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**Topic Specific Subject Knowledge and Pedagogy in One Year Post Graduate Initial Teacher Training Courses**



# Interview schedule

# Thank you for completing the questionnaire asking about Topic Specific Subject Knowledge and Pedagogy in your PGCE course and for offering to be interviewed. I have it here with me now and may ask about some responses you made to it. (this goes in the contact email too) This part of the project, funded by the Wellcome Trust, is to find out about your views on and experience of the variety of ways in which trainee teachers are supported in accessing science subject knowledge and pedagogy (approaches to teaching and learning that subject knowledge) both in the university/college and school based elements of the PGCE course.

# As I mentioned in my email, you have the right to withdraw at any point in the interview, or to pass on any question that is asked. There are no right or wrong answers, and your confidentiality is assured. You will NOT be identified NOR will any information be attributed to you in any reporting of the data.

# The interview should take about 30 minutes and is focussed on 4 aspects that will take a maximum of 8 minutes each. Is it Ok to record the interview as it will take less time that way than if I have to keep pausing to make a note of what you have said? The recording will be securely stored at the university and deleted in February 2011.

**Background and experience of trainee teacher/NQT. (Settling and contextualising)**

* Can you tell me a bit about (yourself not needed – already know a bit from q’aire) the school you have been appointed to as an NQT?
  + - * School type/appointed as science or B,C,P/permanent or fixed term, full or part time
      * Does it match the sort of school that you hoped to be appointed to?/is it a school practice school?
      * Have you visited the school since the end of PGCE course?/content purpose of that visit?/use of CEDP?/match of subject of induction tutor? Is IT a scientist?
      * Details of timetable for the next year (balance of subjects, years, abilities)/how does this match to your expertise and experience to date?/how do you feel about your timetable?/issues or concerns about timetable
      * Link to CPD in NQT year response to questionnaire – any changes in focus?
* Looking back at your PGCE course
  + What elements of the job of a teacher do you think the PGCE course has prepared you well for?
  + Are there aspects/content which with hindsight you think it might have included which were missing or on which there might have been a larger focus? /were there aspects on which thee was too much focus?
* Did the course have any expectations of your science subject knowledge prior to joining the course?
  + Were these explored at interview? Format/outcome
  + Pre-course reading?
  + Subject enhancement courses (2, 24, 36 week)/ for those who have attended them views as to value and methods that they found useful.

**Auditing subject knowledge (and pedagogy)**

* Did you know which areas were weak/strong? How did you work out which areas?
* Can you tell me about the auditing of subject knowledge you carried out?
  + What sort of format? (tick box, level of confidence, based on what criteria)
* When/how often were you required to audit?
* When completed what did you do with it?
  + - Role of the university tutor in this during university /school based phases of the course?
    - Role of the mentor in the process?
    - Personal role? How do you go about self study?
    - Role of peers (if any)? Particularly if peer support identified from documentation.
    - How effective are peer led sessions on SKP compared to university tutor led sessions?
    - Influence on confidence?
    - How useful is the audit process?

## School-based training

* When you plan a lesson on school practice, at what point do you ensure that you understand the **science subject knowledge** yourself?
  + How do you go about this? Is it different for a biology/physics (select to match interviewee) topic?
  + Are the mentor/other science teachers involved in supporting you in this process?
  + Have sessions taught in university contributed to this **science subject knowledge**? How? Did they cover the areas you wanted to cover?
* When you plan a lesson on school practice, at what point do you ensure that you understand the **pedagogy/how best to teach and learn** that topic?
  + How do you go about this? Is it different for a biology/physics (select to match interviewee) topic?
  + Are the mentor/other science teachers involved in supporting you in this process?
  + Have sessions taught in university contributed to this **pedagogy**? How? Did they cover the areas you wanted to cover?
* Can you tell me about the formal meetings with your mentor?
  + Frequency/length/**content** (general as well as SKP focus)**/**structure/record?
  + Place of subject knowledge and topic specific pedagogy within this meeting?
* What **informal** support have you used/accessed for developing your subject knowledge and pedagogy?
  + University or school based resources
  + How much do *informal* discussions/observations with teachers on tp help with developing sk compared with formal school based sessions/mentor meetings/university taught sessions?
* What use do you make of the **formal** support have you used/accessed for developing your subject knowledge and pedagogy?
  + What advice would you give to mentors/other teachers about the most effective ways of supporting trainee teachers/PGCE students in developing SKP?

**University-based training**

One purpose of the university-based training of a PGCE course may be to support beginning teachers in their science subject knowledge and pedagogy.

* Can you tell me about the way in which your course has approached these purposes?
* If no, use session from course documents or session commented on in questionnaire response as a reminder /focus for the question.
* Where formal university assignments cover SKP, do they improve your confidence?
* What have you found to be the most effective teaching /learning methods used in university-based work for finding out more about subject knowledge and pedagogy?
  + - * If not clear ask about lecture, demo student or tutor, workshop, peer involvement as in mixed groups.
      * Probe more the session reported in the questionnaire to get details of activities. How would you do it differently?
      * What advice would you give to university tutors about the most effective ways of supporting trainee teachers/PGCE students in developing SKP?

## Overall Reflections

* What do you think is the ideal way to learn science subject knowledge?
* What do you think is the ideal way to learn about how best to teach the key ideas and concepts in science?
* Are there any other comments that you would like to make on the formal and informal university/college and school based SKP support given during the training year?
  + What aspects of the **science subject** **content** are most useful and valued by trainee teachers
  + What **methods of teaching and learning** about SKP are most useful and valued by you.

## Impact on your subject knowledge and pedagogy

* Can you think of any concrete examples of ways that you found particularly helpful in which your **mentor/teachers in school** helped you access the subject knowledge? (didactic/give a reference/set them a task?)
* Can you suggest ways of better supporting trainee science teachers in accessing subject knowledge and pedagogy?

**Many thanks for your time today.**