



## Level 7 pre-programme activities

**Welcome everyone! All of us look forward to meeting you all and working with you on the PGCE Primary Education programme this year. Below I describe the intent behind our Level 7 curriculum as well as some thinking and questions to get you started.**

Teacher education has entered a new era. The White Paper Educational Excellence Everywhere (DfE, 2016) signalled significant policy reform with new routes into teaching and the emphasis on a school-led direction. In addition, the drive for even higher standards brought implications for the preparation of teachers entering the profession. Further Government initiatives followed with the publication of the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019) for newly qualified teachers entering the profession.

The pandemic and associated closure of many schools has provided challenges but also fresh opportunities for teachers, student teachers and pupils in schools. The new climate brings greater emphasis on evidencing pupil progress and for advanced pedagogical skills (including blended learning pedagogies) and the need for a new, learner-centred, impactful model of professional learning for beginning teachers. This runs in parallel with national and international debates on the types of knowledge and the nature of skills required for successful teaching in a global society.

All of the above has provided Leeds Trinity University with an opportunity to provide programmes of professional study at L7 that are not only responsive to change, but which lead change. The benefits to individual teachers, to schools and to the teaching profession of M level Initial Teacher Education shows that:

- Teaching should be an aspirational and inspirational career.
- Becoming a teacher is to become an educator and community leader.
- Teachers need to be able to draw on research and evidence-based practice.
- Teachers with research skills can bring about change.

In advance of the Level 7 work together, I'd like you to undertake the following pre-programme tasks which will orient you towards the intention for our L7 modules.

### **Task 1. *What Teachers Make***

One of the reasons our student teachers give for becoming a teacher is the opportunity to contribute to your community in a meaningful way. Teaching is one of the most direct ways to make an impact, and if you are driven by the desire to help those around you, being a teacher is an invaluable contribution. For example, perhaps you grew up in a high-needs area and are personally connected to the struggle of students who come from low-income neighbourhoods and who may go to schools with little funding. Maybe an amazing teacher changed your life when you were younger, and you want to share that with a new generation of pupils. This sort of perspective allows you to recognise how much of a difference a knowledgeable and critically reflexive teacher can make with their pupils.

**Read/Watch ‘What Teachers Make’ by performance poet Taylor Mali from *Mali, T. (2002) What Teachers Make. What Learning Leaves. Hanover Press.***

[What Teachers Make - Taylor Mali](#)

[Taylor Mali on "What Teachers Make" \(youtube.com\)](#)

**What are some of the key messages that Mali is trying to communicate about the teaching potential for both teachers and their pupils?**

### **Task 2. Transforming Teaching Practice**

Mahatma Gandhi (1916) wrote “Our language is a reflection of ourselves” meaning that language is part of our identity. How we speak or write or paint or move when communicating shapes our sense of self and our presence in this world. Reflecting on your experiences will be a huge part of your Level 7 study as you begin to link your first-hand perspectives to evidence based practice and your reflections to the theories that support them.

**Read Transforming Teaching Practice by Barbara Larrivee and answer the following questions:**

Larrivee, B. (2000) Transforming Teaching Practice: Becoming the critically reflective teacher, *Reflective Practice*, 1:3, 293-307, DOI: 10.1080/713693162

**What reasons does Larrivee give for becoming a critically reflective teacher?**

**What are the essential practices to achieve this?**

**If language is a reflection of ourselves, what must we be aware of when engaging in critical reflection?**

**Task 3. Teachers make a goddamn difference! Now what about you?**

Your first academic module is on the topic of inclusion. Inclusion is a concept that is interpreted in a range of ways. Diversity and inclusion are also used interchangeably, but there is recognised agreement that it is about removal of barriers to learning, about participation not exclusion, that it involves supporting people from different groups and identifying different strengths, needs and abilities. In doing so, you will be asked to think reflectively about how you have supported a pupil during your school-based placement. However, let's start by thinking about you.

**Write a 500-word reflection on a personal experience in which you were supported (or perhaps not supported) by someone who taught you. Your experience does not have to have taken place during your education (but it must be educational!) It's fine to refer to yourself as I, my or me. You can use the following writing model to help you.**

**What?** A brief description of the incident/experience: who, what, why, when, where.

**So What?** This is the sense-making section where you discuss the significance, your position, understanding, feelings and begin relating to literature/theories.

**Now What?** This section makes connections from the experience to inform future actions. What you would do differently or the same? What do you hope that others will do?

Please bring your answers and any written notes on the above to our introductory lecture.

I look forward to getting to know you.

Best wishes

Dr Naziya O'Reilly