



Student-teacher Story 5



Read through this story and see what you notice in this student-teacher's story.

The issue:

Having done my Master's degree in India, I was completely unaware of how the assignments work in Education here in England, especially for the PGCE. I have traditionally done exams and always passed with flying colours. Our first formative assessment for the PGCE was about defining a pedagogy and how we implement it in the classroom. Very confidently, I started writing the assignment and read through books, websites, and journals. Once finished, I submitted it and felt pleased with my efforts not knowing that my way of presenting the literature was not what is expected of me. When the feedback came through, I was reading it in disbelief as the suggestions were not something I expected. I had not been successful in doing enough research, went outside of the context, and had not used Harvard Referencing. For a person who has always been among the top few students it was difficult for me to digest the feedback and I lost hope.

What happened?

However, I gathered myself together and spoke to my professional mentor, teacher mentor, and subject tutor. All of them gave similar feedback which shows how the university and school operate in sync for our benefit. Once I had feedback and everyone showed me examples of how to present the literature, I felt more confident and I started reading and researching more. Our first summative assignment was on creating a single resource sheet for a key stage. By this time, I was already practising the pedagogy in my classroom and adapting my teaching more confidently. Based on the common feedback from the university and school, I had already started consolidating resources to reference from books, articles, journals, and online platforms. The assignment started to look structured and made more sense. I was in constant touch with staff at the university with any questions that I had, or any doubts. By the time I finished the assignment I had a clear understanding of the framework and referencing. This would have been impossible without the support of colleagues, fellow students, and university tutors. The feedback and marks this time were reassuring and boosted my confidence.

What was learnt?

I realised that a similar strategy can be used in the classroom also. I was teaching year 8's HTML and we aimed to create a webpage. I used the school resources to teach them for the first two lessons. When I asked them questions for an informal assessment, I realised that they had not developed enough knowledge to create a basic webpage. I discussed this with my teacher mentor and suggested that the students needed one lesson to revisit and recap the basics as I was not happy letting them struggle. It was agreed that I could use a single lesson to recap. I created a consolidated resource with a reference to the websites being used. I modelled syntax on the board and each student had to make sure they worked on it and sent me screenshots of their work. This enabled me to show that my strategy had worked.

The structure of the course is planned in such a way that it enables me to get ample opportunity to act on feedback, change what does not work, and implement the revised practice in my classroom. In the last year, I have emerged as a better practitioner with strong subject knowledge, and as a confident writer. I have also become more resilient.



Working in partnership

The student-teacher noted that 'the university and school operate in sync'. This is an example of good partnership practice, experienced by the student-teacher, around supporting the writing of assignments.

- 1. As a centre-based teacher educator, are there areas of practice which you think would benefit from being shared more across the partnership?
- 2. As a school-based mentor, are there areas of practice which you think would benefit from being shared more across the partnership?
- 3. What would be the benefits of each of these suggestions? How could you advance these ideas into practice?



Taking it further: The purpose of your partnership

As a partnership you know what you do, and to some extent you know how you do it, but have you spent time considering why you do what you do?

See the 18 minute video by Simon Sinek: [The Golden Circle](#).



- Why does your partnership do what it does, in the way it does it?
- What are your underlying values and beliefs?
- What is your vision for the kind of teachers you want to grow in your partnership?
- What characteristics are you seeking to develop?

Our Partnership Vision

How to develop a shared partnership vision of your purpose

- Invite contributions from all the participants in the partnership who want to contribute.
- Pull contributions together into something that people can review and comment on.
- Work on a final version that everyone feels enthusiastic about.
- Match up the different ways of expressing your vision. This will involve important relationship work and compromise that can set the foundation for a strong partnership.
- Launch your partnership vision in a significant way and make sure that all participants are aware of the launch.
- Constantly work to raise the vision as part of everything you do – mentor development, partnership meetings, teaching students, assessment. This is your underlying purpose and you need everyone to genuinely embrace it.
- In times of change come back to the partnership vision as an anchor to help you as you may need to let go of structures that have worked well and been refined over many years, and keep on asking what is the best way to meet the purpose of our partnership?