INTRODUCTION
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CONTENT, ORGANIZATION AND UNDERPINNING APPROACH

This book has been written for beginning teachers who are preparing to teach in secondary schools. It covers a range of core professional studies which all graduate teachers need to address, whatever their subject or curriculum specialism. The impact of national government policy to raise educational standards in England, and the wider academic research that informs and underpins new approaches to teaching and learning, have both contributed to a continuing expansion of a curriculum for professional studies in most education courses.

The latest of these political initiatives is the Every Child Matters agenda, which requires multi-agency professionals, including all teachers, to work together to support children and young people. The remodelling of the workforce in teaching is also leading to new relationships between teachers and para-professionals, including teaching assistants, classroom assistants and other support staff within schools. Furthermore, there are many new approaches being deployed in schools and classrooms involving information communication and technology advances such as virtual learning environments and interactive whiteboards. In addition to such novel aspects, there are the important and traditional priorities for beginning teachers, such as knowing how to teach.

The organization of the book is as follows. Chapter 1 aims to develop your understanding of reflection as a critical activity, provides opportunities for focusing on core competences such as communication skills, and examines the relationship between ‘reflective practice’ and professional development.

Chapter 2 introduces you to theories of learning and explores the implications of these for your preparation for teaching and learning.

Chapter 3 considers the way learning and inclusive environments can be structured in secondary schools. It also explores how educational policy has shaped teaching, curriculum content and the qualifications framework, as well as some of the impacts of e learning.
Chapter 4 covers the many aspects of managing learning within classrooms (and other learning places) both in and out of school. It provides you with the chance to reflect upon the dynamics of classroom life and the ways in which you can influence learning through systematic planning and evaluation of your practice.

Chapter 5 focuses on key issues concerning monitoring, assessment, recording, reporting and accountability. It provides some of the theoretical background to assessment, the terminology you will need to use and provides ways for you to reflect on your early experiences of assessing your students.

In Chapter 6 the focus widens to consider the impacts on the education system, particularly in England, from the start of the twentieth century. It provides a chance for you to reflect on your own professional values and perspectives, for example on the many aspects of social exclusion and inclusion, and to consider the role you will wish to play as your teaching career develops.

Chapter 7 opens out a range of issues to do with the pastoral care and the many tutorial responsibilities of all teachers. It examines the links between pastoral tutoring and the academic and personal-social curricula and provides you with a chance to think critically about your own tutorial roles in the future.

Each chapter provides an academic approach to these same studies that teachers need to address in order to reach Master’s (M) level. While this book complements the separate subject studies that form part of all secondary initial teacher education (ITE) courses, each author in the writing team for this book is from a different subject specialist area and working on a secondary postgraduate certificate course. Each author has been able to bring to the separate chapters of this book some particular perspectives from their subject area. This should help you, also, to make the bridges or connections necessary for integrating your knowledge and understanding of both professional and subject studies.

We believe this book and the reflective approaches embedded within it, will find a place in the various routes for initial training, in induction and the early professional development of new teachers. It provides a flexible learning resource for use by beginning teachers in private self-study, when working in group seminars (tutor-led) at the university, when working with mentors during school placements, or in more informal groupings in twos or threes.

Teaching is a professional activity. In learning how to teach we need to explore three important questions in becoming a teacher:

- What do teachers do?
- What affects what they do?
- How do they do it?
However ‘knowing about teaching’ is much more than acquiring a set of skills and accomplishing technical expertise. It is about asking a further question:

- How do teachers improve their practice?

In exploring this question, beginning teachers have to exercise originality of thinking and critical judgement, use educational research strategies, draw on educational theories and develop professional values and practices to support professional learning and development. These are rooted in the several forms of ‘enquiry learning’.

When we ask the very important question, ‘What kind of teacher do we want to be?’ we have to recognize four core characteristics of teaching. The first is that teaching is an intellectual activity. This includes the ability to process knowledge and understanding, together with a capacity to communicate it effectively. A second characteristic is forging and maintaining effective personal interactions. A third area is the forming of ethical judgements. The fourth characteristic is the social significance of teaching. The book incorporates reading and activities and attempts to take account of all of these areas of teaching within each chapter.

Reflective practice as a dynamic developmental process in initial teacher education is at the heart of the book. We have incorporated a first chapter to explore what is meant by ‘the reflective practitioner’. Although reflective practice has become a standard in initial and continuing professional education and development, it is actually a state of mind as well as an educational approach for all professionals to examine both non-critical and critical incidents in our working lives. We present it as a pedagogical approach – one in which you can begin to learn through professional enquiry.

Reflective practice provides a way of examining your personal experiences in the workplace. Thus, it is psychologically useful but, more than this, it is situated within the wider political and social structures of education. Therefore we believe that, through reflective practice, you can be encouraged to examine the values that underpin all your practice in teaching.

This book should also help to raise a beginning teacher’s awareness of the particular role of their teacher-mentor. A mentor helps you to step ‘outside of the box’ of your job and personal circumstances, and look in at it together. Clutterbuck and Megginson describe this as ‘like standing in front of a mirror with someone else, who can help you see things about you that have become too familiar for you to notice’ (1999: 17). A mentor can contribute to your learning in a number of ways: as teacher, coach, encourager, supporter, enabler, role model or critical friend. A mentor should be able to offer: empathy and non-judgemental critique; to challenge your behaviour (not you); to challenge your
assumptions (not your intellect), to challenge your perceptions (not your judgement); and to challenge your values (but not your value). They should be able to help you evaluate the available evidence from your practice. Many of the activities in this book can involve other teachers and mentors with you and can stimulate the wider professional discussions that are so important in your early training.

**TERMINOLOGY**

We have adopted the term ‘beginning teacher’ to describe the trainee or student teacher, or new entrant to the profession, who is learning how to teach. We have therefore chosen to avoid the use of term ‘student teacher’ in order to distinguish clearly the term school ‘student’. The word ‘student’ in this book therefore refers always to the young person, pupil or child whom the beginning teachers will teach.

We have used the word ‘mentor’ in relation to the designated teacher in your own subject or curriculum area, who is likely to have been given a particular supporting and mentoring role in relation to you and your initial training in the school. In some cases the mentor may be the same person as the school ‘tutor’ and therefore have multiple roles in connection with your training and its assessment.

There is much jargon used in education and there is terminology that often has specialized meaning in educational settings and which differs from its everyday use. These are emboldened at their first appearance in the chapters. A glossary of key terms is provided at the end of the book to provide you with an extra referral point for important terminology.

**WAYS OF USING THE BOOK**

This book has been written in a such way that it should allow you to read and think more widely about education and teaching and to work with other beginning teachers and tutors in higher education institutions (HEIs) and in schools and colleges. You are encouraged to read the early parts of each chapter as an introduction to the seven professional areas of study. As you read further into each chapter you will find an extension to the area of study and the references to wider reading and associated activities for the most part will become more complex.

Reading and using a textbook can be a rather passive and lonely experience, with the expectation that you will assimilate all the ideas within it. We sincerely
hope that this will not be the case with this book. It has been written in a such way that will allow you to read and think more widely about education and teaching, and to work with other beginning teachers and tutors in higher education institutions and in schools and colleges. A wide variety of activities and links to web-based materials are embedded within each chapter. We hope these approaches will challenge and stimulate you to think for yourselves about teaching, and in ways that will provide you with opportunities for direct ‘conversations’ with yourself and with others.

**ITT STANDARDS FOR QTS**

We have provided on the website (www.sagepub.co.uk/secondary) a chart (Appendix) of the main Standards areas and an indication of where in the book you might find topics and tasks that relate to particular areas. The revised professional standards for teachers make explicit the level of critical thinking required for progression within the teaching profession.

**Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) M level**

Study at Master’s level requires a level of critical reflection which is not always achievable by the already packed programmes of most PGCE courses. This book should go a long way towards providing you with some independence in learning, particularly if you are embarking on this route. For example, it provides flexible materials and tasks so you can use your non-contact time effectively. Each chapter provides you with references to high-quality, current theoretical literature, some of which can be accessed through the online links. University libraries should have access to key texts as well as a range of e-journals. Your institution’s virtual learning environment (VLE) may also provide you with valuable opportunities for beginning teachers and tutors to share and develop ideas’ and to communicate with each other in discussion forums. The book can be used to assist and inform critical reflection in preparation for assessed units of work.

The range of tasks in each chapter of this book has been selected to provide explorations of topics at both H and M levels. All the tasks address general pedagogical issues. We have recognized the progression that will be needed to move towards M level. There is at least one substantive task which allows for a more in-depth ‘professional enquiry’ within each chapter. Tutors and teachers in both school-based work and taught sessions will have a role to play in helping you relate your M - level study to your work in schools, and thereby link theory, research and practice. The Master’s - level work in our book is
Reflective Teaching and Learning

integral to all elements of the general or professional part of a PGCE programme – it has not been conceived as a ‘bolt-on’ to the traditional PGCE course structure.

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REFERENCES