

UEL ITE Partnership Curriculum Rationale

“The UEL Initial Teacher Education Partnership aims to develop outstanding teachers for schools and colleges and their communities. We foster evolving teacher identity through innovative, creative and critically engaging experiences that will enable our beginning educators to engage with transformational change excellence and leadership throughout their careers”.

The UEL Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Partnership trains 500 Primary, Secondary and Post Compulsory teachers each year and has been doing so throughout the past two decades. UEL is the largest post 1992 university offering teacher training and education in London. At UEL we offer routes into teaching through: PGCE, PCET, Secondary and Primary, School Direct Salaried and Non-Salaried, Postgraduate Teacher Apprentices, BA Primary with Education and QTS and a small cohort of BSc Computer Science with Education and QTS. The wonderfully diverse and cosmopolitan nature of east London is reflected by the vibrant multicultural community training to teach at UEL. Our staff provide strong role models for our student body and we aim to develop similar role models for school pupils and college students, redressing the under representation of certain groups in the teaching workforce. A key strength of training to teach at UEL is our community focus. We are proud that we recruit people from the east London community (whilst not excluding others), who then go back into this community to teach in our local and highly diverse, schools. Most east London schools are Ofsted rated Good or Outstanding, and many are significantly staffed by UEL ITE graduates. Many UEL trained teachers are senior leaders and headteachers in schools.

Our aim is to develop a strong teacher identity in all our trainees. Our highly qualified ITE tutors and school-based mentors do not foster a ‘copy me’ approach to teaching, that is specific to a particular school, academy or trust. Instead we are working with our trainee teachers, to support their developing confidence and a teacher identity that works for them and their pupils, that will enable success for years to come – wherever they end up teaching. We firmly believe at UEL, that emerging teacher identity is underpinned by educational theory and a trainee teacher’s understanding of this. It is vital they can articulate a theoretical rationale behind the pedagogic choices they are making in their classroom or learning space. Therefore, the theoretical balance with the practice of teaching is positively engaged with at UEL within our ITE curriculum. Our curricula approach is research informed, and we enable our students to engage with the research agenda by conducting school placement-based action research focused work as part of their developing teacher role.

We also offer Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) accreditation through our involvement with the PSHE Association. This helps nurture the trainee into an aspect of teaching they will inevitably have to engage with in their career. This nurturing approach is key to teacher development and retention. UEL tutors and school-based mentors will support our trainee teachers into the profession following a ‘confidence before competence’ approach with numerous and (often) bespoke support interventions provided to foster trainees into their new role. This includes recent consideration of trainee teacher wellbeing and a subsequent reduction in paperwork and assignment requirements.

Our taught and placement curriculum is reviewed and evaluated regularly, by tutors, partnership steering groups and trainee teachers. Changes are implemented to reflect the reviews and needs identified; this can be as the training year progresses if development needs are clear, and certainly happens between the cohorts and years. Partnership schools, mentors and teachers are also involved in delivering aspects of our taught curriculum, both at UEL and in their schools; their expertise and contributions are utilised where needed and possible. For

example, our Geography ITE students regularly support a partner schools with outdoor learning activities; an annual safeguarding lecture is presented by a partner school; primary and PGCE PE trainees have the opportunity to attend a residential outdoor learning experience; prevent training delivered by prevent engagement officers from Tower Hamlets; SENCO's and school-based personnel delivering high quality lectures and seminars. At the start of their course, PGCE RE students visit local places of worship to develop their understanding of the religious context of the area. Primary PWR Humanities and secondary RE trainees also help to facilitate the Junior SACRE days for Newham pupils. The RE programme lead is a member of the Newham SACRE and supports curriculum development for the Agreed Syllabus.

Our curriculum is mapped to both Teachers' Standards and the ITT Core Content Framework and is designed to challenge trainee teacher's thinking and develop the skillset they need to become competent teachers. The secondary curriculum is designed around 'subjects' as we firmly believe that Secondary phase pre-service teachers benefit from subject specific pedagogical input and support. This rationale is also applied to our choice of a subject specific Level 7 assignment within the PGCE. Each subject has a subject specialist tutor(s) to support the trainees through their training. Our Primary phase Postgraduate ITE is divided through 'with routes' in SEND, English, STEM, Art and Design, Early Years, Sport and PE, Humanities and EAL. This provides trainees with opportunities to develop additional skill sets in subjects and curriculum areas they are particularly interested in. We retain a cross curricular approach to learning in Primary and all foundation curriculum subjects are given equal weighting within our curricula model.

We have recently realigned our programmes with PCET, Secondary and Primary PG ITE programmes now offering a similar module approach to delivery (contextualised in the phase the trainee is training to teach within). All trainees have two level 7 assignments – one research based, and one subject based. All trainees (PG Primary and Secondary) do two complementary placements with a digital portfolio created to support and evidence their development and Teachers' Standards progression. The Level 7 assignments provide 60 credits towards and MA Education/ Leadership in Education at UEL, should the trainee wish to continue their learning journey with us.

Our PG school-based curriculum consists of the expected 120 days in school across two complementary placements. Trainees are visited up to 4 times by UEL tutors, who will QA the experience and monitor trainee progress. As Teacher Educators we will also coach trainees forward where needed. All trainees have a school-based mentor and many schools run their own professional studies sessions to help contextualise the trainee's learning in that school. UEL offers mentor training throughout the academic year for new and old mentors within the UEL setting. Personalised training is offered to mentors who have trainees on placement which reflect the needs of the mentor. Mentor support is provided beyond the 'usual' mentor training expectations. RE mentors and new members of their departments are offered the opportunity to attend subject knowledge development workshops. These include opportunities to visit places of worship, develop understanding of areas commonly not taught on undergraduate programmes, such as Sikh Theology, and pose questions to panel members who represent a range of denominations from a religion. PE Mentors are given various CPD opportunities by our PE tutor (and these are very well attended and received). Many secondary subject mentors are given the opportunity for bespoke training sessions and are offered additional phone and email support between visits. The sharing of good practice in mentoring is encouraged and then disseminated. Mentors are given the opportunity to lead on campus sessions where suitable and are invited to gather to share thoughts about the development of the programme.