MEASURING QUALITY IN INITIAL INTEACHER EDUCATION (MQUITE)

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Lack of appropriate ways of assessing the quality of ITE
A changing context
Need for sector to be proactive

Scottish Government commissioned longitudinal study
MEASURING QUALITY IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION (MQUITE)

- **Funded** by Scottish Government and **supported** by GTCS, partners include the Universities of:
  - Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Highlands and Islands, Stirling, Strathclyde and West of Scotland.

- **Aim of project:**
  - to develop, collaboratively, a framework for assessing ITE quality and to use it as part of a five-year cohort study

- **Research questions:**
  1. How can quality in ITE be measured in a Scottish, context appropriate way?
  2. What does this measuring tell us about aspects of quality in different ITE routes in Scotland?
THE LITERATURE REVIEW

• Scope and methodology:
  • conceptual review;
  • publications in English;
  • published since 2005.

1. Contexts and trends in the field of ITE
2. Approaches to conceptualizing and measuring ITE quality
3. ITE quality frameworks and studies
COMMONLY ASSESSED COMPONENTS OF ITE QUALITY (FEUER ET AL., 2013)

1. Admissions and recruitment criteria
2. Quality and substance of instruction
3. Quality of student teaching experience
4. Faculty qualifications
5. Effectiveness in preparing new teachers who are employable in the field
6. Success in preparing high-quality teachers
1. ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

- Associated with *selectivity*, reflects quality and/or rigour?
- High academic achievement on entry = ‘high quality’ recruits?
- Teacher effectiveness influenced by other factors too, e.g. institutional location, prestige, status of profession locally, labour market needs etc. (Labree, 2010)
- ‘High quality’ recruits often leave the profession in higher numbers
2. QUALITY AND SUBSTANCE OF INSTRUCTION

- Frequently measured through analysis of programme syllabi
- Can identify inconsistencies and gaps in course work and integration with fieldwork
- Assignments and course materials can also be analysed, but require consistently-applied criteria
- BUT such measures may not reflect what is actually taught, or its quality and effectiveness
3. QUALITY OF STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

• Fieldwork policies
  • Reveal programme design, but not necessarily student experience or its impact

• Qualifications of placement school mentors
  • Doesn’t identify the quality of the mentoring

• Observations of students teaching
  • Requires shared rubric for assessment, and consistent application

• Surveys of teacher candidates
  • Perception studies; perception may change over time

• BUT these are short-term, immediate measurements
4. FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

• Demographic information re. percentage of Faculty: with higher degrees; full or part time; permanent or temporary

• Teacher educator quality less frequently assessed (Snoek et al., 2010)
  • Neglect of this aspect is ironic, given the global consensus that ‘teachers matter’, and by extension, therefore, ‘teacher educators matter’ (Goodwin, et al., 2014)
5. EMPLOYABILITY OF NEW TEACHERS

• Commonly measured by: pass rates on licensure and data on hiring and retention
  • Sometimes linked to programme duration and type (Ingersoll et al., 2012) and students’ satisfaction with programme experience (De Angelis et al., 2013)

• Tanto et al. (2016) claim programmes most likely to show positive employment outcomes have:
  • Resources to invest in longitudinal efforts
  • Strong social/institutional networks to support field experience
  • Guaranteed employment at end of programme
6. SUCCESS IN PREPARING HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS

• Teacher performance assessments at end of programme and/or end 1st year teaching

• Graduate/employer surveys

• BUT Tattö et al (2016) warn of the assumption that higher levels of satisfaction necessarily indicate higher levels of quality

• Mixed evidence on the accuracy of principals’ assessments of teacher effectiveness (Coggshall et al, 2012; Jacob & Lefgren, 2008)

• Value-added approaches to measuring impact on pupil learning: number of limitations
KEY MESSAGES IN DESIGNING A QUALITY EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

• There is no one ’proven’ way to measure quality in ITE

• ‘Quality’ is a context-driven concept

• Any evaluation framework requires a clear and shared articulation of its purpose

• More than one type of evidence is necessary (e.g. surveys, documentary analysis, observation), as is assessment of more than one aspect (e.g. programme structures, teacher educator quality, student teacher performance)
IMPLICATIONS FOR MQUI TE

- Meso-level study is a potentially very valuable contribution to the field

- Importance of a longitudinal study

- Clarity around key aspects of our context and purpose of the evaluation project

- Importance of:
  - a learning and development orientation
  - voice for the sector
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