



Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (PCET).

Title: An Action Plan demonstrating alignment of practice with appropriate professional standards to date

Module: PROFESSIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE [ECPT 6002 & 7002]

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20/05/2019

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Areas of Activity	
Area of Activity	Examples where Standard has been met (What did you do?)
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study Prior to this course I had no experience of designing and/or planning teaching activities. I worked with pre-structured activities.	The PCET programme has provided me the tools and skills necessary to design teaching activities and plan their delivery. I have identified a theory which underlines the reflection. Putting this theory into practice will be interesting and will challenge me as a professional. I propose to hone my skills in specific areas in a way which will build on my ten years of experience to date. Introducing new experiences will help me to grow as a professional. Continued learning will enable me to gain the kind of skills that assist me in connecting to the world inhabited by my students inhabit I am currently designing a new experiment for the Egyptology and history life. This builds on my previous knowledge from teaching in this type of format, on my core knowledge of the subject at hand and the on the teaching training gained with the PCET

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Provide a <u>REFLECTIVE</u> account of the impact that your activities had on learning, teaching and learners, including <u>integration of the Core Knowledge</u> you utilised and which <u>Professional Values</u> you applied in whatever you did.	Future Aims and Goals
Core Knowledge K1. The subject material <i>My core knowledge of my subject area (Ancient Egypt) and of related subjects is good. I take teaching as an opportunity to refresh myself with some of the fundamentals of the subject area. Over time it can happen that some of the basics that are taught early on in a degree course on Egyptology and history can be recalled less clearly, with the consequence that I feel less confident when teaching this component. Refreshing myself on these fundamentals' improves my performance as a tutor.</i> Professional values V1. Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities. I consider respect for others to be one of the most important things in life. I make it my priority to respect everyone in everything I do. Teaching is no different. I respect my students for who they are and strive to deliver inclusive teaching at all times.	https://youtu.be/UveGICnbKDDQ This is the link to the lecture capture video of a lecture I gave to first year of Egyptology students. In the lecture my aim was to connect my research of the geography and religion module. I believe this lecture demonstrates other "K points" on this table, as well as K1. This was an extensive exercise of drawing on my current knowledge and taking the time to analyse the students' course material and learning outcomes. By doing this I was able to create a session that built on students' knowledge and helped them understand the material <i>in a new</i> context by providing them with my perspective on it as a researcher. The teaching of this lecture drew on many of the concepts covered during the PCET workshops (for example, the importance of a clear learning outcomes and feedback system; devising ways for students to relate to the material drawing on previous knowledge; contextualising; using poll technologies for enhanced engagement, etc.). I worked on my core knowledge by sitting through all the second year Egyptology and history lectures in order to evaluate how I could best teach and help student at the two workshops I was asked to help with. My determination to respect students and learning communities has been strengthened by the PGCE/PCET course. It has showed me ways in which I could improve on this. In particular, I became aware of unconscious bias and lack of diversity in curricula. It highlighted the importance of considering learning difficulties such as dyslexia when producing teaching content. Some of these things I hadn't even considered before the PGCE/PCET course. In this respect this course was particularly important to me and has made be a better, more inclusive teacher. I now take a much more proactive approach to acknowledging and catering for students' individual needs, in whatever form these may take. I recognise not only the importance of knowing each student individually but also the challenge that represents in large groups.

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I believe that learning more about each student is often not enough and I try to make it clear to my students that there is an open communication channel with me that they can use to voice any concerns. I have found this to be successful and students contact me regarding a number of issues. I find this helps me, as a teacher, to have better insight into my students' difficulties and overall experiences.

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Area of Activity	Examples where Standard has been met (What did you do?)
A2. Teach and/or support learning During two academic years I have gained extensive experience teaching small groups in a laboratory environment and supporting students to run experiments. I have helped with workshop sessions, actively engaging with students and dealing with their questions regarding previously attempted exercise sheets. .	This course has given me the confidence and motivation to leave my "teaching comfort zone" and to teach in unfamiliar formats. I was given the opportunity to present a lecture consisting of a 45 min presentation in which I related my scientific research to key concepts covered in one of the PCET modules. It was specifically designed to support learning, providing a revision moment, while connecting course material to real research. Additionally, I have continued helping with small group teaching, mainly in the form of workshops, i.e. sessions where students are given exam-like problems and need to solve them. My role has been to support them, answering their questions and clarifying any doubts.
Provide a <u>REFLECTIVE</u> account of the impact that your activities had on learning, teaching and learners, including <u>integration</u> of the <u>Core Knowledge</u> you utilised and which <u>Professional Values</u> you <u>applied</u> in whatever you did.	Future Aims and Goals
K2. Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme. My knowledge of teaching methods was drawn from my experience as both a learner and a teacher. I preferred classes that were a mixture of information delivery and practical practice as they kept me interested and active throughout the duration of the class. Too much information tends to lose me after a while; too much practice tends to leave me without a sense of purpose, i.e. lacking the relationship between the practical activity to course material. As a result, I teach by blending theory with practice which gets good results.	Intercalating periods of theory with practical activities is still my preferred teaching method. I feel students benefit from the changing pace. Practical activities keep them engaged and help contextualise concepts. I am now more aware of different methods of delivering theory and practical activities that break up the constant stream of information while aiding learning. When covering theory, I find it important to keep a logical order and present it in a "story-telling" format so that things are linked to each other. I also find it important to contextualise concepts in terms of real-life applications or in a research context. It aids deeper understanding and motivation to make students aware of how the material is relevant and where it sits in the bigger picture seems. Practical activities are good tools to show how a theoretical, perhaps abstract, concept applies in reality. Practical activities within the context of a lecture, can also take other formats such as solving problem sheets and/or answering questions with interactive tools. These provide a kinaesthetic experience that can also aid deep learning.

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V2. Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners.

Before the PGCE/PCET program I had the opportunity to help with many open days both at the University of Wales and the Swansea University where I did my undergraduate degree. I saw open days as much more of a recruitment, rather than widening participation, activity. I can testify first hand to the importance of demystifying participation in higher education for certain target audiences. I was, nevertheless, unaware of the efforts made towards this by universities in general as teaching institutions and I certainly overlooked my own role in this process as a teacher.

Individuals keep up at different paces. The “blending” approach works well because both the students who learn best by listening to a lecturer and those who learn best by doing (and all of those in between, somewhere in the spectrum) will have an opportunity to have material delivered to them in a way they can best learn from. Nevertheless, it is important to keep individual paces in mind and to adapt to this so that the progress of the group is not negatively affected.

This course, specifically the free choice workshop entitled 'How can my teaching widen participation' really gave me a new perspective into what widening participation in higher education means and the ways that universities are working towards this and how to get involved. I have increased my awareness that a large number of people from certain backgrounds and communities may not consider that they belong in university, or that enrolling in university is unattainable to them. This is a vast talent pool which society cannot afford to ignore. These are very capable people who are being unfairly left out of the academic sphere. I believe it is the role of every member of a university to break down these barriers, to encourage and welcome more people from different backgrounds to join. Widening participation activities should serve much more than recruitment purposes: they should demystify the academic atmosphere, showcase teaching and research, and ultimately motivate and inspire prospective students

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Area of Activity	Examples where Standard has been met (What did you do?)
A3. Assess and give feedback My teaching experience within the Egyptology and history department involves marking students' completed tasks. The department emphasises the need for feedback at all times and consisting of at least a couple of sentences. I make students aware that I am happy to give them further feedback if they need it and some do contact me at a later stage. I try to be thorough, encouraging, and clear when giving feedback, turning it into a teaching opportunity in itself. I guide students by prompting the right questions rather than just delivering information.	The PGCE/PCET course has helped me be more objective in terms of assessment, specifically regarding learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It has become clear to me that informing students of what is expected of them is essential for their good performance. I pay particular attention to this. In hindsight I can identify moments in my teaching that were not clear (even to me) regarding what was expected from students in certain activities. Not making clear what was considered correct/acceptable may have resulted in inconsistent marking on my part. I now understand that a clear set of learning outcomes not only helps students, but it also helps in designing an effective teaching activity. The importance of feedback has been highlighted to me during the PGCE/PCET course. I now pay particular attention to feedback given to learners so that it is not only thorough and useful, but also guides students to realise and correct their mistakes in a way that motivates them (i.e. not just point out where there are mistakes but praise good work). I have also come to realise the importance of seeking feedback from learners in order to evaluate how they are responding to the teaching methods used and to identify what other methods may work to their best advantage. This allows the teaching material to be tailored in the most effective way.
Provide a <u>REFLECTIVE</u> account of the impact that your activities had on learning, teaching and learners, including <u>integration</u> of the <u>Core Knowledge</u> you utilised and which <u>Professional Values</u> you <u>applied</u> in whatever you did.	Future Aims and Goals

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K3. How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s) I was aware of different learning preferences/models but was of the opinion that it was the students' responsibility to recognise their own learning preferences and work on the course materials accordingly. In Egyptology and history specifically, I knew there were usually lectures, workshops/tutorials and saw these as the necessary tools to convey the course material and develop the essential practical skills. V3. Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development This is certainly something I did not do before the APP PGR course. I was given no formal training on how to identify or even deal with learning difficulties when teaching. There were occasions when I was made aware of a student's special need, but I was provided with no guidance on how to address this.	I have learnt more about learning models and preferences; specifically I have realised it is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure different learning methods are used in order to address different learning preferences so that every student has the opportunity to receive information in a way that will be best for them to retain and to have a combination of strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of learning. In teaching Egyptology and history, I have learned to look at the different components of an Egyptology degree as part of a central effort to convey core knowledge and provide different teaching environments to aid deep learning. In terms of pitching things to the right level, I have learned to respect the balance between accessible and challenging as this is important for both learning and motivation. Importantly, even within the same year group students will be at different levels of understanding and an effective teacher will have to be able to identify and address any issues related to this. This may be one of the most challenging things to deal with at all levels of education, but addressing it is essential for inclusive teaching. In my own teaching - which tends to be done mostly in small groups - I try to ask questions of the group and it soon becomes obvious who is keen to answer them and who is quieter. I try to draw out the quiet learners and try to understand if their lack of participation comes from lack of confidence or knowledge. Because there is always a practical task at hand it is easy to go around the group and ask questions individually so that students are not put on the spot (which can sometimes be counterproductive). This is yet another point where the PCET course has enabled me to become a better tutor. It was my first formal training on dealing with learning difficulties and other special needs. This was crucial for me. Previously I would get a note on some assignments informing me a student had certain learning difficulties but there was no guidance on how to deal with them. The PCET course encouraged me think about inclusiveness issues that I had not considered before. One example that particularly stuck with me was the realisation that when dealing with someone with reading difficulties and considering how they would experience a power-point slide or a handout, that it could help them to read the material beforehand, etc. - these were all things that I hadn't thought about. I believed students with dyslexia would find their own ways around things but failed to recognise the role of the teacher in including those students. Therefore, on this course I became much more conscious of the way I produce certain student materials and I will seek to gain further training on this and do more reading around the subject
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K4. The use and value of appropriate learning technologies Before PGCE/PCET most of my knowledge of learning technologies came from a learner's perspective. Contact had mainly been with in-class quiz tools, which I found engaging and useful. I failed to recognise Moodle as a learning technology, it was more of an information storage tool for me. While I knew technology could be successfully used to enhance learning I had no experience of using it as a teacher and I wasn't aware of the wide range of tools available or how to access/use them.	The PGCE/PCET course explored many different ways in which to use technology for teaching and learning and for getting started with the use of technology in my teaching. Firstly, I furthered my knowledge of lecture engagement tools and explored just how powerful they can be, not only for engagement but also for encouraging peer support and thus deeper learning. Even though, as a learner, I was already a fan of these questioning systems, being shown their true teaching potential made me want to try them - which I did in a lecture I prepared. Importantly, I understood that there are many more ways in which to include technology in teaching. Micro-teaching session, for example, has much more teaching potential than I thought, not only for delivering material, but also for receiving feedback. For example, I discovered that the Micro-teaching for one of the sessions I teach has an "in-built" feedback facility that no one was using so I started encouraging students to make more use of it. The response was good and led to a substantial increase in feedback. There are many other functionalities of Micro-teaching that I am yet to explore but I now consider it a much more dynamic, engaging tool (when used well) rather than a static "information dump". Similarly, there are many other technologies (videos, podcasts, online classrooms) that I have not had the opportunity to try but I am keen to do so in the future. In particular, I am interested in evaluating the impact that a much more active use of discussion forums would have on students and I hope I can try this soon.
V4. Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice. I had not considered this before the PCET course. I taught inside my own "bubble", dealing solely with my day-to-day teaching responsibilities	I have since learnt that the PGCE/PCET course teaching and learning strategy is built around five major themes: Promoting Innovation in Teaching and Learning Enriching the Learning Experience Providing a High-Quality Educational Environment Creating a Diverse and Globally Connected Community Preparing Students for Life after University The first three points are directly related to the more conventional role of a teacher: a good teaching workforce should be working towards innovative teaching, enriching student experience and providing high quality teaching by working on and applying all the aspects mentioned in this framework. I believe the last two relate to the "wider context in which higher education operates" and its relation to my role as a teacher was not immediately obvious to me, apart from fostering a

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	diverse community. However, and I believe this will involve working more seriously on proven soft skills which employers' value as much as subject-related knowledge and skills. These include communication skills, time management, team working and emotional intelligence. From what I know from my own journey through education these are not skills that are not embedded in the undergraduate curricula despite being considered essential for employers. This is something else that teachers should have in mind when designing teaching activities in order to work towards the goals of the University of Wales teaching and learning strategy. These are areas in which I can still improve, and I will seek to do so
Area of Activity	Examples where Standard has been met (What did you do?)
A5. Engage in continuing professional developments in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices I had no formal training in teaching. What I knew came from experience. I graduated in Ancient Egyptian from AUC University in Cairo and began a career at the Egyptian Museum also in Cairo. There I built on skills learned at University. I had positive feedback regarding my performance as a teacher and therefore believed that gaining experience from practice would be sufficient. Consequently, I did not consider formal teaching training.	The PCET course drastically changed my view on teaching. The academic approach to teaching techniques, research, pedagogy, etc. fascinated me and I was able to draw parallels with my practical teaching experience. This encouraged me to explore and learn more about new teaching tools to use in my sessions and ultimately led me to consider a career in higher education teaching. I now take every opportunity to engage in continuous professional development by attending formal training sessions and involving myself in different teaching formats. For example, I seek out new opportunities for teaching within my department actively engage in teaching related feedback/input/ideas to the department as much as possible

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K5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching At the beginning of the course I didn't pay much attention to this, mainly because the undergraduate experiments I was teaching looked at average student grades. When they fall below a certain threshold then the demonstrator is consulted in order to ascertain why. Because my sessions seemed to go well and the average grade was within what the department believed acceptable, I simply took that to mean that teaching was effective	One of the main realisations for me on the PCET is the importance of feedback. I had considered important but had not taken a proactive approach. (in fact, I take a much more proactive approach to my teaching in general after having attended this course). Whilst looking for ways to gauge my teaching effectiveness, I learned that teaching observation for a session I was teaching included a feedback page for students' ratings and comments. I started using this tool a lot more and encouraged students to fill it in after the session. This worked quite well: I saw an increase in responses to this feedback page. and whilst most of it was positive, I identified problems that students had with the exercise (mostly related to the format of preparation and assessment). I was able to suggest ways to improve on this to the department. Another example is that on an occasion when I was asked to mark a certain exercise for most of the 1st year Egyptology and history students I noticed some recurrent mistakes/misconceptions/problems. This led to the identification of a potential lack of effectiveness in the teaching of this particular topic; I have now been asked to develop a teaching exercise to cover in the next academic year for new first year students. in a new context by providing them with my perspective on it as a researcher. The teaching of this lecture drew on many of the concepts covered during the PCET workshops (for example, the importance of a clear learning outcomes and feedback system; devising ways for students to relate to the material drawing on previous knowledge; contextualising; using poll technologies for enhanced engagement, etc.). I worked on my core knowledge by sitting through all the second year Egyptology and history.

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Dimensions of the Framework

