

Doctorate in Professional Practice

Assignment 3: Practitioner Learning Project

BMDP7002

Laura James

**INCLUDING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL
LEARNING NEEDS:
ARE TEACHING ASSISTANTS THE ANSWER?**

D. HUW MORGAN

1750078



Introduction

TA will be used as a comprehensive label that encompasses the various titles and roles as described by Bosanquet et al. (2021).

The acronym ALN(s) will be used to refer to Additional Learning Needs, as defined by the Welsh Government (2022).

**Including and
supporting
students with
additional learning
needs:
Are teaching
assistants the
answer?**



Reflections

Policymakers must draw on best practices to ensure optimal provision for future generations of children and young people

Insufficient research on TAs' roles, which is a critical gap that needs to be addressed

Blatchford et al. (2012) and Webster et al. (2013)

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Reflections

The role, impact, and training requirements of TAs are significantly under-researched (Frater 2023)

This is particularly important in Further and Higher Education (Frater 2023)

Student needs should guide the practical implementation, utilising well-trained, confident, and enthusiastic TAs (Webster et al., 2021).

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Reflections

All staff should be involved in discussions and developments related to inclusion (Webster et al., 2021).

Staff should receive training in strategies for offering support to pupils to help them progress in their learning (Welsh Government, 2021)

Has not clarified if the extra provision of £20 million will be sufficient (Welsh Government, 2017).

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Reflections

In the FE sector, where there has been a significant reduction in funding (ATL, 2017).

There are significant gaps in understanding the effects of the ALN Bill in Wales, particularly concerning its design and implementation

Need for more comprehensive studies
Webster (2024)

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Source Analysis

Diverse range of sources (Mahrool, 2021)

Assess the credibility, relevance, and biases of each source, but this was not always possible (Galvan & Galvan, 2017).

I questioned whether the results were generalisable or if there were any potential conflicts of interest in the research (Hempel, 2020).

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Comparison and Synthesis

Compared differing and complementary viewpoints (Luft, et al., 2022).

The literature review was organised thematically Dunleavy (2017)

Identifying and discussing key themes (Cohen, et al., 2018)

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Acknowledging Biases

I reflected on my own assumptions (Adu & Miles, 2023)

I had not previously considered that the TAs that were working alongside me might be underprepared for the classroom setting

As a direct consequence of my research, my own practice will alter

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Insufficient Research & Critical Questions

There is a notable lack of literature assessing the impact of the new Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales and the Curriculum for Wales

Limited scope in this study as I was unable to undertake the collection of primary data

An under-reported and important area for further research

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Insufficient Research & Critical Questions

As a lecturer who works alongside TAs, I may be compromised when collecting primary data (Aburn, et al. 2021)

Potential imbalance in the power dynamic between myself and potential participants (Moss, et al., 2020).

I could enable me to complete a high quality piece of research using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Cohen, et al., 2018)

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Conclusion

My conclusion reflected:

- A balanced view of the literature presented (Dunleavy, 2017)
- I acknowledged both strengths and limitations of the use of TAs in an educational setting (Hempel, 2020).
- I critically reflected and presented a finding using the data available
- I recognise further research is necessary.

**Including and supporting students with additional learning needs:
Are teaching assistants the answer?**



Bibliography

Blatchford, P. et al., 2009. Deployment and Impact of Support Staff In Schools.

Blatchford, P. et al., 2004. *The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools: Characteristics, working conditions, job satisfaction and impact of workforce remodeling.*, s.l.: DCSF.

Blatchford, P. et al., 2006. *The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools: Characteristics, working conditions, job satisfaction and impact of workforce remodeling*, London: DCSF.

Blatchford, P. et al., 2008. *The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools: Characteristics, working conditions, job satisfaction and impact of workforce remodeling*, London: DCSF.

Blatchford, P. et al., 2002. *Pupil-adult Ratio Differences and Educational Progress Over Reception and Key Stage 1*, Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Blatchford, P., Russell, A. & Webster, R., 2012. *Reassessing the Impact of Teaching Assistants : How Research Challenges Practice and Policy*. 1st ed. Abingdon: Routledge.

Booth, A., Sutton, A., Clowes, M. & Martyn-St James, M., 2021. *Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review*. s.l.:SAGE Publications.

Bosanquet, P., Radford, J. & Webster, R., 2021. *The Teaching Assistant's Guide to Effective Interaction*. s.l.:Taylor & Francis.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K., 2018. *Research Methods in Education*. 8th ed. s.l.:Routledge.

Gray, A. & Wright, M., 2021. *The Effective Teaching Assistant*. s.l.:Taylor & Francis Group.

Griffin, C., 2024. Fostering Independence for Life: A Critical Reflection. Palma, EDULEARN24 Proceedings.

Groom, B., 2006. Building relationships for learning: the developing role of the teaching assistant. Support for Learning, 16October, 21(4) , pp. 199-203.

Hall, S. & Webster, R., 2023. 'It's properly changed, and I think it's going to continue.' How the pandemic and the cost of living crisis remade the teaching assistant role. Pastoral Care in Education , pp. 1-21.

Mahrool, F., 2021. Research Methodology. A Guide for a Literature Review. s.l.:Bod Third Party Titles.

Sharples, J., Webster, R. & Blatchford, P., 2015. Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants- Guidance Report, London: The Education Endowment Foundation.

Webster, R., 2022. The Inclusion Illusion. London: UCL Press.

Webster, R., 2024. Teaching on the cheap? The extent and impact of teaching assistants covering classes and leading lessons. British Educational Research Journal, pp. 1-24.

Webster, R. et al., 2010. Double standards and first principles: Framing teaching assistant support for pupils with special educational needs. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 25(4), pp. 319-336.

Webster, R., Blatchford, P. & Russell, A., 2013. Challenging and changing how schools use teaching assistants: findings from the Effective Deployment of Teaching Assistants project. School Leadership & Management, 33(1), pp. 78-96.

Webster, R., Bosanquet, P., Franklin, S. & Parker, M., 2021. Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants in Primary Schools. s.l.:Taylor & Francis.

Webster, R. & De Boer, A., 2019. Teaching assistants: their role in the inclusion, education and achievement of pupils with special educational needs. European Journal of Special Needs Education , 34(3), pp. 404-407.

Welsh Government, 2017. Professional standards for teaching and leadership, Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Welsh Government, 2022. Curriculum for Wales: summary of legislation. [Online]
Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation/>
[Accessed 3 July 2024].

Welsh Government, 2022. School Workforce Census results: as at November 2022, Cardiff: Crown.

WG, 2004. Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales, Cardiff: Crown.

WG, 2017. Financial implications of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales.

WG, 2018. Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, s.l.: Crown.

WG, 2021. The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales, s.l.: Crown.

Including and
supporting
students with
additional learning
needs:
Are teaching
assistants the
answer?

