

Summary of the analysis of ITT in Wales in relation to international quality benchmarks

International quality benchmark	Finding in relation to Wales
<p>1. A clear regulatory framework.</p> <p>Successful systems tend to have a clear legislative framework that sets out, <i>inter alia</i>, teacher standards at entry to the profession, ITT requirements in terms of curriculum coverage, programme types, programme arrangements and details such as course length and time in schools.</p>	<p>In Wales, the regulatory framework is sound. There is a clear set of standards and accreditation rules. The requirements for the delivery of ITT in terms of programme types, curriculum requirements, programme length and course length and time in school are explicit.</p> <p>Further improvements can be made, for example in better alignment of the standards for teachers at different stages in their career, to clarify progression.</p>
<p>2. 'Sector leadership' that is organised, well-connected and consultative</p> <p>Successful systems are distinctive in that ITT is a clear and immediate focus for those in charge of the school service. The character and particular demands of ITT are understood by leading policy-makers. When reform is considered, across the school system, the role and contribution of ITT is addressed. Discussion and consultation takes place, to ensure that reforms are properly aligned and all take part.</p>	<p>In Wales, this is an area where improvements can be made by ensuring that ITT is positively embedded within the school reform agenda.</p> <p>It will be important to consider how the Welsh Government proactively engage ITT providers in developing a system that is agile and able to support policy developments.</p>

<p>3. Strong providers (or a single strong provider) who are well-led locally</p> <p>The foundations of good ITT are always the providers. In Finland, there is a strong developed body of teacher expertise in teacher education that has developed over many years.</p> <p>Consistency is the biggest problem. ITT is a complex business and, to be successful, a provider is required to deliver well across many different subjects, specialisms and age groups. There are additional challenges due to the requirement to organise training in schools as well as in the host institutions.</p>	<p>ITT in Wales falls short of this high benchmark. There are problems that require improvement in management and quality assurance to ensure that programme implementation in the Centres has a higher fidelity and reliability.</p> <p>More could be done to recognise the critical role of senior leaders within each institution to ensure success. This will ensure effective delivery and a solution focussed approach. Further work is needed to support strong and effective partnership working which understands and works sympathetically with all partners, including schools.</p>
<p>4. Strong training and pedagogic models that permeate all programmes</p> <p>It is striking in successful systems that there is a continuous dialogue – if not debate – about the training approach that they adopt and there is usually a programme of evaluation and research that is constantly striving to question and improve the approach. Similarly, provision is at its best when schools and ITT providers share a teaching approach – that is appropriate to teaching, say, the early years, upper primary children, or subjects such as science and history. By working these models out, schools and providers combine to ensure that trainees meet common expectations and receive complementary support.</p>	<p>There is too little evidence that a discussion and critique of what and which training models should be in use within ITT Centres.</p> <p>In the current reform agenda within classrooms in Wales that are being introduced at an increased pace, this is a significant weakness. It is vital therefore that ITT Centres have a clear vision of the classroom strategies and approaches that are being used which they can communicate to schools.</p>

<p>5. An approach based on ‘practical theory’ involving high levels of school practice</p> <p>The modern shift to more school-based preparation in ITT is worldwide. All the most developed ITT models integrate educational theory, subject and pedagogic elements, with school practice.</p>	<p>This is a notable strength. Providers introduce trainees to school experience quickly which is welcomed. It is in schools that the trainees make sense of all that they are learning and this part of the course is held in high regard.</p>
<p>6. Subject and specialist strengths in the tutors and faculty</p> <p>Subject knowledge and what is called content pedagogic knowledge (knowing what difficulties students have learning specific material and knowing how to teach accordingly) are essential components of the best ITT programmes.</p>	<p>In the design of ITT provision, this is a relatively strong feature because the ITT requirements are well balanced.</p> <p>However providers suggest there are some difficulties recruiting tutors in priority recruitment subject areas and more needs to be done to ensure that Wales consistently attracts the very best educators into the system.</p>
<p>7. A clear framework for ‘early professional development’ that runs across ITT, induction and into the early years of a teacher’s career</p> <p>Successful systems are looking to integrate ITT provision with induction and professional development through the early years of a teacher’s career. In some countries, standards are written for entry to ITT, for successful progression to QTS, for</p>	<p>In Wales, there is a progressive framework in place which covers the requirements as set out in best practice. The introduction of the new Masters in Educational Practice (MEP) is beneficial to support such early career development.</p>

<p>completion of the induction year and for progress to an experienced or advanced teacher status. Even where this is not the case, successful countries are beginning to address the question of ensuring that all trainees get more consistent support through their early career.</p>	<p>Further work needs to be undertaken in Wales to consider a further set of comprehensive career standards which would complement the introduction of the MEP</p>
<p>8. Research that is aligned to the ITT models and practice, helping to shape and re-shape approaches over time.</p> <p>Research plays an important part in successful ITT systems. In Singapore, teachers are introduced to research methods and the National Institute of Education there is a prestigious educational research centre in its own right. In Finland, trainees take a very active research role and learn how to conduct learning-related inquiries so that they can carry this expertise into their teaching career.</p>	<p>The connection between ITT and research needs to be strengthened and a research culture encouraged. Wales need to learn from and disseminate good practice in this area.</p>
<p>9. A high status profession that attracts top graduates</p> <p>It is the goal of all IIT sectors to attract high-calibre candidates into a high status profession.</p>	<p>Most ITT provision attracts sufficient candidates to fill most programmes. Financial incentives play an important part in helping to fill priority recruitment subject courses. Consistently attracting graduates of the highest calibre is the major challenge for Wales.</p>

<p>10. Schools working in long-term partnerships with higher education providers, using the same pedagogic models</p> <p>Successful ITT systems ensure that schools work very closely with higher education providers, to ensure that trainees learn to teach in an environment where theory and practice are integrated well and where new teachers receive consistent messages and are given consistent support.</p>	<p>In Wales as in other countries, where ITT is devolved to providers serving different regions, the success of ITT is strongly affected by the quality of school partnerships. Strong and effective partnerships need good leadership where there is clarity about responsibilities, training expectations and accountability.</p>
<p>11. A strong culture, and practice, of continuous professional development in the schools</p> <p>ITT is not the only part of professional development. Schools that have strong CPD practices and traditions generally find it easier to absorb trainees and to support their learning and assessment.</p>	<p>In Wales, a great deal more can be done to strengthen schools' professional development (PD) provision. As in other countries, including Finland, PD is variable in quality and take-up. Many within the profession are proactive and take responsibility for their own continuous learning. However more needs to be done to ensure that high-quality Practice Review and Development (PRD) is custom and practice for all in the sector.</p>
<p>12. Accountability for all ITT providers, collectively and individually</p> <p>In good ITT systems, providers are held to account for their quality. That may, as in Singapore, be through a specific</p>	<p>Estyn has developed a good model of accountability for the sector. Provision is inspected independently and objective</p>

<p>evaluation (or inspection) regime or accountability may be exercised, as in Finland, through the commitment each teacher gives to evaluating their practice and improving it.</p>	<p>judgments are published in open reports.</p>
<p>13. The availability of good data that help providers evaluate performance and track their own progress over time</p> <p>The availability of good data is a further feature of most good school systems. Data help to make performance – and strengths and weaknesses – more visible. They enable managers to investigate trends and to track improvements. They aid accountability.</p>	<p>In Wales, ITT providers are beginning to generate more data that will allow them to evaluate different training approaches and routes that will allow them to track different students' progress. This will also allow them to investigate the contribution of specific tutors and schools and to consider improvements as necessary in terms of Personal Development and discussing areas for action with schools.</p>
<p>14. A relentless orientation to improve, continuously, all ITT programmes and practices</p> <p>The most successful ITT systems are highly ambitious. It is significant that high performing countries in comparative educational studies have often elected to undertake improvements and sustain initiatives over a significant period of time. They have sought quick gains, of course, but they have also attempted to establish habits – and coalitions – that increase their long-term capability.</p>	<p>Many of those working in ITT providers in Wales are ambitious to improve. Leadership and management within the ITT Centres and HEIs could do more to drive the pace of reform.</p>