

APPENDIX GA36c

LEVEL 6 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:	Hannah Macgregor	Student ID number:	1801080
Programme:	Secondary PGCE (Biology)		
Module:	Principles of Teaching, Learning and Pedagogy in the Secondary Sector		
Module code:	ECSP6001	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	50%
Lecturer:	Alison S Evans	Internal Verifier:	
Assignment Title:	Part B, (i) and (ii)	Word count (or equivalent):	(i) = 1,500 (ii) = 2,000
Submission deadline:	26 November 2018	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	17 December 2018
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 40%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Part Bi

There are a number of learning theories and strategies which can be used within a scheme of work (SOW) to achieve effective learning within a classroom environment. Progress in knowledge and understanding of the science and biology curriculum starts with a firm foundational knowledge of basic concepts such as cells, the building blocks of life, before introducing more complex ideas. For the pupils to build an accurate basis of knowledge of the curriculum as a whole, each topic must be condensed into structured and organised individual lessons (the SOW), to allow students to build upon facts and ideas in a logical way. This should enable pupils to generate their own understanding of the more complicated scientific concepts and processes which are presented further on in their educational experience. The aims of this essay are to describe and explain the principles of teaching and learning that underline this SOW, including the resources used.

At the beginning of this SOW, pupils will have a limited understanding of the topic ‘cells to systems’. Therefore, demonstrating the behaviourist model at the start of the SOW would allow pupils to gain a basic knowledge of the topic. Behaviourism, which is based on the work of Watson, Skinner and Pavlov (Wellington, 2007), refers to a controlled approach in which the pupils become passive recipients of knowledge and understanding which is provided by the teacher. It enables teacher-lead programmed learning whereby pupils are able to reach a learning target through the provision of simple bitesize learning portions, along with regular constructive feedback (Pritchard, 2009). An advantage is that it encourages visibly good behaviour of pupils. However, it has been suggested that this learning theory is not likely to take the learner’s personal needs and mental processes into consideration (Wellington, 2007).

A behaviourist approach was therefore implemented when introducing “cells and living things” to learners in lesson one. At the start of the lesson, pupils were provided with diagrams of living and non-living everyday objects, and introduced to the acronym “MRSGREN,” which can be used to learn the essential features of a living organism. This starter task could identify potential areas for development of both subject specific and essential skills for the pupils. This insight could inform amendments to the SOW if necessary, to suit the initial abilities of the pupils.

Once pupils have gained the required subject knowledge during lesson one, they would then be able to apply and build upon their new and prior knowledge, and develop their own understanding of the topic covered by the SOW. This form of application learning is

recognised as Constructivism, a learning theory which is founded on the work of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner (Westwood, 2004). This SOW demonstrates the way in which the behaviourist and constructivist theories can be applied together, to assist effective learning. Piaget suggests that pupils may further develop their knowledge through processes such as assimilation and accommodation (Pritchard, 2009). Furthermore, it has been suggested that limiting instruction and guidance from the teacher can promote more effective learning in pupils (Kirschner, et al., 2006).

During the starter task in lesson two, constructivism was exercised and pupils activated their knowledge and understanding of the previous lesson, as they were asked to demonstrate their own interpretation of what they had learned by writing “30 words in 30 seconds on what you learned from last lesson”.

Associated with the work of Vygotsky, social constructivism differs from constructivism in that it recognizes learning as a construction of knowledge through social processes, with the teacher acting as a facilitator of learning. Vygotsky unlike Piaget, did not recognise an individual pupil as a lone learner but as a part of a group, in which social interactions with peers and teachers are key to achieving an effective learning environment. Lesson three demonstrates the use of this pedagogical theory where students were asked to engage in group discussion to correctly identify parts of animal and plant cells, and to discuss what they had learned during the lesson. This theory suggests that the generation of understanding and successful learning can occur through these social interactions, as multiple learners communicate their thoughts and ideas in groups (Watkins, 2005; Wiliam, 2013). This is in contrast to a teacher driven, ordered, controlled and quiet classroom where learning may not be necessarily achieved. Studies suggest that social constructivism plays an important role in encouraging pupils to express and examine their ideas and the thoughts of their peers; gain a better understanding of the content taught; increase motivation and communication abilities (Watkins, 2005); and develop problem solving skills (Matsumura, et al., 2008; Corden, 2001).

Studies have suggested that providing context to the lesson content increases pupils’ engagement and motivation (Pritchard, 2009). Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig, a statutory requirement of teaching in schools, was integrated into lesson four for the students to see the relevance of the curriculum taught to them from a Welsh perspective. To contextualise the content of the lesson ‘Tissues and Organs’, pupils will be taught about the importance of organ donation in Wales. Incidental Welsh language will be included within each lesson to

encourage an increase in the use of Welsh. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig aims to provide pupils with increased awareness of the relevance of the Welsh language, and the history, culture, economic and environmental attributes of Wales (Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales, 2003; Welsh Government, 2013).

Successful teaching must consider and reflect the diverse learning abilities of all individuals. The term differentiation relates to the careful, logical and strategic manner in which lessons and resources are planned and organised. This would aim to support students who require further help or extra challenge, to assist all learners to achieve their personal targets, irrespective of their learning abilities (Dillon & Maguire, 2007). Differentiated learning outcomes, expressed as bronze, silver and gold awards, will feature at the start of each lesson throughout this SOW. Furthermore, the use of extension tasks for each activity allows higher ability students to be challenged, and appropriate differentiated strategies could allow less able students to access the curriculum (Capel, et al., 2013).

When taking learning abilities at all levels into consideration, ideas such as the ‘zone of proximal development (ZPD)’ and ‘scaffolding’, associated with Vygotsky and Bruner, have been used to promote successful learning for all individuals within a classroom. The ZPD is the ‘zone’ between the level at which a pupil is able to understand or do something of their own accord, and the potential level of performance the pupil may reach if they were provided with suitable teaching and/or support (Vygotsky, 1978). The provision of structured support or ‘scaffolding’ has the potential to move a struggling pupil to a higher level of accomplishment. Scaffolding is intended to be included throughout this SOW in order to support all learning and understanding capabilities. For example, pre-prepared microscopic slides will be provided to students in need of extra support and suggestions of organ names will be provided to help students to correctly identify the organ shown. Support will be given in all lessons, but pupils will be required to use their previous knowledge and the given ‘scaffold’ to come to their own end result. In addition, to promote an active and memorable learning experience within the classroom (Capel, 2005), the regular use of visual aids including PowerPoint, diagrams, pictures, teacher demonstrations, models, and physical objects will support the teaching and engage pupils’ attention in lessons (Capel, 2005).

This SOW was designed to incorporate the skills framework. This framework aims to offer guidance for teachers to facilitate the development of students’ thinking, communication and ICT skills (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008). The skills framework is prioritised with the aim of equipping students with skills which will be essential throughout their lives, including

in the future workplace. Thinking skills will be developed during problem solving tasks and through the application of knowledge to understand a new topic; an example of communication skills development is in lesson two where pupils will play a game of 'cells taboo'; and ICT skills will be developed when students complete the online research homework tasks to discover key information about organs and life, set during lessons one and four. In addition, the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was considered when creating this SOW, and is exercised when pupils complete computer based research homework tasks. The DCF aims to integrate cross-curricular digital competence to all learners to allow pupils to succeed in an increasingly digital world. This framework focuses on four vital elements: citizenship, interacting and collaboration, production, and data and computational thinking (Welsh Government, 2016).

The compulsory National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) puts into action the necessary and expected skills for pupils to progress across the whole curriculum (Welsh Government, 2014). This framework expects all pupils between the ages of 5-14 years to become accomplished in their oracy, writing, reading, and numerical reasoning. These skills should be integrated into lessons in all subjects (Estyn, 2012) and is a useful tool to enable teachers to closely monitor and assess pupils' performance (Welsh Government, 2013). The LNF will be evident throughout the SOW.

Starters and plenaries are a vital part of every science lesson. Starter tasks should determine the pupil's engagement and readiness to learn when concentration levels are high; contain clear aims and objectives of what is expected of the learners; and set the pace of the lesson. In addition, good plenaries will help to tie all of the lesson and what was learned together; provide an opportunity for reflection and to assess pupils learning (Brown & Brown, 2009).

In conclusion, a thorough representation of the learning and teaching principles and other elements stated in this essay, should encourage and support the learning of all students within the classroom environment. It will allow all students to achieve their full academic and personal potential, and enable students to gain full access to this section of the curriculum.

Part Bii

In light of my first professional teaching experiences, I am able to critically evaluate the planning and delivery of my microteaching session in comparison to the lessons I have taught since, to a variety of classes of different ability levels. This process of reflection will support my development as a trainee teacher and help me to improve my effectiveness in the future. To demonstrate this, within this essay I intend to highlight and describe any areas in my teaching practice which require improving, whilst suggesting strategies in which I may achieve this in reference to the QTS standards. I will also include an action plan which references the QTS standards (see Appendix 1), in order to support my development as a professional teacher.

Reflecting on my microteaching session, I have realised that I need to develop my effective questioning techniques. Once I had set the starter task for the pupils to attempt, I informed the pupils that one of the questions could be a more challenging question. However, I did not question the pupils of why they thought this was the case or probe the pupils for a response to my statement. This probing may have caused an open discussion between the pupils and therefore, promoted a more enhanced learning experience where the pupils are more engaged and motivated. Some studies have suggested that effective questioning is the key to aid pupils to clarify and appropriately verbalise their thought processes and help them develop a deeper understanding of the topic (Muijs & Reynolds, 2017). It has also been suggested that questioning may occur in a 'hierarchical sequence' from low to high level questioning where all learners' thinking and learning experiences are challenged (Morgan and Saxton, 2006). Therefore, I intend to use questioning of varying difficulty to allow all pupils to be challenged in their education (QTS S3.3.3). In addition, it is important for me as a teacher to consistently and strategically question pupils to receive a true awareness of pupils' level of knowledge and understanding in order to amend the SOW if the difficulty of the lesson is not suited to the pupil's abilities (QTS S3.2.1).

In my microteaching session, I attempted to differentiate the lesson so that all students, independent of attainment level and ability, were able to gain access to the curriculum and progress in their learning (Capel et al., 2013). Differentiation was included in my learning objectives which were presented in a bronze, silver and gold format at the beginning of the session, for which I received positive feedback from my tutor. On reflection, a more

challenging main task could have promoted more successful pupil development as most pupils completed the task with little difficulty. However, given the nature of the microteaching session, the task provided may have been appropriate for a year 7 key stage 3 class. My first teaching experience placement has highlighted the importance of differentiation within a lesson in ensuring that the individual needs of pupils are met, as there will be a wide variety of needs and ability within every class (O'Brien & Guiney, 2001). During my first placement, I have tried to include differentiation within lessons (QTS S3.3.4; QTS S1.1). For example, I have used the same 'bronze, silver and gold' format when presenting the learning objectives, and I have altered some activities in lessons by creating a more structured, teacher led approach to allow pupils of a lower level to progress in their learning. Scaffolding such as providing the beginning of sentences to pupils was implemented in a practical "laboratory safety" lesson (QTS S3.3.8). Additionally, I have included more challenging extension tasks within lessons such as rearranging a formula to calculate the magnification of an image.

When considering the individual needs of each learner (QTS S1.1), I have recently learned and gained experience of the importance of properly planning a lesson. An appropriately planned lesson should include: effective starters and plenaries; tasks which are based on the aims and objectives of the SOW (QTS S3.1.1); effective, bitesize tasks and resources to allow pupils to remain focused on their task and to progress in their learning and development (QTS S3.1.3). Throughout my teaching practice, I will continue to develop use of schemes of work and implement new strategies to allow pupils to reach their full potentials.

A properly planned lesson should also include elements of assessment for learning (AFL) (Black et al., 2003), to promote pupils learning and progression (QTS S3.1.2). AFL is useful for checking pupils understanding and for identifying any difficulties raised (Fautley & Savage, 2008) in order to appropriately amend the SOW (QTS S3.2.1; QTS S3.2.3). I have utilised a variety of different methods such as asking pupils to stick post-it notes of differing colours onto the whiteboard to express their level of understanding of the subject content. This simple task resulted in a rapid identification of those pupils who required additional help, or challenge, for that topic. The majority of pupils placed green post-it notes on the board which indicated a good level of understanding, while only a few used a red post-it note indicating that they had not yet understood the content of the lesson. This led me to increase the challenge of the following lesson. If more red post-its were placed, it would prompt me to

recap in the next lesson, implement more scaffolding and increase support. I will continue to improve and develop strategies to integrate AFL into my teaching practice by: providing a mixture of realistic yet challenging short and long term targets for pupils to achieve; use effective questioning techniques; regularly provide pupils with opportunities to discuss their progress and provide regular standardised tests throughout the academic year in order to appropriately to monitor pupils progress (Black, et al., 2004).

Motivating pupils to remain engaged with their work is key to achieving successful learning (QTS S1.2; QTS S1.3). Before my first professional teaching experience, I did not realise the extent to which pupils can become so easily distracted during a lesson. This experience was not the case during my microteaching session due to the mature nature of the task. I have implemented various strategies to motivate pupils to remain engaged and to inspire them to succeed. These strategies include: ensuring each lesson includes a contextualized starter task in order to hook pupil's attention; and circulating the room to identify any distracted pupils. In doing so, I am able to individually ask these pupils questions about the work set, and offer additional help, especially to those who may be unwilling to request such help if unprompted (Deci et al., 1999). During my teaching practice, I will aim to provide a supportive environment in which pupils are encouraged to remain on task in order to complete their work in a timely manner. It has been postulated that a warm, friendly and motivating teaching environment will positively impact pupil's engagement, learning and achievement (Anderson et al., 2004). It has also been suggested that with little motivation provided by the teacher, self-motivated students tend to complete their work and remain on task more than less self-motivated students that experience more motivation from the teacher (Muijs & Reynolds, 2017). Therefore, it is highly important for motivation to begin from within the students themselves.

Furthermore, an important aspect of a properly planned lesson includes the careful selection and preparation of engaging resources and teaching materials (QTS S3.1.3). Such resources include PowerPoint presentations, worksheets and models, all of which are beneficial to deliver a successful lesson and to facilitate effective learning. During my first teaching placement, I have learned the importance of choosing resources which contain suitable challenge in order to accommodate the individual needs of every learner and to inspire all students to reach their highest potential (QTS S3.2.4) (Allison, et al., 2015). Resources which are unengaging and provide a lack of or too much challenge could lead to pupils

becoming distracted and unmotivated. To successfully engage and motivate pupils, I will continue to provide good quality resources to promote a more positive learning experience

An element of teaching that I am continuously learning and developing is behaviour management (QTS S2.7). Issues of behaviour were not of concern during the microteaching task, however, my first professional teaching placement has helped me to recognise the need to have various effective behaviour management strategies to maintain positive behaviour in class. I have realised that to effectively discipline poor behaviour in the classroom, I should deal with the situation in the least intrusive manner possible to prevent the loss of a positive environment within the classroom. This could be achieved for example, by expressing a non-verbal cue through body language. The challenge of correcting misbehaviour later in the lesson will become increasingly problematic if this behaviour is not dealt with immediately and consistently. Therefore, I will aim to identify and deal with any misbehaviour immediately and show consistency in order to prevent any negative behaviour from spreading across the classroom. In addition, feedback provided for my first observation lesson has caused me to realise the importance of using different tones of voice when disciplining a class, as opposed to a raised voice. With more teaching experience, I will therefore aim to use a variety of different tones of voice to encourage positive behaviour. However, if a pupil persistently displays poor behaviour then I will deploy a one-to-one approach after the lesson to discuss the pupils behaviour and to offer support to improve this matter (Rogers, 2015). Furthermore, the social constructivist theory suggests that the promotion of good behaviour by means of vocal praise and reward, is one of the keys to reducing negative behaviour (Drewery & Kecskemeti, 2010).

Upon reflection, my microteaching session may have been improved by an increased use of the skills framework and the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) to promote the pupil's thinking, communication and ICT skills (Welsh Government, 2016) (QTS S3.3.10). Although the use of ICT skills was included in the scheme of work, it was not utilised during the microteach session. ICT skills and the DCF aims to create competent ICT skills in all learners, in preparation for an increasingly digital workplace (Donaldson, 2015). Given the time restraint of the microteach task, it was difficult to integrate ICT skills. However, I have arranged for pupils to use their ICT skills in a physics computer lab based research task to create a presentation about space.

Feedback was offered from my peers in relation to my microteaching session to help me reflect on and develop my teaching practice. One of the targets set by my peers was to utilise and include Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and ESDGC (QTS S2.2 QTS S3.3.2c; QTS S3.3.2d; QTS S3.3.15). Although the SOW produced did include the use of these elements, it was challenging to incorporate them into the microteaching session. In future, I aim to continuously develop strategies to include Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and ESDGC within lesson plans to enhance and contextualise the subject content. Ways in which I may address the ESDGC component include: keeping up to date with relevant topics involving the links between social, economic and environmental affairs, and between our individual lives and other people across the globe (Welsh Government, 2008). Additionally, I will incorporate Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig by researching links between the subject content and Welsh history, culture and industry to provide context within the lesson to make my pupils' learning experience more relevant and meaningful (Pritchard, 2009).

In conclusion, during my teacher training, I believe that I have prepared and delivered engaging, stimulating, and differentiated lessons which have challenged and progressed the learning of pupils of differing ages and abilities. I have highlighted my strengths and weaknesses throughout this essay and have included an action plan with the aim of indicating the way in which I shall continue to grow and develop during my training experience to become a competent and enthusiastic teacher.

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ACTION PLAN - Objectives and programme for Term 1

Name: Hannah Macgrgeor

Subject: Biology with Science (Secondary)

Date: 6/11/18

OBJECTIVES (relate to QTS Standards where appropriate).	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	SUCCESS CRITERIA	TARGET DATE
Develop methods to include ESDGC Y Curriculum Cymreig within my lesson plans. (S3.3.2/S3.3.15)	To research and discover relevant topics and resources which contain Welsh aspects to include in my lessons. This could help to enhance lessons and to extend the educational experience for all pupils. Identify lessons in the SOW where I can specifically enhance pupil knowledge of the ESDGC.	Appropriate evidence should be found within my lesson plans, SOW, powerpoints and lesson comment booklet which will show my development, incorporation and utilisation of ESDGC and Y Curriculum Cymreig within lessons. An increased motivation and enthusiasm expressed by pupils should also be apparent.	End of PTE1.
Develop strategies to differentiate my lessons appropriately (S3.3.4).	To identify which pupils require additional help and/or challenge and observe my school mentor to see how he provides differentiation within lessons. Ask my mentor how I may develop my differentiation strategies in lessons.	My lesson plans and resources should show clear evidence of differentiated tasks and use of scaffolding to help all pupils to gain access to the curriculum. I should receive sufficient feedback in my lesson comments booklet from my mentor that I have considered his advice and acted upon it to include differentiation within my lessons.	End of PTE1.
To develop new, effectual questioning methods.	As this was a target set by my subject tutor, I will seek advice about ways I can develop my use of higher order questions. To research different questioning methods to implement into my lessons and to observe my school mentor.	To receive more detailed and in depth answers from the class by the use of more effective questioning. There must be evidence that I have taken into consideration the advice given to me by my mentor in my lesson comments booklet. My mentor should also be able to recognise evidence of varied questioning methods.	End of PTE1.

