Teacher Education Professional Diploma

Cohort 1 Evaluation Report

November 2017

TEPD PY1 Annual Evaluation Report 20186/17

Introduction

This report presents the findings from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) processes designed to gather information about the first of its kind in Jordan Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD), analyse these data and find out about the different components of the programme, and inform further development of the diploma through a set of [recommendations](). These key messages encompassed several areas of the TEDP course such as: content and organisational changes; school – academy partnership; and M&E procedures. Guided by the impact indicators framework drawn from examples of best teacher education practices in 43 countries, the evaluation incorporated a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data from the first cohort of student teachers, teacher educators, and school mentors.

From the collected data, it was clear that the enormous amount of work which went into setting up and running the diploma was matched only by the enthusiasm, commitment and engagement of all involved. Their mission, best described in their own words, went far beyond delivering a training programe:

- *"there is so much excitement, so much hope for the future for the country"*;
- *"This program has huge importance for our country. In even just one year it gave us lots of experience, it made us stronger to face everything and our dream will finally come true, we will do something for our country"*;
- *"Joining the QRTA was the best thing that happened to me in my life. I'm doing something to change the education in Jordan"*;
- *"I believe in Her Majesty's vision that we should make change to education in Jordan. Education is the best investment. It flourishes the minds, it gives roots to our new generations. Giving young people very good education is the best we can do, they can then decide what's right and what's wrong, they can get better jobs, they can communicate better with people"*;
- *"We're building a future, this is our goal, to have teachers in Jordan standing up and talking about education in this manner, to approach a career in education in an academic manner with exploration and inquiry like student teachers did in the last days in their posters and presentations, this is revolution in Jordan"*.

Acknowledgement

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team for the Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD) would like to acknowledge the efforts of all parties who participated in the accomplishment of the evaluation report for the first cohort of students. This work would not have been possible without the support of the Ministry of Education (MoE), our main partner, who facilitated the cooperation between the TEPD team and other stakeholders. The collaborating public and private schools hosted the student teachers, while school mentors played a vital role in developing student teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching and their feedback was integral to the monitoring and evaluating of this programme. The depth and breadth of information provided by teacher educators at Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) was vital to this process and encompassed informative feedback about their teaching experiences, different aspects of their work with student teachers and procedures guiding this work. Student teachers shared their views and opinions of the programme and were in this way instrumental to ensuring the highest quality of the diploma. Lastly, the administrative and academic support at Queen Rania Teacher Academy, Queen Rania Foundation (QRF), and University College London Institute of Education (UCL/IOE) and their close work with the research team brought this evaluation report into success.

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1. Key Messages

Recommendations for changes within the TEPD programme

Curricular:

- Make greater use of modelling teaching practice within the academy and School Experience Practicums (SEPs) – stronger links between modules and classroom practice.
- Strengthen and unify the feedback given by teacher educators, conduct more reflective meetings, allocate more time to meet teacher educators and clarify instructions.
- Create more opportunities for purposeful group work and sharing ideas.

Supporting student teachers' academic abilities:

- Create more opportunities for student teachers to develop their technology skills.
- Create more opportunities for student teachers to improve their academic literacy, establish a library for the use of student teachers, teacher educators and school mentors.
- Create more opportunities for student teachers to develop their English skills and overcome the language barrier.
- Further work with student teachers on time management and the use of body language in the classroom – reiteration of these issues throughout the programme.
- Sensitise student teachers to the issues of plagiarism and employ procedures to monitor and sanction such occurrences.

Providing support to TEPD former students:

- Support student teachers after their graduation, and during their work as teachers in schools by creating a network where they could share their experiences, views and ideas
- Ask former student teachers to share their success stories with next cohorts of students.
- Create video recordings of excellent teaching practice by former student teachers to further expand the use of active pedagogy and modelling.

Training for school mentors

- Unified initial and ongoing training and support for school mentors to enable them to fully understand and engage with the principles of TEPD, develop mentors' interpersonal, as well as professional skills to be more cooperative and helpful to student teachers.

- Develop mentors' capacity to adapt to the new instructional practices, Teachers' Standards and pedagogies, and to provide effective feedback. Involve school mentors in regular meetings between student teachers and teacher educators after classroom observations to further share the vision of education by TEPD and their mentoring skills such as observing and giving feedback.

Improvements to the organisation of the SEPs:

- Unify the process of completing the Observation Forms by teacher educators and the Feedback Form by school mentors, provide mentors with clear guidance and training on how to complete these forms accurately. Enable electronic completion of all forms.
- Ensure more consistent approach to how school mentors observe and comment student teachers' classroom practice.
- Develop a SEP protocol and guidance and share it with mentors and school managements a shared, establish means of communication between all stakeholders.
- Clarify the role of student teachers during the practicum with the mentor and the school management, for example the given tasks, instruction, participation in assemblies, extra-curricular activities, duty breaks, marking, etc.
- Conduct introductory meetings between student teachers and mentors before starting the school experience in order to get introduced to each other, and exchange emails and numbers for any inquires or communications during the program.
- Improve day-to-day communication and organization during the SEPs – establish who is responsible for arranging communication between student teachers, mentors, and teacher educators.
- Ensure effective communication about timetabling teacher educators' visits to schools and informing school mentors about this to enable them to fully participate in these visits and exchange experiences with teacher educators.
- Build closer relationship between QRTA members and school mentors. Develop a platform which allows all mentors to share their experience and communicate with TEPD team. Create an online professional community of mentors of the same subjects with appropriate teacher educators (Facebook or WhatsApp), organise periodical meetings (in person or through phone or Skype) between mentors and teacher educators.
- Ensure closer match of student teachers with mentors in terms of subject specialisation and the levels and stages of education.

Course organisation:

- Ensure timely completion of all prescribed documentation by teacher educators and school mentors – an electronic system to monitor this.
- Digitalise of all documentation to make it readily available at the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Recommendations for changes to M&E procedures

The M&E component for this pilot year provided insights for future planning. Findings of the evaluation led to a separate document which identified the limitations within the process and set out recommendations for planning M&E activities in the future years. A number of adaptations in the monitoring and evaluation processes will be put in place for the second year of the programme to enable periodical updates for the course management and to ensure more efficient work of the M&E team.

Parallel to monitoring and evaluation, a process of curriculum review took place to inform the continuous improvement of the programme. The findings of the review are already being implemented in preparation for the next academic year.

All the recommendations were shared with relevant teams and are being addressed accordingly.

Action for improvement taken by TEPD management

TEPD management are currently working on an effective remedial plan and several actions were taken based on recommendations for the program improvement, as well as to close any gaps between mentors, student teachers, and TEPD team. As in the previous cohort, many actions are being initiated to solve the immediate problems.

Mentors training program has been enhanced by unifying it for all school mentors. In addition to conducting ongoing mentors training at least three times a year this training will be consistent in terms of time, content, and frequency to make sure that all mentors have the same knowledge about the mentoring process.

To improve the organization of the SEPs, TEPD management will ensure electronic completion of all assessment forms. Tutorials videos on VLE to support the understanding on how to deal with these forms and tools will be prepared and distributed to all school mentors. The visits of teacher educators in schools will be planned ahead of time to give school mentors opportunity to plan their work in school to make sure that they are fully engaged in the process.

TEPD management will clarify the role of student teachers during the practicum in the handbook and teacher educators for each subject specific will follow these. In addition, a mentors' data base will be built which would help in closer matching of mentors and student teachers in term of subject specialization and level of education. The communication protocol will be revised to enhance the direct communication between mentors, student teachers, and teacher educators and online professional community of mentors and teacher educators of the same subject will be established.

2. Context

2.1 Introduction to the Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD)

Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) launched its Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD) in 2016 - the first of its kind in the country. This international partnership includes the Ministry of Education and University of Jordan. The development of the programme has also been supported by University College London (UCL) Institute of Education (IOE), within their capacity as education specialists providing technical assistance to QRTA. Successful completion of this programme will lead to accreditation by QRTA and the University of Jordan.

The diploma aims at improving and advancing education in Jordan by providing student teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards teaching and learning in order to allow them to teach across a variety of age ranges. Student teachers get a chance to benefit from the experience and knowledge of teacher educators at QRTA, as well as from the school mentors during School Experience Practicums (SEPs) (SEP1, 2 and 3). It prepares student teachers for the challenges of the classroom, and channels their talents to transform schools into the birthplaces of innovation, leadership, intellectual curiosity, and civic participation among Jordanian youth. The TEPD is a historical turning point for Jordanian teachers. The TEPD vision is not only to create and sustain a pipeline of highly qualified and motivated teachers in Jordan, but to extend support to regional partners whose commitment to quality education aligns with our own.

The initial cohort for Programme Year 1 (2016/17 intake) was close to 179 student teachers, and covered the subjects of English, Science and Mathematics. In future years, it is expected to expand to more subjects in the curriculum.

2.2 Introduction to Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

QRTA's belief in evidence-based decisions led to the establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) department to provide services in designing and developing appropriate M&E systems, and research studies. QRTA recognises the importance of M&E in the educational field to ensure appropriate changes are planned and implemented based on the outcomes of assessment and resources are focused where they can have the optimum impact. M&E helps assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of interventions and allows for lessons learned and success stories to be shared more easily to inform decision makers. The M&E department works with QRTA's partners on conducting research studies for a selection of its programmes, one of which is the TEPD, supported by

the IOE within their capacity as education specialists; a university that is well-known for its world-wide research capacity.

A stand-alone work strand for Evaluation, Quality Assurance and Future Development was included in the design of the programme to ensure that a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component is developed and implemented. The M&E component aims to measure the progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the TEPD which most importantly focuses on raising the qualifications of teachers entering the Jordanian education sector and measuring the TEPD's impact on Jordanian schools.

During the first year of the TEPD, a literature review was conducted to identify the international best practices and benchmarks for pre-service teacher education programmes by which one can measure impact. This informed the development of an impact indicators framework which is being used and built upon to guide the design of monitoring and evaluation, plans, tools, activities, etc. Three main themes were identified in the impact indicators framework to guide the evaluation research study as follows:

1. The principles of good teaching and teacher effectiveness;
2. The features of successful academy-school partnership and mentoring: and
3. Characteristics of a high-quality teacher education programme.

The impact indicators framework will also be used to establish an ongoing M&E plan and will feed into future activities such as, school visits, collecting teacher educators' and school mentors' feedback, submission of data on time and providing regular updates on progress for the project team.

Several tools have been designed and used during the first year of the TEPD to collect qualitative and quantitative data on progress. A broad range of methods ensured triangulation of evidence and allowed all stakeholders to share their views of the programme:

- Induction questions completed by both student teachers and school mentors at the beginning of the programme
- End of module/ SEP evaluation survey completed by student teachers
- Focus groups with both student teachers and school mentors
- Observation forms completed by the teacher educators during visiting the student teachers in the field
- School Mentor feedback completed by the mentors who hosted the student teachers in their schools
- Student Teacher Self-Assessment Form in which student teachers assessed their progress against the Teachers' Standards

A more detailed description of the design of the evaluation and data collection tools is presented in the Methodology chapter.

This diversity of research tools used has ensured a robust and in-depth data for the pilot phase of the TEPD while the findings from the analyses will inform the assessment of the programme and the recommendations for improvement for the coming years.

2.3. Characteristics of the Cohort

Out of 353 applicants to the TEPD programme, 179 were accepted and all finished the course. Most (84%) student teachers were female and only 16% were male. All accepted applicants had some teaching experience, in most cases it was between 1 and 5 years of working within the school environment. The majority of students were between 25 and 29 years old and all of them were university graduates with 20% holding a Master's egree. Figure 2.1 presents years in which TEPD students graduated from university.

Figure 2.1 Year in which TEPD students graduated from university
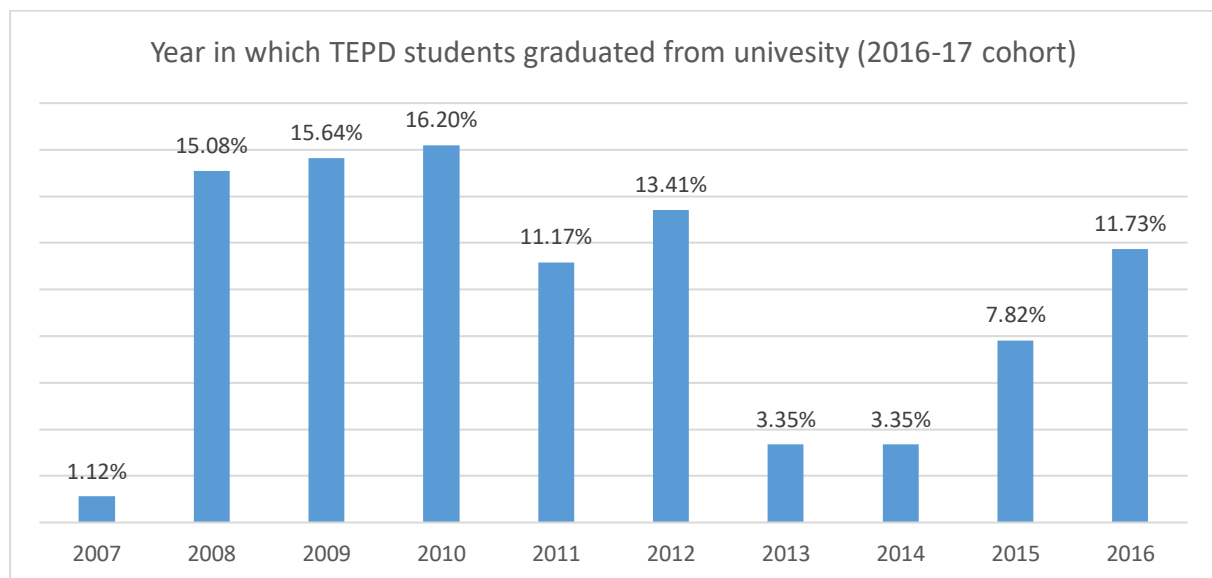
Student teachers came predominantly from the north of Jordan – 108 people which made 60% of the cohort. There were 60 students from the middle of the country – 34%, and only 11 participants from the south (6%) as presented in figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Geographic spread of TEPD students

Geographic spread of TEPD students (2016-17 cohort)

6.1%
33.5%
60.3%

■ North ■ Middle ■ South
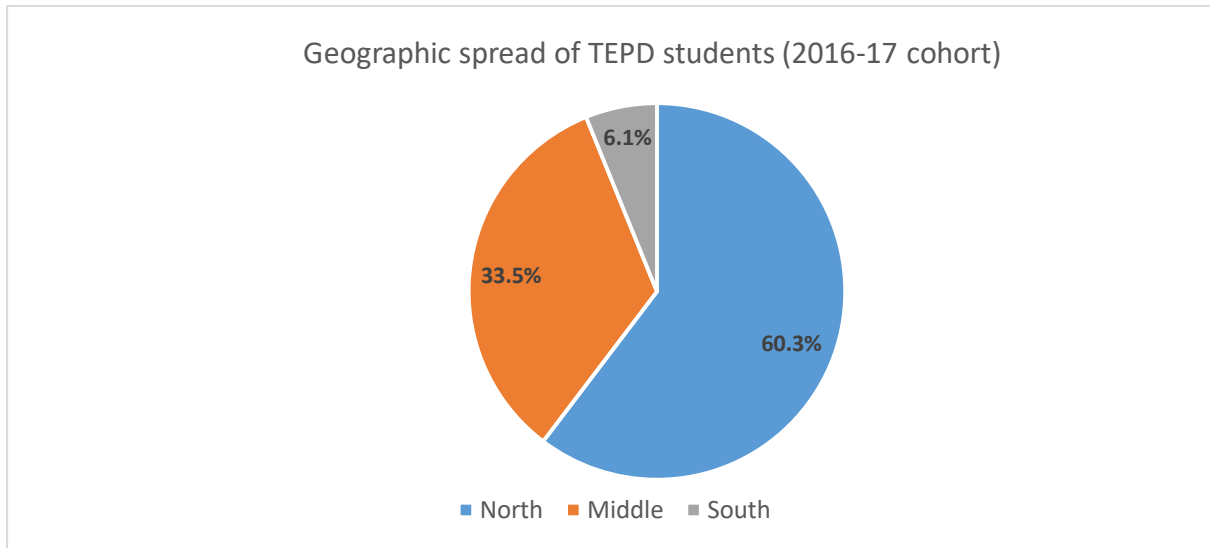
Figure 2.3 shows a more detailed geographical spread of areas where student teachers came from.

Figure 2.3 Regions where TEPD students came from

Regions where TEPD students came from (2016-17 cohort)

Region	Percentage
Balqaa	4.47%
Madaba	2.79%
Zarqa	8.94%
Mafraq	3.35%
Tafileh	1.12%
Aqaba	0.56%
Karak	4.47%
Jarash	7.26%
Ajloun	9.50%
Irbid	40.22%
Amman	17.32%
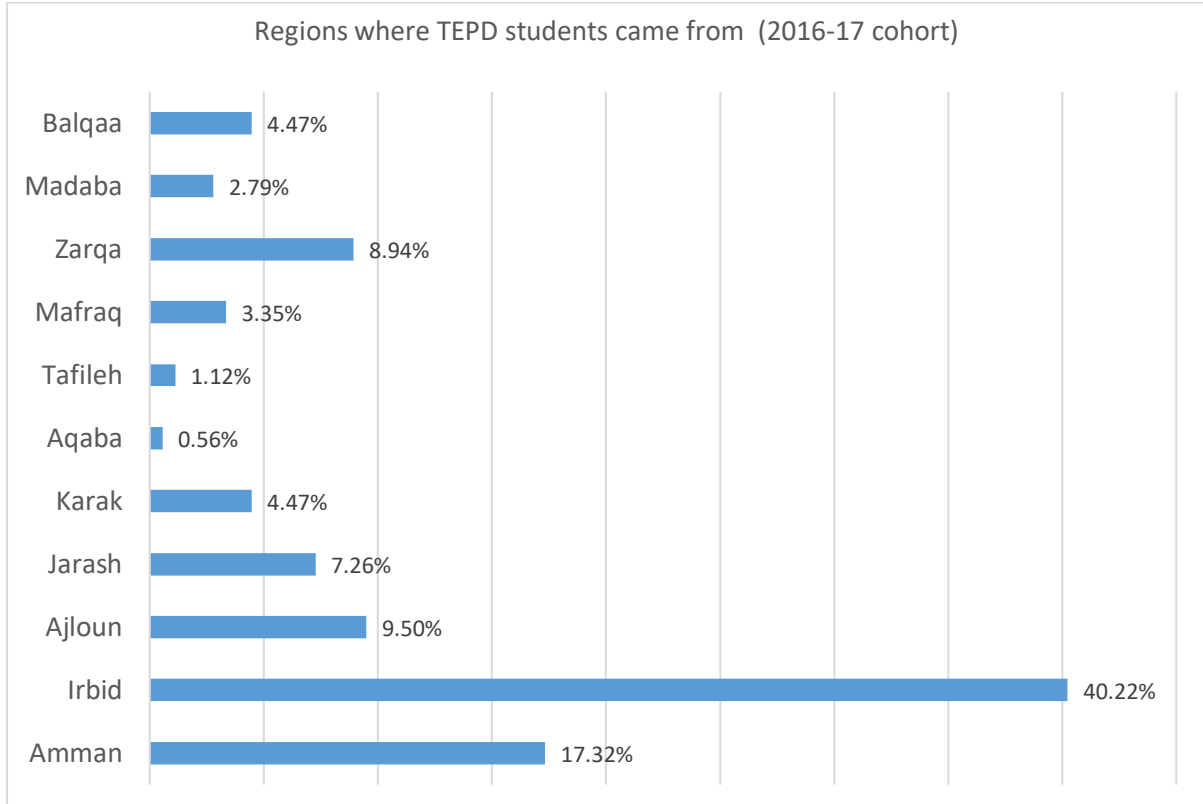
Out of 179 student teachers who finished the programme, 174 (97%) successfully passed all the required assessments and exams, and 3 are currently working on complete it. Table 1 shows pass and fail rates in all subjects. English had the lowest pass rate with respectively two students failing their exams.

Table 1: Pass and fail rate in individual subjects

	Overall	English	Science Chemistry	Science Physics	Science Biology	Mathematics
Number of students	179	35	16	28	14	86
Percentage of the whole cohort	100%	19%	9%	16%	8%	48%
Incomplete	3	2	0	0	1	0
Percentage of the whole cohort	2%	1%			1%	
Pass	174	31	16	28	13	86
Percentage of the whole cohort	97%	17%	9%	16%	7%	48%
Percentage in the subject		89%	100%	100%	93%	100%
Fail	2	2	0	0	0	0
Percentage of the whole cohort	1%	1%				
Percentage in the subject		6%				

3. Methodology

To ensure the highest possible quality of the TEPD, a rigorous M&E plan was put in place. This annual report presents the findings of this evaluation which concludes with the set of recommendations for future years.

The conceptual framework and design of this evaluation was guided by a literature review which drew on examples of teacher education programmes, academy-school partnerships, and teaching and learning practices from 43 countries spanning all continents to ensure a broad and thorough perspective. Impact indicators generated in this review

established an academically robust theoretical basis and informed the development of evaluation tools. Impact indicators were grouped into the following three areas of interest:

1. The principles of good teaching
2. The features of successful academy-School partnership and mentorship
3. General characteristics of high-quality teacher preparation programme

Each of these areas was broken up into more specific indicators to allow a more focused development of data collection tools and the analysis of the programme. In order to measure the indicators, several data collection tools were constructed for the different outputs of the programme.

Both, qualitative and quantitative data was collected through the year using a variety of data collection tools. The three main stakeholders in the programme were the student teachers, the school mentors and QRTA teacher educators. The triangulation of their perceptions, opinions and observations of the programme ensured a broad and objective perspective of the TEPD.

Through Programme Year 1 (2016/17) of the TEPD, student teachers were given three opportunities to teach at a school (otherwise known as a School Experience Practicum, or SEP). These were conducted at three separate intervals throughout the TEPD i.e. SEP1, 2, 3. After the completion of each SEP, student teachers were required to fill out a self-assessment form reflecting on their teaching practice. Student teachers expressed their opinions on the theoretical and practical sections of the programme in a survey which was completed at the end of each module. Additionally, during each SEP, school mentors were required to observe student teachers teaching a lesson and their observations were recorded in a Mentor Feedback Sheet. Similarly, teacher educators were required to attend at least one lesson taught by the student teacher at each of the three intervals SEP1, 2 and 3, and provide them with a written feedback on the Student Teacher Formal Observation Sheet. All these tools were used to provide data for M&E. However, for the purposes of data analysis, only a randomly selected sample of 12 student teacher documents, per specialisation/ subject, per SEP, was extracted for each tool.

In addition to the mentioned tools, directly related to students teaching practice in the classroom, a sample of student teachers, school mentors and teacher educators were given an opportunity to share their perspectives and opinions of programme during:

- Student teacher focus groups – which included a randomly selected sample of 54 student teachers that were allocated into 6 focus groups.
- School mentor focus groups – which included a randomly selected sample of 56 school mentors that were allocated into 6 focus groups

-   Teacher educator interviews – all teacher educators

Table 2 outlines the different data collection tools, their descriptions and data analysis methodology.

Table 2: Data collection tools used in monitoring and evaluation of the TEPD programme

Data Collection Tool	Description	Data Analysis Methodology
Student Teacher (ST) Focus Groups	6 focus groups of 8 to 10 participants each - 3 male and 3 female groups. Focus groups took place at the QRTA facility. The focus group consisted of 8 questions and took an hour to complete.	Focus groups were transcribed and then each question was analysed. The main themes for each question were extracted and their frequency of recurrence was recorded.
School Mentor (SM) Focus Groups	6 focus groups consisting on average of 9 participants - two of the focus groups were conducted in the north/ Irbid to accommodate the school mentors that are based outside of Amman and middle region and the rest took place at the QRTA facility. Focus group consisted of 10 questions and took an hour to complete.	Focus groups were transcribed and then each question was analysed. The main themes for each question were extracted and their frequency of recurrence was recorded.
Student Teacher Self-Assessment Tool / Form	A sample of 12 student teachers from each of the English, Math and Science groups were chosen randomly. Self-assessments are completed by the student teachers after every SEP. This tool allowed them to track their progress against the Teachers' Standards and recognise what they need to work on.	Sample Student Teacher Self-Assessment Tools were extracted from QRTA's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Sections of the tool were associated with its corresponding indicator. Student teachers' recorded levels across the 3 SEPs were analysed to identify progression in their understanding and practice.
Student Teacher Formal Observation sheet	Sampling the same as for the Self-Assessment Tool (36 student teachers). These documents record feedback about teaching and conduct in the	Recorded frequencies of reoccurrence of terms related to specific indicators.

	classroom given to student teacher by the visiting teacher educator.	
SM Feedback Sheet	Sampling the same as for the Self-Assessment Tool. SM observed their ST a few times during their practicum and provided their feedback to develop STs' teaching practice.	Recorded frequencies of reoccurrence of terms related to specific indicators.
ST Surveys (1,2, and 3)	Completed by all ST, these surveys serve as a feedback of the modules, practicum and the perceived connection between the theory and practice throughout the programme.	Associated the questions to its corresponding indicator and analysed the findings.
TE Interviews	Sample: All TEs.	Thematic analyses to reflect the views of teacher educators and their proposed improvements to the programme.

The M&E department shared the findings from student teachers and school mentors focus groups and feedbacks results with the TEPD team after each data collection to provide them with information about the student teachers and school mentors experience regarding TEPD so far, the challenges they faced and their suggestions for improvement to guide the decision-making process. The TEPD team took the findings into consideration and put in place several actions.

4. The Principles of Good Teaching

4.1 Content, Curriculum, and Pedagogy Knowledge

The Professional Knowledge section of the Teachers' Standards is composed of four elements, all of which are essential in developing student teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. These components are: subject knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, contextual, and curriculum knowledge.

In order to create an effective classroom learning experience, teachers should have a deep understanding of the subjects they teach and how to deliver a relevant and meaningful learning experience to their students. SEPs aimed to equip teachers with the required skills and knowledge that would enable them to be able to teach their subjects in an effective way.

English:

During SEP1 61% of student teachers reported that they were working towards achieving an understanding of knowledge in the subject domains, acquiring knowledge of child development, and developing an understanding of Jordanian culture and its impact on practices. The remaining 39% of student teachers noted that they were at the stage of working at gaining pedagogical content knowledge and identifying factors that relate to learner characteristics.

In SEP2 student teachers' responses showed more confidence in moving towards improving their skills and knowledge.

After SEP3 70% of student teachers reported that they were working beyond the predetermined goals, which included understanding of relevant Jordanian curriculum requirements, ability to engage in inquiry-based teaching and learning, and including all the mentioned domains in their teaching. Following SEP3 one student teacher who was exposed to new terms and ideas during SEP1 showed a great shift in perception towards all areas of teaching, especially in subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. After SEP1 he quoted: *"During SEP1 I became aware of my duty as a teacher in students learning progress, I want to learn more about effective strategies that helps students to be better"*. The progress and improvement in this student teaching practice is subsequently shown in his reflection after SEP3: *"During SEP3 I have noticed how my mentor shared a variety of activities that based on knowledge and skills"…"After teaching for a month during SEP3 I adapted a critical awareness of the importance of traditions on students practice. I also acquired better knowledge about the strength and weaknesses of each student"*.

Mathematics:

Mathematics student teachers appeared to be more confident about their skills compared to the English subject student teachers. In SEP1 14% stated that they were working beyond the specified domains such as, possessing the necessary content knowledge to create relevant and meaningful experience for the learners and understanding of different types of assessment for learning.

36% respondents noted that they are working towards improving different skills, such as: the ability to engage in inquiry-based teaching and learning, and the ability to identify key issues relating to students with special education needs and learning difficulties.

50% of student teachers believed that they were working at improving all the required areas, with the majority focused on developing pedagogical content knowledge that is appropriate to all learners and the field of study.

After the completion of SEP3 a shift in student teachers' responses was observed; they felt more confident in their ability to teach. 80% of student teachers rated themselves as working beyond the pre-defined goals on all 4 domains of knowledge. An example from one

of the students shows how during SEP1 they were aiming to do more research, reading and studying in order to become a good teacher and to reach the high standards of the programme. After SEP3, the same student stated that they believed that they reached the level of knowledge they were aiming to achieve in SEP3. This respondent was confident that their educational knowledge and skills will be reflected in students' performance in the classroom.

Science:

After SEP1 55% of student teachers reported that they were working towards acquiring the necessary knowledge in subject, pedagogical, contextual, and curriculum knowledge. At the end of SEP2 the same proportion of students (55%) stated that they were working at this target and were able to implement the skills and knowledge. Their perceptions after SEP3 were equally distributed between believing that they were working at developing the targeted skills, and believing that their learning skills and knowledge were beyond what is expected from them.

Mentors' perceptions:

During SEP1 mentors concurred that, while English, mathematics, and science student teachers had good understanding and knowledge of their subject, they lacked literature knowledge and needed to focus more on teaching and assessment methodologies. Throughout the TEPD, mentors have spoken about a great shift in students' knowledge in all four areas of content, pedagogy, context, and curriculum noting that students were able to contextualise the content, develop assessments, motivate students, lead the classroom, and implement best practices.

In summary, students' pedagogical, contextual, curriculum, and subject knowledge has improved gradually throughout the programme. This improvement appeared to vary by subject, for example, the change was particularly considerable in English with a significant transformation in students' perceptions, knowledge, and understanding.

4.2 Instructional Practice

4.2.1 Planning

Instructional practice - planning
A. Planning for content understanding
B. Planning to support student varied learning needs
C. Planning for assessment (monitoring and supporting student learning)
D. Alignment between planning, instruction, and assessment

One of the key aims of the programme is to prepare student teachers for planning. Student teachers were to plan to ensure in-depth understanding of content, support student

varied learning needs, plan for assessment and align between planning, instruction and assessment.

As observed in the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Forms, 50% "worked at" making effective use of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge when planning, teaching and evaluating in SEP1. Further, data showed that 41% "worked towards" achieving this goal when they planned individual lessons that were structured to support students in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. In SEP2 and SEP3, student teachers' capability progressed and in SEP2, 69% "worked at" and 28% "worked beyond" while in SEP3 78% "worked beyond", 22% "worked at", and none "worked towards". This indicated that they were able to plan lessons that often used well-chosen, imaginative and creative strategies and that matched pupils' individuals' needs and interests. See Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: Make effective use of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge when planning, teaching and evaluating
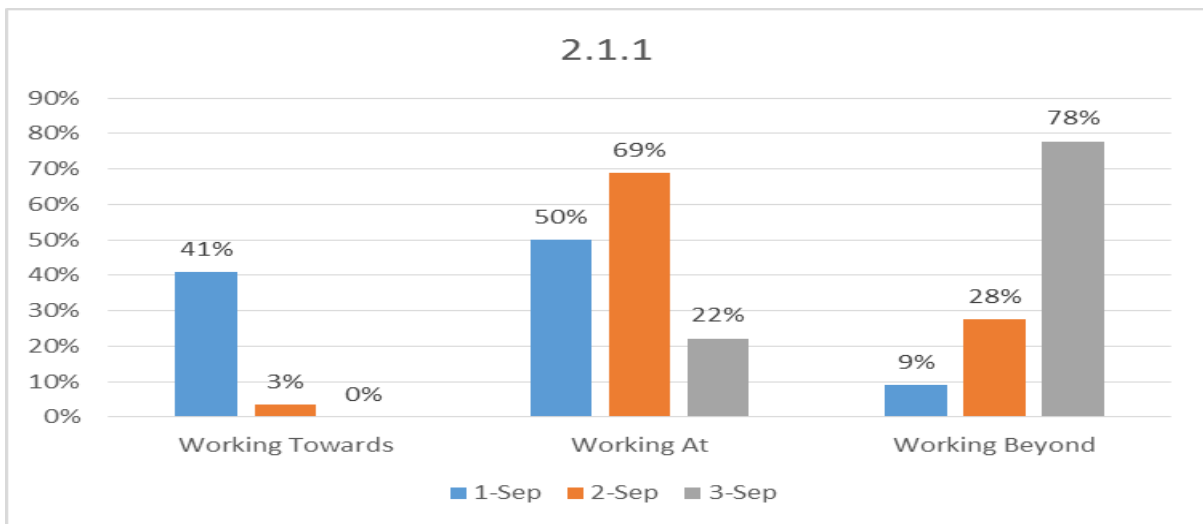
The Self-Assessment Forms showed that for adopting a balanced approach to using formative and summative assessments to support student learning, 72% of student teachers in SEP1 "worked towards" and had a secure understanding of the assessment requirements for the subject, while 7% "worked beyond" and noted that they could confidently and accurately assess students' attainment against benchmarks. In SEP2, data showed that a considerable 66% (almost 50% jump) "worked at" and were able to assess students' attainment accurately against benchmarks, and 21% "worked beyond". During SEP3 results revealed that 4% "worked towards" and a staggering 85% "worked beyond". One student teacher stated: "*I've been introduced to the different types of assessments and I am now aware of their importance in fostering student progress/ applying different kinds of assessments and developed my teaching style from student feedback*". Thus, it was clear that student teachers were progressing very well and used formative and summative assessments to support student learning. See Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Adopt a balanced approach to using formative and summative assessment to support student learning
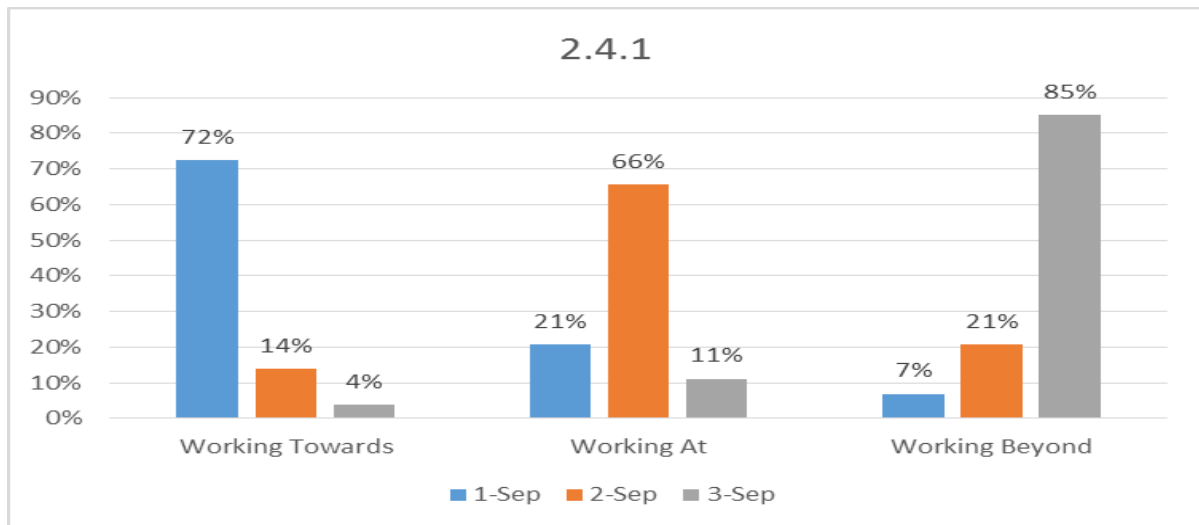
Data from SEP1 showed that 76% of student teachers "worked towards" gathering, analysing, and using assessment to improve learning and inform planning. Another 19% of student teachers "worked at" and 5% "worked beyond" and regularly used data on learners' progress and worked with them to accurately target further improvement. The analyses of data from SEP2 showed progress, with 74% student teachers who "worked at" maintaining accurate records of students' progress and used these to set challenging targets, and 13% who "worked beyond". Finally, findings from SEP3 showed that 88% of student teachers "worked beyond" and none "worked towards". See Figure 4.3 overleaf.

Figure 4.3: Gather, analyse and use assessment to improve learning and inform planning
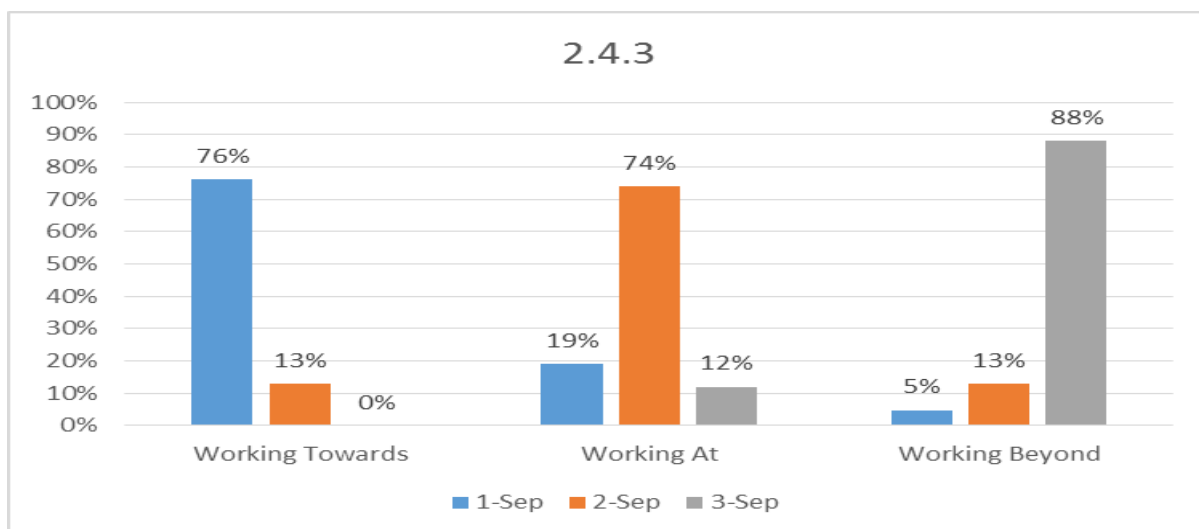
47% of student teachers in SEP1 "worked towards" understanding the different types of assessment for learning and displayed that they knew a range of assessments their purposes. Furthermore, 43% of student teachers in SEP1 "worked at" understanding the role of assessment for learning. 4% of student teachers in SEP2 "worked towards" this goal as well,

while data showed that 52% "worked at" and 44% "worked beyond". Finally, during SEP3, 88% of student teachers "worked beyond" and felt they had a deep understanding of assessments for learning and knew how to use this knowledge effectively. Another 13% of student teachers "worked at", claiming that it "*appeared during the lesson planning*". See Figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: Understanding of different types of assessment for learning
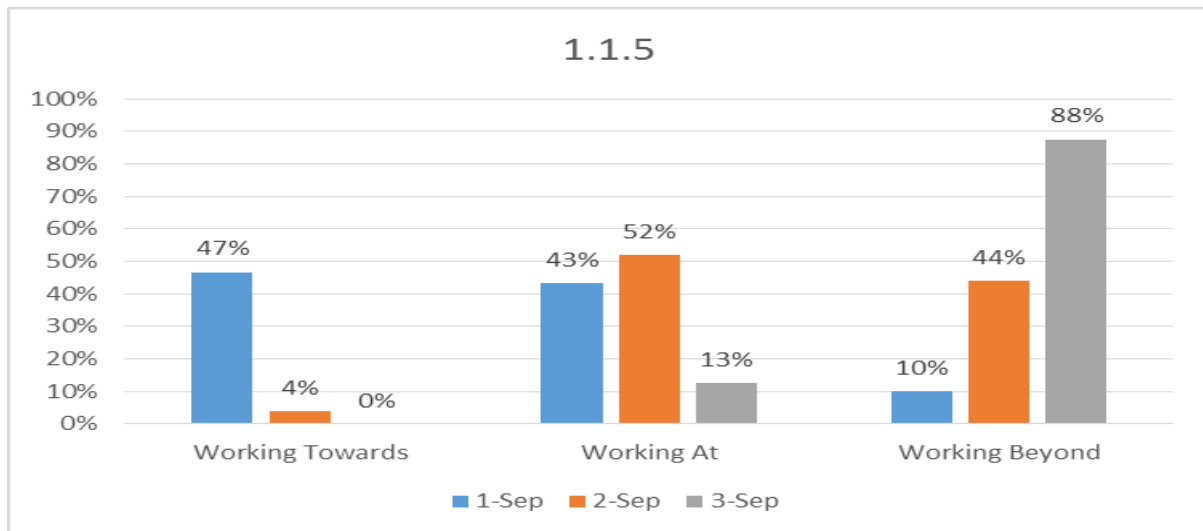
A student teacher from SEP1 stated: *"The essential goal of teaching [was] to improve students and develop their abilities, so I'm as a teacher, responsible to achieve that goal".* The development of students' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) that was appropriate to learners and the field of study was unquestionable as seen in Figure 4.5 below. In SEP1 38% "worked towards" and felt that they understood that teachers were responsible for the learning and progress. 58% "worked at" where they assumed that responsibility as well. Results revealed that 66% in SEP2 "worked at" and 31% "worked beyond". While 17% in SEP3 "worked at" and 83% "worked beyond" and assumed a high level of responsibility for the learning and progress of the students they taught.

Figure 4.5: Possess Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) that is appropriate to learners and the field of study
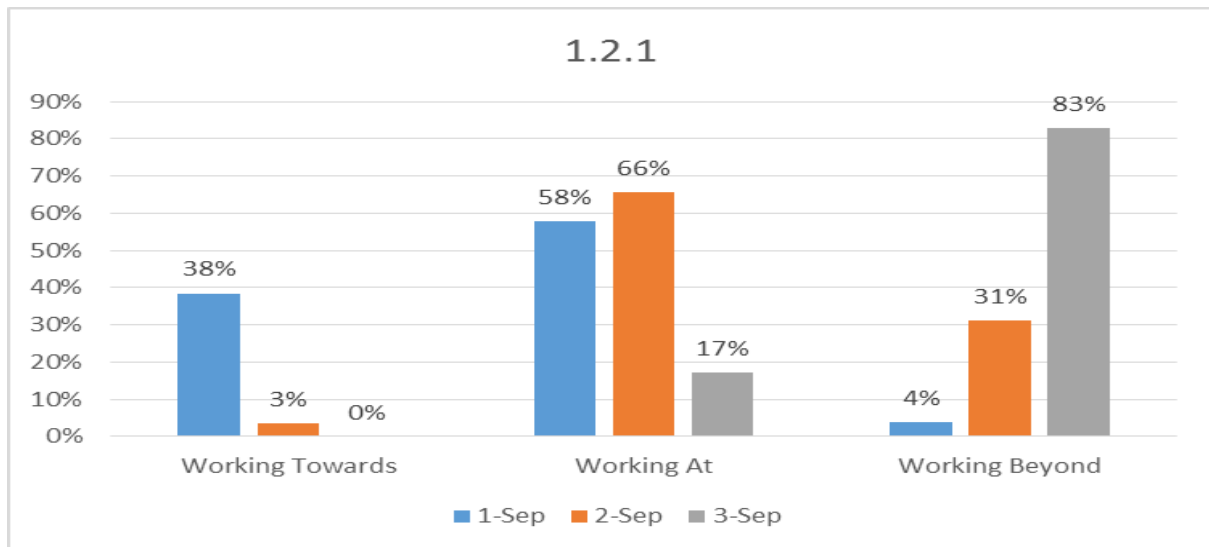
Student teachers seemed to have a general understanding of selecting and using teaching strategies and resources according to the varied needs of students as the figure below shows. Results showed that 50% of student teachers in SEP1 both "worked towards" and "worked at", while 69% in SEP2 "worked at" and had a range of effective strategies to apply. At the same time 31% "worked beyond" and had an astute understanding of how effective different teaching approaches were in relation to impact on learning. Finally, findings revealed that 20% in SEP3 "worked at" and 80% "worked beyond" which showed a general understanding of this standard as claimed by one of the students, "*using various strategies that promotes student engagement".* See Figure 4.6 overleaf.

Figure 4.6: Select and use teaching strategies and resources according to the varied needs of students
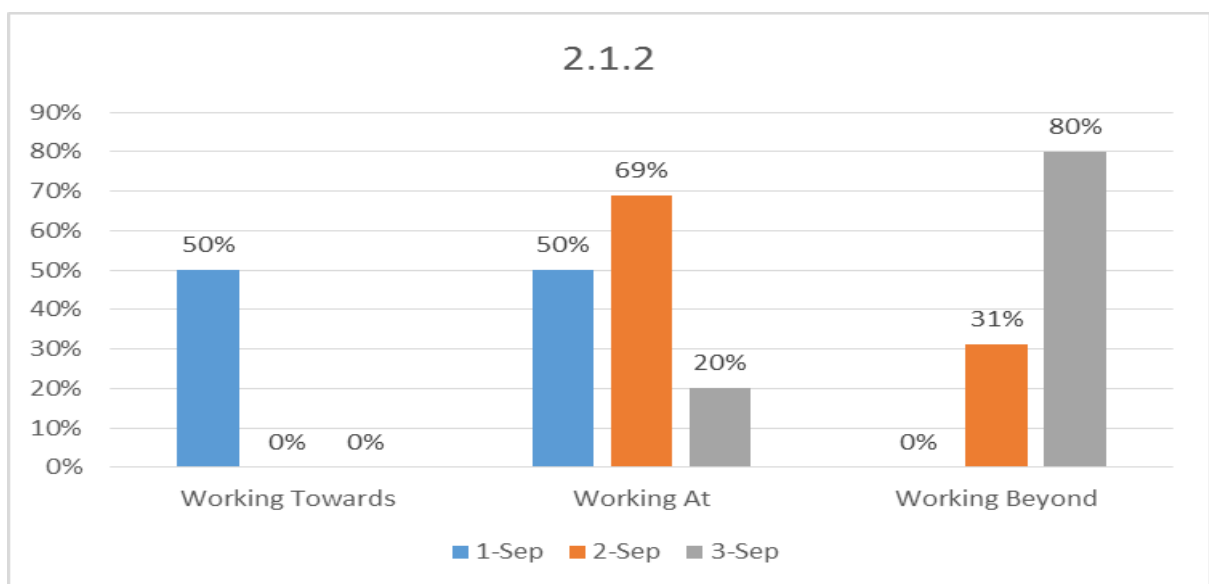
Regarding planning teaching to meet the needs of all learners, findings from SEP1 showed that 33% "worked towards" and 57% "worked at". While 4% in SEP2 "worked

towards", 70% "worked at" and understood the importance of planning for individual students. Another 26% "worked beyond". Findings showed that 28% of student teachers in SEP3 "worked at" and 72% "worked beyond" and could accurately judge the impact of their practice on individual and learner groups. This showed clear progression, as described by one of the student teachers: *"I was able to view students' results by using various types of assessments".* See Figure 4.7 below.

Figure 4.7: Plan teaching to meet the needs of all learners
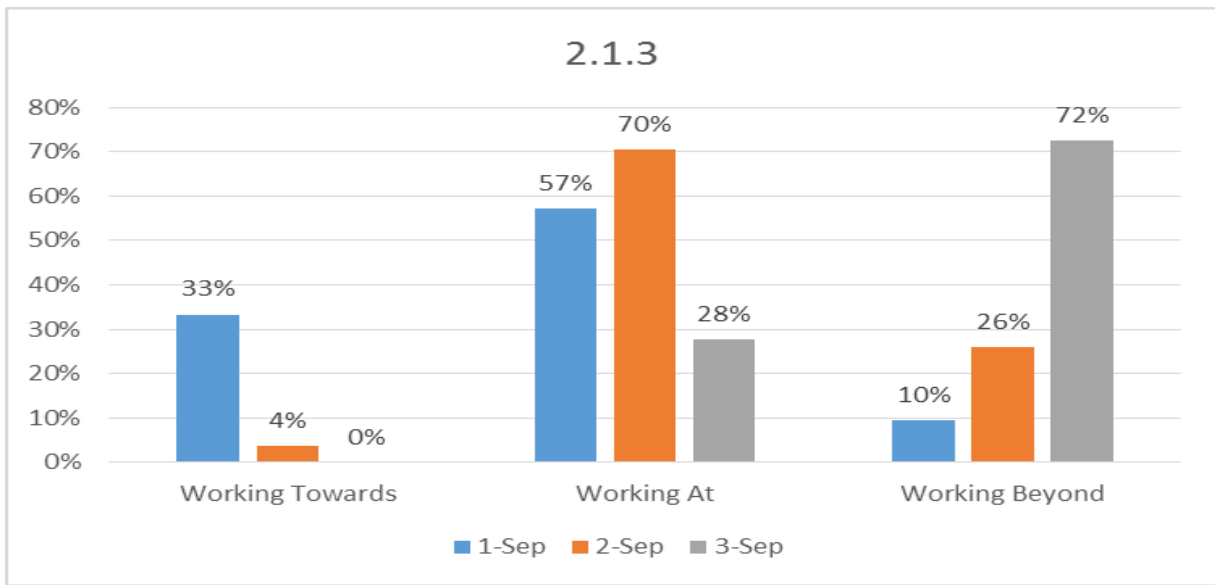
4.2.2 Instruction

Instructional practice - instruction
A. Engagement (using a variety of strategies to ensure student attention and engagement for example classroom environment, learning materials, lesson structure)
B. High expectations to inspire, motivate, and challenge all pupils
C. Well-structured lessons
D. Deepening student learning
E. Variety of instructional strategies to facilitate learning, to deepen understanding, and to build skills to connect difficult areas of learning and to apply knowledge
F. The use of language to support academic language development (use of questions, demonstration language, learning materials)

One of the aims of the programme is to enhance instructional practice in student teachers. Student teachers learned to engage, inspire, motivate and challenge students. They also explored how to facilitate and deepen student learning through a variety of instructional strategies.

As observed in the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Forms, 41% of student teachers "worked towards" planning individual lessons that were structured to support students in developing their knowledge, skills and understandings, while 50% "worked at" planning lessons that took account of the needs of groups of learners and individuals. Data findings in SEP2 showed that 69% "worked at" this goal, while 78% in SEP3 "worked beyond" and in their teaching 'often used well-chosen, imaginative and creative strategies that were matched to individuals' needs and interests. See Figure 4.8 below.

Figure 4.8: Make effective use of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge when planning, teaching and evaluating
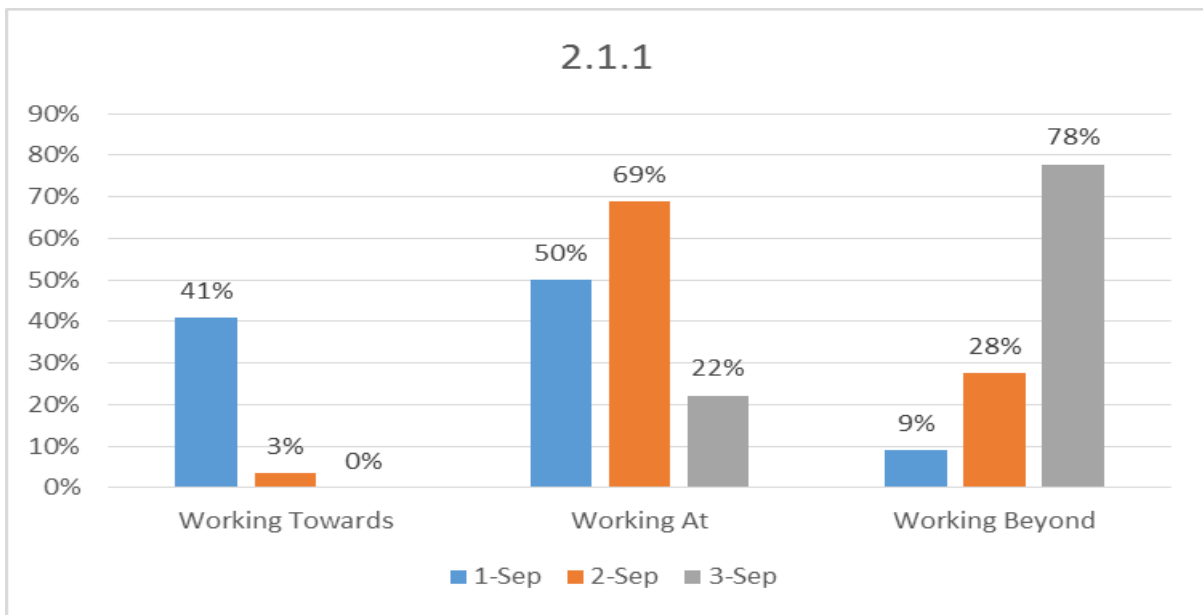
Findings revealed, that 50% of student teachers in SEP1 "worked towards" setting high expectations which inspired, motivated and challenged learners, they had high expectations and were aware of the range of strategies that experienced teachers used to promote learning. A high number (82%) in SEP2 "worked at" consistently having high expectations and understanding a range of strategies that experienced teachers use. A significant proportion (72%) in SEP3 "worked beyond" this target. As one student teacher stated, *"I focused on giving the students challenging activities in order to shine a light on their abilities and skills"*. See Figure 4.9 below.

Figure 4.9: Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge learners
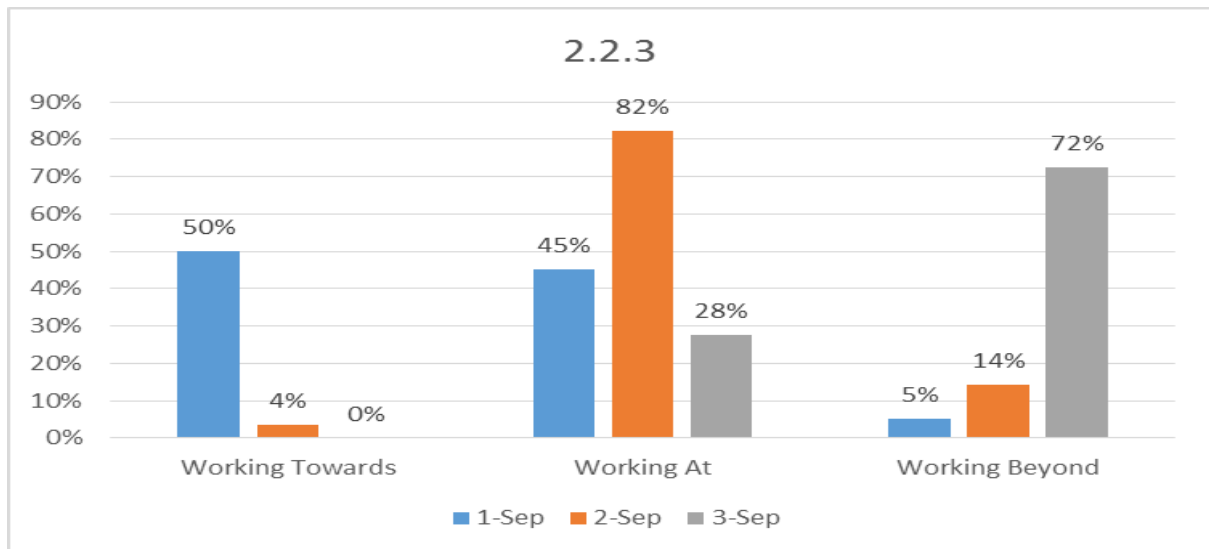
Data showed that student teachers in SEP1 stated that they possessed the necessary content knowledge to create relevant and meaningful experiences for the learners, where 41% "worked towards" and 37% "worked at" this goal and were aware of the need to extend and update their subject knowledge to employ appropriate professional development strategies. As for student teachers in SEP2, half "worked at" and the other half "worked beyond" and were astutely aware of their own development needs in relation to extending and updating their subject knowledge. As for student teachers in SEP3 a staggering 93% "worked beyond" and one student teacher claimed to have a *"deep understand of curriculum knowledge, watching documentaries to have the full experience of the content"*. See Figure 4.10 overleaf.

Figure 4.10: Possess the necessary content knowledge to create relevant and meaningful experience for the learners
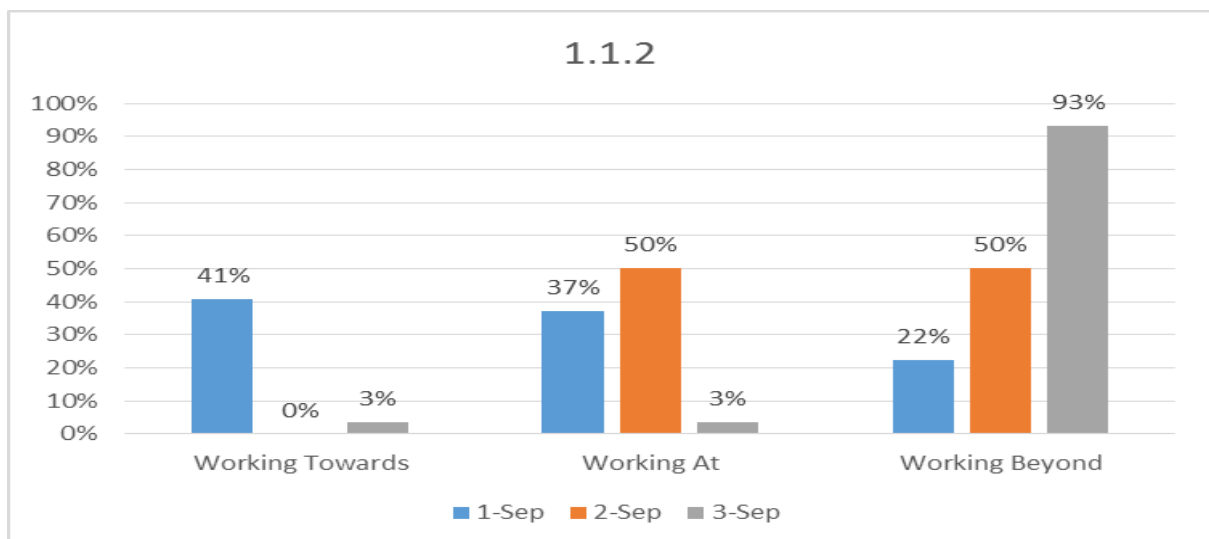
Regarding proficiency in Arabic and English where appropriate, 46% of student teachers in SEP1 "worked towards" and 38% "worked at" this target. This could be due to difficulties with English and learning it. Findings showed, that 61% in SEP2 "worked at" and

presented good standards of written and spoken communication in all professional activities. Finally, data revealed that student teachers in SEP3 progressed to 80% "working beyond" with very high standards of written and spoken language. As one student teacher expressed, *"during my practicum experience, my school mentor would talk to the students in Arabic to show the importance of our language and I will teach in the same way".* See Figure 4.11 below.

Figure 4.11: Proficiency in Arabic (and English where appropriate)
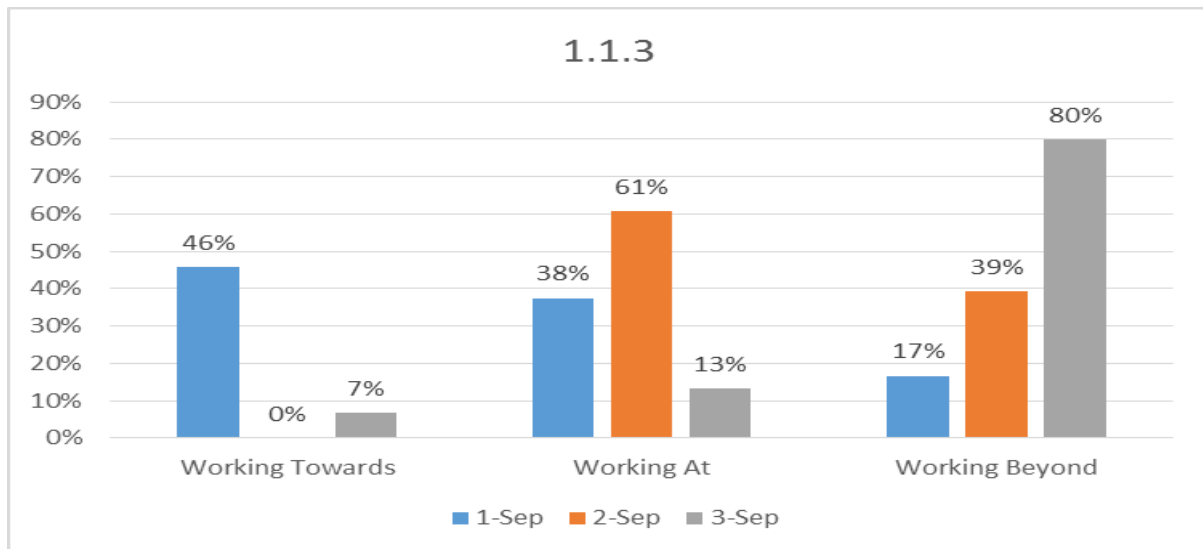
Mentor Feedback Forms

Mentor feedback forms were essential in recording the work of student teachers in a practical experience, handling a class and dealing with students. In this section student mentors' feedback was explored with a focus on planning and instruction. This data revealed how well student teachers planned for their classes, supported students in their varied learning needs, planned for assessment, engaged students, provided well-structured lessons and used language to support learning.

School mentors provided their feedback on student teachers' performance through the mentor feedback form in all three SEPs in English, mathematics and science. Many of the points mentioned below may have been mentioned more than once throughout this annual report - variations of these points were accounted for in order to include all comments.

School mentors' feedback was very valuable to understand student teachers' progress in the programme. It was very informative to see the development of student teachers' skills and knowledge from SEP1, SEP2 and SEP3. During SEP1, there were comments of having to practice more in order to manage a classroom, there were also similar comments in SEP2. However, in SEP3, most of the comments were positive, using words like "great improvement", "deep understanding", "noticeable progress", "unique", "excellent", and

"high skills". One school mentor said, "*I learned a lot from her*" about her student teacher. Evidently, student teachers had improved greatly during the course of the three SEPs.

However, there was some discrepancy in these comments as school mentors would note that some students used variation in their teaching methods, while others would recommend that the same student teachers needed more practice. This showed a difference in a way mentors reflected on the range of student teachers' capabilities and learnings.

Finally, some comments were repeated many times across all SEPs. Examples included "good understanding knowledge", "knowledge of assessments", "student teachers created strategies for lesson planning", and that they "provided a safe and supportive learning environment". These were common in all subjects and across all SEPs, but with varying levels.

Teacher Educator Observation Forms

Picking up from the points above, within their observation forms, teacher educators noticed that across all SEPs student teachers had a good understanding and knowledge of teaching. Multiple teacher educators mentioned that student teachers had an "*understanding of the knowledge in the subject*" and "*used teaching strategies*".

Teacher educators also noted how student teachers engaged students in various ways. During SEP1, one teacher educator said that a student teacher "*started the lesson by showing the class a video related to the text and then asked the students questions about the video*". In addition, class management was mentioned as one of the points in which student teachers advanced, and teacher educators commended on the excellent class management they have observed. Another teacher educator noted how a student teacher began the class in an exciting way for the students through the presented activities and style. Communication skills were also praised by the teacher educators. A final example described a student teacher who used real life examples that engaged the students and got their attention. However, one teacher educator noted that presentation skills and language accuracy in their view needed improvement.

Regarding planning, one teacher educator noted how well student teachers planned for the lesson through "*knowing the requirements of the class and planning for a smooth lesson".* Another teacher educator noted that a student teacher was "*able to plan in the correct way and apply what was planned for efficiently".* Finally, one teacher educator noticed that student teachers were "*planning for teaching that catered for all students' needs".*

Regarding using assessment, one teacher educator reported using: "*formative and summative assessment in a very good way",* while another noted that a student teacher, "*was*

able to assess the achievement of the students' in a specific way and differentiated in the learning with the students despite their differences".

Teacher educators noted multiple techniques that student teachers used to deepen student learning and facilitate learning like moving around the class, engaging in questions and answers, asking about the previous lesson, reinforcing positive answers, giving feedback, smiling, activating debate and dialogue among students in class, creating a safe environment for their students, planning lessons to address misconceptions in the subject, and involving them through story-telling and experiment.

Areas for student teachers to improve included time management - this was a common thread. Nervousness (eye contact, voice tone, confidence) was another issue as well as giving feedback to students, and guiding/managing students as groups. Others included, providing the right answers, especially in science, and not giving students enough time to answer questions. Some commented on the length of the lessons and/or explanations. Others commented on the language use (mixing between Arabic and English and/or not using correct grammar).

Most of the teacher educators commented that the student teachers were confident, knowledgeable about their subject, planned very well and engaged their students. As mentioned above, the most common challenge was time management. Teacher educators' comments varied from SEP1 to SEP3, with more general comments in SEP1 and SEP2, and more focused and questioning approaches and choices in more detail in SEP3. It was expected that by then student teachers would need this kind of direction.

4.2.3 Assessment

Instructional practice - assessment
A. The use of multiple assessment methods to track individual and class learning progress
B. Using assessment to inform planning and instruction
C. Providing feedback to guide further learning
D. Monitoring student use of feedback

When it comes to instructional practice, assessment is an important tool to be used by teachers to understand individual and class needs, track individual and class learning progress, as well as feed into their own teaching practice. Its significance was also acknowledged in the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Form in which one section was dedicated to the students' reflection on their knowledge and use of assessments. In addition to this, assessment was also addressed in teaching standards and played an important role throughout the whole course.

Understanding of different types of assessment for learning is one of the aims of the programme and student teachers were encouraged to research and enrich their knowledge of assessments for learning. They were exposed to a range of assessments to understand their role and how to use them to promote progress. Throughout the duration of the TEPD, student teachers gained deep understanding of assessment for learning as well as the ability to implement and analyse them effectively.

As observed in the Self-Assessment Forms, at the end of each SEP, 56.7% of student teachers were "working towards" becoming familiar with a range of assessments in SEP1, while 43% also identified as "working at" understanding and knowing how to use the assessment. In SEP2, 52% were "working at" understanding and knowing how to use the assessments and 44% had reached the level of "working beyond" the indicator. By SEP3, 87.5% expressed having been "working beyond" this indicator by effectively using the assessment to promote progression in their subject. See Figure 4.12 overleaf.

Figure 4.12: Understanding of different types of assessment for learning
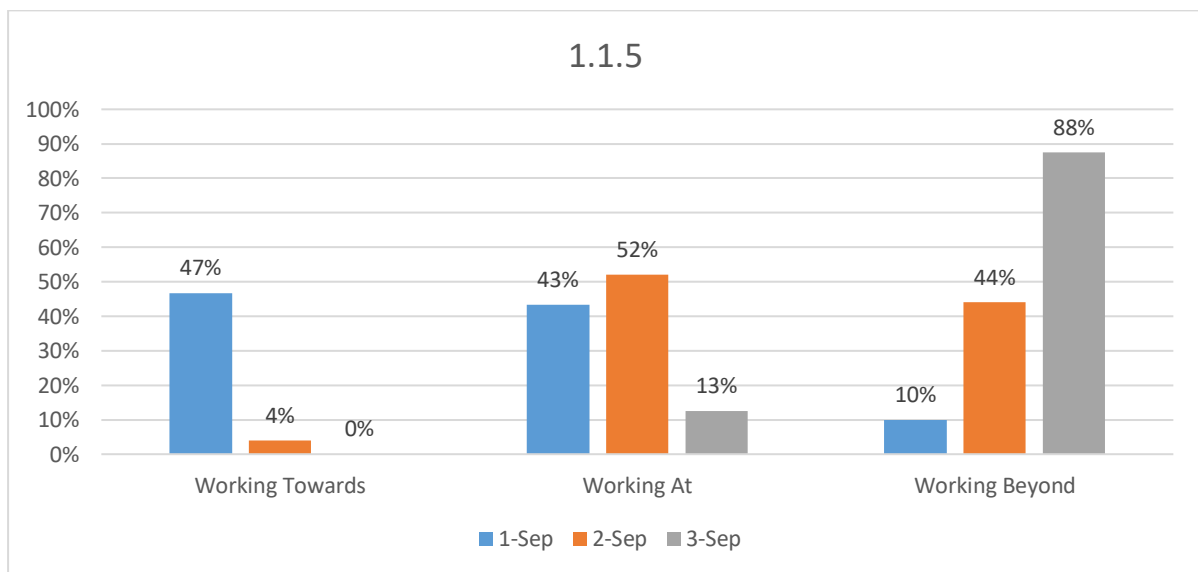
The main comments reported on this assessment standard in SEP1 included having the opportunity to learn more about the different types of assessments during the placement, and observing school mentors. Student teachers in SEP2 expressed their better understanding of assessments and how they were starting to implement them during their placement. By SEP3, it was noticeable that student teachers were using a variety of assessments during their placement to follow up on pupil progression and to make the necessary changes to their lesson planning to fit their students' needs.

The assessment section of the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Form was divided into three interrelated standards:

1. Adopting a balanced approach to using the assessments
2. Differentiating teaching to meet specific learner's needs
3. Gathering, analysing and using assessments

Adopting a balanced approach to using the assessments to support student learning, drove student teachers to include formative and summative assessments in their planning which led to accurate assessment of students' attainment and monitoring of their progress. At the end of SEP1, 72% of student teachers reported "working towards" having a secure understanding of the assessment requirements for the specific subject/ curriculum they are preparing. Student teachers expressed that they were in the process of learning about the summative and formative assessments and becoming more aware of their importance. In SEP2, student teachers reported observing their school mentors applying assessments in the classroom and, building on their knowledge, started to use them themselves. As a result, 66% believed that they are "working at" assessing student attainment accurately against the benchmarks. By SEP3, 85% expressed "working beyond" the standard and were confidently able to use a range of assessments to assess students' attainment and monitor their progress. See Figure 4.13 below.

Figure 4.13: Adopt a balanced approach to using formative and summative assessment to support student learning
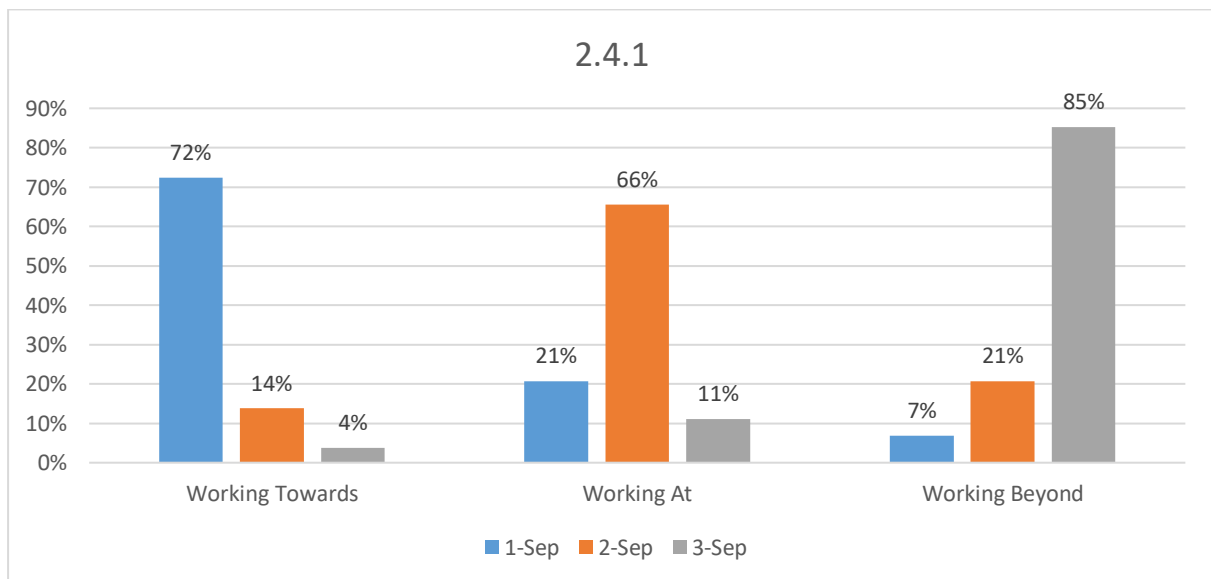
For example, student teacher Basel[1] (student teachers' names have been changed throughout this report to protect their anonymity) was starting to become *"aware of the importance of assessment tools in teaching"* in SEP1 and *"learned how to use formative assessments"* in SEP2. In SEP3, he built on his previous experiences and his lectures at the academy and *"started to use many assessments strategies in order to monitor learning".*

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[1] Student teachers' names have been changed throughout this report to protect their anonymity.

Every student is different and learns differently. As well as learning at different speeds, some are kinesthetic learners, some are visual, and others are auditory learners. Due to this diversity, differentiating teaching is important in order to meet the specific learning needs of students across their full range of abilities.

The Student Teacher Self-Assessment Form guided student teachers to reach a level where they systematically and effectively checked learners' understanding in order to anticipate where interventions were needed to meet the learning needs accordingly. 63% of student teachers in SEP1 reported "working towards" this standard expressing that they were asking various questions that targeted pupils at different levels to improve their learning process. By SEP2, the majority of student teachers indicated that they were "working at" the standard by employing a range of appropriate formative assessments such as worksheets and choosing assessments based on the lesson and the goals they have set for the lesson. In SEP3, 78% "worked beyond" this standard by systematically and effectively checking learner's understanding throughout the lesson such as "assessing pupils during the activities" according to a few student teachers. See Figure 4.14 below.

Figure 4.14: Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities
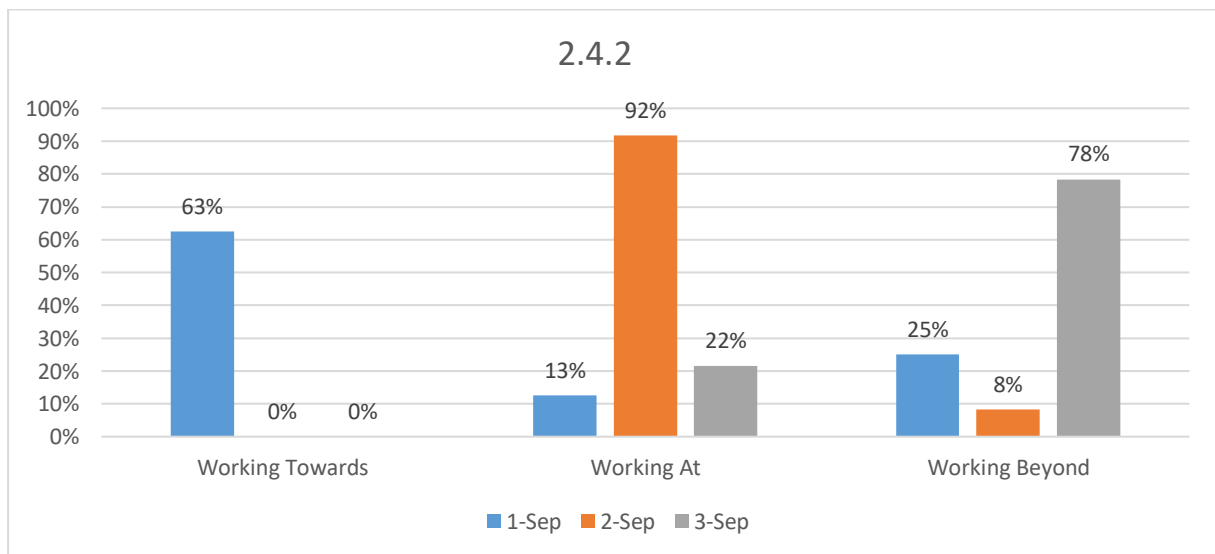
Finally, it is important to gather and analyse the information from the assessments conducted to improve learning and inform effective lesson planning. To reach that level, the Self-Assessment Form guided student teachers to start by monitoring and keeping records of student progress and providing feedback to pupils with help from their school mentors. Once they had a good understanding of the process, they were to move on to using pupils' progress records to set challenging targets. Then, they should be able to assess learner's progress and work with them to target further improvement. As a result of theoretical and practical

sessions, in SEP1, 76% of student teachers reported "working towards" the standard and 19% "working at" it. Furthermore, in SEP2, 74% reported that they were "working at" assessing learners' progress regularly, discussed them with pupils and used them to set appropriately challenging targets. As they reached SEP3, 88% expressed "working beyond" by *"regularly assessing learners' work and using their feedback to improve my lesson planning and target further improvement"* as reported by student teacher Zeid. Figure 4.15 shows this progress. See Figure 4.15 overleaf.

Figure 4.15: Gather, analyse and use assessment to improve learning and inform planning
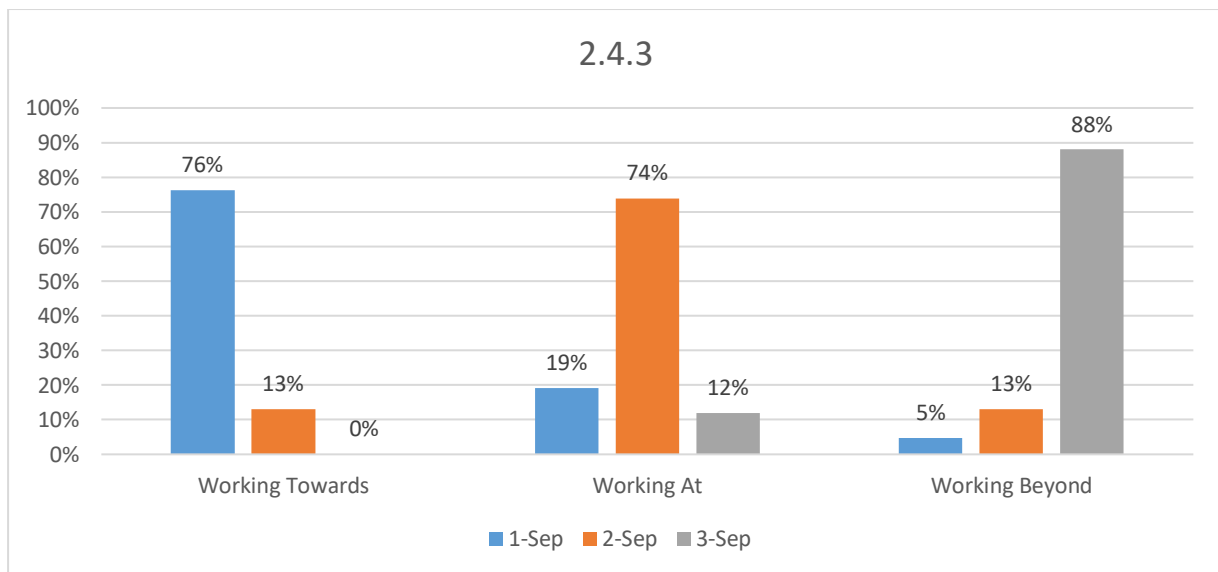
Overall, by comparing the responses from all three post-SEP student teacher Self-Assessment Forms, a clear progression has been noticed regarding assessment knowledge and practice in teachers of all three specialisations (English, mathematics and science). In SEP1, the majority of student teachers (63%) identified themselves as "working towards" specified standards and 25% as "working at". In SEP2, the majority (70 %) identified as "working at" and 22% as "working beyond", while in SEP3, 84% identified as "working beyond" as presented in Figure 4.16.

Figure 4.16: Assessment knowledge and practice

overall 4.c
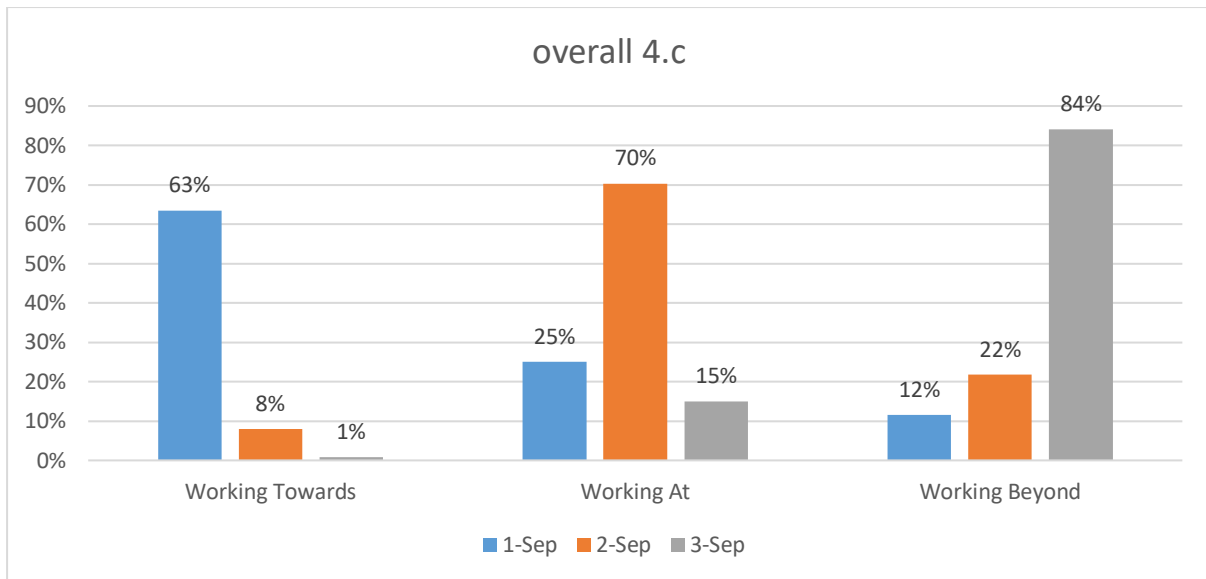
4.2.4 Behaviour Management

Instructional practice – behaviour management

Behaviour management has a profuse impact on effective teaching and learning and as such was integrated into all parts of the diploma. It is correlated with efficient instructional practice and student engagement discussed earlier, as well as the learning environment that the teacher creates in the classroom which will be discussed in the next section "Reflection on Teaching Practice". The Self-Assessment Form also addressed behaviour management in two additional ways that shape the learning behaviour:

- Understanding of selected learning theories and their relevance for practice
- Ability to engage in inquiry-based teaching and learning.

Creating opportunities for independent and autonomous learning shapes pupils' learning behaviour. Throughout the course, student teachers were encouraged to inspire students to do personal research and to promote independent work. The majority of student teachers in SEP1 were interested in learning more about independent and autonomous activities so they could use them to increase pupils' critical thinking. As a result, 58% reported "working toward" the standard and 32% "working at" it. The analyses of student teachers' reported progress in SEP2 showed that 68% "worked towards" the standard by *"using interactive theory through mixed groups and inquiry-based learning to motivated students to research"* as expressed by Asmaa. Finally, by the end of SEP3, 83% reported "working beyond" the standard by improving student teachers' relationship with pupils to install trust, as well as creating appropriate and challenging activities that support self-learning. See Figure 4.17 below.

Figure 4.17: Understanding of selected learning theories and their relevance for practice
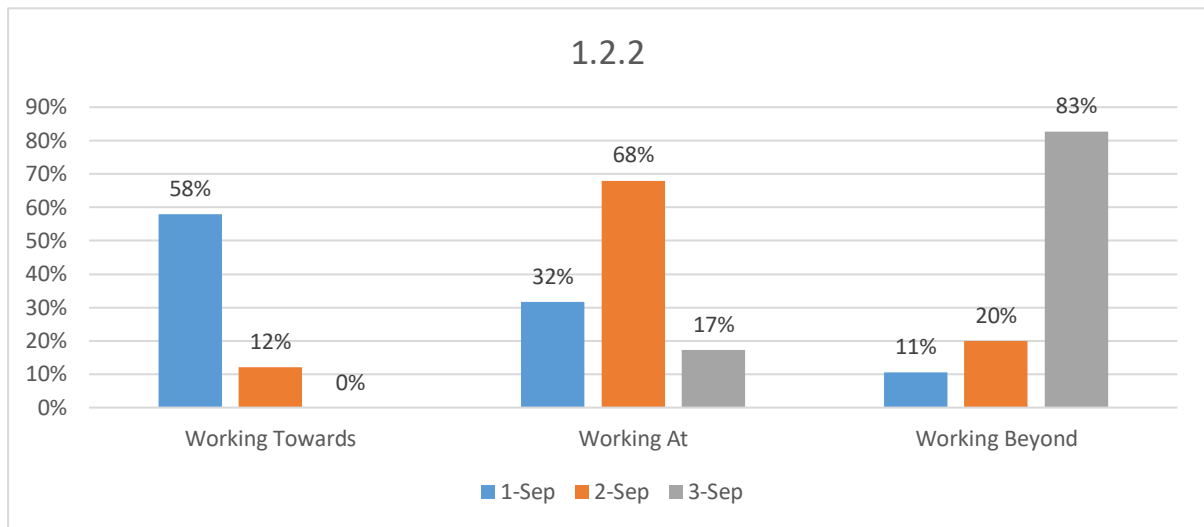
For example, student teacher Yasmine's reflection in SEP1 spoke of having *"learned more teaching strategies from the TEPD lectures and observing her mentor during the placement"* in addition to her own previous research. In SEP2, Yasmine moved on to *"creating stronger relationships with her pupils to understand their needs and strengths better"* to finally *"supporting them and providing them with learning opportunities and showing them how to work in group and individually"* in SEP3.

Furthermore, the ability to engage inquiry-based teaching and learning promotes critical thinking and awareness in student teachers. A student teacher expressed how they had "*increased their knowledge of the different existing strategies through the diploma*" and how they were able to, by the end of SEP3, "*implement inquiry-based learning to monitor their practice in order to create an effective learning experience*". In SEP1, 60% of student teachers started with "working towards" the standard, 30% "were working at" and 10% had already "worked beyond" and achieved the standard in their opinion. In SEP2, 68% reported working at the standard while 21% expressed still "working towards" that goal. By SEP3, the majority (64%) had achieved the standard and 32% were still "working at" it as showed in Figure 4.18.

Figure 4.18: Ability to engage in inquiry-based teaching and learning

1.2.3
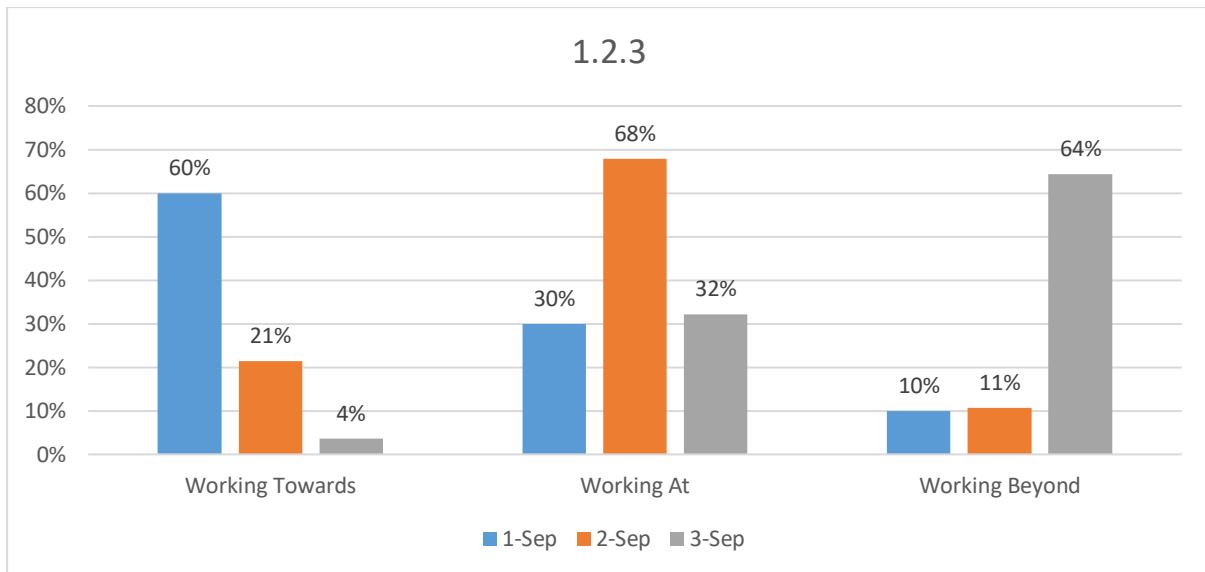
4.3 Reflection on Teaching Practice

Reflection on teaching practice
Reflecting on the relationship between teaching and learning and its effectiveness on all students
Considering diverse needs and characteristics of students

Within the TEPD reflection on teaching practice comprised of two components:

1. Reflecting on the relationship between teaching and learning and its effectiveness on all students
2. Considering diverse needs and characteristics of students.

The ultimate goal of the student teachers after completing the three SEPs was to be able to adapt to the different circumstances and scenarios teachers face while in school and to be able to seek additional support in addressing the different needs of students and when significantly challenging behaviour is demonstrated. Additionally, teachers created supportive learning environment to enable students to reflect on their learning.

On average, a high number of student teachers were more satisfied and confident with their teaching experience after they have completed all three SEPs. By comparing the responses from all three post SEP self-assessments, student teachers' reflections and beliefs improved over each SEP with all believing that their teaching practices have either improved, or at a minimum stayed the same. This is shown by an aggregate comparison of the English, mathematics and science student teachers' responses over SEP1, 2 and 3. After the first SEP, the majority of student teachers indicated that they were working towards a specific goal,

and after the completion of the third and final SEP, they were working either at or beyond this goal.

Creating and effectively managing the learning environment helped in building a link between teaching and learning. To create this environment, the student teachers first "work towards" supporting their pupils to reflect on their learning, then they "work at" providing pupils with the opportunity to self-assess themselves. Finally, the student teachers "work beyond" this indicator by actively promoting engaging and effective methods to support their pupils' learning.

As stated in the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Form at the end of each SEP, 69% of the student teachers were "working towards" supporting their pupils to reflect on their learning in SEP1, 61% were "working at" providing pupils with opportunities to self-assess their learning at the end of SEP2, and 76% were "working beyond" this standard by actively promoting engaging and effective methods to support pupils' learning in SEP3.

The main comments reported in the reflection section completed after SEP1 included giving pupils opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt at the end of each section. Student teachers in SEP2 indicated that they had built on the self-assessments in SEP1 by giving their pupils exit cards and feedback on their assessments. In SEP3, student teachers who believed they were "working beyond" the standards were working with their pupils and incorporating a peer assessment to the self-assessment. Student teachers also incorporated different learning and teaching methods in the classroom in order to make the class more engaging and to enhance pupils' learning outcomes.

For example, student teacher Rasha was *"using strategies like check-in and check-out cards"* in SEP2, in SEP3 she built on what she was doing previously and *"organised activities that help the pupils to self-assess their own and their peers' work"*.

Moreover, Student Teacher Self-Assessment Forms showed that 88% believe they have the ability to critically reflect on the challenges associated with the different teaching and learning issues at the end of Module 2 compared to 82% of teachers at the end of Module 1. After completing both Module 2 and SEP2, 90% of the student teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement *"I am able to critically reflect on the pedagogical challenges faced by teachers in the school"*, compared to 77% of student teachers at the end of Module 1 and SEP1.

Teachers need to be aware that not all of their pupils are the same; a good teacher needs to consider and cater to the diverse needs and characteristics of pupils. This falls under creating and maintaining a supportive and safe environment for all pupils, catering to the

different needs of pupils, controlling the class behaviour, and being able to adapt to different circumstances.

After completion of SEP1, 40% of student teachers were "working towards" creating a school framework, getting help when needed, and planning lessons that address different pupils needs. Upon completion of SEP3, student teachers believed that they have mastered the tasks they were working on in SEP1 and 85% felt they were "working beyond" the goals and were able to rapidly adapt to the different circumstances and manage pupils' behaviour by incorporating different strategies.

The main comments reported in the reflection section after SEP1 were that student teachers were following school rules and had been introduced to the behaviour log. In SEP2, student teachers were more comfortable in the class environment, they were able to control the class and create a safe and supportive learning environment. Some student teachers also came up with new ways to promote and encourage a positive environment. In the final reflections after completing SEP3, student teachers noted being more capable in taking action by controlling the class behaviour, and conducting and promoting a positive environment in school. Some student teachers believed that they became capable of taking action and providing constant support to the different pupils and their needs.

Student teacher Omar's reflections included being *"able to create a learning environment in the classroom"* in SEP2, to being *"able to control the class behaviour and providing constant support to the students in order to improve and getting used to the new method of teaching which is self-learning and not traditional"* in SEP3.

Student Teacher Hassan *"developed his relationships with the school"* in SEP2 and then built on those relationships in SEP3 to *"come up with alternative teaching methods when needed"*.

In their interview, one of the teacher educators spoke about the importance of inquiry and continuous development in teaching: *"The nature of the course welcomes change, because it's based on the inquiry and this answers some questions but also creates new ones"*.

5. The Features of Successful Academy-School Partnerships and Mentoring

5.1 Procedural Characteristics

Procedural characteristics
A. Commitment to quality education and developing student teacher capacity as defined by the Teachers' Standards

B.	Appropriate mentor student pairing, if possible within the same subject

C.	Providing professional development has an emphasis on assistance rather than assessment, working around a set of goals discussed with student teachers and periodically revisited

D.	Focusing observations on specific aspects of teaching with clear objectives agreed before and discussed after the lesson, with deconstruction and co-construction of practice to develop student understanding of teaching

E.	Providing time for reflection on practice that focuses on pre-service teacher development and identity, and children's learning

F.	Helping student teacher with whole school environment, including site administration communication and understanding the way school and administration work. Student teacher fulfilment of wider professional responsibilities as required by the educational setting

G.	Developing system for reporting, coordinating and managing written feedback

H.	Documenting student teacher's professional growth during the programme

I.	Providing student teachers with emotional support and encouragement

J.	Support for mentors: - Ongoing mentor training - Release time from classroom teaching - Supporting teacher networking and providing opportunities for mentors from different schools to discuss their experiences - Sufficient support from the school's leadership

5.1.1 Commitment to quality education and developing student teacher capacity as defined by the Teachers' Standards

During our work on the TEPD, everyone has been very committed to high quality education. While establishing the diploma, the first task was to develop Teachers' Standards to ensure that the course was driven by the highest professional standards. These standards were guiding the growth and development in student teachers in different areas and became the base of the curriculum framework. These Teachers' Standards influenced planning for each of three modules, including a range of tasks and directed activities.

From the beginning of the year, student teachers were trained to embed the Teachers' Standards within their educational practice through reflection and self-assessment. During class visits high standards were ensured through directed observations, discussions with student teachers about their practice and giving feedback. Teacher educators aimed to

develop student teachers' knowledge and understanding through different group work, microteaching and lectures.

Educational research was strongly embedded in the TEPD; in their planning and preparation, teacher educators drew on academic literature, while student teachers were encouraged to read a variety of articles about the latest findings in education. Reflective practices through writing practicum journals and reflective essays were very important and provided tools for student teachers to think critically about their practices, evaluate themselves, and plan for development. The assessment process consisted of many stages and its high quality was ensured through standardisation, internal, external moderation and double marking.

5.1.2 Appropriate mentor student pairing, if possible within the same subject

For this indicator 25% of the private sector school mentors have worked with teacher educators who are not from the same subject as the student teachers. This created conflict because sometimes student teacher told the pupils the wrong concept during the teacher educator visit and the teacher educator didn't correct it which put further pressure on the school mentor to explain it again to pupils. Additional time and effort were needed to resolve such situations.

One mentor from the private sector and a quarter of public sector school mentors indicated that closer matching of student teachers and school mentors from the same specialisation would benefit student teachers. There were also situations where student teachers with a Master's degree were placed in a primary school and had a mentor from a different subject. In this context, it was difficult to show any improvement of their teaching practice and in how the mentor could enhance student teachers' development.

5.1.3 Providing professional development has an emphasis on assistance rather than assessment, working around a set of goals discussed with student teachers and periodically revisited

One of the inspirations for the TEPD was to provide professional development which had an emphasis on assistance rather than assessment. Throughout the programme, student teachers have been working around a set of goals aligned with the Teachers' Standards, discussed with teacher educators and periodically revisited. Identifying individual strengths and weaknesses and addressing them in a supportive, non-judgemental atmosphere not only enhanced student teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills but also provided them with a new perception of the assessments for when they take their posts in schools.

One of the teacher educators gave an example of such work: *"At the moment, I am with one of our student teachers who did not pass Module 2 assessment. Last week the results came out, and today they are here with me, as a teacher educator, reflecting on and discussing*

their work, and analysing what could have been done differently. The student teacher expressed how they already feel much better being in this session, and in my opinion, this is due to the fact that the session, from the outset, emphasised that we do not assess students in terms of pass/ fail. Rather, we try to find the strengths in every piece of work, and identify elements that needs further development. We also assure the students that they have all the support that is required in order for them to meet these goals".

This approach towards supporting students has been running consistently throughout the year. In order to achieve a positive transformation in the Jordanian educational system, our conception of assessment needed to be revisited and enhanced. Student teachers were exposed to a range of literature about assessment for learning and assessment for teaching. Teacher educators, conducted various one-on-one sessions with student teachers to make sure that the feedback is being transferred into an action plan with a clear set of goals that student teachers needed to work on. These discussions were always referred to in the following meeting to assess how far the student teacher has progressed.

5.1.4 Focusing observations on specific aspects of teaching with clear objectives agreed before and discussed after the lesson, with deconstruction and co-construction of practice to develop student understanding of teaching

In this section, it was examined how clear and focused the objectives that were given to student teachers from the TEPD team and mentors in schools were. The findings came from the focus group discussions with student teachers and the mentors as well as the student teachers' evaluation survey results.

During the focus group discussions with student teachers, which took place during SEP1, the respondents raised an issue of the availability of their mentors, their performance, and how this reflected on their learning during their first practicum. One of the participants said their mentor was busy and was not available to guide them as expected: "*I am trying to apply new strategies in my school, but I am not sure if I am doing them correctly as my mentor is busy and unavailable*". Another participant said: "*I have a master's degree in science but I was placed with a math teacher for early grades (1-3), so I did not find my first school placement experience very rewarding*". Eleven participants (58%) said that their mentors were still using the traditional ways of teaching, and they tried to work with their mentors to apply the new concepts and practices they learn at QRTA. Also, they sometimes had to attend classes with other teachers in the school.

During the focus group discussions with mentors, which took place towards the end of SEP3, the participants also raised an issue of the gap between what student teachers learned during the TEPD and the reality of schools and their capacity as mentors. Full understanding of assessment forms and TEPD terminologies was also flagged up as a challenge by 29% of participants, while only 14% said explicitly that they knew how to

complete the assessment forms. One mentor said that: "*differences in terminologies were most noticeable for mathematics*".

When asked about tools and methods they used to support student teachers, mentors indicated that they focused their observations on certain aspects during the lesson to ensure they understood why a certain strategy or tool was used in a certain time. 29% of participants also indicated that they always did reflective meetings with their student teachers after classes to discuss teaching and provide feedback. One mentor said: "*I allowed my student teacher to attend other classes in the school to observe other things in other classes also*".

Also, through the discussions, mentors said that the teacher educators' visits were not arranged with them, so they could not participate in the reflective meetings between the student teacher and the teacher educators after these visits, and provide their comments on student teachers performance. One mentor said: "*I could not meet the teacher educator due to lack of coordination as I was busy giving classes when they came*". This was something that needs improvement in their view.

It seems that student teachers' placement in the schools also impacted on the practices of the mentors themselves. Some of them indicated that they became more organised, motivated to prepare plans, and paid more attention to documentation. One participant said: "*I learned from the student teachers how to be more organized in some areas to manage work-load*".

At the end of each of the three SEPs, student teachers were requested to complete a review point evaluation survey. One of the sections within this looked at whether student teachers thought the targets that were given to them by their mentors and other staff have been formative, structured and supportive in helping them make progress. In all three surveys, we found that the majority of student teachers (68% - 78%) confirmed that these targets were well structured and focused to support their learning, while some (16% - 18%) were neutral and between 6% - 12% did not agree with this statement, see Figure 5.1. This might imply that more attention is needed for this item to strengthen this mentoring component. One respondent in SEP1 said: "*I felt that I had more information than my mentor*". A SEP2 respondent said: "*The feedback from the mentor, the feedback from the pupils, and seeing the different teaching strategies the mentor use during classes was the most valuable*". In SEP3 one respondent said: "*The most valuable thing was getting effective feedback from my mentor and my pupils, and depending on that (beside many other things) in planning my lessons and making a critical deep reflection on my performance, and on my pupils also*".

Figure 5.1: Student teachers' views whether the targets that were given to them by their mentors and other staff were formative, structured and supportive in helping to make progress
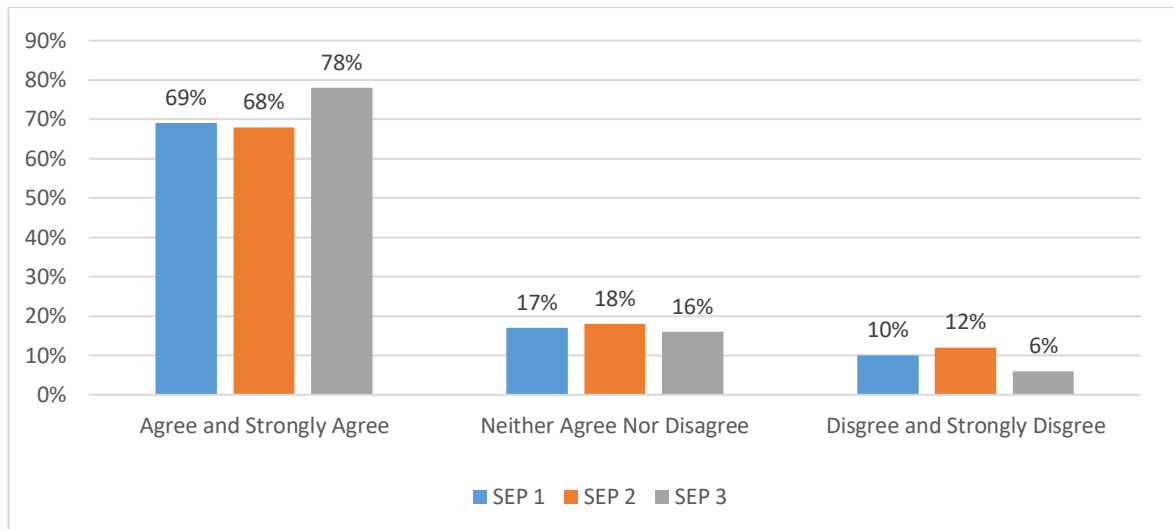
5.1.5 Providing time for reflection on practice that focuses on pre-service teacher development and identity, and children's learning

As "reflection" is one of the most important concepts in the TEPD, student teachers were provided with time for reflection and guidance on reflective writing during the diploma year. This was achieved through sessions, school observation feedback, feedback sessions at the end of each week of the school experience, and the tutorials held at the end of each SEP.

Throughout the course, teacher educators provided a variety of resources to the student teachers including presenting videos, pictures, quotes, readings, and microteaching that encouraged them to think and reflect on teaching practices. In their planning for the sessions, teacher educators accounted for the time needed for each activity so that student teachers had plenty of time to reflect individually, in pairs, or within groups, and record their thoughts and share them with others.

In school observation feedback, prior to the lessons, teacher educators prepared points to discuss with student teachers after the observation and made them aware of this focus. During the discussions, teacher educators made sure that student teachers took enough time to think and reflect on their own practices and pupils' learning. Each discussion ended up with identifying strengths and areas for development.

At the end of each week in SEP1 and SEP2, teacher educators took feedback from student teachers in a session in which they reflected on how the school days went throughout the week, what practices they noticed, what they learnt and what any challenges they experienced. Student teachers also recorded their reflections on the week in their journals.

At the end of each SEP, a tutorial was held to report the progress that student teachers made as measured against the Teachers' Standards. This included professional knowledge,

teaching practices, and ethics. These tutorials gave student teachers time to reflect on their SEP and provided evidence on what they achieved and what they still want to improve in their next SEP.

5.1.6 Helping student teachers with whole school environment, including site administration communication and understanding the way school and administration work. Student teachers' fulfilment of wider professional responsibilities as required by the educational setting.

After the completion of the first module "Productive and Effective Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching", and while student teachers were undertaking SEP 1, a sample of student teachers participated in focus group discussions as explained in the methodology section above. The purpose was for the research team to understand the way of thinking and the perception of student teachers towards the teaching profession in different areas such as: what they perceive an excellent teacher to be like, how an excellent teacher can impact the learning environment in schools, and what tools and methods should be used in an effective and engaging classroom. Student teachers were also asked to reflect on how the TEPD helped them develop their capacities and skills to become excellent teachers.

Furthermore, during each SEP, each student teacher was visited at least once by one of the teacher educators while carrying out the practical class teaching in the school. Teacher educators completed an observation form after each visit illustrating strengths and areas of improvement.

In this section, we are providing the findings from the focus group discussions as well as from the teacher educators' observations.

How student teachers perceived the characteristics of an excellent teacher?

In the focus group discussions, student teachers were asked to identify the personal traits and values which they perceived to be important for an excellent teacher to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. As illustrated in Figure 5.2, sStudent teachers' responses were categorised into eight main themes which were then ranked for importance based on the number of responses in each theme. The first theme was professionalism, being a role model, and promoting learning, with 32% of respondents agreeing on its importance. Second was patience, respect, honesty and loyalty (22%). Cooperation and commitment came third (11%), followed by confidence and strong personality, management and leadership, and social and emotional intelligence with 8% of responses for each of the three themes. Communication skills came fifth with 7%, and differentiation of pupils' levels was sixth with 4% agreeing on its importance.

Figure 5.2: Personal traits and teachers' values

PERSONAL TRAITS AND TEACHERS VALUES

Trait	Percentage
Professionalism, Role Model, Promoti…	32%
Patience, Respect, Honesty, Loyalty	22%
Cooperation, Commitment	11%
Confidence, Strong Personality	8%
Management, Leadership	8%
Sociability, Emotional Intelligence	8%
Communication Skills	7%
Differentiation	4%
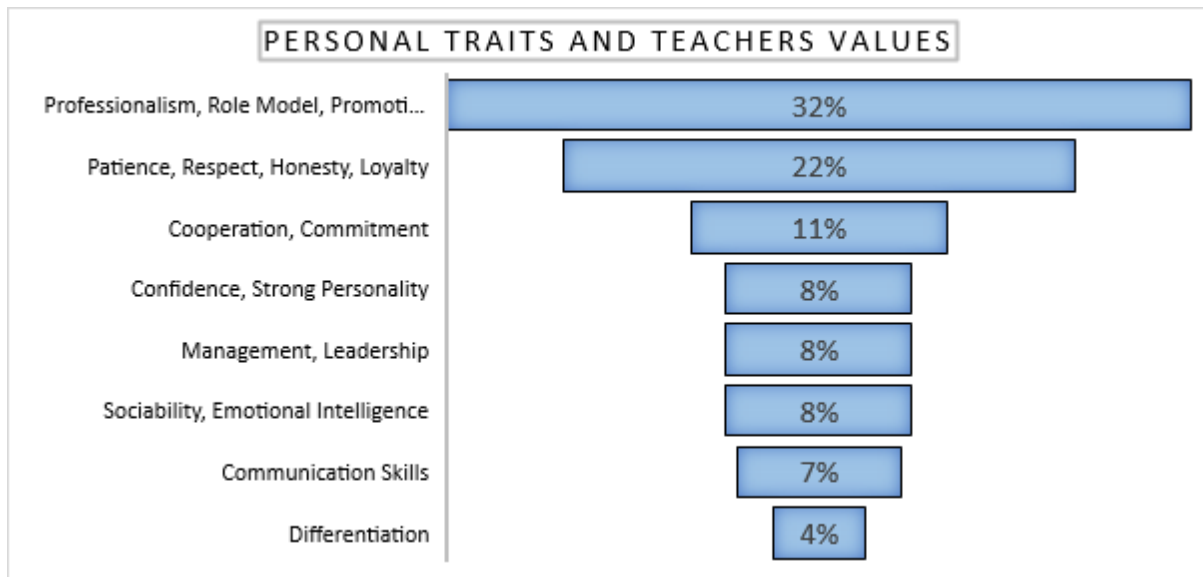
How student teachers perceived a positive impact on pupils' learning and the learning environment?

In the focus group discussions, student teachers were requested to describe how they think the performance of an excellent teacher would attribute to making a positive impact on pupils' learning and the learning environment. Student teachers identified several areas that could be improved which were then categorised into six main themes as illustrated in Figure 5.3. The first area of improvement was creating a mindset shift towards better understanding of education (teachers/ pupils/ community) with 34% of respondents agreeing on this. Second was improving pupils' interest, attention, commitment, and motivation for learning (30%). Third was encouraging pupils to become innovative (12%). Fourth was improving teachers' perception towards teaching where pupils will look at them as a role model (8%). Developing pupils' research skills and developing their ability to reflect on their learning came fifth with 6% of agreements for each theme, and improving pupils' engagement, confidence, and cooperation was sixth (5%).

Figure 5.3: Impact on pupils' learning environment

Impact on Pupils' Learning Environment

Category	Value
Develop Students' Reflection Skills	6%
Develop Students' Research Skills	6%
Students' become Innovative	13%
Mindset Shift Towards Better Understanding of Education	34%
Improve Students' Engagement, Confidence, and Cooperation	5%
Improve Students' Interest, Attention, Commitment and Motivation to Learning	30%
Improve Teachers Perception (Role Model)	8%

How student teachers perceived the use of effective tools and methods in an engaging classroom?

During the focus group discussions, student teachers were asked to identify the tools and methods they see as effective in helping pupils learn better in the three subject areas of English, mathematics, and science.

While some English student teachers mentioned methods like use of technology and learning through play, the majority agreed on three main methods which suited the English subject best. 29% of the respondents saw using audio and video recordings and YouTube channels for teaching English as the most important method. Another 21% indicated that asking pupils to do presentations will improve their learning of English, and 14% said that asking pupils to write was important and will develop their English skills.

English

Category	Value
Using Audio/ Video Recordings	29%
Asking Pupils to do Presentations	21%
Asking Pupils to Write	14%
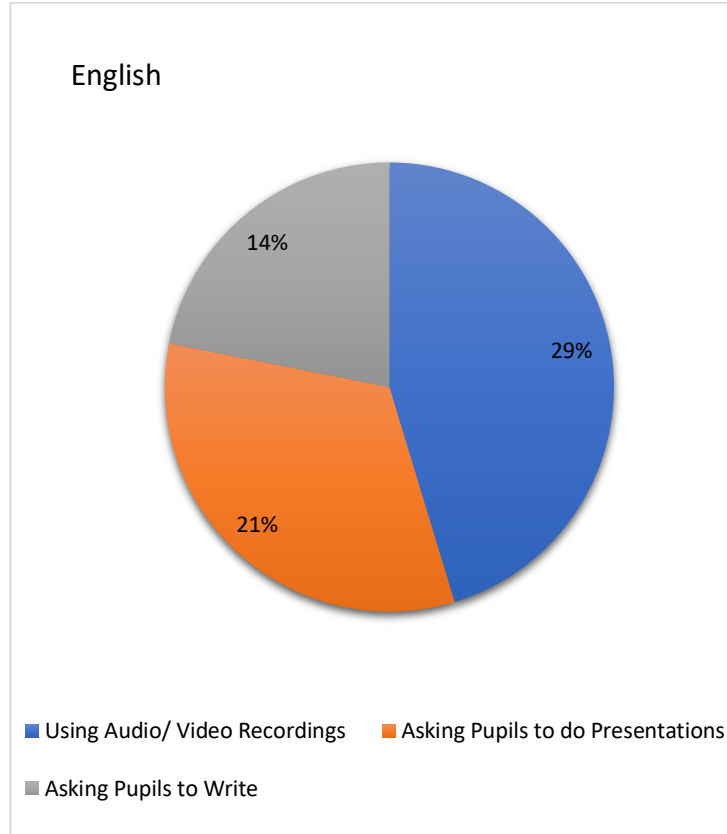
In mathematics, most of responses (36%) indicated that using technology is the most useful to encourage learning. Student teachers also stressed the importance of asking pupils to conduct research, and linking new learning to real-life examples with 16% of responses for each answer. Students' interaction during the lesson was also considered important with both group-work and learning through playing being identified by 11% of respondents.

Mathematics

11%
32%
11%
16%
16%

- Using Technology
- Pupils Conducting Research
- Linking Learning with Real-life Examples
- Group Work
- Learning through Playing
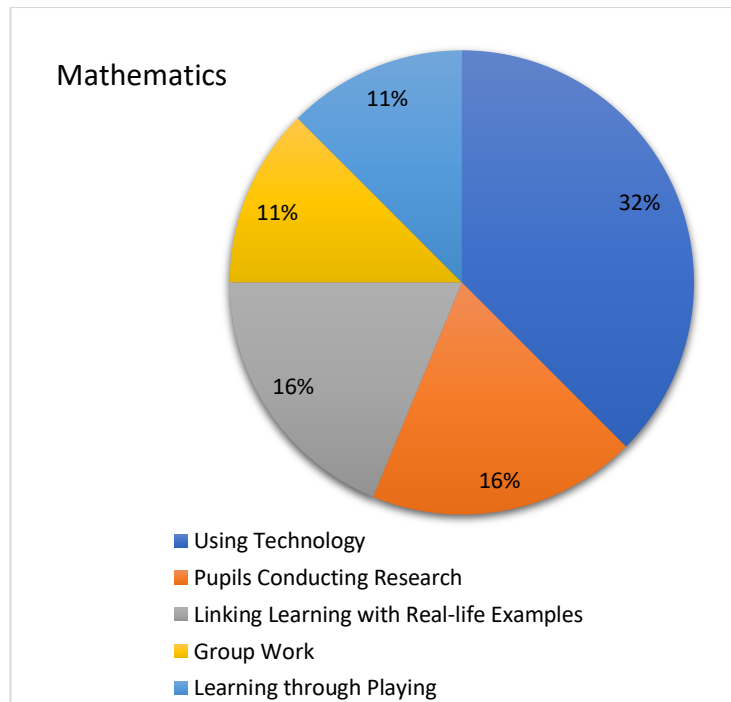
26% of science student teachers' responses agreed that approach to seating in the classroom, location of the class such as in classroom or in the play-yard and using science lab were the best methods. 15% of respondents agreed that asking pupils to conduct research is very beneficial and 15% also agreed that using technology in teaching is very important. 11% of responses showed that linking learning with real-life examples is helpful, while another 15% also stressed the importance of asking pupils to do presentations of their work in front of others.

Science

11%
26%
11%
15%
15%

- Class Seating/location of Class/ Science Lab
- Using Technology
- Pupils Conducting Research
- Linking Learning with Real-life Examples
- Asking Pupils to do Presentations
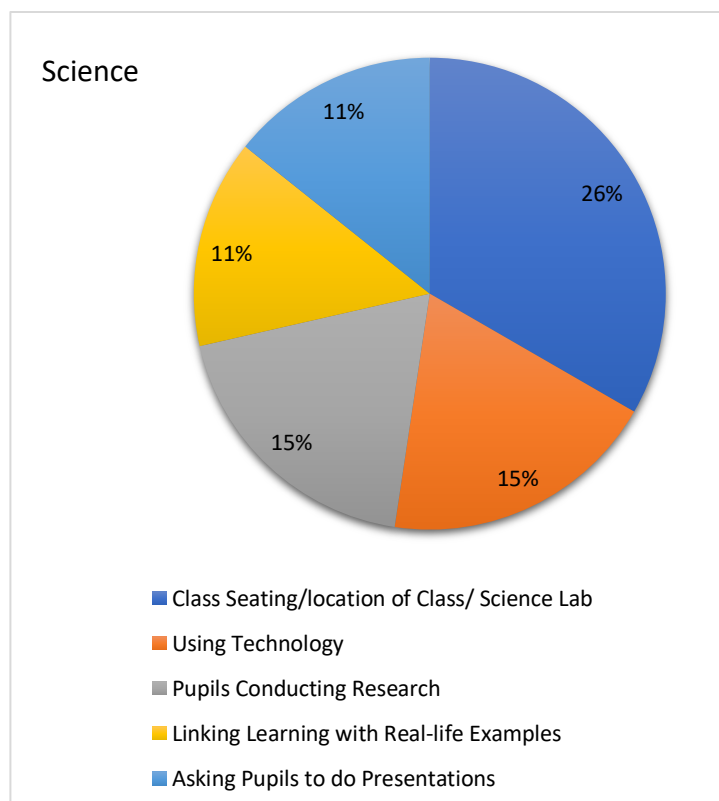
How did the TEPD help student teachers develop their teaching skills?

During the focus group discussions, student teachers shed light on how the TEPD has helped them develop their teaching skills and capabilities. All participants said that enrolling

on the TEPD was the right decision as it gave them hope for the better future for education. One participant said: "*enrolling in the TEPD was the best decision I took to improve my skills in one year, the programme has exceeded my expectations*". Another said: "*It will be a wonderful thing if we do make a change in education*". They highlighted three main areas of improvement: lesson planning and readiness, classroom management, and personal skills.

Lesson planning and readiness

Student teachers identified their lesson planning as the most improved area of their pedagogical practice. One participant said: *"The programme teaches them that being a teacher is not a 'one-man show' but a two-way act where the teacher engages with students".* Another participant said: *"I did not believe in and understand the importance of lesson planning before the TEPD".* Student teachers spoke of many ways in which their skills improved within this theme:

- The importance of preparing a lesson plan
- How to prepare a lesson plan
- How to consider time management
- How to use and integrate appropriate teaching strategies
- How to use/ give feedback and do reflections
- How to write expected learning outcomes and objectives for a class
- How to organise the class and take differentiation into account
- How to prepare good questions and activities for the class
- How to ensure that pupils are at the core of educational process
- How to better engage pupils in classroom

Time and Classroom Management

Time management was the second area identified by student teachers as having improved as a result of the TEPD. One participant said*: "Before TEPD classroom management only meant controlling students' behaviour, but after the TEPD I now know it's not just that; it's also about effective student learning and using tools in the classroom"*. Student teachers provided many examples of what specific skills they developed:

- The importance of time management
- How to manage productive noise and create educational chaos in the classroom
- How to consider effective pupils' learning and use appropriate tools and strategies in the classroom
- How to involve pupils more in the classroom
- How to design refreshment and extra-curricular activities
- How to take differentiation into account

__Personal Skills__

Student teachers have identified personal skills as one of the areas which improved because of their participation in TEPD. One participant said: *"My attitude to teaching was completely changed".* Other student teachers spoke of:

– Improved courage and confidence in myself
– Improved communication skills
– More open minded
– Building good relations with pupils
– Emotional Intelligence
– How to take differentiation into account

Reviewing the teacher educators' observation forms, the research team found that the teacher educators were giving feedback to student teacher on their performance in the classroom and that this feedback was closely matched with individual goals and Teachers' Standards. The feedback across the three subject areas of science, mathematics, and English was focused on some main benchmarks such as providing a good learning environment, voice tune, time management, and knowledge of the subject pedagogies. The discussions during the observation visits were linked to the TEPD Teachers' Standards which helped student teachers understand how they were progressing towards achieving expected learning outcomes.

For the English group, observations focused on benchmarks such as lesson planning, voice tune, classroom management, and pupils' encouragement and engagement. The finding showed that student teachers displayed the highest quality performance in creating a good learning environment, building good connections with pupils and dealing with them with respect. All this engaged pupil and enabled them to learn English more effectively. Student teachers also showed good practice in lesson planning and to some extent time management, while few notes were found about the need for improvement of the latter. More suggested areas for improvement were: using the appropriate voice tune, using a variety of teaching tools, giving pupils more time and reducing teachers' time. Giving pupils more time to think of questions before answering them was identified as an area for improvement across the three subjects.

For the mathematics group, observations focused on benchmarks such as time management, ability to build mathematical concepts with pupils, achieving expected learning outcomes from the lesson and the pace in which the class was being delivered. The findings showed that student teachers showed good knowledge of the subject and curriculum, that they were able to provide a good learning environment for pupils by showing respect and

understanding, and were able to engage pupils in the lessons. Time management was something that almost half of student teachers mastered while others still needed some improvement. Differentiation, allowing enough time for pupils to think of questions, and asking higher order thinking questions were also areas identified for improvement.

For the science group, observations focused on benchmarks such as lesson planning, pupils' reflection, personality, time management, knowledge of the subject and curriculum, and communication skills. The findings showed that most of student teachers showed satisfactory performance in terms of using appropriate teaching strategies, knowledge of the subject, confidence while giving a lesson, voice tune, and providing a good learning environment that entails dealing with pupils with respect. Areas of improvement were mainly time management, giving appropriate time for pupils to think before answering questions, and being patient with pupils, especially low achievers (a form of differentiation).

5.1.7 Developing system for reporting, coordinating and managing written feedback

Any feedback that student teachers received from their coursework or practical sessions in schools was recorded electronically and made available to students by being regularly updated to the VLE. This platform was used as an important way of exchanging and managing written information between teacher educators, school mentors and student teachers, and supported student teachers' learning and development on many levels. Apart from containing theoretical course materials, it included reading lists, feedback forms, and the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Tool. Additionally, it enabled student teachers to continue discussions with their professional and subject tutors, coordinate their work, and ask any questions they might have had while out of QRTA. As an extremely rich and robust source of information, it provided data for the M&E processes to further develop and improve the diploma.

As in some schools where SEPs took place, access to technology was limited, there were occasional situations when observation forms from school mentors were sent as PDF documents or as photos of handwritten feedback. Such occurrences disturbed the flow of information which might have impacted on the effectiveness of this feedback. Also, some of the involved parties did not always upload appropriate documentation in a timely manner and a system monitoring the completion of all uploads and updates would further improve these processes.

5.1.8 Documenting student teacher's professional growth during the programme

Assessing and documenting student teachers' professional growth was one of the important strands of the diploma and for a key element of ensuring the success of the programme. It provided a great opportunity for the team of teacher educators, school mentors and student teachers to reflect on the programme holistically and to encompass different viewpoints. It was also an important element to feed into the M&E of the programme as it showed what went well and what did not. The documentation helped to

build plans to support the weak points and enhanced the growth of student teachers' knowledge, understanding and practical skills. Furthermore, it provided a golden opportunity to share success stories and celebrate hard work.

At the beginning of the programme, student teachers could have been described as very passive students who needed support in each activity. Comparing this to what was achieved and presented in the poster session, and student teachers' performance during the last SEP, one can really appreciate the effect of the TEPD, and the teacher educators' continuous support for the student teachers.

Professional growth in student teachers throughout the TEPD was tracked with many tools, which provided a comprehensive and objective view:

- Teacher practice: Many student teachers started their teaching profession during microteaching day before their first SEP. The significant growth in their teaching practice inside classrooms was observed and recorded by teacher educators, mentors, and IOE staff members. All these observations were followed by a discussion with teacher educators during which student teachers' strengths and weaknesses were identified and they received advice on how to improve their teaching practice. As observed in discussion points during the tutorials, student teachers showed a significant improvement in their thinking, planning, self-efficacy, and designing next step and future plans. Each tutorial was summed up in the progress report by the teacher educator and provided student teachers with suggestions, ideas, and plans how to further develop their teaching.
- Subject specific knowledge: During the programme student teachers' mind-sets were being changed from perceiving the development of their subject knowledge as a mean to achieve the diploma into understanding the need for continuous growth in their subject knowledge throughout their whole carrier. This was supported by exposing student teachers to a wide range of academic literature and the development of their research skills.
- Teachers lesson plans: Student teachers moved from teacher-focus plan to pupil-active learning plans.
- The Self-Assessment Tool provided student teachers with a continuous reflection on their improvement and progress compared to Teachers' Standards.
- Assessment pieces indicated student teachers' progress and the achievement of the aims that the TEPD worked towards.

5.1.9 Providing student teachers with emotional support and encouragement

Student teachers expressed the support and encouragement they received from their school mentors during the TEPD experience in three student teacher evaluation surveys at the end of each module. The following questions were under the school experience section:

1) 'I have been supported very well by my mentor':
Student teachers' answers 'strongly agree' and 'agree' increased between survey one and three to reach 80% of student teachers either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Answers 'neither agree nor disagree' decreased slightly from 16% in the first survey to 11% in the last, see Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4: Support received by student teachers from their mentors
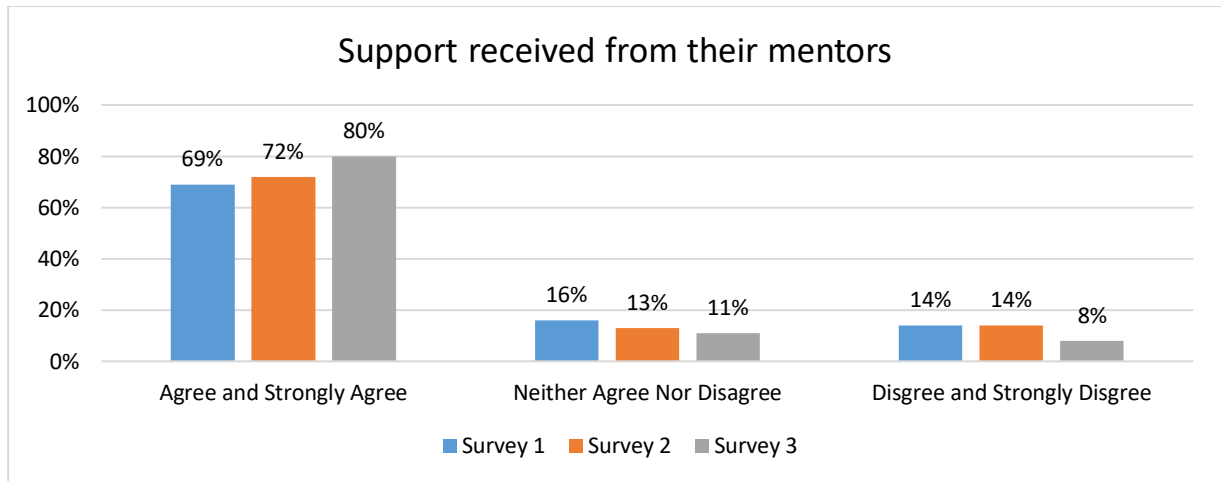
2) 'The targets I have been given by my mentor in school and other staff have been formative, structured and supportive in helping me to make progress':
Student teachers' perceptions saw a positive increase between surveys one, two and three. Survey three showed that 79% of student teachers answered: 'strongly agree' and 'agree', 16% 'neither agree nor disagree', and 5% disagree and strongly disagree. See Figure 5.5 below.

Figure 5.5: Student teachers' responses about given targets having been formative, structured, and supportive
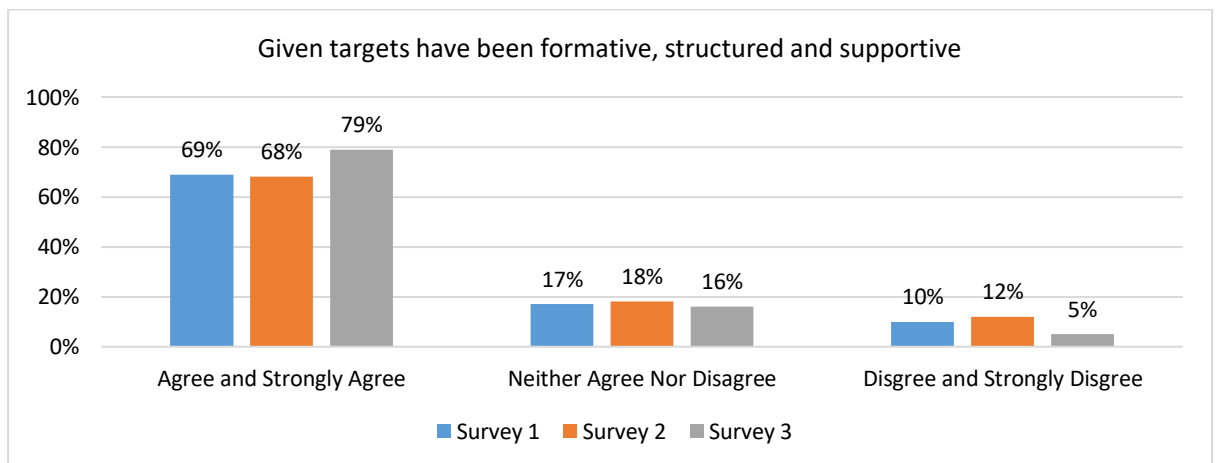
3) 'I have had support in planning and teaching lessons':
More student teachers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in survey three (88%) compared to results from survey one (74%) and two (82%). The number of student teachers who neither agreed nor disagreed, or disagreed and strongly disagreed decreased throughout the course from 16% to 8% and 9% to 3% respectively. See Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.6: Student teachers' responses about support in planning and teaching lessons
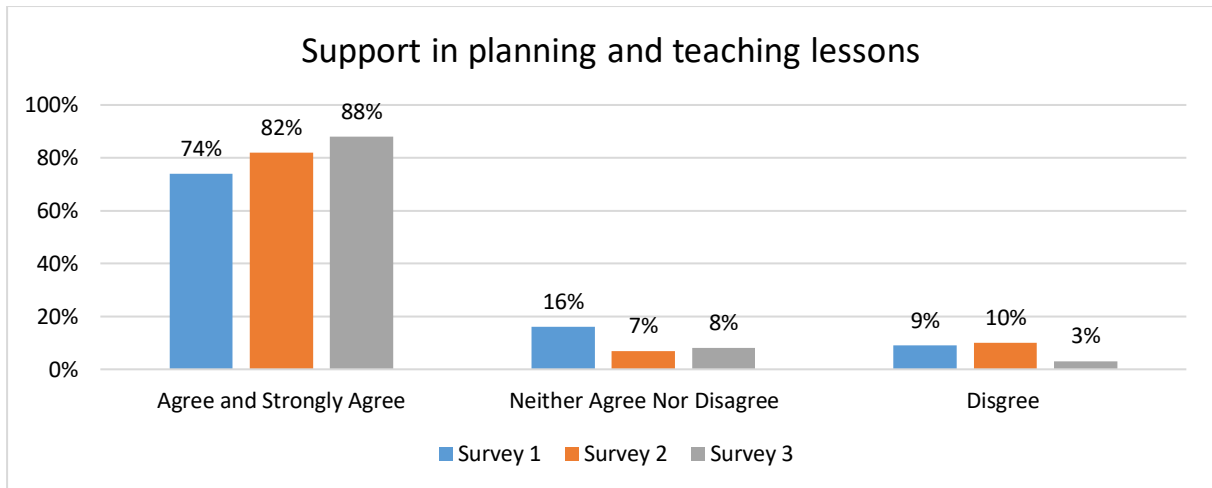
4) 'The subject department has helped me considerably to plan lessons effectively':
Student teachers were more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement survey three (83%) as compared to results from survey one (46%) and two (73%). The proportion of students who neither agreed nor disagreed or disagreed and strongly disagreed decreased to 12% and 3% respectively. See Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7: Student teachers' responses about help in planning lessons they received from the subject departments
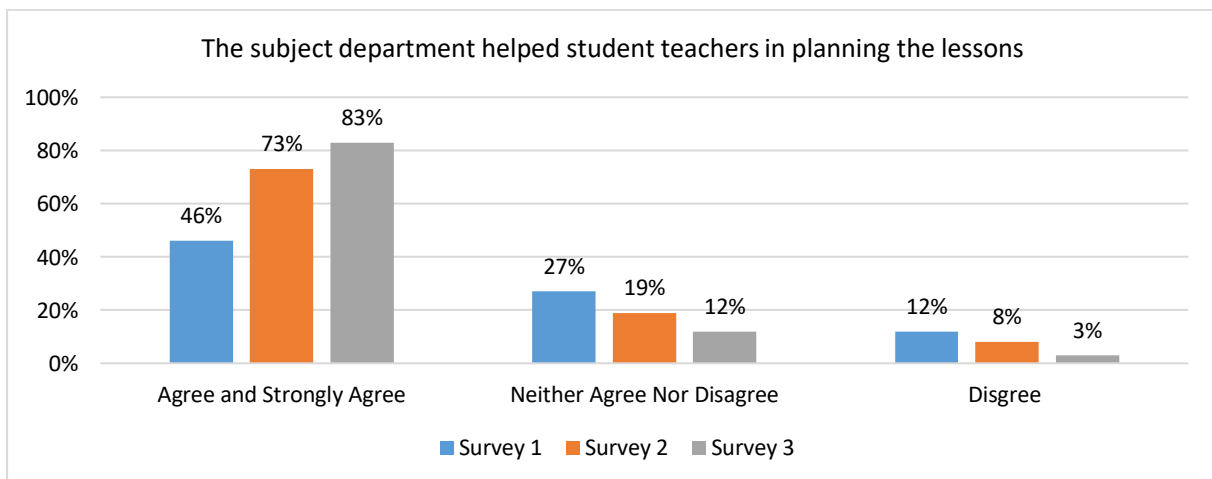
During the first and second survey at the end of SEP1 and SEP2, the student teachers were asked how supported they felt by their teacher educators; in the first survey 97% of student teachers said that they have received support and 3% said they did not, while in the second survey 95% of student teachers said that they have received support and 5% said they did not. Moreover, the student teachers spoke about the ways they have been supported by teacher educators; based on the first survey results 66% of student teacher indicated that the teacher educators had given them moral support, encouragement and confidence, 17% mentioned knowledge and practical experience, and 13% have benefited from reflection and feedback. Student teachers' answers for the first and second survey are illustrated in Figure 5.8 overleaf.

Figure 5.8: Student teachers' perceptions of the support they received from teacher educators
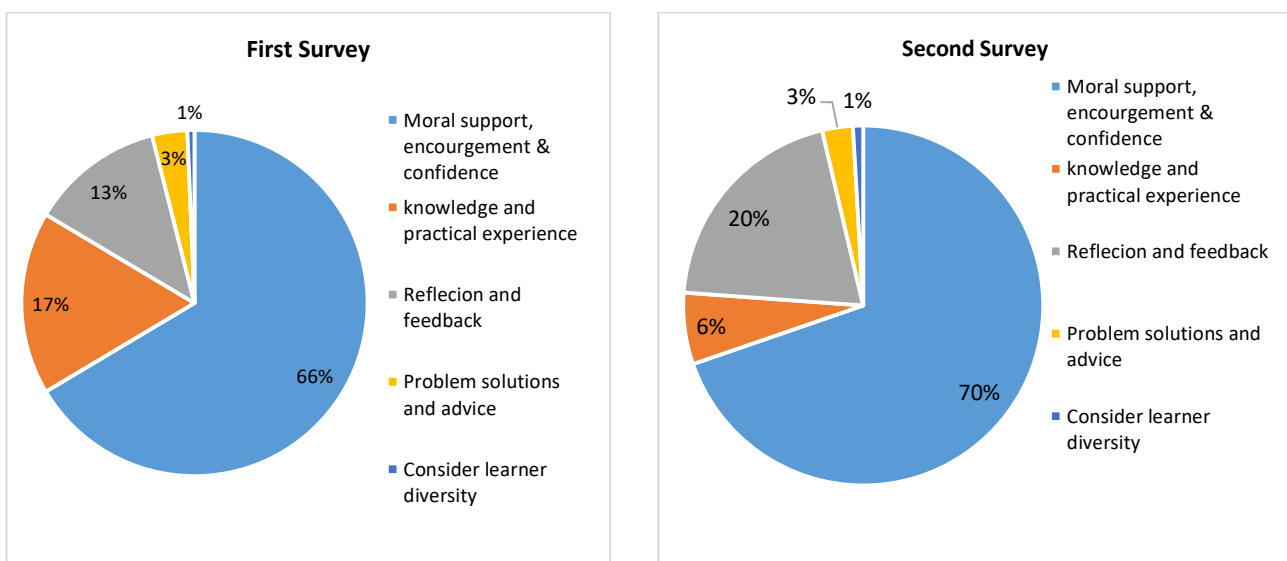
In the third survey at the end of the course, 83% of participants said that they had the opportunity to see teacher educators model the pedagogical practice while 70% had the opportunity to see school mentors teaching. Student teachers found it useful for their own learning and teaching. Student teachers' answers are illustrated in Figure 5.9 below.

Figure 5.9: Teacher educators and school mentors modelled their own pedagogical practice

Teacher Educators and School Mentors modeled their own pedagogical practice
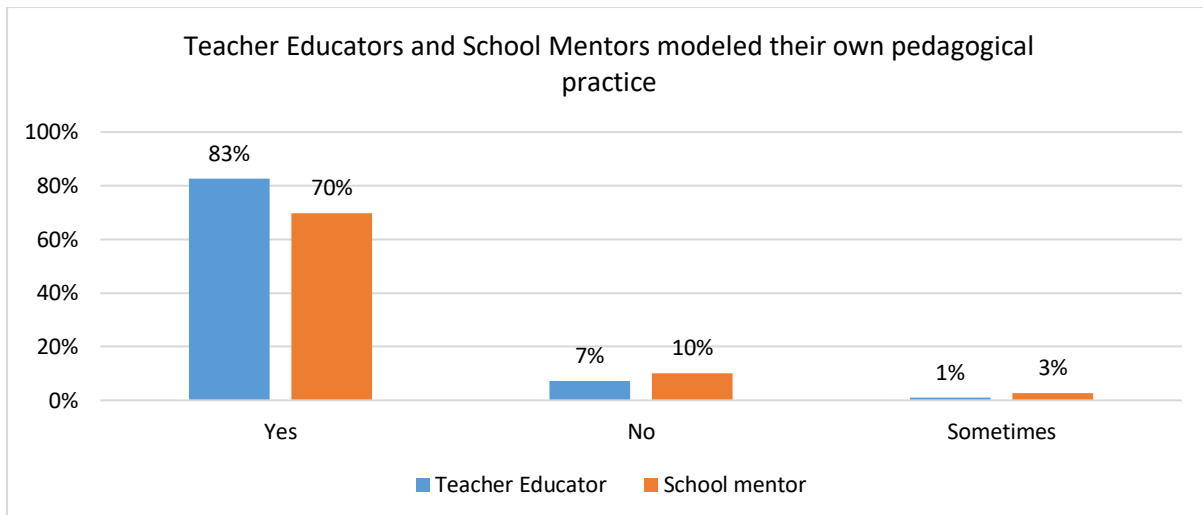
A sample of 56 school mentors were given the opportunity to share their perspectives about their role as mentors during the mentor focus groups as clarified below:

- 21% - role model, supportive, and tutor.
- 21% - improve and enhance the performance of student teachers and teach them how to deal with challenges. For example, all mentors from one of the private sector focus groups mentioned that their role is to teach the student teacher how to implement what they have learned during the programme and to show them how to deal with any classroom situation.
- 11% - build good relationship with the student teacher; for example, some mentors mentioned that they should create a friendly and trust relationship.
- 7% - transfer the educational experience (both theoretical & practical) to the student teacher; one of the school mentors said her role is to *"give the student teachers a chance to get involved in the schools' practical life with follow up and responsibility"*.
- 5% - provide a learning and comfortable environment; one of the mentors mentioned *"my student teachers were very motivated linking and writing everything I do in and outside the classroom and gave me ideas to improve my information delivery and classroom environment"*.

During one of the focus groups with school mentors from the public sector, all participants suggested that teacher educators should give the school mentors moral support in front of the school management and their colleagues.

Some school mentors spoke of how the TEPD changed the perceptions of all involved stakeholders, including pupils. Some pupils found the role of the student teacher and the thought that they will be practicing on them confusing. School mentors described how they worked on convincing the pupils to accept student teachers and explained to them how important it is to give the student teacher the opportunity to be part of the teaching process in the school, because school mentors used many approaches to do this. For instance, one

mentor said: *"I was bringing the student teacher to my classroom as a friend and introduced him to the pupils, after that I gave him an opportunity to teach the pupils and they accepted him"*, and another mentor mentioned *"I asked the student teacher to do ice-breaking activities with the pupils to build confidence between her and the pupils and to enhance the communication between them"*. This took time and effort from the school mentors as some student teachers lacked time management in the classroom. In some cases, student teachers made teaching mistakes which required school mentors to re-explain the lesson for the pupils. To accommodate this, sometimes the school mentors needed to arrange for additional classes to take place, via school management, which was also challenging.

5.1.10 TEPD Support for mentors:

Ongoing mentor training

Most mentors from the private sector agreed on the fact that the training was focused on how to give feedback to the student teachers, rather than explaining how to fill the student teachers' forms. Training did not explain the Teachers' Standards which student teachers' performance was being assessed on, and didn't specify what exactly the mentors should focus on. A quarter of private sector mentors felt that the training course could have been given in one day instead of two days as the training content focused on topics that the school mentors already knew. They proposed that instead, training should focus on their mentoring role and the tasks requested of them. Some complained about what they perceived time wasted on filling forms. Three mentors requested the extension of training time to more than two days.

In the public sector, not all mentors had the same number of training hours, for example: one public school mentor said that their group was trained for two hours only, and not all of them were given the chance to express their ideas as one mentor from them was selected to speak on behalf of the other mentors in that group. They were then given the materials and were asked to read themselves. 16% of public sector mentors said that training was not enough. To understand their roles and to gain skills necessary to their work they believed that they needed more than two days. On the other hand, 25% of the public sector mentors who had a full day training considered it too long, and they thought the material could be covered in two hours only.

25% of the public sector mentors were satisfied with their training, they had clear ideas about the requirements, and found training tools and methods excellent. One of the mentors said that the training material was not enough, teaching methods were not appropriate, and that training which lasted only two hours wasn't long enough.

During the discussion with the mentors, 32% of public sector mentors indicated that sometimes they felt some of the student teachers came to their schools with a high level of knowledge of new teaching methods, concepts, terms, and practices. This made them feel

that the student teachers were above their levels. Mentors suggested that they take more in-depth training in relation to the content of the programme that the student teachers are being trained on. They felt that when they have better understanding of the programme's content, this will allow them to better supervise their student teachers.

Some school mentors from public schools reported leaving training with plenty of questions about their role. Several areas were unclear for them during training, for example one of them said that they only understood 30% of their role as mentors during training, while another one understood about half of what was needed from them. One mentor from the private sector suggested that it would be beneficial if mentors could meet their student teachers prior to the course. They suggested meeting student teachers during the training in order to get introduced to each other and to exchange emails and numbers for any inquires or communications during the programme.

36% of public sector mentors said that the training they received was great, while one other mentor said that the training was amazing. They all valued the strategies they applied after the student teachers came to their schools. On the other hand, one mentor from the public sector said that the training wasn't well organized and it confused them. 20% of mentors from the public sector did not fully grasp their role as mentors during the training, but they said that when they contacted the TEPD team they explained it well to them. One mentor from the private sector felt that the tasks they performed as a mentor was based on their own experience as teachers and not fully on the mentoring training they took in the programme. 9% of the public sector mentors reported that they did not understand the full picture of the TEPD and their role as mentors except after the student teachers came to their schools. Three of the public sector mentors said that the training was only theoretical, not practical and two mentors mentioned that the tools provided in the mentoring training were different to those mentioned by their student teachers.

Release time from classroom teaching

17% of the private sector mentors and 41% of the public sector mentors reported that they did not have enough time to spend with student teachers on discussions and to give them feedback about their teaching because of their high workload. 17% of mentors from the private sector and 18% from the public sector recommended a reduction of the school mentor's workload to ensure a truly meaningful practicum. They also suggested that school limitations should be considered; especially the number of classes that the student teachers should attend. They pointed out that student teachers should follow the mentor's lesson preparation and this wasn't always possible. One of the mentors was given additional work by the school principal who thought that the two student teachers will help so that the mentor can do additional work.

42% of mentors from the private sector noticed that student teachers needed to engage more in the classroom and to support this, mentors organised an opportunity for student teachers attend other classes in the school to observe other teachers and their teaching practices. Two mentors from the private sector felt that they did not benefit from their role as mentors since they only had the class time to spend with their student teachers, otherwise they were busy. In this regard, one mentor from the public sector recommended to reduce the mentors' workload or to reduce the number of student teachers because there were two student teachers trained in the school he was working in.

7% of the public sectors' mentors have faced time pressures because the curriculum was very broad and there was not enough time to complete it and work with the student teachers at the same time. To complete their curriculum, they had to take time from other teachers' and due to these mentors' time limitations some strategies could not have been implemented.

Supporting teacher networking and providing opportunities for mentors from different schools to discuss their experiences

A quarter of mentors from the private sector suggested building a communication cycle between mentors. 18% of mentors expressed the need for communication between all mentors or mentors by specialisation to support each other and they proposed setting up a Facebook or WhatsApp group. Ten mentors from the public sector and one from the private sector suggested that organising meetings for mentors from the same topic during their work would allow them to benefit from each other's knowledge and share their experience.

Sufficient support from the school's leadership

Most school mentors from both, private and public sectors reported that the head teachers in their schools were supportive of the programme, however on many occasions they couldn't provide the mentors with an appropriate amount of release time to fully engage with the programme as such decisions would have financial consequences for the school.

However, several occasions were described, when the management of the school were not familiar with the expectations towards student teachers and assumed that they were there to independently take over the teaching while the teacher can be doing something else. An extreme example of such misunderstanding was when one of the student teachers was told to cover for an absence of one of the teachers. Additionally, some asserted that student teachers can be given tasks such as the break duty and fulfil these without any supervision.

In some schools, the decisions were made that student teachers were not allowed to participate in out of classroom activities, such as assemblies or trips, which limited their

experiences. There was also a situation, in which student teachers were not allowed to spend any time in the staff room. As no reason for this was provided, student teachers were confused by such approach and did not feel welcome there.

5.2 Mentor's Knowledge and Skills

Mentor's knowledge and skills
A. Understanding of the individuality and diversity of learners to be able to engage and support them in their learning;
B. Good knowledge and understanding of learning theory, discipline taught, and subject-specific pedagogy
C. Planning: - Collaborative planning individual lessons and broader schemes; - Discussing subject content and its relationship to teaching and student learning;
D. Instruction: - Ability to model practice and explain the choice of used strategies and materials; - Ability to help student teachers with help with differentiating instruction;
E. Assessment: - Cooperation with student teacher in analysing student's work
F. Behaviour management: - Instructional skills and teaching strategies to engage and encourage all students and effectively manage their behaviour
G. Discussing teaching with student teachers which explores a variety of pedagogical issues: - Learning and students - Making decisions about how to teach and justifying them - Using new strategies based on knowledge of students, needs of students, students' prior knowledge - Setting next learning steps - Assessing for learning - Trialling new ideas

To better understand how school mentors viewed their experience of the TEPD the research team engaged three mentors in providing a reflection essay where they described their experience. This section is also supported by data from the focus group discussions with

student teachers and mentors, as well as the results from the student teachers' evaluation survey.

5.2.1 Understanding of the individuality and diversity of learners to be able to engage and support them in their learning

During the focus group discussions with the mentors, they raised an issue regarding the diversity of student teachers and the English language barrier, especially in the private sector schools. 15% of the participants mentioned that there were differences in student teachers' levels of teaching and their characters, while 16% of the mentors spoke about English language barrier between student teachers and pupils. For example, two mentors expressed, that there was a disparity between student teachers from SEP 1 and SEP2. One other mentor from the same group said that: *"In my school the English language was a barrier for the student teachers, and they were not fluent to give English for the pupils."*

In the reflective essays, one of the mentors from the public sector who was an English teacher said that *"The student teacher came into the school very well-prepared; every week the student teacher organised what should be observed in class, and showed excellent knowledge for pedagogical terms and teaching methods. It was obvious that the student teacher was given clear instructions about being cooperative with the school mentor and the pupils."* Also, the mentor expressed that student teachers had a problem with communication skills and they should work on enhancing their English. Another public mentor expressed, that a mentor should be capable to develop enrichment and remedial plans, along with daily and semester plans that take into account different patterns of student teachers' learning, their different environments and backgrounds, in order to engage and support student teachers in their learning.

Additionally, another mentor from private sector who was a mentor for two student teachers expressed, that student teachers had very good subject-specific knowledge with good enough understanding of the learning theory, despite the language barriers they faced since the school's curriculum was international. This mentor said that: *"To be honest one of the student teachers was flexible and open-minded to listen for me; we were having weekly feedback reflection meetings about strategies based on knowledge of student teachers and their needs, also agreeing and setting next learning steps. Another student teacher was strict and behaving as if knowing everything".*

5.2.2 Good knowledge and understanding of learning theory, discipline taught, and subject-specific pedagogy

During the focus groups, the interviewed mentors were asked to explain the extent in which they had some/ much knowledge of what was covered in the TEPD and whether the support they provided for their student teachers was aligned with what they have learnt

during the TEPD. 61% respondents said that they have a good understanding of the programme, while 14% said that they have some understanding. Another 11% said that they did not have a clear understanding. On another hand 21% of mentors said that this was a beneficial experience for them as they have learned new things from their student teachers. For example, mentors mentioned that they have learned a lot from the theoretical part which student teachers have brought into the classroom. This made them want to research more to keep up with student teachers' academic level. While trying to verify mentors' understanding of the subject specific pedagogies (subject related tools and strategies) that were used in different subject specific areas of English, mathematics and science, no data was found in the mentors focus group discussions. However, reviewing student teachers' focus groups provided data about some of the subject specific pedagogies (tools and strategies) which could be used for the different subject specific areas. In mathematics for example, these were: using technology, conducting research by the pupils, linking learning with real-life examples, group work, and learning through playing.

In mentors' reflective essays, one respondent from the public sector expressed that for the mentors to be able to achieve the desired targets from the TEPD, they should acquire a range of personal skills and proficient knowledge to empower them, like being in line with best instructional practices, and understanding and applying different forms of assessment. It was also mentioned that school mentors need to constantly seek to develop their skills and proficient knowledge through attending training courses, to stay up to date with the new instructional practices and pedagogies.

5.2.3 Planning

Collaborative planning individual lessons and broader schemes

Concerning planning, during the focus groups the interviewed mentors spoke about the interactions with their student teachers and the tools and methods they have you used. 45% of mentors said that they have collaborated with student teachers in lesson planning. Mentors mentioned, that the student teachers were fully engaged with them and they used variety of tools to interact with them like research, providing feedback, analysing pupils' work, and reflection.

Another mentor expressed, that teacher educators focused on student teachers' teaching strategies, but in his opinion the focus should be also on pedagogical skills, lesson planning, and the ability to select the appropriate teaching strategies for the lesson.

In reflective essays, a mentor from the private sector mentioned, that student teachers made an outstanding effort as assessed against the set of Teachers' Standards. They said: "*I have teamed up with the student teachers to plan per class and per week and for the whole practicum period; conducting many discussions and brain storming sessions before we*

enter the class, in other words, we planned and prepared together for the content's objectives, the needed tools, and decided on which pedagogy will we deliver the info."

Discussing subject content and its relationship to teaching and student learning

No data about this benchmark was found. This will be addressed a point of improvement of the M&E system in the next academic year.

5.2.4 Instruction

Ability to model practice and explain the choice of used strategies and materials

After completion of SEP3 student teachers were requested to complete a review point evaluation survey in which they provided feedback on a variety of items which will inform the research team and TEPD programme team on the required improvements.

Ability to help student teachers with help with differentiating instruction

During mentors focus groups the mentors spoke about working with the student teachers on taking differentiation into consideration while planning and delivering a class. The limited data in this area suggests that data collection requires adjustments in the following years.

5.2.5 Assessment

Cooperation with student teachers in analysing pupils' work

In the reflective essays, one mentor from private sector said that: *"We were having weekly feedback and spoke or made reflection about strategies based on knowledge of students and their needs"*. The same mentor faced a challenge with one of the student teachers who was strict, behaved arrogantly, and thought that the practicum is just a time to be spent.

During the discussion in the focus groups, two mentors from private sector raised the point that they were patient while dealing with their student teachers who were from different backgrounds and accepted their different point of views. Also, three mentors from public sector mentioned that the student teachers were fully engaged with the mentors, and they were shadowing them. Furthermore, four mentors expressed that student teachers were helping them in analysing pupils' work. In addition, 23% of public sector mentors perceived student teachers as collaborative in lesson planning; for example, one mentors gave student teachers 10 minutes from their class to talk with pupils, and asked student teacher to prepare exams and participate in scoring the exams.

During student teachers' focus groups, they discussed their experience with pupils during the practicum, and have identified the methodologies they used. Some of student teachers mentioned that in order to measure pupils' learning in a certain lesson they asked them to reflect on what they have learnt and complete a feedback form (exit ticket) by the end of the class. They also mentioned that they used to follow up on pupils' work and assignments, encouraged their pupils to correct each other's mistakes, and to share their opinions and learning. During the discussion, student teachers expressed that before the TEPD they did not have this level of instructional capacity and knowledge and that they have learnt it during the programme.

5.2.6 Behaviour management

Instructional skills and teaching strategy to engage and encourage all students and effectively manage their behaviour

During the focus group discussions, the mentors spoke about their supporting role for their student teachers and about teaching them how to implement what they have learned. Mentors tried to give student teachers opportunities to deal with any classroom situations, for example one mentor said that: "*My student teacher was initiative and used to cover me place when I was absent, helped me in correcting exams, and used to arrange activities for the pupils*". Another mentor also supported student teachers to differentiating teaching strategies by learning through play, using EDUWAVE (Ministry of Education online platform), manipulatives, extracurricular activities, involving them in building development plan for the school, and letting them help in assessment and how to use rubrics and checklists.

Moreover, three mentors agreed, that implementing the concept of instructional practices and teaching strategies which they learned from the TEPD was easy because of student teachers' good understanding of these issues. For example, one public sector mentor worked with student teachers to make the classroom more flexible, and maintaining pupils' focus during class without them being bored. Another mentor mentioned that they proceeded with usual classroom methods, and did not change the methodologies except for very few specific situations, such as incorporating group work in mathematics classes.

The mentors also spoke about their support for student teachers by giving them feedback and conducting reflective meetings. Six mentors spoke about conducting reflective meetings with student teachers to discuss their performance in the classrooms, and to give them feedback on their performance. Three mentors used to correct the student teachers' mistakes during the classrooms, but in a smart way without letting the pupils notice.

Mentors helped in building student teachers' competencies, for example three mentors mentioned that they worked on building the capacity of student teachers by asking them to prepare power point presentations and to use technology tools.

During the student teachers' focus groups discussions, the participants mentioned, that before the TEPD their understanding of classroom management was only controlling pupils' behaviour, and after joining the TEPD it has also become about effective pupils' learning, using a variety of teaching tools in the classroom, and the fact that controlling pupils does not have to be by preventing them from talking.

Student teachers used different activities and teaching strategies depending on their subject to enhance teaching and learning and to engage pupils in the classroom. For example, English student teachers used audio/ videos to improve pupils' language, asked pupils to do presentations and to discuss them in the classroom, and to write short stories.

5.2.7 Discussing teaching with student teacher which explores a variety of pedagogical issues

- *Learning and pupils*
- *Making discussion about how to teach and justifying them*
- *Using new strategies based on knowledge of pupils, their needs and prior knowledge*
- *Setting next learning steps*
- *Assessing for learning*

In one of the mentors' reflective essays, the respondent was impressed that the student teacher came into the school very well-prepared. Every week the student teacher organised what should be observed in class, and showed excellent knowledge for pedagogical terms and teaching methods. It was obvious that student teacher was given clear instructions about being cooperative with the teacher and the pupils.

During the focus group discussion five mentors expressed that they benefitted from student teachers and admitted that at the beginning, student teachers were learning from them but by the end they started learning from the student teachers. One mentor spoke about learning a lot from the theoretical part/ comments that the student teachers made in the classroom. This made them want to research more to keep up with the student teachers. Another mentor talked about the practical experience with the student teacher and said that regarding the materials student teachers were being trained on, it was great, they have benefited from it and exchanged the experience with student teachers. One mentor appreciated student teachers' engagement: *"The basics were clear, but the student teachers' energy was greater than the pupils and school's management energy"*.

6. General Characteristics of High-Quality Teacher Preparation Programme

6.1 Knowledge and Learning

Knowledge and Learning
A. A curriculum grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development, learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, and motivation which provides student teachers with understanding of the various ways in which children learn
B. Learner-centered philosophy
C. Blending the theory with the subject-matter knowledge, subject-specific pedagogical knowledge, and practice which helps student teachers to develop the ability to apply theoretical knowledge into teaching practice

6.1.1 A curriculum grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development, learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, and motivation which provides student teachers with understanding of the various ways in which children learn

The design of the curriculum for the TEPD is based on three modules which together cover a range of themes pertinent to initial teacher education, which include the learning environment, planning, relationships, assessing pupils' progress and understanding of learning. Whilst the TEPD is modular by design and assessment, these themes recur in across the modules so that the student teachers experience a spiral curriculum where educational concepts are revisited in different contexts.

In this way, the teaching of the modules is approached in a more holistic way rather than a linear fashion so that the student teachers can see the connections between the content of the different modules. The rationale behind such an approach is so that the student teacher begins to make sense of the complexity of learning. During the TEPD they are encouraged to use their experiences in school to make sense of the learning that has taken place at QRTA, in this way they should start to make some connections between concepts or theory and practice. There is a strong subject focus and student teachers are gradually encouraged to unpack these themes within the context of their subject domain so that they interrogate what learning looks like within their subject.

6.1.2 Learner-centred philosophy

This section contains a description of how the learner centred philosophy was adapted in the programme. Two perspectives were considered: the change in student teachers' mind-set in thinking about the learner as the core of their work, and the level of learner

incorporation and inclusion in student teachers' activities inside the classroom. Data drawn from the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Tool and focus groups with student teachers was analysed to showcase how the learner-centred philosophy was embedded in the TEPD.

Student Teacher Self-Assessments

Throughout the year and at the end of every placement period, student teachers were required to fill out the Student Teacher Self-Assessment Tool. This form supported and directed student teachers in monitoring their progress and achieving the Teachers' Standards in all three areas of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional ethics. Different elements of the form aimed to guide student teachers and allow them to build a more learner-centred philosophy of teaching.

Pupils' engagement was highlighted in the self-assessment form as one of the integral components of the learner-centred approach. It stipulated that student teachers should be able to design lessons that "focus on stimulating and capturing pupils' interest". Student teachers' teaching and assessment of pupils were also centred on the needs of individual learners, with the assessments designed and administered to measure the individual's progression, as well as, monitor the performance of the whole class/ group. In addition, student teachers were encouraged to develop the skills to "quickly and accurately detect learner's strengths and needs systematically in order to employ a range of effective strategies", to secure individual and group progression, and to build on their prior achievements.

The planning sections of the tool reflected on student teachers' ability to extract relative information from the assessment and take informative decisions in planning the following lessons. The use of various assessment methods discussed earlier was linked to lesson planning as a crucial component that allows student teachers to set appropriately challenging tasks, plan lessons that match individuals' needs and interests and create opportunities for independent and autonomous learning.

Student Teacher Focus Groups

Early in the programme, a sample of student teachers took part in focus groups, in which they shared their views of the diploma and how well it prepared them to the role of a teacher. The participants commented on a range of issues, including the importance of learner-centred philosophy throughout the programme.

There was a general consensus that the diploma was focused on the *"development towards a better education and new knowledge about effective teaching methods and strategies"* and it resulted in a shift in student teachers' thinking inside the classroom.

Many student teachers commented on how the programme introduced and encouraged them to use new teaching strategies. This change was expressed by several participants who said: "*The diploma provided me with class management strategies to work with students more effectively*"; "*I used to think that I had information and I had to give it to my student and that's all, but now I'm thinking about the teaching ways and how can I deliver the information to students' mind through activities and make sure that all of them understand it regardless of their different level*". The example of this student teacher showed that the learners' understanding of the subject was at the centre of their practice and successfully replaced the former teaching through memorising.

During the focus groups, student teachers were asked about their teacher values and traits. Most of the answers emphasised how the participants placed the learners at the core of education. Phrases included: "*Act as role model for students*"; "*Ability to build good relations with students*"; "*Differentiation*"; "*Support students*"; "*Promote learning*" and "*Consider the students as the core of educational process*". These statements demonstrated that student teachers saw the learners and their needs at the centre of their teaching practice.

There were also examples of a similar approach within the subject specific training. The central role of learners was underlined in student teachers' descriptions of their pedagogical practices: "*Always motivate students to learn science*"; "*link lessons to real life examples*"; "*differentiate work accordingly to students' levels*", "*ask students to reflect at the end of class on what they learned (I used to know, now I know)*"; "*send students to library to read*"; "*ask students to write about themselves*"; "*encourage students to talk even if wrong*" and "*encourage students to correct each other's mistakes and share opinions*". These comments showcase a learner centred approach in between student teachers within the subject specific areas.

Learner-centred philosophy was also visible in planning and preparedness inside the classroom with one of the student teachers describing how they "*planned lessons according to the students' needs*". In classroom management, another student teacher said "*before TEPD classroom management only meant controlling students' behaviour, after TEPD I know it's not just that; it's also about effective teaching and learning, using appropriate tools in the classroom,*" while another pointed out that they "*Let the students reach the information by themselves*". The development of personal skills necessary to adopt this new way of conceptualising teaching was also noted and one of the student teachers said that they now have the "*ability to build good relations with students*".

Overall, the learner-centred philosophy was central to the TEPD and student teachers presented their understanding of this approach in a variety of ways and contexts. In their course work and school placements, student teachers developed their ability to apply this

pedagogy in practice and became familiar with the impact of using a range of learner-centred teaching methods on pupils' learning and engagement.

6.1.3 Blending the theory with the subject-matter knowledge, subject-specific pedagogical knowledge, and practice which helps student teachers to develop the ability to apply theoretical knowledge into teaching practice

One of the goals of the TEPD was to blend the theoretical knowledge of pedagogy with subject matter knowledge, subject specific content, and to apply it in teaching practice. These skills were developed throughout the programme and the ability to use them in the classroom was acquired during SEPs.

Both, the private and public sector mentors, reported that while some student teachers presented a thorough understanding of how to use their theoretical knowledge to make their teaching more effective, other student teachers still had more work to do, when it comes to blending theory with the knowledge. One mentor stated that "*the pedagogy they used to deliver the information was not enough to deal with the three learning styles of all students*", highlighting that student teachers needed to work more on practicing how to deal with different learning styles. Another mentor stated that the student teacher "*knows well about the strategies but had difficulties when practiced*", therefore, this student teacher needed to work more on blending theoretical knowledge into their teaching practices. It was also stated that student teachers needed "*more intensive practice training in order to use the applicable techniques*". Towards the end of the programme, most student teachers continued to develop their skills and employed the theoretical knowledge as well as the pedagogical content knowledge in their teaching practices.

Based on the student teacher Self-Assessment Form, student teachers were more confident in understanding the learning theories and their relevance for practice. At the end of SEP1, 58% of student teachers were able to explain how the teaching strategies were influenced by the pupils' learning. At the end of SEP2, 68% of student teachers used their knowledge of effective teaching to encourage independent learning. 83% of student teachers believed they have "worked beyond" the predefined Teachers' Standards. They also reported being more able to understand the theories they have learnt and could be then creating opportunities for independent and autonomous learning within their classroom.

6.2 Programme Organisation

Programme Organisation
A. Meaningful academy-school partnership where knowledge and understanding of good teaching is unified and shared. Extended field experiences which are carefully prepared, progressive, and aligned with coursework to foster student teachers' acquisition of practical skills

B.	A coherent programme vision where a set of standards for good teaching is embedded in all aspects of the course and which are used to guide and evaluate coursework and field work
C.	Collaboration between teacher educators, mentors, student teachers, and other practitioners and scholars as a vehicle for building professional community
D.	Periodical evaluation of student teachers throughout all stages of the programme against the shared Teachers' Standards
E.	The use of active pedagogy where teacher educators and mentors model their own practice to facilitate the translation of theory into practice and promote reflection
F.	Continuous updating and improving the programme modules
G.	Considering learner diversity in coursework and throughout field experiences

6.2.1 Meaningful academy-school partnership where knowledge and understanding of good teaching is unified and shared. Extended field experiences which are carefully prepared, progressive, and aligned with coursework to foster student teachers' acquisition of practical skills

Working with different schools in different locations and cultures had its challenges for the TEPD. Bringing forward a new way of thinking about education required changing mind-sets not only in student teachers but also in school mentors, and to some extent in school leaders and pupils, to enable using new teaching strategies and methods in practice. In its first year, schools were encouraged to apply Teachers' Standards and new practices while managing the programme requirements. The best practices were assessed in several ways:

- After coming back from SEPs, student teachers were given feedback by teacher educators and discussed the practices face to face with them.
- Lessons were also observed by school mentors who also provided written feedback and student teachers reflected on those with teacher educators' support.

All teacher educators tried to reach the schools in an encouraging and positive way and contacted mentors directly either by email or by phone. Many of the schools were very supportive towards the TEPD and offered as many teachers as QRTA asked to become mentors. They tried hard to prepare an environment that accommodated QRTA's students very well. Many mentors in these schools followed up on the themes and updates on directed activities suggested in the programme. Some of these mentors said that working with student teachers and learning from them made their own teaching style complete. These well-

organised schools shared with us a unified practice like scheduled programs, well trained mentors, and well-arranged visits. All mentors attended the observed lesson and gave an organised and clear feedback. Many asked for the taught materials from QRTA for their own, professional development.

Many school mentors suggested that they would benefit from more than one training visit to explain the mission of the TEPD and its requirements. There were also some mentors who did not appreciate the mission of the programme and were looking for the financial benefits only.

Also, teacher educators expressed their views about the academy-school partnership and how to continue to improve it. The most in depth, teacher educators considered their relations with school mentors: *The relationship with school mentors was good overall, we tried to train them first. Most of them were helpful but it's another challenge for the program because they didn't have experience; the relationship with school mentors was interesting, I had an amazing mentor who was just amazing, she should be a teacher educator. And then there were others who wouldn't engage with this; Majority of school mentors supported the diploma but there was a big proportion that didn't believe that this program is going to transform things, it wasn't even close to the way they think. It's understandable because it took us, teacher educators, time to understand all this. But there were also others who were learning my students, asked how can they support, some learned strategies and skills from student teachers; when we were giving feedback to our student teachers, the school mentors often were there listening to this, learning, taking notes because they thought that our feedback was very useful for them too.*

Several challenges observed throughout all three SEPs were mostly related to inability to engage with and embrace change in between school mentors: *Some of the school mentors refused to change because they were proud of their experience; sometimes our student teachers had some obstacles while working with mentors; some relationships with school mentors were difficult, I don't know why, maybe they were forced to do this? Many school mentor didn't complete the forms in a very thorough way. Some of them came to training without knowing why and what they will be doing; Communication with the mentors was sometimes a bit difficult, it didn't feel like there was enough communication with the schools; many teachers aren't ready for this change.*

The effectiveness of SEPs was sometimes decreased by misunderstandings between student teachers and school mentors about the expectations and duties: *There were misunderstandings between* student teachers *and* school mentors - *do we do other duties, do we teach without* school mentors *in the classroom, expectations should be clearer. I know that we put expectations in the materials for the last training, but I think it was a little bit late. I think it would be useful to tell* school mentors *and heads of school what are the expectations*

towards student teachers*. There were occasions that a* student teacher *was told to go to do break duties but the mentor wasn't there. What was he supposed to do, what if anything happened? Should* student teachers *go to assemblies, where should they be in terms of space, what time should they go home (with a long travel back)? Some private schools didn't want* student teachers *to be part of the additional activities, but most of the schools wanted more participation from our* student teachers*. Some* student teachers *thought they will only do teaching and we had to tell them: no, you need to participate in this.*

It was a belief of some teacher educators that making the training and the expectations towards SMs and student teachers in the practicum clearer, would prevent from difficulties in the future: *The relationship with* school mentors *needs to be clearer. There were few tutors I needed to talk to more than just during the visits, for example when going through observation forms. One or two of them did it well but they should be prepared to do it in a more systematic way. They didn't always know what to do, what's the limits of when to talk to* student teachers *or not to talk to them, but some weren't happy to be given advice about doing it. We did the training with* school mentors *and then we went to schools and it turned out that they can't use the observation forms, they are not aware of the Teachers' Standards and how to use them with the* student teachers.

6.2.2 A coherent programme vision where a set of standards for good teaching is embedded in all aspects of the course and which are used to guide and evaluate coursework and field work

During the work on the TEPD we were very committed to high quality education. While establishing the TEPD, the first task was to develop Teachers' Standards to ensure that the programme was driven by the highest professional standards. These standards were guiding the growth and development in student teachers in different areas and became the base of the curriculum framework. The final agreed Teachers' Standards for Programme Year 1 (2061/17) influenced planning for each of the three modules, including a range of tasks and directed activities.

From the beginning of the year student teachers were trained to embed standards within their educational practice through reflection and self-assessment. During class visits high standards were ensured through directed observations, discussions with student teachers about their practice and giving feedback. Teacher educators aimed to develop student teachers' knowledge and understanding through different group work, microteaching and lectures.

Educational research was strongly embedded in the programme, in their planning and preparation, teacher educators drew on academic literature, while student teachers were encouraged to read a variety articles about the latest findings in education. Reflective practices through writing practicum journals and reflective essays were very important and

provided tools for student teachers to think critically about their practices, evaluate themselves, and plan for development. Assessment process consisted of many stages and its highest quality was ensured through standardisation, internal, external moderation and double marking.

6.2.3 Collaboration between teacher educators, mentors, student teachers, and other practitioners and scholars as a vehicle for building professional community

17% of mentors from the private sector and 7% mentors from the public sector communicated with the TEPD programme management team through emails and the website, and found it easy and clear. One mentor said: *"I communicate with the teacher educator and he answers all my questions"*. One mentor from a public school suggested to broaden the communication via WhatsApp, Facebook Groups, and Twitter and to expand the communication area. One mentor from the public sector asked whether it was possible to communicate directly with teacher educators, not through student teachers in order to avoid misleading information and enable the mentors to better support student teachers. 29% mentors from the public sector agreed with this.

41% of the private sector mentors reported that they suffered from a lack of direct communication and coordination between the TEPD programme management team and the mentors especially during school visits for the teacher educators. 31% of the private sector mentors reported asking student teachers to obtain the information and one of them had to depend on personal efforts to communicate with the TEPD programme. 41% of the mentors from the private sector said that there should be direct communication between the mentors and a member of the TEPD programme. They also pointed out that the school management should be copied into emails, especially when there were school visits from teacher educators of which the mentors were only informed by the student teachers.

One mentor from the private sector noticed that there was change in student teachers' characters and dispositions from SEP1 and SEP2 in the way they dealt with teaching and accepted feedback. On other occasions, student teachers were very cooperative and not only accepted the feedback positively, but they also helped the mentors in filling out the reports and explained some concepts used throughout the course.

7% of the mentors from the public sector reported that they benefited from student teachers and one of them mentioned that *"many activities and methods for teaching were given by student teachers and they taught us a lot"*. This learning was two-way, for example one mentor from the public sector said that student teachers learned from mentors how to manage the classroom, while mentors learned content knowledge and worksheets from their student teachers.

14% of mentors from the public sector discussed planning, assessment, and observations of the teaching practice with student teachers through reflective meetings, but another mentor said that they had no reflective meetings in their school.

9% of the mentors from the public sector suggested that the communication process with the TEPD team should be improved because on many occasions the student teachers led it and if anything went wrong there was no support. Due to the lack of communication, two mentors from the public sector felt that TEPD did not engage their school's management and they did not know that student teachers were coming to their school (they didn't receive the MOE letter). For example, one mentor from the private sector said: *"because of bad communication I gave a very bad impression to one of my student teachers (I did not know that I was getting a new student teacher and was surprised with one while I was overwhelmed with work and projects)"*. Two mentors from the private sector reported that they suffered from the lack of coordination for student teacher tasks, where the mentors had to get back to the school management for approval of activities such as the interaction with the pupils and correcting exam papers. One mentor from the private sector mentioned that student teachers in one of the schools were not allowed to sit in the staffroom, therefore there was not enough time for discussions, and to gain knowledge from the mentor.

11% of mentors from the public sector wanted to communicate better with teacher educators, for example when the teacher educators were to visit student teachers in the classrooms only student teachers were aware of them coming. The mentors suggested that it would be beneficial for them to know about the visits as well. 20% of public sector mentors suggested the increase of the number of school visits conducted by teacher educators because they found them amazing. They were also keen to be included in the discussion between teacher educators and student teachers during the school visit as it would provide them with a more thorough understanding of the course and giving feedback. Eight mentors from the public sector suggested the provision of an orientation about the TEPD for all school principals to give them a better understanding of the programme and the expectations before the start of the mentoring component.

In the student survey following the first module, 93% of student teachers answered 'agree' or 'strongly agree' regarding the development of their understanding of aspects of teaching and learning through the relationship with school mentors and classroom practice in Jordanian schools. Only 5% of their answers were 'neither agree nor disagree', and 1% answered 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'.

Additionally, in the evaluation surveys, student teachers expressed their perceptions on the collaboration between teacher educators, school mentors, student teachers, and other practitioners and scholars as a vehicle for building professional community by specifying aspects of the programme they have enjoyed, the challenges they have faced, and provided suggestions for the future developments.

Challenges faced by student teachers

The challenges listed below were mentioned in student teacher evaluation surveys 1, 2, and 3:

- How to communicate the performance feedback to others
- Not enough time to communicate with pupils and exchange ideas
- Learning condition and sustaining the relationships
- Clarifying the assessment process
- Mentor was not cooperative
- The way public school dealt with me
- Unable to meet with the mentor every time because they had more classes in other school
- Short time to discuss some aspects at QRTA like inquiry sessions
- Social background for the pupils and the learning environment
- Mentor always busy with school activities so we didn't benefit from her role
- Lack of effective feedback
- Engagement with groups of pupils working at different levels during the same lesson

6.2.4 Periodical evaluation of student teachers throughout all stages of the programme against the shared Teachers' Standards

To ensure the high quality of the programme, a set of Teachers' Standards, based on best international practices, was created and applied in many ways in theoretical teaching at QRTA and during SEPs in schools. As a conceptual framework, Teachers' Standards set out the expectations for student teachers and guided their development throughout the programme. Student teachers' written work and practical teaching were periodically assessed against these standards in a variety of ways in both, academic and practical parts of the programme.

The Teachers' Standards guide the curriculum content and were introduced to student teachers in group sessions and drawn upon in tutorials and microteaching. Tutorials are one to one sessions between a tutor and student teacher (or small number of student teachers) which allow for personalised, detailed discussion and exploration of ideas. Tutorials may have a pastoral or academic focus and can be used to support student teachers who are struggling with particular academic content or who have missed learning in other formats. Microteaching is when a student teacher teaches their peers all, or part of a lesson, receives feedback and reflects on the experience in order to develop practical skills and apply learning. This is an important opportunity to prepare for school placements, to isolate core teacher practices for interrogation during taught sessions, and to link them with the set of Teachers' Standards.

At the end of each SEP, student teachers are required to write an essay reflecting on their progress against the Teachers' Standards. Together with a final statement demonstrating, through reference to evidence in the portfolio that met the Teachers' Standards. Assessment at the end of module three is based on the successful completion of each SEP and the submission of a Student Teacher Portfolio (STP), which demonstrates that the Teachers' Standards have been met. Additionally, student teachers demonstrate their

knowledge and understanding of inquiry-based practice and relevant evidence while writing a reflective report towards the end of the programme. In addition to the report, student teachers are expected to prepare and present a poster summarising the key aspects of their learning, but that is not formally assessed.

After the completion of each of the three SEPs, student teachers were requested to complete an evaluation survey to assess their experience with both the theoretical part of the TEPD, the practicum at schools, and how the student teachers were using their theoretical learning in the school experience.

During SEPs, each student teacher was visited at least once by one of the teacher educators. In the observation, teacher educators recorded the general information about the class, such as: date, time, grade, school name, and lesson subject. Teacher educators also identified the focus of the observation for the class that is being observed, wrote comments on the lesson, and the points which were to be discussed after the class. Teacher educators identified the strengths and areas of improvement and the observation was agreed upon and signed by all involved, student teacher, teacher educator, and the mentor.

After the completion of each of the three SEPs, mentors were also requested to complete a mentor's feedback form in which they reflected on their experience with the student teachers while they were at their schools. Mentors were requested to provide a brief comment on student teacher's progress in three main areas linked to the TEPD Teachers' Standards: professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional ethics. Mentors also provided an overall feedback, and set the targets for the next practicum. Student teachers and teacher educators also provided comments on the school placement experiences.

Student teachers were also requested to complete a formative assessment form using a Self-Assessment Tool against the TEPD Teachers' Standards. The tool had clear objectives and benchmarks and was designed in a way so that student teachers can see where their strengths lie and where they need to improve their practice. The form was completed at the end of each SEP and based on discussion between the student teacher, teacher educator, and the mentor. Student teachers wrote how they saw their progression on the course generally and specifically with regards to the Teachers' Standard main benchmarks.

6.2.5 The use of active pedagogy where teacher educators and mentors model their own practice to facilitate the translation of theory into practice and promote reflection

Throughout the programme, student teachers had many opportunities to see teacher educators and school mentors model their own practice, more so in schools than at QRTA. Within the coursework, the most frequent way of exposing students to teaching practice was

the use of microteaching and making students aware of how to use their bodies and mimicry in effective teaching.

As mentioned previously, most student teachers were given opportunities to see teacher educators and school mentors model their teaching practice and they found it very useful in developing their own skills. One of the student teachers said that: *"During SEP 1 and SEP3 the mentor was modelling their own pedagogical practices and I benefited from during the teaching in the classroom"*, while other student teacher said that: *"I hope that the mentors have more training and professional development to facilitate the tasks required from the student teachers."*

One of the interviewed teacher educators did not consider the amount of modelling experienced by student teachers at QRTA sufficient for their learning: *"Modelling practice wasn't really there. There were elements of mini-modelling. The issue with this is that we had to focus on theory because we didn't have the reading list in time for student teachers to read it (we uploaded them a week before but they had other things to do as well). So maybe next year it can be done that they do the reading at home and when they come here we implement this theory into something like modelling".*

During the interviews with teacher educators, an idea was put forward to video record examples of student teachers' best and most effective teaching practice during SEPs to then share these with new cohorts of students and in this way broaden their experience of observing high quality methods and practices.

6.2.6 Continuous updating and improving the programme modules

A curriculum review process took place after the first year of the programme (pilot year – 2016/17) of the TEPD at QRTA and its outcomes were presented in a document which outlined the strengths of the programme and the areas of improvement for the following year. All academic advisors at IOE and the teacher educators were invited to contribute. Overall, the response rate was high.

Many strengths were identified and the hard work and dedication of the teacher educators should be recognised as a major factor in the success of the first delivery of the curriculum. These strengths were observed across several areas of the programme including vision and outcomes; curriculum, content and design; operationalisation; teaching and learning; assessment; mentoring, and the quality manual.

As a result of the review process, a list of recommendations for adaptations was suggested to be incorporated into the curriculum for Programme Year 2 (2017/18) of the TEPD. This was created by firstly collating all of the responses received from the curriculum review document, then by grouping together similar themes and ideas and looking at how frequently they occurred as problems or suggestions. Those that were occurring most

frequently and also being identified as a high priority were extracted to discuss possible courses of action. Whilst it has not been possible to include all of the ideas suggested by the contributors, a range of options and all of the ideas expressed were considered.

A range of suggestions included issues such as: further integration of educational literature; integration of modules; tutor and teaching groups; increased focus on reflective practice; student teacher support; assessment; feedback and preparing for assessment; monitoring progress and intervention; handbooks and student information.

6.2.7 Considering learner diversity in coursework and throughout field experiences

During the focus groups, the mentors were asked about the challenges that they have experienced while working with student teachers on the TEPD. Several challenges related to student teachers' diversity in the TEPD and throughout the field experience were mentioned:

- 16% of the mentors spoke about English language barrier between student teachers and pupils, especially in private schools. Student teachers were not fluent in English and made grammar or spelling mistakes while teaching. For example, in one of the private sector focus groups a mentor mentioned that student teachers refused to teach in the international section of the school because of the language barrier. Also, based on the analysis of student teacher focus groups, 48% of student teachers saw that the English language was one of the challenges they faced during the TEPD.
- 15% of the participants mentioned that there were differences in student teachers' levels of teaching and characters. Also, two mentors from one of the private sector focus groups expressed that there was a disparity between students' teachers from SEP 1 and SEP2 in the way they dealt with mentors and accepted feedback.
- 5% of the participants mentioned that female student teachers refused to attend classes in the mixed schools.
- 4% of the mentors spoke of the cultural gap between the student teachers and the pupils which resulted from their different backgrounds.

Some of the interviewed mentors explained how they have overcome these challenges, for example one of the mentors from the private sector said that "*I asked the student teacher to speak in Arabic during the lesson due to the English language barrier*". By the end of SEP1 and SEP2, some pupils asked about student teachers as they got used to them and got to like them. Two mentors from the private sector said that they worked on bridging the cultural gap between student teachers and pupils and that they were patient while dealing with student teachers who were from different backgrounds and accepted their different points of view.