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24. Apr. 2025

Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together: The CaBan Initial Teacher Education Partnership

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we outline the philosophy and research foundations underpinning the development of CaBan – an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Partnership developed for the purpose of educating the teachers of tomorrow for North Wales. CaBan represents an ambitious 'learning partnership' of five partners consisting of regional schools, Bangor University, University of Chester, the regional school improvement service (GwE), and the Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact (CIEREI). Each partner plays a key role in fulfilling our ambitions to contribute to *Our National Mission* and achieve our vision of 'Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together.' At its core, the goal of CaBan is to support our new Associate Teachers (ATs) to become creative, inspiring and highly skilled teachers who will contribute to the delivery of *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (Welsh Government, 2015). In this paper we outline: (i) our basic vision and mission as a learning partnership; (ii) the evidence to support our strategic pedagogical position with respect to growing tomorrow's teachers; (iii) the crucial role of mentoring in the development of our ATs as critically reflective practitioners; (iv) how we integrate research as a fundamental element of all we do; (v) how our programme design is underpinned by the notion of professional enquiry

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and career long professional learning (vi) the specific modes of learning that help nurture ATs' sense of their 'teaching self'; and crucially (vii) the importance of Welsh culture and the Welsh language in education and the role the CaBan partnership has in building capacity to help realise Welsh Government's vision for a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Key words: Initial Teacher Education, learning partnership, mentoring, research, Welsh culture and language

Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together: The context of reform of ITE in Wales

Following a disappointing performance in the 2009 Program for International Student Assessments (OECD, 2010), Wales embarked on a journey of wholesale educational reform. Core to this journey was a vision to create a world-class education system for all citizens, where equal opportunities to fulfil potential would strengthen both individuals' and communities' capacity to contribute to economic growth and social cohesion. In 2013, Welsh Government invited the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to undertake a nationwide review of the current provision in Wales, which resulted in a comprehensive report – *Improving schools in Wales: an OECD perspective* (OECD, 2014). The OECD report highlighted the need to build 'professional capital' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012) with the aim of raising the status and professionalism of the teaching profession. They recommended additional reforms and improvement of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes and suggested the need for better leadership across the system nationally and stronger partnerships with high-performing schools. ITE needed to align closer with policy changes, and to this end, leaders in teacher education institutions recognised the need to work more closely and collaboratively across all tiers of the Welsh education system.

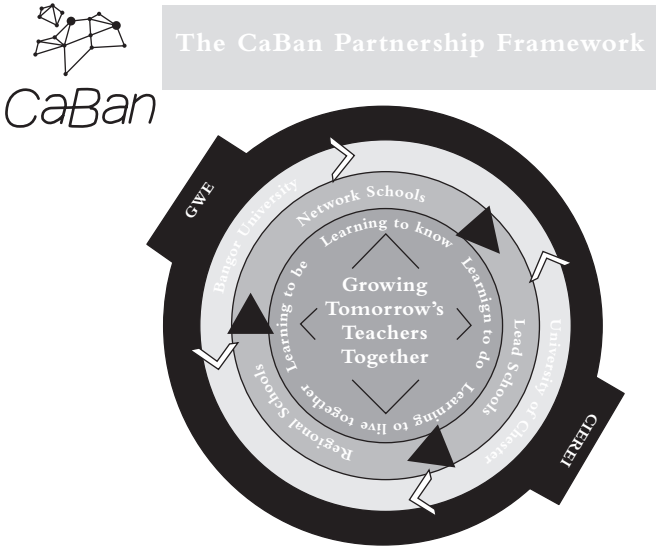
In 2012 – prior to the OECD reports, but concomitant with adopting a vision of a world-class education system for Wales – the Minister for Education and Skills in Wales instigated a review of ITE in Wales. This review, conducted by Tabberer (2013), recommended the appointment of an ITE Adviser for Wales, and in March 2014 Professor John Furlong of the University of Oxford took up that post. In the years following that appointment, a clear vision has been developed, and more recently

realised, as to what teacher education should look like, as outlined in *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (Furlong, 2015) and the subsequent Welsh Government circular, *Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2018).

At this time ITE in North and Mid-Wales was provided through a partnership between Bangor and Aberystwyth Universities, operating as the North and Mid Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training, alongside two additional Centres operating in South West Wales (South West Wales Centre for Teacher Education) and South East Wales (South Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training – SEWCTET). A series of inspections carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn 2012, 2013, 2015) highlighted concerns around the current state of ITE. From that point forward, the focus shifted towards a new national accreditation process informed by evidence from international best practice.

In response to these strategic developments, a partnership was formed between Bangor University and the University of Chester to work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop high quality ITE, bringing the relative strengths of both organisations together to provide a coherent and strong partnership to serve the disparate needs of the North Wales region. Drawing from excellence across the region, this new partnership – *CaBan* – comprises five strong partners: a number of Lead and Network schools; Bangor University; the University of Chester; GwE regional consortium; and the Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact (CIEREI) (see Figure 1). Each partner has a key role and a passion to deliver on the vision of enhancing the life chances of children and young people across North Wales. The name *CaBan* encompasses several meanings that speak to both the development of a strategic partnership of two Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and the vision and overall aim of the partnership. In English, *CaBan* forms a pseudo-acronym representing the long-term collaboration between the two institutions around the provision of teacher education in North Wales that stretches back 150 years (***Ca***er and ***Ban***gor). In Welsh, *CaBan* signifies the historical past of industrial Wales, where quarry and mine workers would gather at the 'CaBan' to share, discuss, and engage in wider debate – practices that are core to the mission of CaBan.

Figure 1: The CaBan Partnership Framework



Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together:
The CaBan vision for Initial Teacher Education

Central to the CaBan vision is the acknowledgement that effective professional learning is neither entirely theoretical nor entirely practical, but a fusion of the two (BERA/RSA, 2015). Research shows that student teachers often struggle to make the link between 'theoretical' and 'practical' learning as they move between school and university (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Raffo and Hall, 2006).

Conceptually, the CaBan ITE model is most closely related to research-informed clinical practice (Burn and Mutton, 2015). This model, with obvious connotations to medical education, has adult learning at the centre and aims to support the development of professional knowledge within communities of practice. Burn and Mutton (2015), in a review of ITE programmes, explain how clinical-practice models of ITE bring together the 'practical wisdom of experts' and evidence from research.

They envision a relationship between School and University that 'deepens the interplay between the different kinds of knowledge that are generated and validated within the different contexts of school and university' (Burn and Mutton, 2015: 217). The new ITE programmes in Wales were expected to take the best professional knowledge from school and university in order to develop effective teachers (EWC, 2019; Whitty and Furlong, 2017).

This clinical practice model in education, however, does pose some risks and necessitates a cultural change both in schools and university. Schools will no longer be the passive recipients of students for teaching practice, but will be equal partners and an integral part of the learning process for developing Associate Teachers (ATs). If schools and class mentors do not make the mindset shift, then there is the possibility that ATs may feel unsupported and lack clear direction. University staff will also need to understand their role in supporting schools, whilst simultaneously acknowledging there is a wealth of expertise in the classroom to help ATs develop their skills. A significant change in approach within any systems is often occampanied by a ruduction in performance. In the initial stages of development both schools and universities need to be very aware of this 'change curve' (Kubler-Ross, 1977), and there needs to be a clear focus on monitoring and quality assurance throughout the journey for the individual ATs.

CaBan programme design has been underpinned by the notion of *professional enquiry*[1] that describes the vision of tommorrow's teachers as those who are 'scholars of pedogogy' and continually engaged with research evidence (Furlong, 2015), practice-based evidence, enquiry-based professional learning (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Cordingley, 2015) and classroom-based practitioner enquiry (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; Campbell and Groundwater Smith, 2009). In line with Furlong (2015), we believe that it is through asking questions, identifying problems in practice and working collaboratively to find solutions that ATs will become 'active professionals able to use their own judgement and take responsibility as leaders of learning' (Furlong, 2015: 12). Our vision encompasses a broad view of professional learning, which seeks to bring about an understanding of teaching as a moral and intellectual undertaking and not merely a set of technical skills to be mastered (Ponte, 2009). This requires that ATs have a deeper philosophical understanding of how change is effected within their own practice through systematic exploration and interrogation of that practice (Hulse & Hulme, 2012). The insights gained from focused classroom enquiry are designed to equip ATs to translate research into

practice and adopt a problem-solving orientation (Burn and Mutton, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2017). Through the process of enquiry the ATs will 'interpret and make sense of the specific needs of particular students, to formulate and implement particular pedagogical actions and to evaluate the outcomes' (p. 218).

ATs are taught how to study their own practice through a variety of pedagogical methods appropriate for adult learners. CaBan programmes promote a questioning approach where ATs are encouraged and supported by their mentors and tutors to critique current practices and experiment with new ones. Student teachers often find this challenging (Livingston and Shiach, 2009), as there is no single 'blue-print' for excellent teaching, but rather they must develop their practice through a continual process of enquiry. The 'discomfort' this can engender is a key component of creative practice (Claxton, 2008) which will require support. The development of a 'teaching self', an agentive professional identity, is of central importance and is nurtured through metacognitive learning strategies. The programmes will take account of the AT's initial and developing beliefs, attitudes and values regarding teaching and learning and the individual and idiosyncratic nature of professional growth (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002).

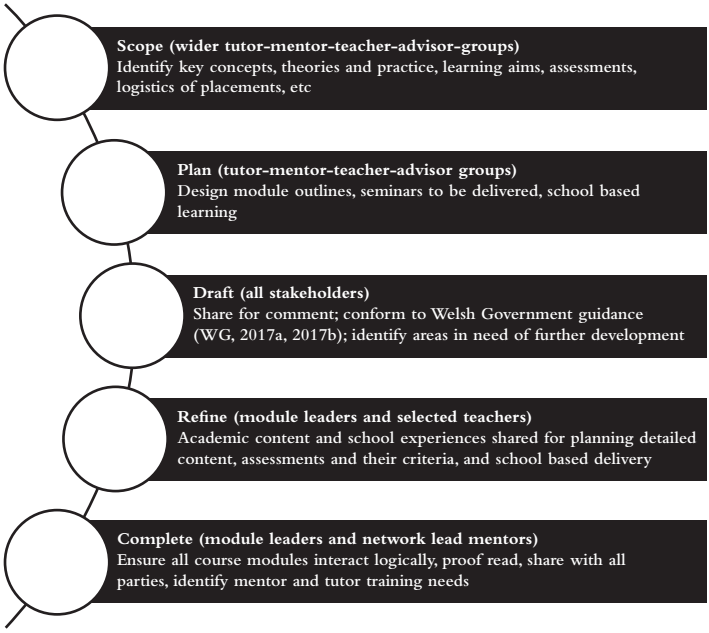
To facilitate this all CaBan programmes provide both formal and informal opportunities for focused discussions with mentors, colleagues and peers (see section on Mentoring below for details). Our principle models of professional learning are *quality teaching rounds* (Bowe and Gore, 2011), *lesson study* (Lewis, 2000) and *professional enquiry* (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; Campbell and Groundwater Smith, 2009) (and all three have been shown to encourage and develop collaboration within professional learning communities. For example, teaching rounds have been shown to be an effective mode of professional learning (Gore *et al*., 2015), enabling beginning teachers to observe expert practice through evidence-informed critical lenses such as the instructional core (City *et al.,* 2009) and develop their awareness of their emerging teacher identity (Mockler, 2011). Our aim is that this identity is further professionalised by the subsequent use of lesson study (Cajkler *et al*., 2013), where mentors and ATs co-plan to allow for research informed lesson design and refine the skill of interrogating learners' responses to the models used. Adaptation of the model to ITE suggests that lesson study is an effective tool for mentor development in addition to being successful in equipping ATs to learn how to teach responsively (Cajkler *et al*., 2013). Clearly, learning to teach does

not end after ITE (Berliner, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2017: Welsh Government, 2019); there is a need for teachers to continue to operate within research-informed professional learning communities, be informed of, and to respond to, new developments as well as developing new pedagogical practices.

In 2015 Welsh Government published a series of four booklets to support the *New deal for the education workforce* (Welsh Government, 2015). The four elements covered by each booklet describes the Professional Learning Model (PLM) and included: effective collaboration; reflective practice; effective use of data and research evidence and coaching and mentoring. These principles are central to both the revised ITE programmes and the revised and renamed National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL) (Welsh Government, 2018) The NAPL has been developed with input and feedback from Pioneer School practitioners, working with Government whilst co-constructing the new National Curriculum. It also incorporates the work of the OECD, developing the Schools as Learning Organisations (SLOs) model for Wales (Kools, 2018). Each of these three pieces of work, NAPL, SLOs, and the ITE reform have enquiry based learning central to their success. Professional enquiry skills may offer teachers a means of ascertaining or making sense of what aspects of new initiatives, training or developments best support effective teaching and learning in their context. Developing such skills during ITE supports not only pupils' learning but teachers' career-long professional learning. Additionally, there is a wealth of research opportunities to undertake in developing evidence about how this actually works within the context of the CaBan model, and in the unique context of schools and communities in North Wales.

This programme design marks a shift in focus from a performative model of teacher education to collaborative, sustained professional leraning. This transition is not without risks. Much of the international evidence from successful teacher education models idenitifies structural, cultural and contextual differences that need to be acknowledged in the Welsh context. For example, research informed professional knowledge has not always been at the forefront of teacher professional learning in the United Kingdom in the way that it is in countries such as Finland. Time to develop sustained communities of enquiry is limited in schools where teacher-pupil contact time is amongst the highest in developed countries. This means that whatever time is available for collaborative lesson design and teacher enquiry needs to be allocated in the most intelligent way possible. The CaBan programme has endeavoured to do this through models of

Figure 2: Course Design



professional learning such as lesson study and classroom enquiry that improves the learning experience of ATs, teachers and young people.

CaBan Course Design

CaBan programmes are a product of a close collaboration between various CaBan stakeholders. Led by lecturers (tutors) from Bangor and Chester Universities, mentors and teachers (from Lead and Network schools) and GwE advisors, we designed a structured, rigorous suite of programmes that focus on the analysis of, and reflections upon, teaching and learning, linking theory, evidence, practice and reflection. Figure 2 summarises this process for each course module.

This co-construction process has ensured that our programmes contribute to the wider aim of building professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) and a culture of collective responsibility for improved

learning for all ATs. This process has resulted in the joint ownership of the programme by all CaBan partners.

Modules and Areas of Study

Practices that our ATs experience are rooted in evidence and theory, thereby producing evaluative and reflective practitioners who understand the complexities of teaching (Shulman and Wilson, 2005). The importance of child development, theories of learning, the centrality of positive relationships with learners, and the importance of creating 'whole-school' nurturing environments (Biglan *et al.*, 2012; Biglan, 2018) are emphasised in our courses, providing ATs with 'routine opportunities to link their developing practical school experience with other forms of professional knowledge – with research, with theory and with knowledge of practice in other contexts' (Furlong, 2015: 17).

ATs are introduced to research within the field of their subject specialisms in order to inform their pedagogical content knowledge (BERA/RSA, 2014). Subject pedagogical expertise is developed by immersing ATs in research informed learning models that are translated into practice enabling them to present subject content in a learnable manner. The development of ATs' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is modelled as an ongoing aspect of professional learning throughout their careers (Shulman, 1986). This will enable the AT to demonstrate 'an increasingly confident understanding of the theories and research about assessment, pedagogy, child and adolescent development and learning relevant to planning and day to-day practice' (Welsh Government, 2019). It is this deep understanding of pedagogical principles which provides the AT with a secure foundation from which they can innovate and create new ways of teaching and learning.

We have linked all assignments and school-based observations and reflections to established models of teacher and schools-based enquiry. ATs keep a professional journal where they observe practice and frame their analysis of their own teaching and that of others using the *instructional core* (City *et al.*, 2009), and the *knowledge quartet* (Turner and Rowland, 2011). In addition, they will be encouraged to evaluate teaching by analysing learner outcomes using Ebbut's Questions (Hopkins, 2014) thus ensuring that 'student progress is the yardstick by which teacher quality should be assessed' (Coe *et al.*, 2014: 2). This combination of the daily use of the

journal combined with the more formal assignments aims to bridge theory and practice and develop teachers who become evidence-informed professionals.

The Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership

In addition to assessing ATs using formal Higher Education methods, it is of course a requirement of the ITE accreditation process to assess their progress against the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (PSTL). When designing our assessment instruments, we have had to balance the use of the PSTL as a tool of accountability and their formative role in framing the dialogue between ATs, mentors and tutors.

Building on the *Standards for QTS: further advice for ITE Providers* (Welsh Government, 2018) we have identified aspects of practice that can be evidenced against individual elements within the five standards that also support the evidence that ATs produce for the *Professional Learning Passport* (PLP) and their professional dialogue with tutors and mentors. The principle sources of evidence submitted to the PLP includes: observation reports by tutors and mentors; audio recordings of learners; professional journal extracts; pupil profiles and/or case studies; examples of pupil voice collection (e.g. interviews and questionnaires); lesson plans and evaluations; observation of, and co-planning with mentors; workshop notes; original and adapted classroom resources; examples of pupils' work; and formal assignments.

Importantly, we also grade ATs' progress using the PSTL as a formative assessment tool to scaffold their progress. Despite evidence that, in some circumstances, lessons can be graded consistently (Muijs *et al*., 2018), Coe *et al*. (2014: 4) state this is only effective when 'pooling the results of observations by multiple observers of multiple lessons.' Therefore, in our programmes we grade once per school placement, and this is based on evidence from a number of sources, including the learner progress over time, the overall quality of teaching observed in a number of lessons (both formally and informally), and the quality of the ATs' professional interactions in school and academic assignments.

We have tailored the assessments (the PLP and the formal assignments) to meet the new Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards ensuring all elements are evidenced. However, we also avoid one-to-one matching of assessment points to standards because any one assessment or item of

evidence is likely to address many elements and will adhere to the principles set out in the PSTL consultation document. ATs use the PLP to create a picture over time which informs their perspective, placing the emphasis on the process rather than the product, producing reflective practitioners who regard teaching as a cohesive whole. This will therefore ensure the PSTL are used formatively as well as providing assurance our ATs have met or exceeded the standards of QTS.

The CaBan Mentor Development Programme

One key element of the education reform in Wales is the increased importance given to mentoring in the professional development of all teachers, including those new to teaching (Furlong, 2015). Estyn (2018) suggested that whilst there are examples of effective mentoring practices across Wales, it remains inconsistent and is an area that the system at all levels, incudling schools and providers of ITE, need to develop in order to ensure effective practitioners that embrace career long professional learning. In the process of developing the CaBan partnership, and the recognition that our mentoring programme needed to be qualitatively different to traditional mentoring approaches, we formed the Mentor Development Group (MDG) that consisted of key individuals from the primary and secondary sectors, the two HEIs and GwE. CaBan is committed to ensuring that ATs have high quality mentoring and will enter school environments where mentoring is embedded and valued as a professional learning activity. The members of the MDG were identified based on experience and expertise in mentoring. The remit of the group was to clearly define what we meant by mentoring, and to re-conceptualised the role of the mentor in the CaBan programmes, and, in particular, how the mentors collaborated and worked across the partnership and region in a strategic and consistent manner. The group formulated the mentor development programme that defined what was meant by mentoring and what this would mean for our schools and ATs. We did this through an iterative process of consulting with key stakeholders, experts, integrating current international thinking on best practice (e.g. Estyn, 2018; Furlong, 2015), and working closely with the accreditation panel during the accreditation process to shape our programme to deliver excellent mentoring across our partnership.

Now clearly defined in the CaBan model, effective mentoring is a two-way process that develops a reflective approach to learning through

the key processes of collaboration, dialogue, observation, critical reflection and enquiry. Mentors are versed in dialogic models of feedback which enable ATs to learn through deliberation on their own teaching (Jones *et al.*, 2018) and which allow mentors to understand the ATs perceptions in order to better support them (Burn *et al.*, 2000: 226). This vision for an excellent mentoring experience adopted by CaBan is also aligned and integrated to CaBan's pedagogical approach to ATs' learning, and a catalyst to fuse theory to practice.

The term mentoring describes 'the support given by one (usually more experienced) person for the growth and learning of another, and for their integration into and acceptance by a specific community' (Malderez, 200: 57). This 'more experienced' person 'facilitates the development of the AT as s/he grows from novice to full practitioner, nurturing and challenging through a full range of responsibilities, thus linking theory to practice. The mentoring role is developmental and only by engaging in it can it be learned. Just as the mentor nurtures the AT, the mentor should be nurtured and supported'' (Punter, 2007).

CaBan's *lead* and *network schools* adopt a whole school approach to mentoring. We strongly believe that CaBan mentors will be a catalyst for change in the need to establish a culture of professional learning in schools, to further integrate ITE in schools and to develop ATs into world-class teachers of tomorrow. We also regard ATs as 'leaders of tomorrow' and what this might means as they enter the profession in a time of ambitious reform and optimism. Strategic support from senior leaders is fundamental to effective mentoring concerning: (i) the recognition of the value of professional learning; (ii) the positive impact of strong mentors on school culture, teaching practice, learners' experiences and outcomes; and (iii) the growth of leadership potential across all levels of the school and education system. It is also the case that successful mentoring, as with other system level change, should be seen as a whole school approach, involving strategic leadership input and support. Because GwE is a strategic partner within CaBan, we have worked hard to connect the mentor training with the monitoring and support from the GwE challenge and support adviser termly visits to schools. This also provides ATs with continuity of support into their first year of teaching as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). In addition to leadership support of mentoring, all members of the network school community are committed to the positive experience of the ATs.

In the CaBan partnership, school mentors have been strategically identified and appointed by senior school leaders following a process of selection

that demonstrated the qualities, skills and expectations as outlined in our *CaBan Mentor QA Framework*. Drawing upon existing literature, a number of core mentor roles and skills have been identified (Furlong 2009; Welsh Government, 2014; Estyn, 2018) that emphasise a focus on progress of the AT rather than the administrative aspects of the role. CaBan's vision of the mentor is encompassed in the mentor core roles, aligned with the PSTL, which acknowledges the multi-faceted role of the mentor as a reflective practitioner, supporter, teacher educator, role model, acculturator, assessor, collaborator, advocator, researcher, and leader.

Within the CaBan model we defined three different types of mentors: the *Network Lead Mentor*, who is responsible for the mentoring across the network of schools; the *Principal Mentor*, who is responsible for the mentoring provision within the network school; and the *Class/Subject Mentor*, who is responsible for mentoring specific to that area of teaching or to that class. It is the class/subject mentor who will receive most support within our mentoring support programme, because research has identified these mentors as the critical players in the development of ATs and to ensure a personalised experience (Estyn, 2018). Our mentor development group also created a 'Mentor Development Pathway' that clearly outlines the journey a class/subject mentor will follow to become a principal and/or network lead mentor, where mentors can accrue credits at Masters level for the professional development work that they undertake. There is also the opportunity for university tutors and mentors to conduct research on the mentoring work that is carried out across the CaBan partnership. This whole mentor support progamme is framed by a rigorous quality assurance and enhancement processes designed to support the mentoring provision, along with a framework and timeline for the academic year that shows clear progression milestones. At the heart of this process is the AT and class/subject mentor, and this relationship informs and inputs into the mentor development programme continuously throughout the academic year.

Welsh Culture and Language

Teachers have, and will have, a pivotal role in helping realise the vision of a million Welsh speakers 2050. Teachers have a crucial role in fostering appreciation of the multi-faceted culture of Wales, developing learners awareness of the Welsh, English and other languages and communicating

that Wales is a country with a 'vibrant culture in which Welsh thrives' (Welsh Government, 2015). Developing ATs proficiency in speaking Welsh at different levels is one important element in helping realise Welsh Government's vision (Welsh Government, 2015). Developing ATs appreciation of their role in nurturing learners who recognise the relationship between culture and language and how that defines their own language, their unique place and voice within society, will be key (Welsh Government, 2015). Undoubtedly, getting to know and cater for the diverse linguistic nature of the education workforce, practitioners and learners in schools, as well as understanding their day to day lives within monolingual, bilingual and multilingual communities, is a core strand within the teaching profession in Wales.

In schools all pupils need different linguistic inputs from educators to thrive as confident individuals when using their language skills. There is a diverse linguistic range within CaBan partnership schools, which reflects the linguistic categories of schools as currently defined by the Welsh Government, and the reality of the diverse linguistic histories of the children of the region, their families and their communities. This provides an excellent training platform to match the language profile of ATs to apply their Welsh language skills, whatever their current language development, within a partnership school.

In order to create successful learning environments, where all pupils value every stage of their linguistic development, CaBan's core courses ensure that ATs show an understanding of the wide range of outcomes that learners acquire through Welsh medium, bilingual and Englsih medium provision. Experience of theory and practice in Welsh medium, bilingual and Englsih medium provisions, ATs develop their personal language skills, together with their increasing knowledge of how children learn a language; they will encounter differences and similarities in learning a language as an adult as compared to learning a language as a child. This provides valuable insight for ATs to be able to evaluate and develop a learner's language skills as well as their personal Welsh language skills in accordance with the expectations of the QTS descriptor requirements.

Alongside these experiences, ATs are equipped to inform their teaching and learning with evidence on teaching Welsh and language effectively. CaBan's Welsh modules were designed to include learning about concepts such as language acquisition, monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism, language assessments, language behaviour, aspects of multi-literacy and practical pedagogy when teaching language, such as,

translanguaging, practice effects, and immersion education methods (see e.g. Thomas, Parry & Apolloni, 2019). Linking these theories with good practice and activities in schools helps foster 'pedagogic skills of trainees to work through the medium of Welsh' (Welsh Government, 2017: 18). They will be equipped with a knowledge base that is transferable within various linguistic contexts in Wales and beyond and be skilled in designing a language curriculum that is appropriate for the linguistic needs of the learners, whatever their medium of instruction.

However, producing learners and an education workforce who only possess language competencies does not guarantee that they are speakers who use the language in different social situations. Providing enriching experiences for ATs, practitioners and learners to engage and immerse themselves in contemporary Welsh and community culture through a variety of traditional and digital media, and various social events is vital. It leads to gaining and deepening the respect, understanding and active appreciation of ATs and the learners in their care of Welsh culture in all its multilingual subtleties, and to see its relevance to their everyday lives. Only by creating natural, normal opportunities to use or practice Welsh will we encourage learners, as well as teachers, to speak and use Welsh as a choice. This is one of the key aims within the Welsh language strategy of 2050 and is at the heart of the aims of the Welsh Language Charter Framework, which is to make the Welsh language inclusive and relevant by 'establishing positive practices in the use of the language, as well as creating formal and informal opportunities to use the Welsh language... helping them [learners] see that it is not just school-related and that it has a rich social and cultural world' (Welsh Government, 2019: 18).

CaBan in partnership with schools and the lead language mentor system and other stakeholders have created enrichment activities and speaking opportunities for ATs to use everyday Welsh through out-of-school and college enrichment activities. Opportunities are promoted by methods such as lesson study, learning journeys, language specific pedagogy and professional enquiry to foster reflective AT who value the linguistic diversity within our schools. CaBan advocates the principle that language and culture are interrelated and that learning a language means learning a cultural attitude that will increase ATs' understanding of the Welsh way of life from the perspective of different ages, attitudes, beliefs, and values across differing linguistic communities – a principle that will equip them to understand and participate in the development of Welsh culture and education within a multilingual and international context.

Collaboration between teacher education institutions and partnership schools to create a culture of inquiry, innovation and investigation (OECD, 2018:8) in the area of language promotion and use is essential in the process of transforming the method of teaching Welsh to all learners. CaBan's vision through the partnership with CIEREI, lead language mentors in lead schools including the stakeholders within the regional consortia, GwE, is to encourage professional enquiry in language among ATs and teachers. Educators can take advantage of CaBan's international specialisms in areas such as bilingualism, bilingual education and language development in order to create lead schools that will be centres of excellence whilst assisting ATs to develop their Welsh language skills.

Throughout the courses there is a need to nurture reflective ATs who are aware of their own personal progress in Welsh speaking, reading and writing skills and who evaluate their experiences with regard to teaching Welsh/using everyday Welsh and promote the social use of Welsh with their learners. The results of the language competency framework for all ATs will be a means for schools, regional consortia and sabbatical schemes to tailor subsequent professional learning. The result of this will be to ensure that ATs at the beginning of their career recognise their own language proficiency and know how to develop their skills, aiming to set an example for learners, colleagues and the community in their career, through a positive commitment to the Welsh language. These are the principles that will support the four purposes of the curriculum and ensuring that developing values and taking pride in all kinds of languages and cultures is a natural, enjoyable and exciting experience for learners. An experience that will foster a sense of self-esteem among all learners. The impact of this should, in turn, increase the number of Welsh speakers and users of Welsh within the education workforce.

Research, Evidence-informed practice and professional enquiry

Tomorrow's Teachers outlines a vision of a state-of-the art ITE programme that learns from the best evidence internationally and develops the capacity locally to contribute to creating local and contextual evidence-informed teaching practice. One of the most innovative aspects of CaBan is its close collaboration with the Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impac*t* (CIEREI). CIEREI, represents a strategic partnership between GwE, regional schools, other stakeholders invested in improving educational outcomes and the well-being of our children:

> CIEREI is a collaborative, bilingual, multi-disciplinary institute for the creation of research evidence with the primary aim of positively impacting learning and well-being for learners through schools, and to contribute to teacher education and building regional capacity in co-constructed close-to-practice impact research. (Tyler, *et al.,* 2018: 90).

This is an exciting relationship that aims to build an international education research profile through the fusion of a critical mass of university researchers, centres and academics with educational practitioners, GwE and 439 schools in the North Wales region. It has the common aim of developing and disseminating research and evidence in the evaluation of educational practice, designing and evaluating large-scale educational interventions, and improving learning and well-being outcomes for the children and young people of Wales.

Within CIEREI there are a number of key research specialism that are directly relevant to our ATs' developing knowledge and to schools committed to evidence-informed practice. These include bilingualism in education, literacy interventions, ALN, effective classroom management, poverty impact, pedagogic research, physical literacy, activity and health, mental health, child law and children's rights, and ITE. In CIEREI we have brought this vast expertise together to inform our ITE content, to support the development of close-to-practice impact research across the region, to inform our regional professional learning programme, and importantly, in our commitment to the importance of all educators being both consumers and producers of research in a research driven self-improving school system.

To this aim, we are now engaged with a number of ambitious projects that collate and undertake research that supports the strategic strength of the CaBan partnership and simultaneoulsy helps build regional educational research capacity (see Tyler *et al.*, 2018, earlier edition for details of an example of a regional strategy to develop research capacity in Wales). With respect to the CaBan partnership, and in particular the professional journey of our ATs, CIEREI helps to inform and embed current research findings and evidence on children, schooling, learning and well-being into the content of our ITE programmes. Our aim, of course, is to support our ATs in becoming consumers and producers of research and understanding the importance of research and evidence in improving learning and well-being of the learners in their class. We also aim to build regional capacity within the system to conduct and support research and professional enquiry in schools by supporting our ATs when

they are in the network schools and with their own professional enquiry projects.

Concluding remarks

In this paper we have outlined the philosophy and research foundations of the CaBan vision for ITE in North Wales. Our mission statement – Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together – encompasses a collaborative partnership approach that brings together the strengths of universities, GwE, the CIERE institute of education research, and a network of strong regional schools to educate the best teachers of tomorrow for our schools. We believe that the CaBan partnership represents a world-class programme that will play a leading role in the education reform in Wales and the ambition to achieve *Our National Mission* (2017).

As the first cohorts of associate teachers embark on our new and exciting programmes we already have one eye on evaluating our success. How will we know that we have achieved all we set out to achieve? As well as the usual key performance indicators such as outcomes, recruitment and retention figures and national student survey (NSS) feedback etc. CaBan will go through its own internal reflective process with all partners. Not only is this a huge methodological change, but also a real cultural change. There will be numerous primary qualitative indicators such as partners enthusiasm and willingness to engage, or improved and closer links between schools and HEIs to support career long professional learning for the whole profession and research expertise.

The fundamental goal of CaBan is to support our new ATs to become creative, inspiring and highly skilled teachers who will contribute to the delivery of *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (Welsh Government, 2015). The philosophical foundations of the partnership represent a strong sense that realising the vision of educating tomorrow's teachers is 'everybody's business', and only a partnership that involves our best schools in an active and equal partnership with universities, consortia, and one that embeds research and evidence, will achieve this. Central to our vision is the acknowledgement that effective professional learning is neither entirely theoretical nor entirely practical, but a fusion of the two and that this can be realised only through an equal partnership between schools and universities (BERA/RSA, 2015).

We have also emphasised here the crucial role of mentoring in the development of our ATs as critically reflective practitioners and how our

programme design is underpinned by the notion of professional enquiry and career long professional learning. We also recognise the importance of Welsh culture and the Welsh Language in education and the key leadership role that the CaBan partnership has in building capacity to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Wales in helping to realise the vision for a million speakers 2050. To this we add the foundation and capacity to create and mobilise knowledge through our partnership and into the classrooms of Wales. Only a system that can learn from the best internationally, build evidence of impact, and contextualise this evidence locally, will serve the needs of the children of Wales and provide World-class education for the teachers of tomorrow.

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Note

1 Other, related terms include action research, close-to-practice research, enquiry-based professional learning, classroom-based practitioner enquiry, representing various models of teacher driven enquiry and research. However, Professional Enquiry as described here is more descriptive of the typical process that practitioners undertake, that subsumes the above terms and is utulised in this article to describe teachers as 'scholars of pedogogy'.