

**'Singing from the same hymn-sheet':
Exploring school-based mentors' perceptions
of the role of HEI subject tutors in ITE
partnerships**

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Victoria Crooks*, Laura London**, Helen Snelson***

*University of Nottingham, **University of East Anglia, ***University of York

Abstract

Following a decade of shift towards more school-led or school-centred initial teacher training it is time to assess the impact of this change on the roles of mentors and tutors in university based initial teacher education (ITE) partnerships. This paper therefore elicited the perceptions of school-based mentors' contributions to the education of training teachers when working with a higher education institution (HEI) ITE partnership. During 2018/19, school-based secondary history mentors working with three university providers offering Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and School Direct (SD) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) qualifications, were asked how they perceived the expertise brought to the role of teacher-educator when working in partnership with a university subject-tutor. Many school-based mentors involved in the study worked with a variety of training providers and routes, and university subject-tutors and school-based mentors were understood to have purposeful roles to play, bringing distinct and complementary expertise to a collaborative ITE partnership. The study identifies advantages in HEI ITE partnerships that could be lost if an understanding of the distinct contributions of the school-based mentor and university subject-tutor are not recognised. It offers suggestions as to how these advantages might be maximised to strengthen the quality of subject-specific mentoring in these partnership contexts.

Keywords

Teacher education; ITE; HEI; partnership; mentor; collaboration; subject specificity.

Research background

Following a decade of movement towards school-centred Initial Teacher Education (ITE), this small-scale project elicited the perceptions of school-based mentors (SBMs) about SBM and university (HEI) subject-tutor (UST) contributions to ITE partnerships.

Since 2010, Department for Education (DfE) policy changes regarding ITE provision in England have led to a decreasing role for HEIs and a shift towards school-led ITE (Allen et al., 2016). In 2011/12, 80% of ITE places were allocated to HEIs leading partnerships with local schools (Universities UK, 2014). By 2018/19 the number was 47%, with the remaining 53% shared between School-Centred ITE (SCITT) (14%), School Direct (SD) (35%) and Teach First (4%) (DfE, 2018, 4).

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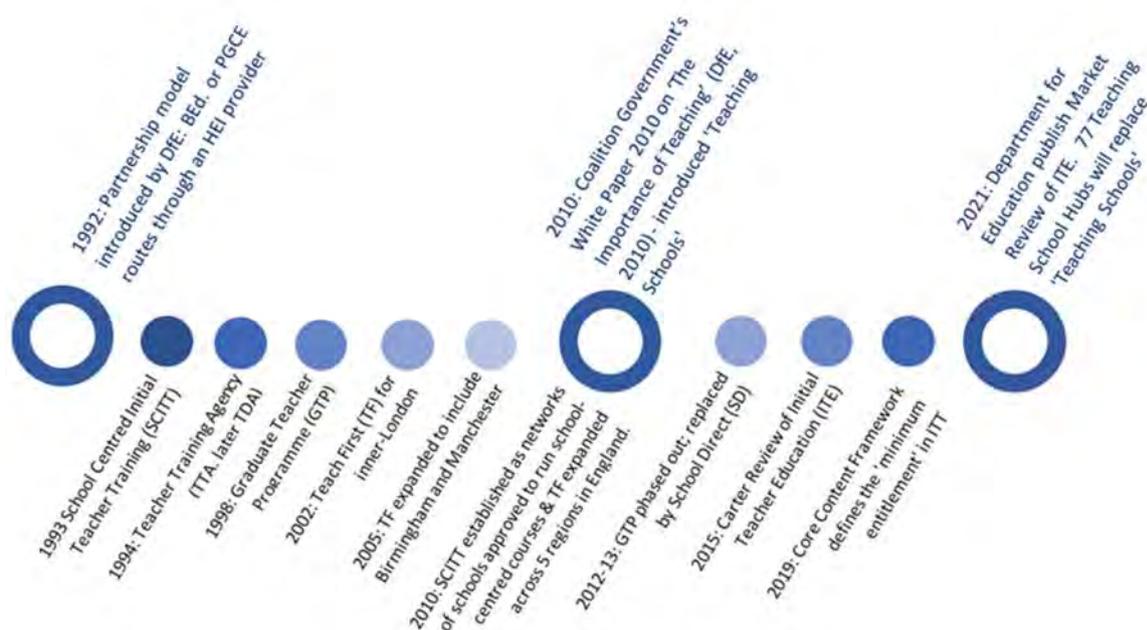


Figure 1. The development of ITE routes since 1992.

This changing landscape [Figure 1.] has repositioned HEI provision; as Whiting (2019, 48) states ‘any description of ITE as being *either* ‘HEI-led’ or ‘school-led’ grossly simplifies a complex reality’. HEIs support a range of relationships with SD providers, providing academic qualifications to SCITTs and partnering with Teach First; recent DfE figures have shown HEIs are still significantly involved in the training of 75% of teachers (2021, 54). Yet these changes have been criticised for jeopardising some of the best HEI practice developed since the 1990s (Whitty, 2014). Some HEI providers closed courses and others underwent a period of such uncertainty that course development was hindered. More recently there has been a significant refocus of school inspection upon the importance of curriculum and knowledge (DfE, 2019b, Ofsted, 2021) and concern has also been expressed at the way pedagogical content knowledge development has been limited by placing it in a specific school setting rather than within HEIs (Brown et al, 2016). The DfE (2019) has also recognised the role of HEIs (the largest, most experienced providers) in meeting the challenges set out in their recruitment and retention strategy. COVID-19 induced suspension of school-based practice for trainees has challenged training providers’ capacity to support trainee teachers during this period; la Velle et al. (2020, 12) found that ‘English HEI providers of ITE responded positively and creatively to protect and encourage their trainees’ to achieve QTS in an environment of continued training and support.’ However, the developments of the ITT Market Review (DfE, 2021) have reintroduced uncertainty around the role of HEIs in ITE, as attempts to restructure the sector through a new accreditation process have been interpreted as a further attempt to control, and potentially marginalise, HEI involvement in teacher training (UCET, 2021).

Since 2010, the three institutions involved in the study have maintained ITE provision in the form of a master’s level PGCE and forged partnerships with SD providers. Both PGCE and SD trainees are supported by a SBM, who supports them in developing their practice in the school placement context, and a UST providing specific curriculum sessions in university, one-to-one professional development support (including lesson observation) and guiding master’s level work. The UST also leads a subject partnership of SBMs, supporting the latter’s ITE role and providing subject-specific continuing professional development (CPD). Around two-thirds of these SBMs are employed in schools which

regularly work with different models of ITE provision alongside their involvement with the HEI partnership.

It is against this turbulent background that history SBMs, involved in ITE partnership with the three HEI providers, were asked about their perceptions of the contributions made by SBMs and USTs to ITE. The study identifies opportunities for development to strengthen the quality of mentoring in these partnerships.

Context

Models of HEI-school ITE partnership

The nature of HEI-school partnerships was extensively researched in the years 1992-2010 (Furlong et al., 2000; Pendry et al., 1998; Smith et al., 2006). In the early 1980s HEIs acted with relative autonomy. Routes into teaching were typically the one-year PGCE or four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree, with course content defined by the HEI. Since the 1980s central government has increasingly tightened control of ITE in England (Furlong, 1992), with the Teacher Training Agency established in 1994 to create common standards and procedures across training providers. Hagger and McIntyre (2006) noted, in their survey of ITE in England, that by the 1980s inspection and research evidence was finding against HEI-centred ITE models. An HMI report found that "nearly one in four [beginning teachers] are in some respects poorly equipped with the skills needed for teaching" (DES, 1982:1). As Robinson (2004) described, by the end of the decade a model of ITE with most time devoted to school placements was being extensively theorised. Theoretical knowledge, it was argued, could not be easily interpreted by new teachers into effective classroom practice, unless they were specifically supported to do so by staff in school placements working in partnership with an HEI.

By the beginning of the 1990s, commentators agreed that closer partnerships were needed between schools and universities (Furlong, 1992). Research demonstrated the importance of schools and classroom teachers providing 'direct experience' and university tutors' providing underpinning 'indirect experience' of teaching principles and relevant theory (Furlong, 2000:14). Partnerships between HEIs and schools already existed in some parts of the country (Whitehead et al., 2000), when in 1992 the DfE required ITE in England to be primarily school-based learning in partnership with HEIs. Hagger and McIntyre argue that this whole country shift was not well-resourced and was predicated on the view that learning to classroom teach was a 'fairly straight forward business' (2006:12). Nevertheless, schools assumed greater ownership over ITE provision, and SBMs' judgement of trainees was given increased weight. In addition, the school-based role of professional tutor was expanded, as advocated by McIntyre et. al. (1994). Despite the lack of resourcing, the shift in the training model was widely regarded as well-implemented by HEIs with positive impact. By the mid-1990s, high degrees of satisfaction were being reported by trainees, newly qualified teachers, SBMs and head-teachers (Furlong et al, 2000). Ofsted concurred with this, finding 'the majority of secondary ITT courses inspected had maintained or improved their previous good quality.' (2002: 61).

The Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) projects of the early 1990s provided an evidence-base upon which to develop ITE that achieved these high levels of satisfaction. They identified different types of partnership, with Furlong et al. going on to describe these as the 'collaborative' and the 'complementary' ideal-typical models of partnership at each end of a continuum (Furlong et al., 2000:77).

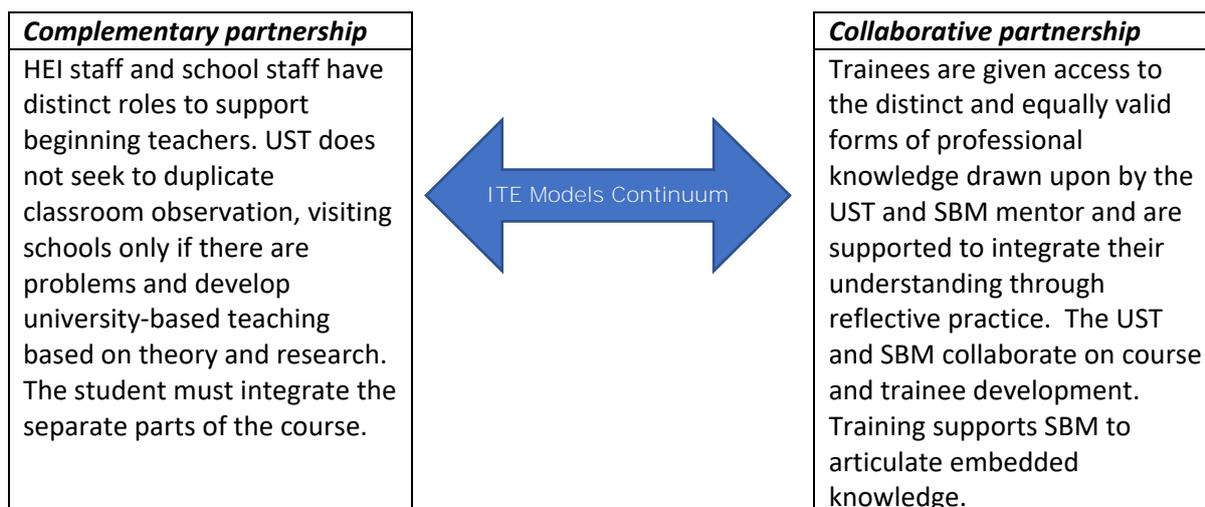


Figure 2. Summarised MOTE models of partnership described in Furlong et al. (2000, 77- 79).

The MOTE project did not suggest that all aspects of a course's provision would neatly fit within one model, but the models nevertheless continue to provide a useful framework for analysing practice.

The impact of policy and wider development upon partnership models

In the early 2000s, Furlong et al. (2000) and Smith et al. (2006) identified a tendency for HEIs to develop HEI-led models, rather than collaborative partnerships, to ensure a continuing role for themselves within ITE. Smith et al. (2006:161) argued that moving beyond an HEI-led to a collaborative model would 'require very major shifts in the attitudes of school staff, and in the level of resource commitment.' In the years post 2006, the potential for the development of collaborative partnerships became even less favourable, as the policy context in England increasingly sought to shift the balance of training routes towards school-centred provision (DfE, 2010).

However, it is possible that, in addition to a shift in policy emphasis, other developments have also blurred the distinction between the forms of professional knowledge of USTs and SBMs. In her study of the Oxford Internship programme, Burn (2006) found that SBMs and USTs, while drawing knowledge from contrasting sources, took a common approach in terms of purpose and pedagogical strategies used to support trainees. Indeed, initiatives such as the development of Research Schools, aimed at embedding evidence-based practice in schools and enabling schools and teachers to innovate and evaluate the impact of innovation¹, and the increase in Master's degree participation amongst serving teachers, have both contributed to developing the research informed practice of teachers in schools. Additionally, subject organisations, such as the Historical Association, support lively subject communities in which full-time teachers and academics work together to advance subject substantive and pedagogical knowledge for teaching². More recently, these subject communities have been supported by influential ideas, significantly that of 'powerful knowledge' asserted as 'knowledge that draws on the work of communities of specialists' (Young, 2014:9). Expert SBMs have knowledge that should not be narrowly defined as school-based practice knowledge and are able to articulate 'professional knowledge in the practice context in ways that facilitate student teacher learning about their practice, the rationale underlying it and how to improve it.' (Timperley, 2010:122). Also, many HEIs employ experienced classroom teachers, rather than research academics, as USTs. The three institutions in which the authors are employed have sustained and successful experience of classroom teaching as an essential requirement of the person specification for the UST

¹ <https://researchschool.org.uk/about/our-aims/>

² <https://www.history.org.uk/>

role. While postholders are also expected to be research-informed and to have experience beyond teaching in a specific setting, this means that there is considerable overlap in the working experience of USTs and SBMs. Consequently, partnership working in this context might be best expressed as reflective of a community of professional peers.

Research questions

During the 2010s the authors' HEI institutions experienced uncertainty over allocation of ITE training places, fluctuations in applications and poor retention of staff in some partnership schools; issues that have made partnership development more difficult. It was not certain that there would be a continuing role for HEIs in ITE. HEIs were allocated a declining proportion of training places and Nick Gibb (former Minister of State, DfE) and Michael Gove (then Secretary of State for Education) were severely critical of what they saw as over-theoretical HEI-led training (Gibb, 2014, Gove, 2012) with both arguing for school-based training. It is therefore timely to examine SBM perceptions of partnership-working for future planning purposes.

The following research questions were explored:

- What do SBMs perceive to be similar about the expertise brought by SBM and UST to the role of teacher educator?
- What do SBMs perceive to be unique about the expertise the SBM and UST bring to the role of teacher educator?
- How do SBMs understand the priorities for teacher education within the partnership?
- How do SBMs perceive the nature of their own professional knowledge and that of the UST?

Methodology and methods

Sample Frame

In 2018-19, 61 SBMs were working in partnership with the Universities of East Anglia, Nottingham and York Secondary History PGCE and PGCE School Direct (SD) programmes. All history SBMs attending mentor development training at their partnership HEI during the second teaching practice placement (n=41) were surveyed. Of those mentors in attendance 32 unique participants completed a questionnaire, that is 78% of the 41 attendees at the meeting. (Denscombe, 2014). The volunteer sample in each HEI included SBMs with a range of experience working within the partnership (Figure 3.). It also included SBMs who were experienced in supporting beginning teachers via other ITE routes.

Experience of SBM in working with the HEI ITE partnership	UEA	UoN	UoY
<3 years	0	4	7
>3 years <10years	4	7	4
>10 years	2	1	3
Total	6	12	14

Figure 3. Experience of SBMs working with the HEI ITE partnership.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was trialled with a small sample of SBMs, resulting in some minor restructuring of the questionnaire grid for clarity, before implementation with the study participants during the second main teaching practice placement. The exact timing varied due to the different rhythms of the SBM development meetings across the three HEIs.

Ethics

Ethical approval for this cross-centre research was granted separately by all three HEI institutions involved in the study. The research was designed and carried out following the ethics policies of all three Universities and the ethical guidelines published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011). Participants were included only once informed consent had been gained, with anonymity being guaranteed as far as possible as responses are linked to their partnership institution.

Data Collection

SBMs were asked to complete an anonymous tabular/diagrammatic questionnaire (Figure 4.) to capture their perceptions of the complementary and unique roles and priorities of USTs and SBMs. The open-ended structure of the questionnaire allowed participants to express their perceptions in their own words (Bell, 2010). SBMs could give as many responses as they wished. SBM responses were analysed using a qualitative content analysis methodology (Gläser-Zikuda et. al., 2020), whereby inferences were made by 'identifying specified characteristics of messages' (Holsti, 1969:14) and responses were independently coded to confirm categorisation for the 'types' of responses given to the open-ended questions. The data from each participant across the three HEIs and each comment from those participants were coded to contribute to the categorised data sets, allowing for the proportional dominance of each category of participant perceptions to be reflected.

SBM Questionnaire

Please consider how you see your role as the SBM and the role of the UST combining in partnership to develop and train beginning history teachers.
Record your thoughts in the grid below.

	What tutor brings as the HEI Teacher Educator	What mentor brings as the School-Based Teacher Educator
Similar expertise in the role of Teacher Educator		
Unique expertise in the role of Teacher Educator		
Perceptions of priorities for emphasis in the training year		

Figure 4. Questionnaire used with SBMs to explore their perceptions of PGCE partnership working.

Limitations

This is a small-scale study with a voluntary sample (n=32) drawn from attendees at secondary history SBM development training to which the full cohort (n=61) had been invited. Therefore, care must be taken when generalising from its conclusions due to the small sample size based in one phase and subject area.

The non-random nature of this sampling technique may mean that participants did not represent the full range of experience in the mentor community. One clear limitation was that the full cohort of SBMs was unable to attend due to their school commitments. However, as the sample included SBMs with a range of mentoring experience, service length and experiences working through more than one ITE route across the three HEI providers, it was deemed an appropriate method for sampling in this small study seeking to make inferences in common perceptions held by SBMs involved in the training of beginning teachers (Etikan et al., 2016).

Findings

SBM responses showed a high level of commonality, with similar themes emerging across all three HEI partnerships. The responses (often more than one per mentor) emphasised the complementary roles of SBM and UST as a collaborative partnership.

What do SBMs perceive to be similar about the expertise brought by SBM and UST to the role of teacher educator?

Four key themes emerged in SBM responses to this question which revealed a strong sense of common background, purpose and collaborative partnership to achieve the best outcomes for beginning teachers.

- Qualifications and qualities of SBMs and USTs: 37 responses described both SBMs and USTs as very knowledgeable about history and history teaching, with a depth of knowledge of concepts and strong experience, stating that both bring a “high level of subject expertise” (Y12) and “experience of teaching and a focus on the subject specialism” (UEA2).
- Collaboration between USTs and SBMs to structure the PGCE training: 27 responses focused on structuring of support for the beginning teacher across the training year and into their first posts. For example, supporting, challenging and stretching beginning teachers to enable them to develop professionalism. One SBM commented that within their partnership there is a “collaborative approach between university and school to provide different perspectives on the same issues to help develop solutions for trainees.” (Y9) Another SBM explored this same idea with a specific example, commenting that the “tutor and mentor can bounce off each other during feedback to give a unique perspective ... they allow each other to stretch the student teacher. However, this can be different perspectives, one day to day, one academic/pedagogy.” (N8)
- Understanding how to ‘create’ new history teachers: 12 responses focused on SBMs and USTs’ shared “desire to shape the future generation of teachers” (N11) and exemplified how this was embodied in their approach, for example by modelling passion for the subject and the teaching of it, focusing on the significance of history teaching and encouraging career long professional learning.
- Working together to help beginning teachers to learn how to teach: 11 responses described USTs and SBMs as guiding beginning teachers in “using school behaviour policy and routines”

(UEA6) and supporting them in their understanding of the pedagogy of history to learn about the “structures of lesson planning and sequencing lessons” (Y4).

It was clear from the strength and frequency of responses to this question that SBMs perceived themselves to be embedded in a ‘collaborative partnership model’ (Furlong et. al., 2002) where the SBM and UST “work together to provide a foundation of educational pedagogy and an understanding of expectations in a real school” (UEA4). Indeed, further responses to these questions also revealed a strong recognition that much of this work is carried out in the same space, for example in joint feedback to the trainee following post lesson observation. For example, one SBM commented that they “always worked closely” with the UST and that their “roles are pretty in sync with each other. We sing from the same hymn sheet” (N8). These findings were particularly interesting as this sample, although small, did not constitute a selective, consultative group, or ‘inner circle’ of SBMs, who may be expected to articulate this sort of thinking or sense of ‘loyalty’ in a purely HEI-led model.

What do SBMs perceive to be unique about the expertise the SBM and UST bring to the role of teacher educator?

When considering SBMs’ perceptions of the unique expertise of SBMs and USTs the data at the thematic categorisation level was less clear. However, within a number of sub-categories a distinction emerged which emphasised the distinct but complementary nature of SBMs’ focus on the specific/practical and USTs’ focus on the general/theoretical.

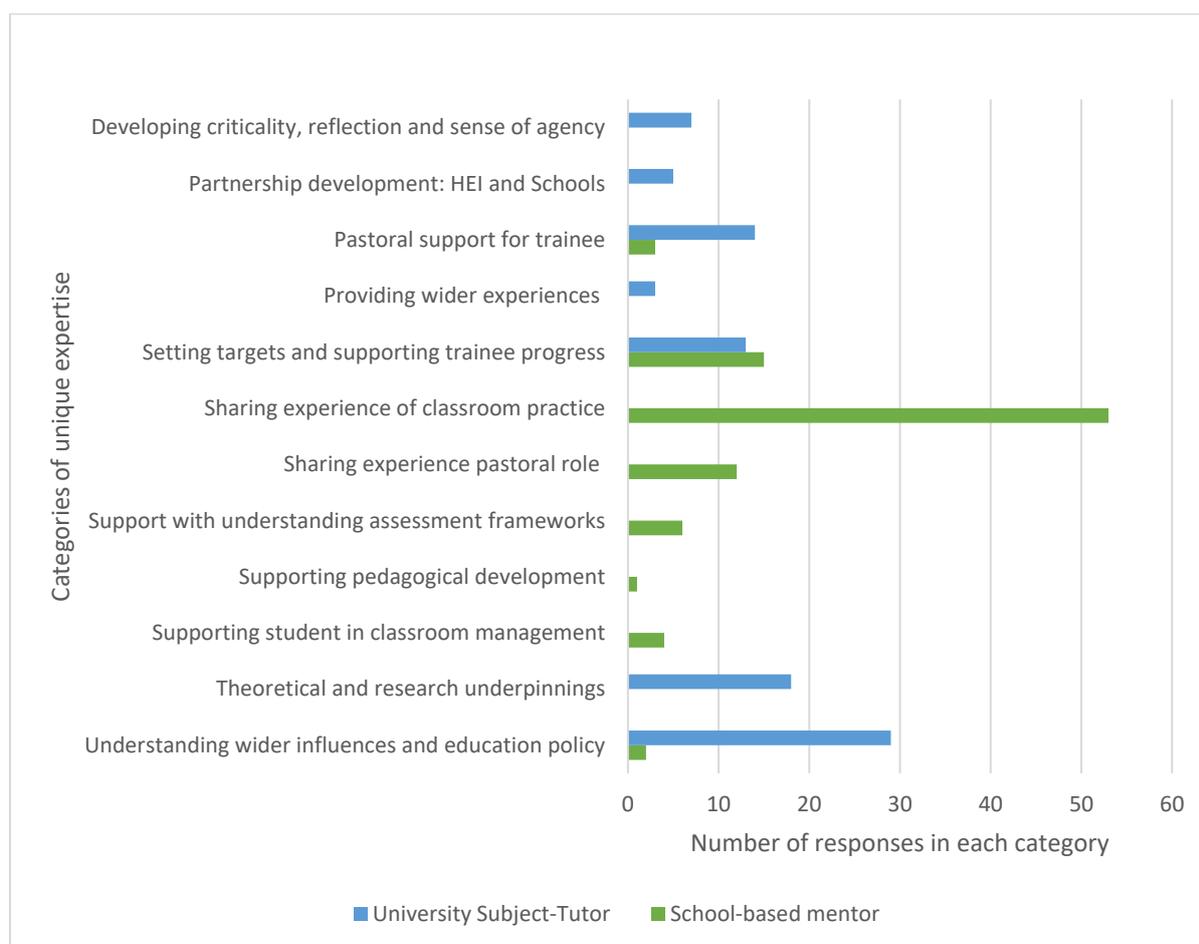


Figure 5. Categories emerging from SBM responses about their perception of the unique expertise of SBMs and USTs.

Trainee teacher 'progression' emerged as a common theme in 46 responses. Within this theme 29 responses suggested trainee progression was uniquely in the SBM domain, while 17 responses suggested this was a uniquely UST role. This appears, on the surface, to be contradictory. However, the specific responses reveal a clear divide in SBM perceptions. Responses showed that the SBM role is seen as focusing on the development of day-to-day classroom practice and a teacher persona, and the UST role is seen as taking an overview of trainee progress across all elements of the course, providing professional developmental support and pastoral care to ensure successful course completion.

More starkly 53 responses identified the sharing of specific school practice as unique to SBMs while no responses placed this in the UST domain. SBMs identified inducting and developing beginning teachers' "knowledge of the delivery of history within that school" (Y1). This unique SBM role included: understanding classroom practice with specific classes and students; pastoral care as organised in their school and managing workload and the application of specific assessment structures.

In contrast, the perceived UST unique expertise was in supporting beginning teachers to develop criticality, reflection and a sense of professional agency by providing beginning teachers with "up-to-date research in education and [an understanding of] how this impacts on classroom practice" (Y5) through "teaching theory and key thinkers ... academic studies that are relevant to now" (N3) and offering "their perspective on effective strategies from a range of different schools" (UEA4).

These findings support previous research by Burn et al (2007, 430) demonstrating the 'distinctive and complementary' nature of the two roles, with USTs perceived as providing critical distance from specific school contexts through 'academic' or propositional knowledge about effective teaching practices. SBM perceptions suggest that they see the USTs as being able to deploy practice knowledge, evidence from research and developmental thinking to enable trainees to develop as professionals who take an open, positively critical and criterion-based approach to all recommendations for practice, whatever their source.

How do SBMs understand the priorities for teacher education within the partnership?

SBMs were asked to distinguish between the priorities of USTs and SBMs during the PGCE year. A strong sense of a shared, collaborative endeavour once more emerged from this data, with comments asserting the distinct contributions of USTs and SBMs towards four complementary objectives.

The school and HEI working together to prioritise the development of the beginning teachers' classroom competencies and development as professionals emerged as a theme in 44 responses. These responses explored the idea that the SBM and UST are "a team with two sides, working together to create the whole experience" (Y3) and discussed the need for trainees to take the foundational learning of curriculum and pedagogical theory prioritised by the UST and embed it in practice through school experience with the SBM during placement, where the UST ensures "a strong pedagogical and academic foundation for learners... [SBM] helps provide the balance of how to practically teach" (N2).

21 responses, drawn from respondents in all three HEI-partnerships, identified the development of communities of peers and networks of history teachers to support breadth and depth of learning as important for their trainee teachers. These responses talked about "the importance of collaboration [to develop] appreciation of pedagogy and significance of teaching HISTORY" (N4).

The creation of independent-minded professionals who would stay in teaching for the long term was another priority that SBMs perceived was important for both parties in the partnership. 31 responses understood both SBMs and USTs as being united in their intention to support beginning teachers to understand the great demands of the role and to be prepared for them in order to produce

“committed and effective teachers who are supported in the long term” (UEA4). SBMs perceived they were engaged in a shared endeavour with the UST to help beginning teachers “understand the realities of the job and how to handle them” (N2) and to know that “it’s tough at the coal-face but as a vocation and a career [teaching] is totally amazing” (Y6).

A further priority which emerged convincingly from these responses was the fostering of beginning teachers’ criticality, reflection and agency. Of the 32 responses identifying this priority, 8 suggested it was more of a concern for SBMs, while 15 responses asserted this was mainly a priority for the UST. A strong sense of a shared, collaborative endeavour once more emerges from this data, with HEIs and schools having complementary and distinct contributions to make towards the same objectives in ITE.

How do SBMs perceive the nature of their own professional knowledge and that of the UST?

Overall, the evidence from this study suggests that SBM and UST have different but equally valid roles in teacher education; SBMs’ perceptions were aligned with previous research findings. SBMs saw themselves as providing direct experience of the craft of teaching (Furlong, 1988) and knowledge relating to classroom practice, the pastoral role, assessment and classroom management underpinned by rich knowledge of specific learners, which USTs cannot replicate. Yet it is precisely because of the highly contextualised nature of the expertise provided by the SBM, that the UST has an important role supporting beginning teachers to form their own professional judgements through critique and analytical reasoning to avoid replication without understanding (Burn et al., 2017).

Discussion

This small-scale study suggests that, despite the years of upheaval and uncertainty, there has been greater continuity than change in the way SBMs understand their role as teacher educators in relation to their UST counterparts. SBMs still perceive teacher training as a shared project with the common purpose of creating teachers who frame teaching as a professional endeavour (Winch et al., 2013). Working closely together, SBMs and USTs have shared roles to play to achieve the best outcomes for beginning teachers. SBMs and USTs were also perceived to bring different expertise to achieve this common purpose. This continuity is to be welcomed. Whitty (2014) found in his update of the topography of teacher education in 2010 that 90% of ITE provision was good or better. A 2019 DfE report on Ofsted inspections showed that 100% of HEI inspected providers had secondary ITE provision rated as good or outstanding (DfE, 2019b). Since 2021 a small number of inspections have taken place under the new inspection framework (2020). In this small sample outcomes have covered the full range of gradings, however, it remains too early in the process to draw any firm conclusions from this.

SBMs in the three contexts perceived themselves as contributing practice-based, context-specific perspectives which complemented UST understanding of schools, educational institutions, and education policy beyond a specific setting. USTs were recognised as having the greater role in developing beginning teachers’ sense of criticality, reflection and consequently agency. USTs were also perceived as offering subject substantive and pedagogical knowledge and expertise and pastoral support informed by the trainee’s development in a whole course context (figure 5). In a smaller number of responses USTs were also seen as having a leadership and co-ordination role to bind the partnership together. All this is, perhaps, because the UST has more time and opportunity to develop their expertise in these areas and to focus on ITE development, in contrast to SBMs whose first priority is rightly the progress of their pupils.

The findings are encouraging in the light of the renewed focus on curriculum and subject specialism in teaching (Spielman, 2018). The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2019) includes provision of subject-specific CPD as a measure for judgement of the effectiveness of schools’ leadership and management: ‘The practice and subject knowledge of staff are built up and improve over time’

(2019:44). USTs are well-placed to support SBMs in this endeavour. USTs can facilitate regional subject communities, utilising their connections within the locality, involvement in national subject communities and educational research to foster opportunities for CPD and growth in professional knowledge for their local schools. Two of several examples of local subject communities nurtured and sustained by local universities are in evidence in Bristol and in York, including work to support early career teachers (Hawkey and Snelson, 2019). Several initiatives are already underway in all the institutions participating in this study and future research will focus upon how being a history SBM with subject-specialist HEI provider support contributes to a teacher's ongoing CPD.

The main focus for this research has been to explore the way in which our own ITE partnerships are viewed by our SBM colleagues. The findings suggest that our curriculum delivery is perceived by SBMs as highly collaborative. However, in truly collaborative partnerships, trainee teachers take part in a continual process of dialectic critique with both SBMs and USTs, being supported by both to select, adapt and reflect upon more general theory in a specific context (Timperley, 2010). Few of the SBMs in the study perceived their expertise as developing criticality, reflection, and a sense of agency, yet beginning teachers spend most of their training year in school. This suggests that an area for development within each of our partnerships is working with SBMs to create opportunities to enable them to become more research informed. As Burn (2007, 463) states, this will mean recognising that 'combining research with teacher education...means asking mentors to adopt simultaneous roles as learners and teachers'; something that can only be done if they and their university partners fully recognise and plan for this learning as part of their roles. In truly collaborative partnerships, beginning teachers are part of a continual process of constructing new professional knowledge alongside university and school-based colleagues with distinct and complementary roles.

Conclusions

This study, whilst small scale and context-specific, indicates that partnerships have been developed with elements of the collaborative model and not an HEI-led model where SBMs are 'trained to deliver the competences of the course' (Furlong, 2000:118).

HEI PGCE course collaborative model development has been hindered by variations in numbers of course participants from year to year and emerging 'competition' from other training routes leading to instability in the SBM community. There has also been an erosion of the SBM role, in terms of time allocation given by schools to SBMs, due to pressures on school budgets. This research provides a 'snapshot' of an often-changing SBM community.

However, the data shows that SBMs in this study perceive the collaborative and complementary roles of the SBM and UST, unified by a common set of priorities, as creating positive outcomes for beginning teachers. While the challenges persist, it is important to remain optimistic and committed to truly collaborative partnership. Indeed, given that most schools now work across multiple models of ITE provision, harnessing the advantages of HEI partnership could benefit the broader ITE landscape. The Ofsted Framework (Ofsted, 2020), with its greater emphasis on subject-specific curricula, offers an opportunity to shape truly collaborative ITE learning partnerships as part of vibrant subject-communities. The following next steps have been identified to strengthen future PGCE partnership work and develop the SBM community:

- Sharing this work with SBMs to support a greater understanding of each other's collaborative and distinct roles in ITE.
- Using SBM development meetings to support SBMs to develop beginning teachers' criticality, reflection, and sense of professional agency.

- Identifying and describing how being a history ITE SBM with subject-specialist HEI support contributes to an established teacher's ongoing CPD.
- Developing our courses so that there are opportunities for school colleagues and HEI-based academic staff to work as communities of scholars of educational research.

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