

Level 7 pre course activities

Welcome everyone! All of us look forward to meeting you all and working with you on the Level 7 programme this year. Here we describe the intent behind our L7 curriculum as well as some thinking and questions to get you started.

Teacher education has entered a new era. The White Paper Educational Excellence Everywhere (DfE, 2016) signalled significant policy reform with new routes into teaching and the emphasis on a school-led direction. In addition, the drive for even higher standards brought implications for the preparation of teachers entering the profession. Further Government initiatives followed with the publication of the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019) for newly qualified teachers entering the profession.

The pandemic and associated closure of many schools has provided challenges but also fresh opportunities for teachers, trainees and pupils in schools. The new climate brings greater emphasis on evidencing pupil progress and for advanced pedagogical skills (including blended learning pedagogies) and the need for a new, learner-centred, impactful model of professional learning for beginning teachers. This runs in parallel with national and international debates on the types of knowledge and the nature of skills required for successful teaching in a global society.

All of the above has provided Leeds Trinity University with an opportunity to provide programmes of professional study at L7 that are not only responsive to change, but which lead change. The benefits to individual teachers, to schools and to the teaching profession of M level Initial Teacher Education shows that:

- Teaching should be an aspirational and inspirational career
- Becoming a teacher is to become an educator and community leader
- Teachers need to be able to draw on research and evidence-based practice
- Teachers with research skills can bring about change

In advance of the Level 7 work together, I'd like you to undertake the following pre-programme tasks which will orient you towards the intention for our L7 modules

Task 1.

One of the reasons trainees state for becoming a teacher is to contribute to your community in a meaningful way. Teaching is one of the most direct ways to make an impact, and if you are driven by the desire to help those around you, being a teacher is an invaluable contribution. For example, perhaps you grew up in a high-needs area and are personally connected to the struggle of students who come from low-income neighbourhoods and who may go to schools with little funding. Maybe an amazing teacher changed your life when you were younger, and you want to share that with a new generation of pupils. This sort of perspective allows you to recognise how much of a difference a knowledgeable and critically reflexive teacher can make with their pupils.

Read this poem by Taylor Mali available here – what are some of the key messages that Mali is trying to communicate about the teaching potential for both teachers and their pupils?

[What Teachers Make - Taylor Mali](#)

Mali, T. (2002) *What Teachers Make. What Learning Leaves*. Hanover Press.

Task 2.

Your first academic module is on the topic of inclusion. Inclusion is a concept that is interpreted in a range of ways. Diversity and inclusion are also used interchangeably, but there is recognised agreement that it is about removal of barriers to learning, about participation not exclusion, that it involves supporting people from different groups and identifying different strengths, needs and abilities.

It is very important to us that your programme includes you. We want you to bring your *Whole Selves* onto your programme to build a sense of believing and belonging to a community that promotes the diversity of our student body.

Naziya O'Reilly May 2023

Create a one-minute self-portrait in video form that tells the story of who you are. You will receive a link when you enrol on the programme to upload these onto our module pages. You can see an example from one of your tutors here

<https://youtube.com/shorts/aMKVUo2oEDQ?feature=share>

Remember to include your

- **name and pronunciation**
- **heritage or where you're from**
- **anything you would like us to know about you**

Task 3.

Typically, in universities, assessment is through a variety of modes: essay, portfolio, presentations, reports, reflective accounts and exams as some examples. Some, but not all of you, will have been assessed on essay writing. Some, but not all of you, will have written dissertations. Thinking (and reading and writing) critically is the core of your success at Level 7. Critical thinking is not a negative stance. It simply means weighing up the arguments and evidence for and against before coming to a conclusion.

Below are some words and phrases that describe a person who thinks critically.

Logical	Reflective
Creative	Open-minded
Curious	Questioning
Rigorous	Objective
Checking facts	Gathering facts and ideas
Comparing	Contrasting
Challenging views	Supporting views

Choose three words and reflect in what ways do you think each of these qualities makes a person critical? Can you think of a recent example in your life when you showed this quality?

GOOD LUCK THIS YEAR AND ENJOY THE PGCE LEVEL 7 WORK!
Dr Naziya O'Reilly