

Title Preparing Future Teachers of Business and Economics

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UoW Affiliated Authors	Cashmore, Yvonne
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EBEA article

Preparing future teachers of Business and Economics

Whether you are seeking to recruit ECTs with a specialism in Business or Economics, mentor Business and Economics trainee teachers in school or work for a training provider, you will be impacted by the changes in Initial Teacher Training. Following the Carter Review of ITT (2015) and subsequently the ITT Market Review report (2021), teacher training providers had to meet new criteria to gain accreditation to train teachers from September 2024. The ITT Criteria (2024, p20-21) outlines the key elements required, which includes, but is not limited to:

- a sequenced curriculum, based on evidence, and which includes all elements from the ITT Core Content Framework (CCF) as a minimum, with emphasis on subject specific training.
- experiences to enable trainees to critically analyse theory, research and expert practice.
- purposeful integration of components of the curriculum with teaching practice, ensuring that expert mentors give feedback.
- identified parts of the ITT curriculum that will be delivered as intensive training and practice, with a focus on pivotal areas of the ITT curriculum.

To strengthen the intersection between theory and practice, the introduction of intensive training and practice (ITAP) introduced a requirement for deliberate practice. This required training providers to design a new approach to training working with trainees and expert colleagues in partnership schools (Initial teacher training (ITT): criteria and supporting advice, 2024).

The PGCE Secondary course at University of Worcester piloted their first ITAP, with a focus on explanations and modelling, for one week in September 2023. Explanations and modelling were selected as a foundational aspect of the ITT curriculum in the early stages of the course. The ITAP was sequenced in the first phase of taught sessions where our curriculum focus is on memory and how pupils learn, along with planning lessons. It enabled trainees to be supported in subject knowledge development and develop clarity in the level of detail required for the subject concept being explained or modelled.

The work of Grossman (2018) and the National Institute of Teaching provided a structure for ITAP in the Intensive training and practice pilot: evaluation report (Marshall et al, 2023 p15).

Figure 3 Five-element framework developed by NIoT and informed by Grossman (2018)

INTRODUCE	ANALYSE	PREPARE	ENACT	ASSESS
<i>Learning about the theory of teaching and learning.</i>	<i>Using representations to analyse expert teaching.</i>	<i>Using approximations to practice and get feedback.</i>	<i>Receiving support to apply learning in the classroom.</i>	<i>Tracking trainees' growing knowledge and skills.</i>
e.g. Lectures	Lesson observations	Instructional rehearsals	Instructional coaching	Lesson observations
Seminars	Video deconstructions	Scenario planning	Team teaching	Classroom artefacts
Assigned readings	Classroom artefacts	Role plays	Small group teaching	Quizzes
Podcasts	Lesson transcripts	Case studies	Co-planning	Portfolios
Interviews	Expert modelling	Digital approximations	Lesson study	Approximations

For trainees at University of Worcester, the first day of the ITAP week was spent in university in mixed subject professional studies groups, introducing trainees to the 4 step approach for explaining new content as underpinned by Rosenshine (2012) Shimamura (2018) Van de Pol et al (2015) and Sweller et al (2019). Each of the 4 steps had related strategies outlined in The Teaching and Learning Playbook (Feely and Karlin, 2022) or Teaching WalkThrus (Sherrington and Caviglioli 2020) which

enabled trainees, expert colleagues, and mentors in placement to access the strategies and underpinning theory. On the second day business and economics trainees used digital approximations to see business teachers explaining a concept including demand, opportunity cost, and cash flow forecasting and discussed key components. They learned about concrete to concept and scaffolded modelling of business concepts and explored subject pedagogy in the use of context and real business examples as part of explanations. On the third and fourth days the cohort visited a partnership school, as detailed in the next section, before returning to university on Friday for reflection, refinement of technique and further feedback.

The next sections of this article explore the experiences of the ITAP pilot from the perspectives of a partnership school, and from two trainees.

Debbie shares her experience as an expert school colleague delivering ITAP.

As an experienced subject mentor, I was approached to lead and coordinate the first of the Intensive Teaching and Practice (ITAP) school experiences for the 2023/2024 cohort of business and economics students. The business department felt genuinely honoured and privileged to be asked to host the event and excited at the prospect of the opportunity.

In preparation for the ITAP experience, which was to be hosted on two consecutive days, in September I met with the university PGCE Business with Economics Lead, and the Professional Mentor. During the meeting we discussed the four principal strategies to be evidenced to support 'Explanations and Modelling' and the wider literature and research that had been conducted to justify the identified techniques – the strategies included:

- "Why" First
- Embedding New Vocabulary
- Scaffolded Modelling
- I do, we do, you do.

On concluding the meeting we had devised a schedule for the two-day delivery of the ITAP and I departed feeling more than equipped to share with my departmental team the principles for the ITAP delivery, the strategies that were to be employed and programme of delivery for the two-day experience.

The programme had carefully considered the specifics of the ITAP, timings, logistics and rooming, staffing timetables and commitments, strategies to be rehearsed and the fundamental opportunity for trainees to receive expert feedback and to reflect on their personal and professional experiences from the day. During the first day, trainees experienced their first paired delivery of a taught lesson, having planned this at university, and received feedback and advice on how they explained and modelled a key concept using the strategies rehearsed in university.

The ITAP days gave trainees an opportunity to observe the delivery of 'explanations and modelling' strategies that they had planned on the 4P's of the Marketing Mix in a genuine classroom setting by an experienced professional. Trainees then observed the same lesson being taught for the second time; this time they had to undertake the role of a teaching assistant in the classroom to develop their confidence in delivering the strategies. The trainees subsequently taught their planned lesson in pairs to either a Year 9 GCSE Business or NCFE Business teaching group. The two days concluded with an opportunity for the trainees to receive expert feedback and to reflect on the process.

From a school perspective we highly valued the experiences gained through the delivery of the ITAPs. As established teaching staff, we reflected on our own teaching practice and felt privileged to be able to observe the trainees delivering the strategies in action and to then be able to provide expert feedback on what we had witnessed. I am now excited at the opportunity to be able to deliver taught repeat this opportunity with future cohorts.

Bonnie reflects on the impact of feedback.

Our first task during the ITAP week was to work on our lesson plans and the content that would be delivered using the identified strategies. We were placed in groups and began working as small teams to define our lesson structure. Peer feedback on our lesson plans and resources was a welcome start to the process as we were able to idea-share sparking creativity and innovation on business topics. The feedback highlighted blind spots in our planning and areas where we could improve. The variety of individuals in our cohort provided input from diverse perspectives offering a well-rounded view of our teaching effectiveness. Bringing the theory to life was essential for this task and having a supportive cohort of business trainees to validate our planned teaching methods worked well.

Having feedback from our university tutor was also essential in this process and provided us with expert guidance on our lesson plans and content. We gained valuable insights and guidance based on expert professional knowledge which helped us to improve our explanation and modelling techniques. We adjusted our methods and lesson plans to ensure the smooth running of the lesson and planned content. Positive feedback from our tutor enhanced our confidence fostering a sense of self-assurance in our abilities.

Expert colleagues in school gave us valuable feedback both prior to teaching the lesson ourselves and after we had taught the lesson. Sending the lesson plan and content through via email to the school helped us to understand if we had the tone correct and activities set at a suitable level for the abilities of the pupils in the class. We also had feedback from the teachers after we had observed them teaching our lessons. This was a unique experience whereby the content and resources were designed by us but taught by a professional teacher. It was great to see how they dealt with our lesson content and helped us understand the strengths and areas for improvement more effectively. The most important learning was how questioning, as part of explaining and modelling, can be used to encourage deeper learning and also the use of multiple case studies throughout to bring ideas to life. Feedback after our lesson was also invaluable allowing us to see where we could improve our explain and modelling teaching techniques. Two areas of focus that greatly impacted my teaching was the use of teacher movement within the classroom and also the positives of setting the tone for the class at the start of a lesson.

The feedback received throughout the process had a huge impact on how I taught my lessons during my placement. It has allowed me to see where I excelled and where I needed to improve my techniques. My questioning technique as part of explaining and modelling has undergone significant refinement as my proficiency in this aspect has advanced, largely influenced by the feedback provided by my mentor. Similarly, the use of a visualiser to model exemplar examination question answers has been an area that I have developed.

Overall, the feedback received at each stage of the ITAP process has greatly enhanced my growth as a teacher. The expert guidance and personalised support have given me opportunities for continuous improvement. I have become more reflective, adaptable and effective in the classroom as a result. I have taken the strategies in my teaching planning and delivery at every opportunity.

Joe reflects on the trainee experience of a week of intensive training and practice.

Prior to the ITAP explanation and modelling, I had an underdeveloped understanding of the topic. Although I understood their importance, my knowledge of their implementation was lacking. The ITAP week worked to bridge this gap. The week consisted of a blend of taught university sessions, practical teaching opportunities and reflections.

Monday began with university sessions in which strategies for explanations and modelling were introduced. This was supported with both literature and examples, helping the concepts to feel real. Whilst these sessions began more generalised, we promptly congregated as subject groups to embed the concepts in the context of our subjects, business in my case.

Learning about explanations and modelling with my specialist subject as the backdrop was highly beneficial. Our focus as business teachers this week was on planning and teaching a lesson that utilised explaining and modelling practices. This presented as the greatest challenge of the week. Personally, this challenge was less due to the use of the strategies and more because it would be my first student-facing lesson.

The lesson was delivered on the second of two days in the business department of a local school. The first time planning a lesson can be a daunting task as we need to consider the content, activities and delivery. However, being asked to plan the lesson with the explicit use of explaining and modelling retrospectively eased this burden as we knew what we needed to do.

My lesson, taught in a pair, was on product, as part of marketing mix for a year 9 GCSE class. Knowing that the lesson needed to include deliberate explaining and modelling practices made planning and delivering the lesson more straightforward. As a pair, we designed numerous short tasks. By explaining and modelling these tasks to students, using those ideas developed earlier in the week at university, meant the lesson was more successful than it otherwise may have been. It transformed a challenging moment into one of great satisfaction and success, helped in part to the tailored preparation.

Closing out the week, my understanding of explanations and modelling had improved tenfold. I felt more aware of the importance of the practices and took confidence in the fact I was now equipped with an arsenal of explanations and modelling strategies. This confidence was consolidated further by the context of each strategy. By learning about explanation and modelling within both theoretical and practicable environments, I felt my understanding running deeper than ever before.

Reflecting on the ITAP week eight months on, I can truly appreciate the skills I developed during the week. I continue to employ strategies such as scaffold modelling, worked examples, live modelling, concrete to concept and I do, we do, you do. Learning about the merits of these strategies before seeing them in practice, and eventually using them myself, are what I believe were the main benefits of the explanations and modelling ITAP week.

Final thoughts

Overall, the ITAP model enabled the use practice-able strategies in explanations and modelling. As trainees have input from experts in university and in school they can trial techniques and strategies in a safe environment. Trainees can make explicit the underlying evidence base and are confident to share their knowledge and skills in explaining and modelling business and economic concepts to

classes. The ITAP in explaining and modelling also enabled trainees to be supported to develop and extend their decision-making capabilities in planning and teaching business and economics.

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Authors:

Yvonne Cashmore, PGCE Business with Economics Lead and Regional Training Hub Coordinator, University of Worcester

Debbie Berry, Head of Business, Hanley Castle High School, and Associate Lecturer at University of Worcester.

Bonnie Siviter, PGCE Business trainee, University of Worcester

Joe Vickers, PGCE Business trainee, University of Worcester