studying bilingually would not have been feasible. These trainees would not therefore have benefitted from the benefits of collaborative working in Welsh or of sharing insights and experiences of bilingual pedagogy with peers.

Providers also report difficulties in their capacity to match Welsh speaking trainees or those wishing to deliver some of their sessions bilingually with Welsh speaking mentors of the appropriate subject specialism.

The Welsh Government incentive scheme (Welsh Government, 2022c) to encourage potential trainees to undertake PCET ITE programmes changed its criteria for the academic year 2022 – 2023 to enable trainees in any subject (except Welsh) to apply for an additional grant for Welsh language teaching and learning of £1000. This is an encouraging development, and additional work is going on in parallel to this review to consider how best to incentivise trainees to teach or study bilingually or through the medium of Welsh.

## Recommendations

- 14.** Develop differentiated modules, as part of the core curriculum, which promote, encourage and support Welsh medium and bilingual teaching and learning
- 15.** Ensure that any future incentive programme for PCET ITE trainees includes incentives for trainees to teach or study bilingually or through the medium of Welsh
- 16.** Develop opportunities for trainees carrying out teaching practice experience or studying through the medium of Welsh at any institution to have a community of peers and benefit from collaborative experiences with colleagues
- 17.** Ensure that trainees carrying out teaching practice experience or studying through the medium of Welsh have access to a teaching mentor with expertise and experience of bilingual delivery

The intention of the first recommendation in this section is to ensure that every PCET ITE trainee has some exposure to the Welsh language and to models of bilingual pedagogy. The core curriculum would recognise that practitioners in Wales work and teach in a bilingual society and must equip practitioners to do so.

There is a spectrum of starting points of trainees’ Welsh language ability and of their awareness of Welsh language and bilingual teaching. The core modules taken by individual trainees in this respect would need to be differentiated to meet trainees’ linguistic starting points. Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol’s (2019, p.6) skills development model provides a useful conceptual framework for this, and a considerable range of resources already exists to help practitioners develop their understanding and practice in bilingual pedagogy (Sgiliaith, 2023). Assumed within this recommendation is that providers would actively encourage trainees to use bilingual pedagogies in their teaching practice experience and to study through the medium of Welsh, whatever their starting points. The enhanced partnership model proposed here would also facilitate trainees’ opportunities to carry out teaching practice experience at institutions other than their main placement or workplace.



The recent change to the Welsh Government incentive scheme to award an incentive payment to trainees carrying out aspects of their ITE in Welsh is welcome. It is beyond the scope of this review to consider future incentive schemes in much more detail, but any future incentive scheme should continue to consider how to encourage trainees to use the Welsh language in their teaching and their own study and should mesh with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's (2020) strategic priority to promote a sufficient supply of qualified PCET practitioners.

In only one of the six institutions that Estyn reported trainees carrying out teaching practice experience through the medium of Welsh was there a sufficient number of trainees to support a community of trainees teaching in Welsh. The aim of the latter recommendations in this section is to establish these communities – which of course could be virtual – so that trainees benefit from the mutual support they offer.

Similarly, providers should share the capacity they have for Welsh speaking mentors to support trainees teaching or studying through the medium of Welsh. This would require a new level of cooperation and coordination between providers.

## **Recognise and enhance professional status and prepare trainees for career-long professional learning and development**

Teachers who successfully complete a school PGCE are entitled to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This, and completion of an induction period, are required by legislation for a person to work and be paid as a fully qualified teacher in a maintained school<sup>11</sup>.

There is also legislation which specifies the minimum teaching qualification required to be a qualified teacher<sup>12</sup> on the main grade pay scale in an FE college<sup>13</sup>. Approved qualifications include the PCET PCE, PgCE and PGCE awards, and QTS derived from school ITE qualifications.

Legislation does not govern the minimum qualification requirements for a practitioner to work in the work-based learning or adult community learning sectors. Traditionally, in the WBL sector, the minimum requirement to be employed is that the practitioner has to be competent in the relevant occupational area and competent to assess trainees' competence in that area. Traditionally, professional qualifications for WBL practitioners have related to assessment<sup>14</sup>. However, many work-based learning providers have embraced the principle of dual professionalism. For these providers the PCET ITE awards

provide a valuable and important teaching qualification which develops their practitioners' teaching skills and enhances their dual professionalism.

Estyn reported that a small but significant minority of trainees on PCET ITE programmes in 2019 were employed in the WBL or ACL sectors<sup>15</sup>.

There is currently no equivalent to QTS for PCET practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award.

Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in the maintained compulsory school sector who have attained a PGCE with QTS and are in full-time or part-time employment, or building up teaching service through employment in supply teaching posts, have an entitlement to a supported, assessed induction period (Welsh Government, 2022d; Education Workforce Council, 2022c). This typically lasts three terms (or equivalent, for those in supply teaching roles) but must be completed within five years from gaining QTS. NQTs who are able to demonstrate achievement of the standards sooner, may complete their induction in a shorter period (a minimum of one school term).

Successfully completing the induction period is a requirement in order to be employed as a fully registered and qualified teacher in a maintained school in Wales. During their induction period, NQTs are entitled to a reduced teaching load and are supported by a mentor. They log evidence from their practice in their Professional Learning Passport to demonstrate that they have met the school teacher professional standards at the 'induction standard' level. The intention of the induction period is both to support new teachers to develop their practice in the critical early stages of their career and to ensure that they meet the professional standards. On completion of the induction, an NQT's portfolio is assessed by an independent assessor and the outcome is communicated to the EWC. The EWC then changes the registration status of NQTs who pass the induction assessment from provisional to full. The induction process is delivered in collaboration between a number of partners including schools, local authorities, regional consortia and the EWC. It is ultimately funded by the Welsh Government.

<sup>12</sup>'teacher' used here to reflect the language of the legislation

<sup>13</sup>In FE colleges, there are nationally agreed contracts for a wide range of job roles (University and College Union, 2021) meaning that all colleges offer very similar terms of employment for equivalent roles. For a salaried full-time lecturer (the contract which best specifies the job role pertinent here) there is a requirement that a lecturer being appointed on the main grade salary scale should have or attain (usually within two years) an ITE qualification as set out in the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002 (Welsh Government 2002) and undertake a probationary period of nine months. In FE colleges, both PCET ITE awards (PCE / PgCE / PGCE) and a compulsory PGCE (QTS) are considered appropriate qualifications. In the work-based learning sector, the terms of employment and the details of any probationary period, and in the expectation that practitioners should attain an ITE award, vary from provider to provider. The Education (Wales) Act 2014 and Education Workforce Council (main functions) Regulations 2015 also make stipulations relating to qualification requirements and registration for FE teachers with the EWC.

<sup>14</sup>The Post 16 Professional Learning Scoping Study (Welsh Government, 2019a) and the NTFW scoping exercise on the potential development of a new qualification for WBL practitioners (National Training Federation for Wales, 2018), identified at least 39 different qualifications in use across the PCET sectors. In work-based learning, providers have traditionally focussed on ensuring their practitioners have assessor and internal quality assurance qualifications.

<sup>15</sup>Of the 356 in-service part-time trainees whose occupational background was known, ten per cent were employed in the work-based learning sector and six per cent in the adult community learning sector (Estyn, 2021a).

In contrast, PCET practitioners do not currently have a statutory entitlement to an induction period after attaining their PCET ITE award. In practice, the terms of employment usually determine the extent to which practitioners have a probationary period and the extent of support, mentoring or monitoring they receive during this period. These are different across the PCET sectors.

PCET practitioners therefore do not all benefit from an early career experience which sets them on a path of professional learning and reflection, with the support of a mentor, in a structured framework aligned to the professional standards. There is no assurance, beyond the probation arrangements of individual providers, that early career practitioners are developing as professionals or in the spirit of the PCET professional standards.

### Recommendations

18. Establish a professional status, Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET) - abbreviated to 'QPS (PCET)' - for practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award
19. Develop an induction process for early career PCET practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award, which both supports professional learning, reflection and development, and gives assurance that practitioners meet the PCET professional standards
20. Review and update the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002 so that they reflect the new qualification structure

### Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET)

A professional status for PCET practitioners should be developed, analogous to QTS, with a working title 'Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET)' – abbreviated to QPS (PCET). It would be achieved after completing a PCET ITE award and, dependent on the options discussed below, a supported, assessed induction process. Importantly, to ensure parity between non-graduate vocational specialists and graduates, QPS (PCET) would be open to practitioners who attain the PCE, PgCE or PGCE.

A slightly different sequence from the current approach for QTS for school teachers is proposed, where completion of a PGCE allows candidates to be awarded QTS, *before* completing an induction period. In the proposed model for PCET, practitioners would first need to complete their induction period as soon as possible *after* completing their PCE, PgCE or PGCE before being entitled to QPS (PCET). Awarding QPS (PCET) only after completing an induction period would have some advantages, namely in that it would encourage practitioners to stay and work in the PCET sectors after competing

their ITE award, it would establish good professional habits that promote professional learning throughout their careers, and it would ensure that practitioners have progressed on from the level of competence that they had attained for the ITE award and are demonstrating strong teaching skills in their paid teaching posts against the PCET professional standards. However, it would set up a set up an inconsistency with the process for school teachers and it would delay the time period before a PCET practitioner could be considered 'qualified'. This is discussed further in the section, *QPS (PCET) as a minimum requirement to teach in the PCET sectors?*, below.

Models that award a qualified status for PCET practitioners are in use elsewhere. For example, in England, practitioners in the further education and training sector can attain the status of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) through a process of 'professional formation' (Society for Education and Training, 2022) which is similar to the induction process proposed below.

### An induction process

In the current school teacher model, newly qualified teachers (ie those who have attained QTS via their school ITE qualification) must complete a statutory induction period in the years immediately completing their initial training and attaining QTS.

An analogous model for induction for PCET practitioners who have completed an ITE award is proposed. This should be presented as a positive and developmental step on a practitioner's professional journey, not as an additional hoop to jump through. Following attainment of a PCET PCE, PgCE or PGCE, whether this is achieved in-service or pre-service, a PCET practitioner would carry out a period of induction, supported by a mentor, during which they would need to demonstrate how they are developing their practice since attaining their PCET ITE award and how they fulfil the expectations of the PCET professional standards at the appropriate level. A method for assessing practitioners' evidence of doing so would need to be developed. To accommodate the diversity of teaching and timetabling in the PCET sectors, rather than a set time period for induction, the induction period should be for a minimum number of teaching contact hours<sup>16</sup>. Practitioners may take longer than the minimum number of hours to complete their induction, but not less. An induction process for practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award would be a worthwhile investment in the PCET workforce and would add to its strength and capacity, and its ability to provide the best education for learners in the PCET sectors. It would:

<sup>16</sup>The school teacher induction process has recently been reviewed, with updated guidance published in September 2022 (Welsh Government, 2022d). The typical period for induction is three school terms, or for those not employed in a full-time role, 380 half-day school sessions, with a minimum time period of 110 half-day sessions. In a PCET context, full-day or half-day sessions would not be appropriate as practitioners are often employed on hourly timetables. The National Agreement on Lecturer's Workload Allocation for Further Education Colleges in Wales: Version 2 (2019) (University and College Union, 2021) stipulates that a normal full-time teaching commitment is a maximum of 835 hours annually, or 278 hours as an approximation for one term. These would seem appropriate analogues for the time period for a PCET induction process.

- support practitioners to make the best start to their teaching career
- allow practitioners to use the professional standards as guides for their practice, as tools for professional reflection and engagement with research, and to demonstrate their progress and competence
- consolidate the knowledge, skills and values that they have already acquired in their ITE and will need to build on throughout their careers
- develop a broader understanding of the PCET system and the policy framework within which it operates
- establish good habits in professional learning, enquiry and reflection, supported by an experienced mentor

Recent reviews of the school teacher induction process in Wales by Professor Mick Waters (2020) and OB3 Research (2020) - summarised in Welsh Government (2022f) - provide helpful insights into the experiences of school teachers on induction programmes, and the strengths and shortcomings of the induction process at the time of the reviews. In designing an induction process for PCET practitioners, it will be instructive to consider the lessons from these reviews, in particular about the need to maximise the positive benefits of an induction process by ensuring good quality mentoring support and a sufficiently flexible approach which accommodates the wide diversity of teaching work in the PCET sectors; while avoiding some of the pitfalls, including unhelpfully time-consuming methods for recording and evidencing how a practitioner has met the professional standards.

The school teacher induction process is ultimately funded by the Welsh Government and represents a considerable ongoing investment in developing teachers in the early part of their careers. This review does not propose a funding methodology for an induction process for PCET practitioners – this will need to be determined as the reforms proceed - but it is likely to represent the most significant additional ongoing cost of all the recommendations in this review.

### **QPS (PCET) as a minimum requirement to teach in the PCET sectors?**

In this discussion, it is helpful to differentiate between qualification requirements which are specified in legislation, qualification requirements which are not specified in legislation but are nevertheless a desirable or essential part of an employer's terms of employment, the role for which a person is employed, the salary scale on which they are appointed and the pay they receive.

For practitioners wishing to teach and be paid as fully qualified FE teachers [the term 'teacher' is used here to reflect its use in the legislation] in FE colleges in Wales, the minimum qualifications required are set out in legislation, namely the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales)

Regulations 2002. In practice, this is enacted by colleges through their common contract, requiring candidates applying for teaching posts already to possess a PGCE (QTS), or a PCET PGCE, PgCE or PCE or to complete one within two years of taking up post through an in-service programme. Practitioners who are appointed without a prior ITE qualification and who do their ITE in-service are paid on an unqualified teacher salary scale (referred to as the Associate Lecturer Scale) until they attain their ITE award (see University and College Union, 2021).

The 2002 regulations should be reviewed as part of the reform process and updated to reflect the new qualification structure. QPS (PCET) - which would include the induction period – should be the minimum qualification required for new FE teachers paid on the main grade salary scale. In turn, this would need to be reflected in the colleges' common contract. A consequence of the inclusion of an induction period into the QPS (PCET) award is that it would set back the point at which a practitioner is effectively 'qualified' and could therefore delay the point at which a person is paid as a qualified teacher in an FE college. This could be mitigated through an intermediate increment on the FE lecturers' pay scale. As mentioned above it would also establish a different sequence of qualification processes than the current model for school teachers:

### **PGCE > QTS > Induction > Fully qualified to teach in schools**

In comparison to the proposed model for PCET practitioners:

### **PGCE/PgCE/PCE > Induction > QPS (PCET) > Fully qualified PCET practitioner**

An alternative would be to award QPS (PCET) on completion of the ITE award and not after induction. This would analogue closely to the current school teacher model but would lose the advantages, outlined in the section above, of awarding QPS (PCET) after induction.

The sequence of school teacher qualification processes and registration with EWC is discussed by Waters (2020, p25) and this is an evolving area. It will be helpful, as the PCET ITE reform proceeds, to consider the current models for school teacher ITE when considering the terminology and sequencing of PCET ITE qualification processes.

This review is not recommending requiring teachers who have QTS from school ITE to attain QPS (PCET) before working in an FE college. This would establish an unhelpful barrier for school teachers wishing to work in a college and limit colleges' opportunity to employ the most suitable staff. While it has not been a focus of the discussions with participants in this review,



there has been no evidence from participants that teachers who transfer from school into a PCET setting are unable to adapt their skills to a PCET teaching environment. The induction process proposed here would present a potentially useful opportunity for teachers with QTS who transfer from a school to a PCET setting to develop their understanding of the PCET sectors and demonstrate how they fulfil the expectations of the PCET professional standards at the relevant level.

Other PCET sectors, such as work-based learning and adult community learning, currently do not have legal minimum qualification requirements, although employers may require particular qualifications as part of their terms of employment. For clarity, this review is not proposing a change to this arrangement. In these sectors, the challenges that would be posed by legislating for a minimum qualification standard are likely to outweigh the advantages, at least in the short term.

As the Estyn (2021a) report identified, a substantial minority of trainees who undertake PCET ITE awards are from PCET sectors other than FE. This review proposes that the new PCET ITE awards, the induction process and QPS (PCET) should be available to these groups of trainees, as long as they had suitable opportunities for teaching practice experience and/or job roles. Employers across the PCET sectors should encourage and incentivise their staff who are not legally required to have ITE qualifications to do so, through, for example:

- offering staff 'taster' teaching experiences and introductory awards as outlined in this review
- providing suitable teaching practice experience, mentoring and induction opportunities
- contributing to course fees for in-service ITE programmes
- reducing workload for those on ITE programmes in order to allow for study time
- where the practitioner's role allows, offering pay increments which reward attaining an ITE award and QPS (PCET).

### Registration with EWC

Once a practitioner had completed a PCET PCE, PgCE or PGCE and successfully completed the assessed component of the induction, they would be entitled to Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET), which would be awarded and recorded by the EWC.

Practitioners who work or are intending to work in teaching roles in FE colleges and equivalent roles in work-based learning providers are required to register with the EWC (Education Workforce Council, 2022d). Under the proposed model, this arrangement would continue, but the EWC would need to be notified on a registrant's award of their PCE/ PgCE/PGCE, when starting

their induction period, and on successful completion of their induction - and hence the entitlement to QPS (PCET).

Practitioners in the ACL sector are currently not required to register with the EWC. Should practitioners in the ACL sector in future be required to register with the EWC, similar arrangements to those described here for FE and WBL practitioners would apply.

## Enhance PCET practitioners' opportunities for career development within the PCET sectors and across the broader education system

Teachers who have attained a PGCE and QTS through school initial teacher education are considered qualified by FE colleges and can be paid on the main grade lecturing pay scale. The reciprocal arrangement does not apply to practitioners who have completed a PCET initial teacher education award (whether a PCE, PgCE or PGCE). These are not entitled to QTS and are not eligible to be employed and paid in maintained schools as fully qualified teachers. This apparent anomaly is framed by the respective legislation that governs what constitutes 'being qualified' to teach in FE colleges<sup>17</sup> and in schools<sup>18</sup>.

Schools do in fact have scope to pay persons without QTS, in shortage areas and vocational subjects where there are no candidates with QTS, equivalently to QTS qualified teachers.

Nevertheless, participants in this review frequently raised the issue, arguing that it contributes to a perception that PCET ITE awards do not have the same professional standing as their QTS equivalent, raising questions around parity and equity. It is also perceived as creating a barrier to career progression for practitioners with a PCET ITE award which is not present for those with a PGCE (QTS). Estyn (2021a) quoted a current PCET trainee: "Not having QTS suggests we have lower status for doing essentially the same job." On the whole, participants in this review – including current and recent trainees and senior managers and principals at FE colleges – expressed similar views.

This affects in-service PCET practitioners more than it does those doing pre-service ITE: presumably, a person who wishes to teach in the school sector would opt for a pre-service route which confers QTS. At present, there is no mechanism for those who have completed a PCET ITE award to 'convert' their award to QTS. The recently accredited Open University salaried PGCE with QTS

<sup>17</sup>Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002, Education (Wales) Act 2014, Education Workforce Council (main functions) regulations 2015.

<sup>18</sup>The School Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2012, The Education Workforce Council (Main Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2015, The Education Act 2002, the Welsh Ministers' (Transfer of Functions) Order 2018 – SI 2018/644

(Open University, 2023) does give a potential mechanism for practitioners from a PCET background to attain QTS while being employed in a school, although

it requires trainees to complete a full PGCE over a two-year period. The only alternative is to retrain fully on a pre-service PGCE – an unrealistic prospect for many employed PCET practitioners.

The EWC has recently conducted research to scope the potential demand for a conversion- or joint-programmes which confer PCET PGCE and QTS (personal communication). The evidence currently available (the Estyn report, this review and the work carried out by the EWC) indicates that there is some demand for a straightforward mechanism for PCET practitioners who have completed a PCET ITE award to attain QTS without needing fully to retrain, although the level of demand is as yet unquantified.

The requirements of QTS are set out in the legislation. These include a requirement that teachers should possess a degree. Current PCET ITE awards are not designed to meet the QTS standards and are not accredited programmes in the definition of the legislation. Any changes to the current arrangements relating to PCET ITE awards and QTS would need to be enabled through amendments to the legislation.

About a third of trainees taking PCET ITE programmes in 2019 were not graduates (Estyn, 2021a). Nearly all of these were carrying out their training in-service. These trainees often have expert vocational skills and have attained the highest level of qualification (typically a level 3 vocational qualification) available within that sector. At present in Wales there is no in-service part-time BA Education programme specifically aimed at PCET practitioners wishing to deepen their understanding of education.

The National MA (Masters) in Education (Wales) is a programme offered by seven universities in Wales and developed collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders including the Welsh Government. Places on the programme for eligible participants are funded by the Welsh Government. Although the online information about the National MA specifies that only teachers holding QTS and working in the compulsory sector are eligible for funded places (see Welsh Government, 2021 - and links to partner universities' programme pages) this review has been assured that practitioners in FE settings are also eligible for funding. The programme currently offers three strands, focussing on leadership, ALN and a 'general' strand. Two other strands, 'curriculum' and 'equity in education' will be available from September 2023. There is currently no PCET strand.

## Recommendations

21. Investigate and develop a methodology and regulatory framework for PCET practitioners to be employed as qualified teachers in maintained schools
22. Develop PCET practitioners' opportunities for in-service degree- and postgraduate-level study in the field of education

### Qualified to work in schools

The intention of this recommendation is for the reform process to investigate, establish an evidence base and develop a mechanism that allows qualified PCET practitioners to be employed as qualified teachers in maintained schools without having fully to retrain. Further work needs to be carried out to establish the scale of demand, the implications for the labour market and the most suitable approach. In order to be successful, such a mechanism would need to have the trust of the school sector and would need to enable PCET practitioners to transfer the skills and practice they have developed through their PCET teaching to a school context, and demonstrate they meet the school teacher professional standards. As described above, it would also require amendments to the legislation governing school teachers' qualifications.

The focus of the proposed reform process should be on getting ITE right for PCET practitioners. Nevertheless, this is an opportunity to address how this barrier to career progression for PCET practitioners can be reduced or removed.

### In-service BA and MA programmes

The final recommendation of this review relates to developing and enhancing PCET practitioners' funded opportunities to study education while they are in-service, both at degree and postgraduate level. The national Masters programme offers a useful model, in that it is a collaborative approach across seven universities. A similar approach could be taken for a BA Education programme developed specifically for PCET practitioners, across the range of PCET settings, not just focussing on FE.

These would provide nationwide, structured, accredited professional learning opportunities for PCET practitioners to further their understanding of education, engage with and carry out their own research and enhance their dual professionalism.

In the case of the national Masters programme, a dedicated PCET strand would be a helpful addition to those currently offered and would allow PCET practitioners to focus on the currently understudied PCET sectors.



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# Glossary

ACL	Adult community learning
Colegau Cymru	The representative body for further education colleges in Wales. The review has consulted with various networks hosted by Colegau Cymru, including the Principals' Forum and the Curriculum and Quality (C&Q) group
Credit	Credit is the notional amount of learning time assigned to a set of learning outcomes. One credit is equivalent to 10 learning hours. See also 'Level'
CTER	The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research ('the commission')
EWC	Education Workforce Council
FE	Further education
FEI	Further education institution
HEI	Higher education institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
ITE award	A postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE), a professional graduate certificate of education (PgCE) or a certificate of education (PCE)
ITE qualification	Used here as a nuanced version of 'ITE award', where the possession of the award (eg a PCE or a PGCE) is a legal requirement in order to be 'qualified'. For example, teachers in schools need to have QTS and have completed their induction to be considered fully qualified, as set out in the School Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2012. 'Teachers' in FE colleges need to have met the conditions of the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002 to be considered and paid as fully qualified FE 'teachers'

ITE	Initial teacher education
Level	Level is an indicator of the relative demand, complexity and depth of learning. Level 5 is, broadly, foundation degree level; level 6, honours degree; and level 7, master's degree. For detailed information on the Credit and Qualifications Framework (CQFW), see Welsh Government (2022e). See also 'Credit'
NTfW	National Training Federation for Wales
NQT	Newly qualified teacher
PCET	Post-compulsory education and training. This is not an easily definable sector and the usage of the term – including whether it is used in the singular or plural - varies depending on the context. For the purposes of this report, the PCET sector includes the FE, WBL, adult justice and ACL sectors; and to a lesser extent, those sectors whose staff use PCET ITE awards, such professional trainers from the armed and emergency services, or private training companies.  A variety of terms are used, often interchangeably, to describe this sector, including: lifelong learning and skills sector, learning and skills sector, post-16 sector, education and training sector, FE and skills sector. Particularly in the international literature, the sector is often referred to as the vocational education and training (VET) sector. In Wales, the newly established Commission for Tertiary Education and Research has a remit which covers much of post-compulsory education, reintroducing the term 'tertiary' into the range of terms in use
PLP	Professional learning passport
Practitioner	The different PCET sectors use a range of terms, such as teacher, tutor, trainer, lecturer, training adviser and many others to describe those who deliver and support learning and progress. For the purposes of this report, the term 'practitioner' is used an inclusive term to refer to persons working in these roles in the PCET sectors. Practitioners studying on PCET ITE programmes are referred to as 'trainees'. Occasionally, where the context refers to a specific legal or technical usage we have referred to 'FE teachers' or 'FE lecturers'. [See also 'Teacher']



QPS (PCET)	Qualified Practitioner Status (PCET)
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SHELL	Skills, Higher Education & Lifelong Learning – department of Welsh Government
Teacher	A teacher working in a school in the compulsory sector [See also 'Practitioner']
Trainee	A person studying on a PCET ITE programme
USCET	The Universities and Schools Council for the Education of Teachers. The USCET PCET sub group is a professional network for course leaders at HEI ITE providers in Wales
WBL	Work-based learning
WG	Welsh Government

## Appendix A

# The current PCET initial teacher education awards

Broadly, the current awards are categorised as follows

- Professional Certificate in Education (PCE). This usually requires candidates to have at least a level 3 qualification and/or vocational experience in their chosen subject on entry. Typically, it has 120 credits with module outcomes at level 4 and 5, although at least one provider offers modules at level 6. It is variously titled as Professional Certificate in Education, Professional Certificate in Education and Training, Professional Certificate in Education (Post Compulsory Education and Training), Professional Certificate of Education
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE). This usually requires candidates to have a degree on entry. Typically, it has 120 credits with module outcomes at level 5 and 6. It is variously titled as Professional Graduate Certificate in Education, Professional Graduate Certificate (Post Compulsory Education and Training), Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and Training, Professional Graduate Certificate of Education
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). This award requires candidates to have a degree on entry. Typically, it is 120 credits with module outcomes at level 6 and 7. It is variously titled as Postgraduate Certificate in Education, Postgraduate Certificate Post Compulsory Education and Training, Postgraduate Certificate in Education and Training

## Appendix B

# Stakeholders engaged as part of this review

The review core team consisted of Dr Steve Bell (on loan from Estyn for this work), Helen Scaife (Post-16 Workforce Development Branch) and Rhian Pound-McCarthy (Post-16 Workforce Development Branch). Professor Bill Lucas acted as adviser and critical friend to the review.

The review consulted regularly with the Welsh Government Professional Learning Steering Group – a high level policy advisory group with representation from the PCET sectors – who supported the guiding principles and scope of the review. A reference group was also established to consider and advise on more detailed aspects. This group consisted of representatives from across the PCET sectors: a member of USCET PCET group, a course leader from FE college PGCE team, a senior leader from FE college (also representing Colegau Cymru C&Q group), a representative from WBL (also representing NTfW), a representative from ACL (representing the adult learning partnerships' network), a representative from EWC, an official from the school ITE team of Welsh Government (Pedagogy, Leadership & Professional Learning Division), and the review core team.

The review held online meetings between April 2022 and January 2023 with:

- Adult Learning Partnership Network of ACL coordinators
- Agored Cymru
- Colegau Cymru Principals' Forum and Curriculum and Quality Group
- Education Workforce Council
- Estyn
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
- Institute of Physics
- Officials from a range of branches within Welsh Government, looking at funding, induction, QTS, data, CTER
- Officials from the Department for Education in England
- Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
- University and College Union (UCU)
- Welsh Government Union Partnership Group
- Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

The review held focus groups with teacher educators and teaching and learning mentors from all the FE colleges who deliver PCET ITE, and with members of the USCET PCET group of HE PCET ITE course leaders.

We invited, via emails kindly forwarded by course leaders, trainees currently studying on - or those who had recently completed - PCET ITE programmes to attend on-line focus groups. Nine current or recent trainees took part in three online focus group meetings during September 2022.

We held a range of one-to-one meetings with individuals to discuss aspects of the review. We are grateful to Professor Michelle Jones of Swansea University, Professor Ron Thompson of Huddersfield University, Mike Williams of Coleg Sir Gar and Howard Pilott of the Education and Training Foundation for their input.

An interim report was circulated to stakeholders in October 2022, to which 24 written responses were received.

We would like to thank all the participants who have contributed over the course of the review.

## Appendix C

# Trends in the number of PCET ITE trainees

Providers offering HEFCW-funded PCET ITE awards record data about their learners in the HESA dataset. Traditionally, however, this data has not been systematically collated, analysed and published and so there has been no public record of the trends in the number of trainees taking PCET ITE awards. Addressing this is one of the recommendations of this review.

As part of the work of this review, Welsh Government statisticians have analysed the HESA dataset, filtering on any student studying an initial teacher education course designed for Further Education. While the data has been checked, it has not been subject to the same inclusion and exclusion criteria that would normally be undertaken for bulletin data. It should be regarded as experimental data and has been included as an appendix to this review to give an indication of the number of trainees over time, rather than as a definitive statement. For this reason, individual institutions have not been identified. Noting the caveats above, and in the footnotes accompanying the tables (particularly the note about Table A), the data nevertheless gives a useful insight into the demographics of PCET ITE trainees and trends in recruitment.

Table A shows the total number of trainees. This table combines enrolment data from the HESA dataset and one institution which had coded their enrolments differently and so did not appear in the query outcomes (see notes, below). The first thing to note is that the total number of enrolled trainees recorded for 2019/20 is 940. This is slightly more than the only other data source available about enrolments in PCET ITE, the 899 reported by Estyn (2021a), from the same year, based on a self-reporting census of individual providers. The match is not perfect but gives some degree of triangulation for the data and its analysis in that report. The total number of trainees from 2017/18 to 2020/21 declines from 1,000 to 875. Recruitment of trainees may have been impacted to some extent between 2019/20 and 2020/21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The mode of study is shown in Table B and is fairly consistent over the period, with between 81% and 83% of trainees studying part-time. This is consistent with the figure reported by Estyn of 82%.

Table C shows enrolments by sex. The proportion of female trainees ranges from 63% to 67%. For comparison, the EWCs annual workforce statistics (Educational Workforce Council, 2022b) show a slightly smaller proportion of currently registered FE teachers were female (60% in 2021). In work-based learning, 63% of registered WBL practitioners in 2021 were female.

Table D shows trainees' ethnicity. Over the period, the proportion of ethnicities of trainees stays largely static, with white trainees accounting for between 89% and 91% of the total. A direct comparison with the current workforce is not possible because of the proportion of 'unknown' ethnicity in the EWC annual statistics, reported as 20% for both FE teachers and WBL practitioners in 2021.

The age profile of trainees, shown in Table E, demonstrates the later age of entry into the profession and of initial training for PCET practitioners. Over the period, the proportion of trainees aged 30 years and over is consistently above 60%. In 2020/21, only 16% of trainees were aged 24 or less. This is a distinctly different age profile to trainees on school ITE programmes. StatsWales (2022) shows data for trainees in their first years on school ITE courses in Wales by age and degree type. Of 1,395 trainees doing PGCE programmes (the best analogue for PCET ITE awards) in 2020/21, 800 (57%) were aged 24 or less.

Estyn reported that only 34 (4%) of 899 trainees in 2019 were carrying out any aspects of their teaching experience through the medium of Welsh. Table F shows data for trainees' Welsh speaking ability and indicates that 105 (12%) of the 895 trainees in 2019/20 – the same year as Estyn's census - were fluent Welsh speakers and a further 125 (14%) were Welsh speakers but not fluent. The EWC annual workforce statistics are not reported in the same format, but indicate that in 2019, 15% of FE registered teachers were fluent or fairly fluent in the Welsh language and 11% were 'trained to work, currently work, or have ever worked through the medium of Welsh or feel confident to do so'. The respective figures for WBL practitioners for the same year were 11% and 8%. These data demonstrate the gap between the potential proportion of trainees who could be carrying out at least some of their teaching or training in Welsh and the current reality.

**Table A**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales (2017/18 to 2020/21)

HEI	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
University 1	125	130	130	75
University 2	40	30	30	45
University 3 (ceased provision in 2020/21)	55	50	35	-
University 4	525	520	495	475
University 5	135	125	115	150
University 6	110	95	90	75
<b>Subtotal from HESA dataset</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>
University 7 (self reported)	15	30	45	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>875</b>

**Table B**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales by mode (2017/18 to 2020/21)

Mode	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Full-time (including sandwich)	130	185 (20%)	155 (18%)	140 (17%)
Part-time	805 (81%)	155 (18%)	735 (82%)	680 (83%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>

**Table C**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales by sex (2017/18 to 2020/21)

Sex	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Male	330 (33%)	320 (34%)	325 (36%)	295 (36%)
Female	660 (67%)	630 (66%)	565 (63%)	525 (64%)
Other	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>

**Table D**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales by ethnicity (2017/18 to 2020/21)

Ethnicity	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
White	900 (91%)	870 (91%)	815 (91%)	730 (89%)
Black background (including Black British)	20 (2%)	20 (2%)	15 (2%)	15 (2%)
Asian background (including Asian British)	20 (2%)	15 (2%)	20 (2%)	20 (3%)
Other (including mixed)	20 (2%)	25 (3%)	20 (2%)	30 (4%)
Ethnicity not known	20 (2%)	15 (2%)	20 (2%)	25 (3%)
Non-UK domicile	5 (0%)	5 (0%)	5 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>



**Table E**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales by age (2017/18 to 2020/21)

Age	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
18-20 years	0 (0%)	15 (1%)	15 (2%)	5 (0%)
21-24 years	155 (16%)	170 (18%)	150 (17%)	130 (16%)
25-29 years	205 (21%)	180 (19%)	175 (19%)	150 (18%)
30 years and over	625 (63%)	585 (62%)	550 (62%)	540 (65%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>

**Table F**

Enrolments on ITE for FE in Wales by Welsh speaking ability (2017/18 to 2020/21)

Welsh speaking ability	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Fluent Welsh speaker	100 (10%)	110 (12%)	105 (12%)	85 (10%)
Welsh speaker not fluent	160 (16%)	145 (15%)	125 (14%)	115 (14%)
Not Welsh speaker	665 (67%)	655 (69%)	620 (69%)	590 (72%)
Not known	60 (6%)	40 (4%)	40 (4%)	30 (4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>825</b>

**Notes**

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and figures less than 2.5 have been rounded to 0. Percentages may not add up perfectly to 100% because of rounding.

For Tables B to F, numbers are based on HESA dataset for enrolments of students who are:

1. Counted within the standard Higher Education registration population
2. Studying in a Welsh Higher Education provider (including Higher Education Institutions and HE enrolments at Further Education Institutions) or Welsh domiciles at the Open University
3. On an initial teacher training (ITT) course where the student's initial teacher training aim is to teach in further education

Table A shows enrolment data from the HESA dataset, as described in the criteria for Tables B to F, above. Institutions have been anonymised and are shown as University 1, University 2 etc. One institution had coded their enrolments as 'in-service training', rather than 'initial teacher training', and so their data did not appear within the query outcomes. This institution reported their enrolment numbers directly to this review and were accepted without further checking. These are shown as a separate line (University 7). Enrolments for University 7 may not have been recorded on the same basis as enrolments at other institutions. Where a university operates in a franchise or partnership arrangement with FE college/s all the enrolments for that franchise or partnership are shown under the parent HEI.

The demographic information shown in Tables B to F is taken from the HESA dataset only and does not include information from the institution (University 7) that had coded their enrolments differently.

