



TEACHER EDUCATION
PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA
QUEEN RANIA TEACHER ACADEMY
أكاديمية الملكة رانيا لتدريب المعلمين

Teacher Education Professional Diploma

Cohort 2 Evaluation Report
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Introduction

This report presents the findings from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the second year of the Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD) which is the first of its kind pre-service teacher training programme in Jordan. Data collected from a range of stakeholders, including student teachers, teacher educators, and school mentors was triangulated between these groups to provide rigorous and comprehensive information about the different components of the programme. The findings of the evaluation will inform further development of the diploma through a set of [recommendations](#). Guided by the impact indicators framework drawn from best practice teacher training in 43 countries, the evaluation incorporated qualitative and quantitative data related to the content and organisation of the diploma and the partnership between the academy and cooperating schools.

The [key findings](#) clearly show the positive influence of the programme not only on student teachers, but also on school mentors. Taking part in the diploma in either role improved participants' pedagogical and subject specific knowledge, and developed their teaching practice, as well as encouraging a reflective and holistic approach to education. A range of quotes from student teachers provide unrivalled perspective of the diploma:

'The most beautiful thing was how they taught us the teaching strategies to involve pupils in teaching and learning process and how to evaluate our work.'

'The program made me an educated teacher who always searches for knowledge and uses reflection in my work and life.'

'Before my enrolment in TEPD, I didn't believe in classroom planning, then TEPD convinced me about its importance and how should I select the teaching strategies appropriately to students' abilities and the curricula.'

'The TEPD have focused on how to deal with the pupils in the classroom, how to make learning joyful, and to encourage pupils to be continuous learners.'

'It has changed the concept of education and made me aware that a teacher has to keep pace with the development in educational field to evolve personally and help their students to evolve as well.'

'I was like a closed box and the TEPD has opened me; I now know myself and my capabilities more. It was a new experience and I was able to face and overcome my challenges.'

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 evaluation of the second year of the programme. 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 further improvement of the programme. The depth and breadth of information provided by teacher educators encompassed different aspects of their work with student teachers and the content of the diploma. Student teachers shared their views and opinions of the programme which was instrumental to shaping its further development. Lastly, the administrative and academic support at Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) and University College London Institute of Education (UCL/IOE) and their close work with the M&E team led to the success of the programme.

Key findings

Key findings from quantitative data from student teachers and school mentors

- The majority of student teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the different elements of the unit 'Pedagogies for learning and teaching' had helped them develop a range of knowledge of pedagogy and teaching skills.
- Students appreciated learning about subject didactics and reported that it helped them understand subject specific aspects of teaching and learning.
- School experiences were highly valued by student teachers and the majority agreed that the different areas of working in schools were useful to their development as a teacher.
- Most mentors (92% in SEP1, 88% in SEP2 and 96% in SEP3) stated that their student teachers achieved their goals identified for improvement during their school experience. This was mostly aligned with student teachers' views.
- In some areas, 10% more mentors than student teachers agreed with some statements. This may suggest that either their work was not as effective as they perceived it, or their self-reported answers were biased. These areas were: target setting related to Teachers' Standards, planning, differentiation, and support and encouragement. Communication with each other as well as with teacher educators was considered strong and helpful by student teachers and school mentors.
- The biggest discrepancy between students' and mentors' views were found in relation to receiving support in planning and teaching episodes of lessons. Around 80% of students and 97% of mentors were positive about this, which shows that what mentors perceived to be a positive experience, was not always seen as such by student teachers.
- A majority of student teachers found working with teacher educators effective and inspiring. Teacher educators also put relationships with student teachers the highest on the list of benefits of working with the Teacher Education Professional Diploma (TEPD).
- In most subjects, student teachers were satisfied with tutorials provided to them by teacher educators, and well as enabling connecting learning at the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) with their school experience. The weakest results in both these areas were reported in Physics.
- There was a strong sense of agreement between student teachers in that the TEPD developed their skills to critically engage with academic literature and to incorporate this in their writing.
- Most school mentors said that training they received provided them with a sufficient amount of knowledge and skills to fulfil their mentoring role and they gained a good understanding of pedagogical principals of the TEPD.

- Nearly 90% of respondents have found being a school mentor interesting and benefiting their own teaching.

Key findings from qualitative data from student teachers

- Across answers from all three academic modules, student teachers found planning, assessment, relationship between them and pupils, and effective teaching with the use of appropriate strategies the most valuable academic part of the diploma.
- Also, in assessing their school experiences, these four areas were highly valued.
- In terms of more general areas of the diploma, student teachers found application of theory and practice, subject knowledge, as well as understanding their role as a teacher and improving their instructional practices and skills most beneficial and they appreciated the role of teacher educators in this.
- The most challenging areas indicated by student teachers were academic writing and the time pressures related to the amount of work required by the diploma, as well as to transport.
- Respondents proposed several possible improvements, mostly aligned with what they perceived as challenging. Additional ideas included enhancing school mentors' preparation and developing the practical part of the assessment in the school environment. This call was also put forward by teacher educators (please see [section 11](#)).

Key findings from qualitative data from school mentors

- School mentors found the experience of working with the TEPD interesting and beneficial to their own practice through learning about teaching strategies and pedagogical terminology, as well as sharing experiences with student teachers.
- High workload was the most often mentioned challenge to the role of a school mentor, while some also mentioned overly complicated reporting system and a lack of educational resources.
- While considering the possible improvements to the diploma, school mentors said that reducing their workload would allow them to work more closely with student teachers. They have also asked for more comprehensive training and clarification of their roles, as well as emotional support and encouragement and the recognition of this work as a step in their teaching career.

Key findings from teacher educators

- Teacher educators greatly valued their role in the diploma and felt well prepared to undertake their duties. They identified a range of positive aspects of their work, such as: relationships with student teachers, cooperation with others in the team, and the support they received in their roles.
- Being a teacher educator facilitated their personal and professional growth and developed their knowledge and skills both related to teaching and more broadly. The majority of the respondents (72%) were satisfied in their role, while the others were quite satisfied.

- Most often noted that key challenges included workload, bureaucracy, and organisational issues such as late communications or last-minute changes.
- Teacher educators proposed a variety of improvements to the diploma related to timing and organisation of the academic year, administrative issues, preparatory activities, assessment, and professional development.

Proposed areas for improvement

- While most student teachers agreed that 'Pedagogies for learning and teaching' was very useful for their teaching, there were some elements which students found less useful, such as: learning journal, preparation for summative assessment through working on the practice paper, and the pre- and post- activities on VLE. The essay-based assessment was seen as a challenge by the students and they proposed that the assessment should include their performance during the school practicum.
- Reflective journal was also mentioned as a time-consuming and overburdening tool in relation to subject didactics. Student teachers found this approach very novel and difficult because of their limited writing skills. Towards the end of the programme, they noticed that the journal was useful in developing their English and their habit of reflection. Further work is required to ensure that student teachers are supported in using the journal.
- 8% of students in SEP1, 3% in SEP2, and 5% in SEP reported to only have had two or less weekly target-setting meetings with their school mentors, while 4% in SEP1 and 2% in SEP2 had either one, or in some cases no formal observations. This is aligned with the finding that around 9% of student teachers across all three school experiences did not find these meetings useful in developing their teaching practice. A record of such cases is needed to monitor the quality of provision and to recruit the best mentors in the future.
- Across all SEPs, 70% to 80% of student teachers found targets given to them by school mentors related to Teachers' Standards. This is a low percentage considering that all targets should be aligned with Teachers' Standards. Additionally, student teachers commented that the mentors were not always familiar with Teachers' Standards which should be considered in more detail in preparing mentors' training.
- 12% of student teachers in SEP1 and 8% in SEP2 and SEP3 mentioned that their school mentors were from the same subject which meant that the practicum was not as beneficial to them as it could have been. This issue was mostly present in matching within the three science subjects. Broader recruitment of mentors and more careful matching with student teachers are needed to reduce this in future years.
- During focus groups, student teachers asked for more time to be spent on differentiation in the academic part of the diploma.
- There were several areas of the diploma which Physics' students struggled with, such as: feedback from teacher educators was not helpful to 15% of students, as well as tutorials (15%) and their targets (20%). A third of Physics students did not find connecting Pedagogies for Learning and Teaching to school experience successful. This requires further adjustments in setting targets for Physics students, and linking tutorials and feedback more closely to these targets. It would be advisable to monitor whether these steps improve students' experience.
- A fifth of students did not agree that the reading shared on VLE helped them in developing a habit of reading about educational issues. Many student teachers pointed out that they

needed more support with their reading and writing and asked for the writing support sessions to be moved to 3pm so that they can more easily attend them.

- VLE orientation was effective for 64% of mentors, while the rest either were not comfortable with using this platform or did not have access to technology in their schools. Only half of SEP3 respondents agreed that technology available at the school enabled them to complete the necessary TEPD documentation. Access to technology and the ability to use it were mentioned by school mentors and student teachers as challenges and they have proposed, that more resources provided to the schools and training on how to use the available limited resources, would help them overcome this.
- Almost half of school mentors found online free access to the E-library useful, and more than 42% of school mentors responded ‘neither agree’ or ‘disagree’ which may be related to the lack of appropriate technology in their schools.
- Although most mentors felt supported by teacher educators across the diploma, this proportion was only 72% in SEP1 and SEP2, while during SEP3 this improved and 84% of school mentors felt that they were well supported. This was because during SEP1, teacher educators could not arrange school visits. In SEP2 they were able to visit each school once, unless a student teacher was a risk when two visits were conducted. By SEP3, teacher educators undertook two visits. This should be addressed in the following years.
- Only a third of respondents had an opportunity to discuss their experiences with mentors from other schools, while they felt that it would have been beneficial to their work with student teachers. Selecting networking leads between mentors and setting up social groups would encourage networking and exchanging experiences. This could also provide useful in addressing the difficulties with completing forms and other inquiries.
- In considering challenges experienced throughout the diploma, student teachers mentioned the assessment based entirely on writing essays. Many found it difficult because of the amount of time required to complete it, some were challenged by their lack of confidence in academic writing or their language skills, while others questioned whether their teaching practice during SEPs should become part of the whole assessment, rather than being passed or failed. Teacher educators also put such proposition forward. Additionally, student teachers suggested that greater clarity of the assessment criteria and timely and constructive feedback, as well as a timetable of all assessments for the entire programme would improve this.
- Challenges faced by student teachers that were most consistently spoken about were: logistics and transport and time pressures related to transport and the amount of activities required in the diploma. They proposed reducing the number of directed activities and duration of lectures, as well as distributing student teachers to their local areas for school practices.
- Time pressures were also challenging to school mentors who, because of high workload, could not spend sufficient amount of time discussing teaching with students. They proposed that reducing their workload would be beneficial, but did not offer any concrete solutions about how to do this apart from reducing what they perceived as bureaucracy.
- In addition to this, school mentors offered a number of ideas for improving their experience, such as: greater support and encouragement, more comprehensive training and clarification of their roles, and the opportunity to use their work as mentors to progress their careers.
- Teacher educators put forward a number of recommendations broadly related to the organisation of the academic year, preparatory activities, assessment, professional

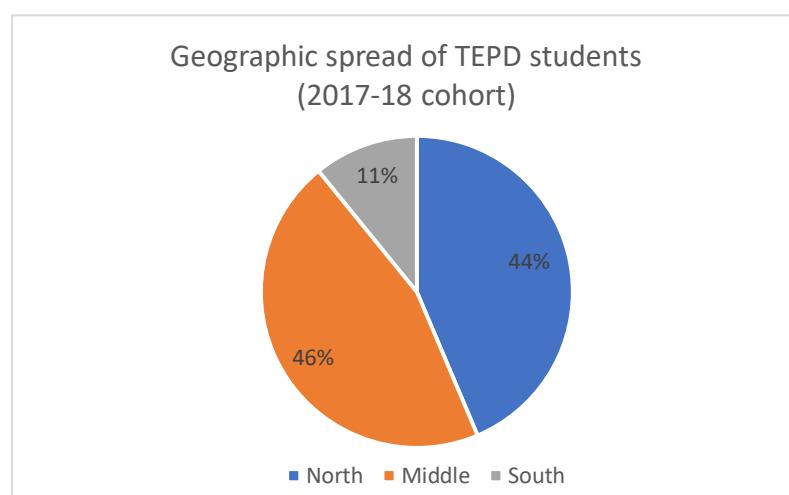
development, and administrative issues - more detailed description of these ideas can be found in [section 11](#).

Student teachers' characteristics

Out of 2825 applicants to the TEPD, 479 were accepted and are studying in the diploma, which is a 17% acceptance rate. Most (99%) student teachers were female (475) whereas only 1% were male (4). 477 students successfully passed the diploma - 99%. Two student teachers failed. Both these students came from the Amman governorate and they studied English and Arabic.

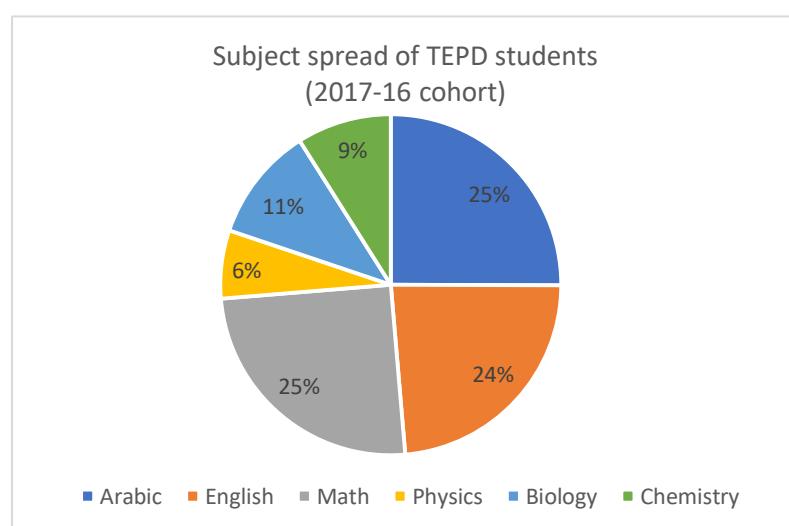
Student teachers came predominantly from the middle part of Jordan – 218, which made 46% of the cohort. There were 209 from the north of the country – 44%, and only 52 from the south (11%) as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Geographic spread of TEPD students

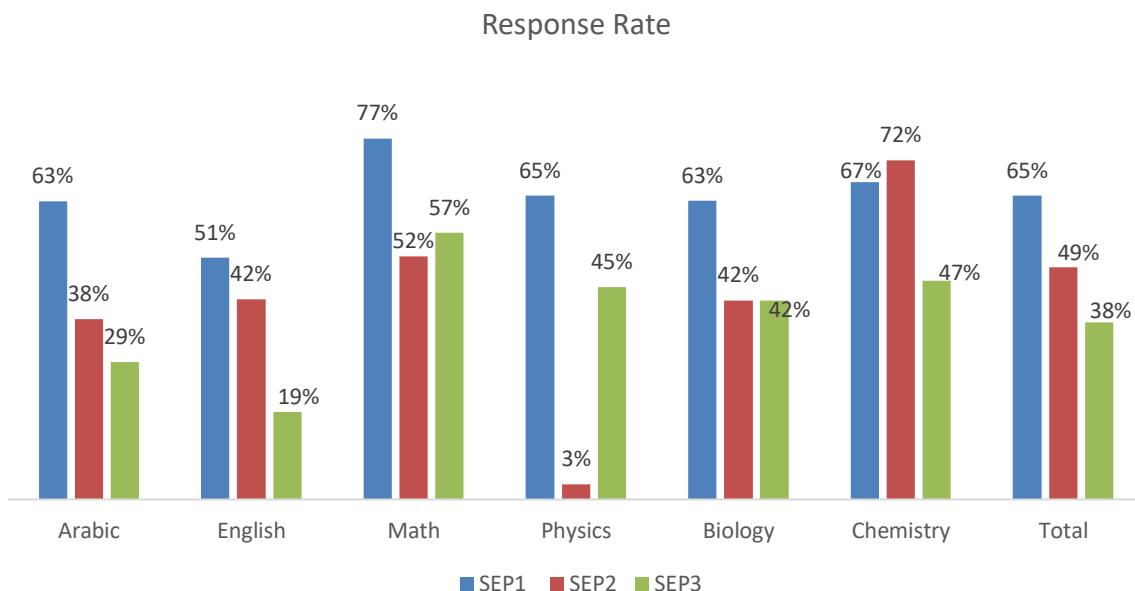


There was an even spread of students across the four main subjects: Arabic (25%), English (25%), Mathematics (25%), and Science (26%). All three sciences were represented by similar numbers of students, with the least of them in Physics (6%) – see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Subject spread of TEPD students



The SEP1 student teacher survey response rate was 65% compared to 49% in SEP2 and 38% in SEP3. The highest response rates in SEP1 and SEP3 were in Mathematics (77% and 57%) and the lowest response rates were in English (51% and 19%). For SEP2, the highest response rate was in Chemistry (72%), and the lowest in Physics (3%) – see Figure 3.

Figure 3: Response rate among the subjects

School mentors' characteristics

In the second year of the diploma, TEPD worked with 713 school mentors from private and public schools, who taught Mathematics, Arabic, English, and Science - table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of school mentors

Subject	Public Schools Mentors	Private Schools Mentors	Grand Total
Math	100	57	157
Science	131	71	202
English	108	65	173
Arabic	115	66	181
Grand Total	454	259	713

For the first and second school experience, student teachers were split into two groups. One group went to private schools and the other to public schools for SEP1, and for SEP2 they switched. All student teachers spent the third school experience at public schools.

Selection of school mentors started with these mentors who worked with the diploma in the first year, confirming their commitment and nominating new mentors. This was followed by outreaching schools through workshops for school principals and meetings with teachers in the different governorates of Jordan. For public schools, this was matched to the geographical distribution of student teachers, while private schools were mainly recruited in Amman. However, since transportation is more challenging in the south region, in PY2 some private schools were recruited locally to address this challenge. A set of criteria was adhered to in

selecting school mentors: at least 3 to 5 years of teaching experience, thoughtful and supportive practitioner who is willing to accept the challenge.

Challenges with recruiting mentors for PY2:

- Some of the mentors from PY1 refused to continue as they felt they were not acknowledged enough during the previous year. These teachers influenced some newly nominated teachers who decided to not to join.
- Delayed response from the schools regarding their partnership, commitment and the number of nominated teachers.
- Some mentors were forced by their school management to be part of the mentorship program.
- In the previous year, some mentors experienced inappropriate behaviour from student teachers.
- A number of teachers nominated by their schools did not turn up for the mentors training which meant that new schools had to be reached in a very short period of time to nominate mentors. This caused changes to teacher educators' schedules and using time planned for visiting student teachers on delivering training for mentors.

In general, most of the mentors reported great experience and how they benefited from mentoring student teachers, and this was proved by continuing as mentors for PY3. Some mentors felt overwhelmed and did not want to carry on working with TEPD. It is possible that some forms of incentives would attract teachers to join the TEPD mentorship program, including professional development, career progression, or financial enticement.

Quantitative findings from student teachers' and school mentors' surveys

1. Pedagogies for learning and teaching (PLT)

In commenting on pedagogies for learning and teaching after SEP1, most students (between 76% and 96%) strongly agreed or agreed that the programme has helped them develop a range of teaching skills in a variety of ways. In SEP2, even greater numbers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement - between 81% and 98%. If student teachers disagreed with any of the statements, they were predominantly students of Arabic, English, or Mathematics – see Table 2.

Table 2: Pedagogies for learning and teaching

	SEP1					SEP2				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) I have developed understanding of aspects of learning and teaching which relate to classroom practice in Jordanian schools, with reference to:										
a) Relationships	53%	45%	1.7%	0.3%	Biology	0	60%	38%	1%	0%
b) Introduction to planning	38%	52%	7%	3%	Arabic, English, Maths, Physics, Biology	0	57%	38%	5%	0%
c) Learning environment	42%	52%	5%	1%	Maths	0	50%	47%	3%	0%
d) Conditions for learning	33%	54%	12%	1%	Maths	0	37%	58%	4%	0%
e) Assessment for learning	-	-	-	-	-	-	36%	54%	7%	3%

	SEP1					SEP2				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
f) Pedagogical content knowledge	-	-	-	-	-	43%	49%	6%	1% English	0%
g) Assessment in different subjects	-	-	-	-	-	37%	55%	7%	0%	0%
2) I have developed an ability to critically reflect on the challenges associated with these learning and teaching issues	25%	60%	13%	1.7% Maths, English	0.3% English	40%	52%	8%	0%	0%
3) I have developed my understanding of these learning and teaching issues through reading relevant literature	31%	57%	11%	1% Arabic, English	0	40%	50%	8%	1% Math	0%
4) My learning journal has been a useful tool in helping me to reflect on my understanding	37%	51%	11%	1% Maths, Arabic	0	41%	47%	9%	2% English, Math, Biology	1% Math
5) I feel more prepared to conduct the summative assessment for PLT after working on the practice paper	22%	57.4%	18%	2% Maths, English	0.6% Arabic, English	36%	52%	10%	1% Math, English	0%
6) The pre- and post- sessions activities on VLE have helped me to develop my understanding of PLT	25%	51%	20%	4% Arabic, English, Maths, Physics, Biology, Chemistry	0.3% Maths	30%	50%	16%	3% Math, English	1% Math, English

2. Subject Didactics

During SEP3, student teachers were taught subject didactics and most students (between 89% and 100%) strongly agreed or agreed that the programme has helped them to develop their understanding of aspects of learning and teaching related to this. If student teachers disagreed with any of the statements, they were predominantly students of Arabic, English, Biology, or Mathematics – see Table 3.

Table 3: Subject didactics

	SEP3				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) I have developed my understanding of aspects of learning and teaching which relate to classroom practice in Jordanian schools, with reference to:					
a) Curriculum	64%	36%	0	0	0
b) Pedagogical Content Knowledge	66%	34%	0	0	0
c) Assessment in different subjects:	56%	43%	1% Biology	1% English	0
d) Subject Inquiry	68%	31%	1% English, Arabic	0	0
2) I have developed an ability to critically reflect on the challenges associated with these learning and teaching issues related to my subject	62%	38%	0	0	0
3) I have developed my understanding of these learning and teaching issues through reading relevant literature	61%	37%	2% Arabic, Maths, Physics	1% Chemistry	0
4) My learning journal has been a useful tool in helping me to reflect on my understanding	57%	37%	4% English, Arabic, Maths, Biology, Chemistry	2% English, Arabic, Maths, Biology	0
5) I feel more prepared to conduct the summative assessment for module 2 after working on the inquiry proposal	64%	33%	3% English, Arabic, Maths, Biology,	0	0
6) The pre- and post- sessions activities on VLE have helped me to develop my understanding of teaching my subject	47%	42%	8% All subjects	0	0

3. School Experience

When asked: 'How many targets setting weekly meetings did you have with your school mentor?' most students (71%) told us that they had six meetings in SEP1, 21% had three to five, while 8% had two or less. During SEP2 most students (90%) told us that they had six meetings, 7% had three to five, while 3% had two or less. When describing SEP3, 93% of students told us that they had six meetings, 4% had three to five, while 3% had two or less. The least number of meetings (two or less) for SEP1 and SEP2 occurred in English, and for SEP3 in Mathematics – Table 4.

Table 4: School experience – number of target-setting meetings

Number of meetings	Arabic			English			Maths			Physics			Biology			Chemistry			Total		
	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3
Zero	1%	0	0	3%	0	5%	0	2%	0	0	0	0	3%	3%	5%	3%	0	5%	1%	1%	2%
Number of students	1			2		1		1					1	1	1	1		1	4	2	3
One	0	0	2%	5%	0	0	1%	0	3%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4%	0	2%	0	2%
Number of students			1	3			1		2								1		5		3
Two	1%	2%	0	9%	6%	0	8%	2%	2%	0	0	0	3%	0	0	3%	1	0	5%	2%	1%
Number of students	1	1		5	3		7	1	1				1			1			15	5	1
Three	3%	0	3%	5%	6%	10%	3%	0	0	0	0	0	3%	0	0	3%	0	0	4%	1%	2%
Number of students	2		1	3	3	2	3						1			1			11	3	3
Four	4%	2%	0	7%	0	0	2%	3%	0	15%	9%	0	3%	0	0	3%	0	0	4%	2%	0
Number of students	3	1		4			2	2		3	2		1			1			13	5	
Five	13%	0	3%	9%	13%	0	10%	0	0	15%	0	0	24%	0	5%	24%	8%	0	13%	3%	1%
Number of students	10		1	5	6		9			3			7		1	7	2		40	8	2
Six	78%	96%	91%	62%	75%	86%	76%	94%	96%	70%	91%	100%	62%	97%	91%	62%	88%	95%	71%	90%	93%
Number of students	59	44	32	36	36	18	70	58	65	14	20	14	18	20	20	18	23	19	220	212	168

There were no significant differences in the amount of target setting weekly meetings between private and public schools, also numbers of meetings were very similar. For SEP1, the highest number of these took place in the following governorates: Ma'an, Mafraq, and Ajloun, while the proportion of students who had two or less meetings was the greatest in Karak (14% - 3 out of 21 student teachers reported this to be the case), Zarqa (14% - 2 out of 13), and Amman (11% - 14 out of 133). For SEP2 and SEP3, the highest number of the weekly meetings took place in most of governorates. The proportion of SEP2 students who had two or less meetings was the highest in Karak (8% - 1 out of 12), and Amman (4% - 7 out of 165). SEP3 students who had two or less meetings were located in Amman (7% - 3 out of 41), and Irbid (6% - 3 out of 55). Talking about formal observations, most student teachers reported to have had two (71%) or three (25%) formal observations in SEP1. In SEP2, student teachers reported to have had two (81%) or three (17%) formal observations, while in SEP3, a majority (97%) reported to have had three formal observations and only (3%) reported two formal observations – see Table 5.

Table 5: Pedagogies for learning and teaching – number of formal observations

Formal observations	Arabic			English			Mathematics			Physics			Biology			Chemistry			Total		
	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3	SEP1	SEP2	SEP3
Zero	1%	0	0	3%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1%	0	0
Number of students	1			2															3		
One	3%	2%	0	7%	4%	0	1%	2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3%	0	0	3%	2%	0
Number of students	2	1		4	2		1	1								1			8	4	
Two	63%	61%	9%	64%	77%	0	82%	87%	3%	75%	91%	0	70%	94%	5%	76%	88%	0	72%	81%	3%
Number of students	48	28	3	37	37		75	54	2	15	20		23	29	1	22	23		220	191	6
Three	33%	37%	91%	26%	19%	100%	17%	11%	97%	25%	9%	100%	30%	6%	96%	21%	12%	100%	25%	17%	97%
Number of students	25	17	32	15	9	21	16	7	66	5	2	14	10	2	21	6	3	20	77	40	174

After SEP1, only students in Arabic (4%) and English (10%) reported having had none or one observation, and for SEP2, only students in Arabic (2%), English (4%), and Mathematics (2%) reported to having had none or one observation. A small amount of observations (zero or one) were spoken about by students who had their SEP1 in Ajloun (8% - 1 out of 12), Zarqa (8% - 1 out of 13), Irbid (7% - 5 out of 76), and Amman (3% - 4 out of 133), while SEP2 student teachers from Karak (8% - 1 out of 12) and Amman (2% - 3 out of 165) had only one school observation.

3.1 School experience target setting related to Teachers' Standards

During SEP1, most student teachers strongly agreed (29%) or agreed (46%) that the target setting weekly meetings they had with the school mentor, were useful in developing their classroom practice (only 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed). For SEP2, most student teachers strongly agreed (32%) or agreed (50%) that the target setting weekly meetings were useful for them (only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed). In describing SEP3, most student teachers strongly agreed (41%) or agreed (38%), while 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This was equally spread between the subjects throughout all three school experiences.

After SEP1, over 70% of student teachers strongly agreed (28%) or agreed (45%) that the targets they have been given by their school mentor were related to Teachers' Standards. Students who disagreed (5%) or strongly disagreed (2%) were studying Mathematics, English, and Arabic. During SEP2, over 77% of student teachers strongly agreed (40%) or agreed (37%) that the targets they were given by their school mentors were related to Teachers' Standards. Students who disagreed (6%) or strongly disagreed (1%) were studying Mathematics, English, Arabic, and Chemistry. In SEP3, 80% of student teachers strongly agreed (42%) or agreed (38%) that the targets were related to the Teachers' Standards. Students who disagreed (5%) or strongly disagreed (2%) were studying Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and English.

Responses from school mentors confirmed this, however their answers were on average 10% higher than those of student teachers. Once they were asked if their mentoring activities such as observations, or weekly target setting were based on QRTA/TEPD Teachers' Standards, over 90% respondents after SEP1 strongly agreed (35%) or agreed (58%) with this statement, while only (7%) neither agreed nor disagreed. In SEP2 and SEP3 over 95% of school mentors responded by strongly agreeing or agreeing while only (4%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

In commenting on setting up student teachers' goals in SEP1, most school mentors strongly agreed (43%) or agreed (50%), that they have established a clear set of goals and ways of assessing their achievement with their student teachers, which they have then periodically revisited. The majority of school mentors in SEP2 (97%) and SEP3 (95%) also strongly agreed or agreed with this.

During SEP2 and SEP3, school mentors were asked whether, in setting up students' goals, they have been guided by student teachers' areas for improvement from previous SEP and over 90% of SEP2 school mentors responded by strongly agreed (46%) or agreed (47%), while 94% of SEP3 school mentors responded by strongly agreed (42%) or agreed (52%). Only (6%) of school mentors responded by neither agreeing nor disagreeing for either SEPs.

Most of school mentors (92% in SEP1, 88% in SEP2 and 96% in SEP3) stated that their student teachers achieved the goals identified for improvement during their school experience. This was true for school mentors from all subjects and from schools located in all governorates.

3.2 Focus of observations on specific aspects of teaching

After SEP1, student teachers strongly agreed (38%) or agreed (44%) that the observations by the school mentor were focused on specific aspects of teaching with clear objectives agreed before and discussed after the lesson, while in SEP2 and SEP3 over 85% of student teachers strongly agreed or agreed with this. During SEP1, only 12 student teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed, and this was spread evenly between subjects, apart from physics, where 10% of students claimed this. In SEP2 students who disagreed (4%) were studying Mathematics, English, Arabic, Chemistry and Biology. In SEP3, only (5%) of students have disagreed or strongly disagreed and they were from all the subjects except Physics.

Additionally, a majority of school mentors (93%) agreed or strongly agreed, that the lesson observations were focused on specific aspects of teaching guided by the Teacher Standards with clear objectives agreed with their student teachers before and discussed after the lesson. This was found in all three school experiences.

3.3 Planning, instruction, assessment, and behaviour management

During SEP1, 88% of student teachers mentioned that their school mentors were from the same subject, while in SEP2 and SEP3 92% of student teachers had school mentors from the same subject.

During SEP1, student teachers of all subjects strongly agreed (36%) or agreed (44%) that they had received support from their school mentors in planning and teaching episodes of lessons. After SEP2 student teachers also responded by strongly agreeing (43%) or agreeing (36%). While in SEP3, 84% of student teachers agreed that they have received support from their school mentor in planning and teaching lessons related to their subject. The highest percentage students who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement in SEP1 was in the following subjects: Physics (10%), Biology (9%), Mathematics (9%), and English (9%). In SEP2, such students were from the following subjects: English (15%), Chemistry (12%), Biology (7%), Mathematics (5%), and Arabic (4%). During SEP3 students who disagreed were from the following subjects: Chemistry (10%), Biology (9%), English (5%) and Arabic (3%). The findings from school mentors were a bit higher than the student teachers' views. Most school mentors said they had collaborated with the student teachers in planning individual lessons and broader schemes - 97% in SEP1, 98% in SEP2, and 95% in SEP3. While planning, 97% of mentors in SEP1, 95% in SEP2, and 94% in SEP3 discussed with the student teachers the subject content and its relationship to teaching and student teachers' learning.

In terms of being given an appropriate degree of autonomy in planning and teaching episodes of lessons, 91% of SEP1 student teachers agreed or strongly agreed, while 10% of Physics students disagreed, as well as 7% of English students, and 5% of Arabic and Mathematics students. In SEP2, 92% of student teachers agreed or strongly agreed, while 7% of Arabic students disagreed, as well as 5% of Mathematic students, 3% of Biology and 2% English students. In SEP3 majority of student teachers (97%) mentioned that they were given an appropriate degree of autonomy in planning and teaching lessons related to their subjects.

Additionally, most school mentors (97% in SEP1, 96% in SEP2, and 99% in SEP3) said that they have given the student teachers an appropriate degree of autonomy in terms of applying directed activities, discussing new methods of teachings.

Most student teachers from SEP1 (90%), SEP2 (87%) and SEP3 (92%) highly valued the weekly directed activities in terms of developing their professional practice. Only six students from SEP1 did not agree that this happened (English, Arabic, and Mathematics), while four students from SEP2 (English and Mathematics) and only two students from SEP3 (English and Arabic) did not agree with this.

During SEP3 most students (92%) found that the weekly directed activities were a useful tool in developing their skills in the process of inquiry. The subject audit was helpful to 79% of SEP1 students in using their subject knowledge and understanding in teaching effectively. We have found it to be the case for 87% and 91% of student teachers in SEP2 and SEP3 respectively. Only two student teachers in each school experience did not agree.

The majority of student teachers (89%) reported that during their school experiences, they have had an appropriate time to observe and reflect on their school mentor's professional practices, and these numbers were similar in private and public schools of all levels throughout all governorates. Nearly all students in SEP1 (98%) said that during their school experience they have had a chance to attend and observe teachers other than their school mentors to learn from their professional practices. In SEP2 and SEP3 these numbers were lower with respectively 70% and 65% of students agreeing with this. 89% of school mentors across all three school experiences also mentioned that they have created opportunities to model their teaching practice and discuss the choice of used strategies and materials with the student teachers.

While considering analysing pupils' work, more than (90%) of school mentors from all three school experiences said that they discussed with the student teachers the assessment for learning and setting next learning steps. During SEP1, school mentors strongly agreed (29%) and agreed (53%) that they guided student teachers to understand data from formative assessment, and only (2%) disagreed. As for SEP2, school mentors strongly agreed (24%) and agreed (62%) on the same statement and only (2%) disagreed. School mentors strongly agreed (26%) and agreed (61%) and only (1%) disagreed with this in SEP3. The majority of SEP1 (93%), SEP2 (97%) and SEP3 (95%) school mentors mentioned that they discussed with student teachers a variety of teaching strategies to engage and encourage students and effectively manage their behaviour.

3.4 Differentiation

After SEP1 just over half of the student teachers agreed (36%) or strongly agreed (22%) that their school mentor worked with them to consider the individuality and diversity of pupils which led to being able to engage them and support their learning. In SEP2, over 80% of student teachers agreed (43%) or strongly agreed (38%) with this, while in SEP3 it was 49% and 32% respectively. 12% of SEP1 and 9% of SEP2 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement and this number went down to 6% for SEP3.

This was viewed differently by school mentors in SEP1 when 92% of them claimed to have worked with the student teachers to have a better understanding of the individuality and diversity of pupils and assisted them in applying differentiation to be able to engage and support pupils in their learning. Even though in SEP2 and SEP3 these number were more similar between student teachers and school mentors, there were still some differences - 92% of mentors and 81% of students in SEP2, and 95% of mentors and 81% of students in SEP3.

3.5 Support and encouragement

Most students in SEP1 (83%), SEP2 (85%) and SEP3 (88%) felt that they were emotionally and technically supported and encouraged very well by their school mentor while only 6% of SEP1, 7% of SEP2 and 4% of SEP3 respondents did not agree with this statement. This was equally spread between the subjects. All school mentors across the three school experiences responded saying they strongly agreed or agreed that they have provided the student teachers with emotional support and encouragement. This was a higher proportion than that reported by students.

3.6 Working within the school environment

School mentors' help in working with the administration and the wider school environment was a positive experience for most student teachers (75%) and this was broadly similar throughout all subjects from 68% in Mathematics and 85% in Biology in SEP1. 10% of Mathematics and Physics students strongly disagreed or disagreed with this. For SEP2, and SEP3 the lowest level of satisfaction was reported in English (73%) and (84%) respectively. During SEP2, the highest satisfaction was reported in Chemistry (89%), and during SEP3 in Biology (96%). Overall total for SEP2 was 79% and 91% for SEP3. In SEP2, 3% of Arabic, English and Mathematics students strongly disagreed or disagreed, while in SEP3 it was 4% of Arabic, English, Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology students.

The majority of school mentors (98%) during the school practicum experiences said that they helped the student teachers with the whole school environment, including site administration and explained teachers' wider professional responsibilities and this was close to what student thought in SEP2 and SEP3.

3.7 Supporting student teachers' development through reflection

During SEP1, most student teachers (between 80% and 100% depending on the subjects) agreed or strongly agreed that they received useful feedback from their school mentors which helped them to develop their professional practice. An average of 84% of students in SEP2 and SEP3 agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Disagreeing answers occurred the most in English: 9% in SEP1, 17% in SEP2, and 10% in SEP3.

Student teachers also found the learning journal a useful tool to reflect on their professional practice with an average of 90% in SEP1, 84% in SEP2 and 91% in SEP3 agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. 3% of English students did not agree with this statement in SEP1 and SEP2.

During meetings with the student teachers across all three school experiences, over (89%) of school mentors either strongly agreed or agreed that they provided time for reflection on learning and teaching experienced during the lesson, while only (1%) and (2%) from SEP1 and SEP2 respectively disagreed - these were all English student teachers. This confirms student teachers' observations.

3.8 Communication

For most student teachers (89% in SEP1, 95% in SEP2 and 94% in SEP3) communication between them, the school mentor, and the TEPD team went well. During SEP1 the subjects in which respondents did not agree with this statement were: Arabic, English, and Mathematics, while during SEP2 only two students (one of Chemistry and one of Biology) did not agree with this statement. As for SEP3, only 3 respondents did not agree with the above and they were from the following subjects: Arabic, English, and Biology.

The majority of student teachers (82% in SEP1, 87% in SEP2 and 92% in SEP3) claimed that collaboration between them, the school mentor, and the teacher educators supported forming professional learning community (PLC). The majority of school mentors from SEP1 (96%), SEP2 (98%) and SEP3 (99%), also said that the communication with student teachers was easy.

During SEP1 (80%) and SEP2 (84%) the school mentors either agreed or strongly agreed that the communication with teacher educators and the administration of TEPD was easy, while only (77%) of SEP3 agreed with this statement. School mentors who faced difficulties in SEP1 (5%) were teaching Mathematics, General Science and Biology, in SEP2 (3%) were teaching Mathematics, General Science, English and Arabic, and in SEP3 (6%) were school mentors from all subjects except for Physics.

Most of SEP1 and SEP3 90% of school mentors found that the school is generally aware of the presence of the student teachers and welcomed them to join any learning opportunity such as attending other teacher's classroom. This rate was higher in SEP2 (98%).

4. Working with teacher educators

A majority of student teachers (93%) said that teacher educators helped them in developing awareness around the TEPD and its requirements. In SEP1, Chemistry was the only subject in which most student teachers disagreed with this (7%). In SEP2, this was the case in Biology (1%), while in SEP3 in Arabic (1%).

Student teachers highly valued the emotional and technical support and encouragement from their teacher educators; during SEP1, students between 80% and 100% in different subjects agreed or strongly agreed with the lowest scores in Physics (80%) and English (83%). In SEP2 this response was between 90% (Biology) and 100%, and in SEP3 between 95% and 100%.

Modelling teaching practice by teacher educators to facilitate the translation of theory into practice and promote reflection was found useful by most student teachers from SEP1 (89%),

SEP2 (92%), and SEP3 (97%) with agree and strongly agree statements appearing in Arabic, English, Math, and Biology. In SEP1, three chemistry students (10%), two students in English (3%) and one physics student (5%) did not agree with this, and in SEP2 one student from Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry did not agree. While in SEP3, only one student from each, Math and Biology, did not agree.

Reflection on teacher educators' professional practices was wide spread in all subjects with an average 87% in SEP1, 91% in SEP2, and 97% in SEP3 of student teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that they had a chance to consider and discuss this. Although during SEP1, feedback from teacher educators helped most student teachers (80%) to develop their professional practice, this was not the case for 15% of English and Physics students. During SEP2, most student (96%) found that the feedback by teacher educators was helpful in developing their professional practices, while almost all students of SEP3 (99%) agreed with this. Majority of student teachers in SEP2 (94%) and in SEP3 (97%) found that the observations by subject tutor were focused on specific aspects of teaching with clear objectives agreed before and SEP3 discussed after the lesson.

An average of 89% of student teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the written feedback by teacher educators on their assignments (M1 practice paper, M1 summative assessment and reflective essay) guided them in developing their academic performance. Only 3% of student teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. During the third school experience majority of students (96%) found that the written feedback useful in their development as a teacher.

5. Tutorial

The percentage of student teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that the tutorials allowed them to better understand their progress towards meeting the Teachers' Standards in SEP1 ranged between 60% in Physics and 100% in General Science. In other subjects this proportion was around 80%. The greatest dissatisfaction with this aspect of the programme was reported in by Physics students (15%). During SEP2, the percentage of student teachers who agreed or strongly agreed ranged between 90% in Biology and 100% in Chemistry. Almost all of SEP3 students have agreed with this statement. During tutorials, the targets they were given by the teacher educator appear to have been formative and structured as confirmed by the majority of student teachers - 86% in SEP1, 96% in SEP2, and 100% in SEP3. The lowest proportions during SEP1 were in Physics (75%) and Chemistry (79%), and continued to be lower than average for Physics in SEP2 - 86%.

6. Connecting PLT to school experience

81% of student teachers agreed or strongly agreed that micro-teaching, which they experienced at QRTA, allowed them to make clear connections between what they learnt in PLT and their experiences in both SEP1 and SEP2. During SEP3 this proportion reached 91%. In the first school experience, the least satisfied group were Physics students, in which group only 60% agreed with this statement, while 10% did not agree. In SEP2, the proportion who did not agree with this studied Physics (32%), English (24%), and Mathematics (23%) and Physics continued to be scored the lowest in SEP3 with 22% of students disagreeing.

Most student teachers stated that they were able to apply what they learnt in PLT to their classroom practice in SEP1 (87%) and SEP2 (90%) across all subjects. All students from SEP3 said that they were able to apply what they learnt in subject didactics to their classroom practice. A majority of SEP1 (86%), SEP2 (94%) and SEP3 (98%) student teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to critically reflect on the pedagogical challenges faced by school teachers. Additionally, 93% students in SEP1, 97% in SEP2, and 100% in SEP3 started applying the PLT in their own professional practice.

Most student teachers (85% in SEP1, 92% in SEP2, and 97% in SEP3) said that they were able to contribute to the current teaching culture in the school and to share new concepts and teaching methods which they have learned in TEPD. The highest dissatisfaction with this in SEP1 was reported by Mathematics' students. As for SEP2 none of the student teachers disagreed with this statement, and only one Mathematics student in SEP3.

7. Study skills

There was a strong sense of agreement (96%) between student teachers in that the TEPD developed their skills to use academic literature and reference it in their studies. Most of student teachers (89% in SEP1, 93% in SEP2, and 96% in SEP3) reported that taking part in the TEPD developed their skills to critically engage with academic literature and incorporate it in their writing, while 79% student teachers mentioned that the readings shared on VLE helped them in developing a habit of reading about educational issues.

8. Training and support for school mentors from TEPD/school

More than 90% of school mentors who took part in the program during SEP1, SEP2 and SEP3 said that the training raised awareness about the TEPD design and the topics explored with student teachers. After SEP1 80% of mentors told us that the training provided them with a sufficient amount of knowledge and skills to fulfil their mentoring role. Only 6% disagreed and they were teaching Mathematics, General Science, Biology and English. In SEP2 88% of respondents, and 83% in SEP3, found training sufficient for their role of a school mentor

Training provided 72% of school mentors from SEP1 and 81% from SEP2 with a good understanding of pedagogical principals of the TEPD. School mentors in SEP1 who disagreed (7%) were teaching Mathematics, English, and Biology, and in SEP2 (2%) were teaching English (6%) and Chemistry (7%). During SEP3, the majority of school mentors found that the training provided them with a good understanding of pedagogical principals. Most of the school mentors in SEP1 (90%), SEP2 and SEP3 (95%) mentioned that they have some understanding of what is covered in the TEPD and can align support for the student teachers with what they have learnt at QRTA. Most of the school mentors in SEP1 (89%), SEP2 (98%) and SEP3 (94%) strongly agreed or agreed that they have gained a good understanding of Teachers' Standards and regularly use them while working with the student teachers. However, only about 75% of student teachers said that the targets they have been given by their school mentor were related to Teachers' Standards.

During the mentor training, school mentors from SEP1 (60%), SEP2 (63%) and SEP3 (67%) were oriented on how to use VLE and have access to the material uploaded there. After training 13% of school mentors from SEP1, 8% from SEP2 and 11% from SEP3 still did not feel confident about using VLE. School mentors also found that the mentoring handbook received during training presented the information/ forms in a very clear structure that was easily accessible with an average of (84%) agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. More than 86% of SEP1 and SEP2 school mentors found that the mentoring handbook is a good point of reference when they need forms related to student teachers work, while only 78% of mentors in SEP3 needed to refer to the handbook. This may suggest that as their knowledge and understanding of the principals of the TEPD developed with time, they relied less on the handbook.

Over 80% of school mentors were well prepared to complete the required forms for the student teachers. 65% of school mentors during SEP1, and 77% in SEP2 strongly agreed or agreed that the technology available at the school enabled them to complete the necessary TEPD documentation, while only half of SEP3 respondents agreed with this. Almost half of school mentors found that the online free accesses to the E-library was useful, and more than 42% of school mentors responded by neither agreeing nor disagreeing. This may relate to the earlier findings that not all school mentors had access to appropriate technology in their schools.

There was a strong sense of agreement between respondents after SEP1 and SEP2 (85%) in that the school's leadership supported them in their role as school mentors. This decreased to 69% during SEP3. During SEP1 and SEP2, only 72% of school mentors felt that they were supported in their role of a school mentor by teacher educators, while during SEP3 this improved and 84% of school mentors felt that they were well supported. In terms of having opportunities to discuss their experiences with mentors from other schools only 33% in SEP1, 36% in SEP2 and 32% in SEP3 mentioned that they had such opportunity. In SEP1, 35% of school mentors from all subjects responded by disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, while this was the case for more than 40% in SEP2 and SEP3. The highest percentage of SEP2 school mentors who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement were teaching Biology (57%), Chemistry (53%), and English (47%), while in SEP3 they were from all subjects.

Overall, 85% of school mentors from SEP1 and 89% from SEP2 and SEP3 found being a school mentor interesting and felt that it benefited their own teaching.

Qualitative analyses

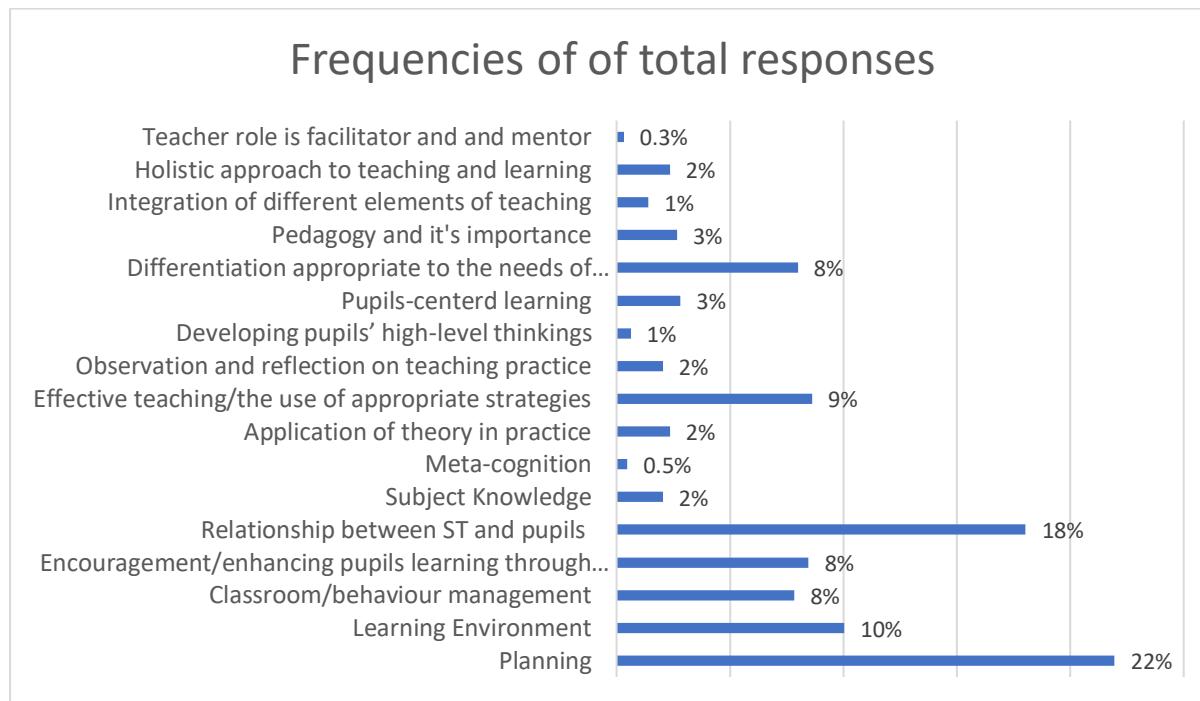
9. Findings from the student teachers' survey

9.1 Benefits from attending TEPD - responses after Module 1

In terms of what student teachers learnt in Module 'Pedagogies for Learning and Teaching' during the first term of the programme, they found the following areas most valuable in understanding the role of a teacher: planning lessons (22% of answers included this), relationships between student teachers and pupils (18%), the use of appropriate strategies

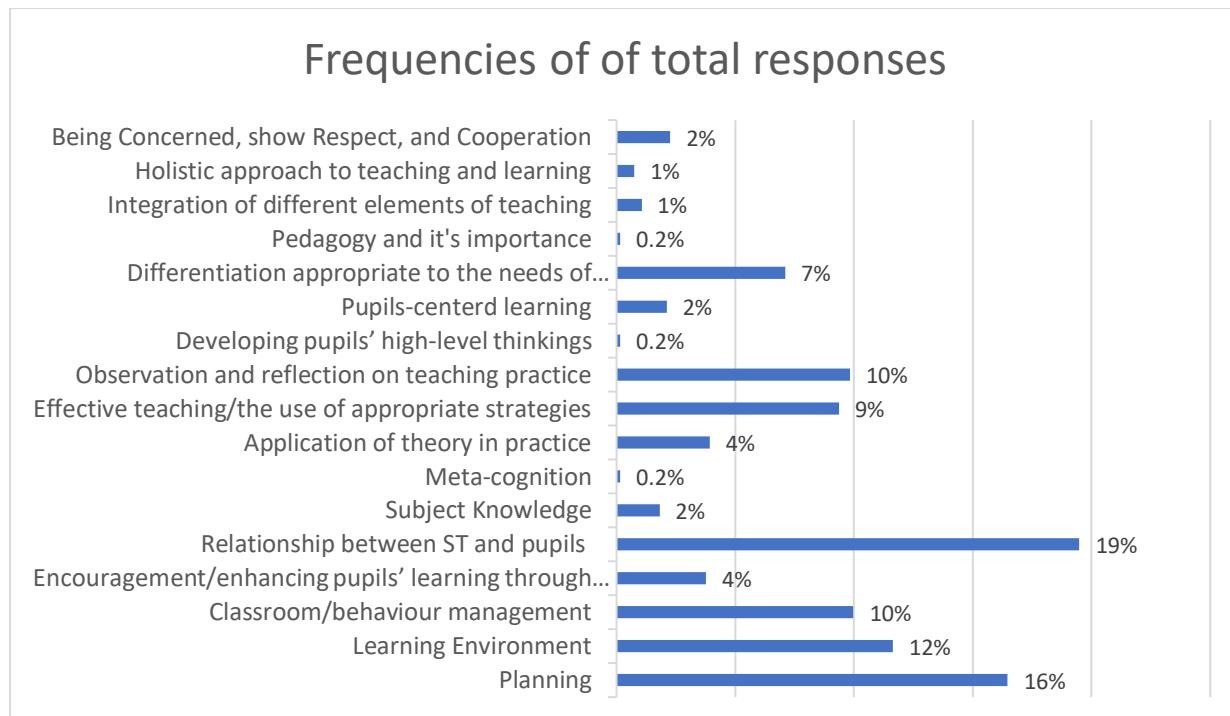
to make teaching more effective (9%), and differentiation appropriate for the needs of pupils (8%) – see Figure 4.

Figure 4: Learning in Module 1 ‘Pedagogies for Learning and Teaching’



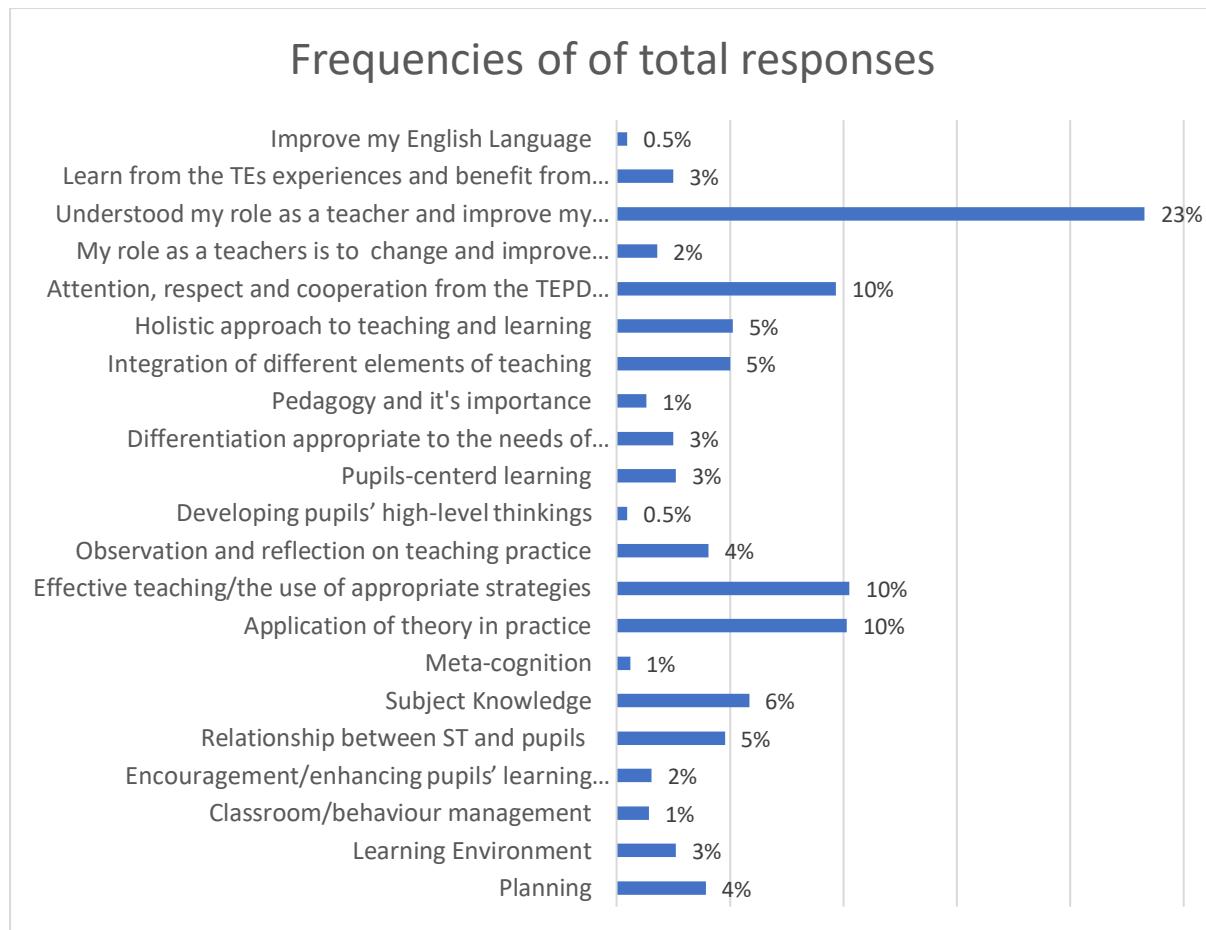
In SEP1 student teachers found several areas valuable in understanding the role of the teacher. Four of them were similar to those which students valued in their academic learning: relationship between student teachers and pupils (19%), planning (16%), effective teaching (9%), and differentiation (7%). They also mentioned: learning environment (12%), behaviour management (10%), and observation and reflection on teaching (10%) – see Figure 5.

Figure 5: Learning in SEP 1



Once asked which aspects of TEPD they found the most valuable in the first term of the TEPD, student teachers spoke most often about understanding their role as teachers and improving their instructional practices and skills (23%). Other areas mentioned by the respondents were: the use of appropriate strategies to improve the effectiveness of teaching (10%), observation and reflection on teaching practice (10%), and the attention, respect, and cooperation they received from the TEPD team (10%) - see Figure 6.

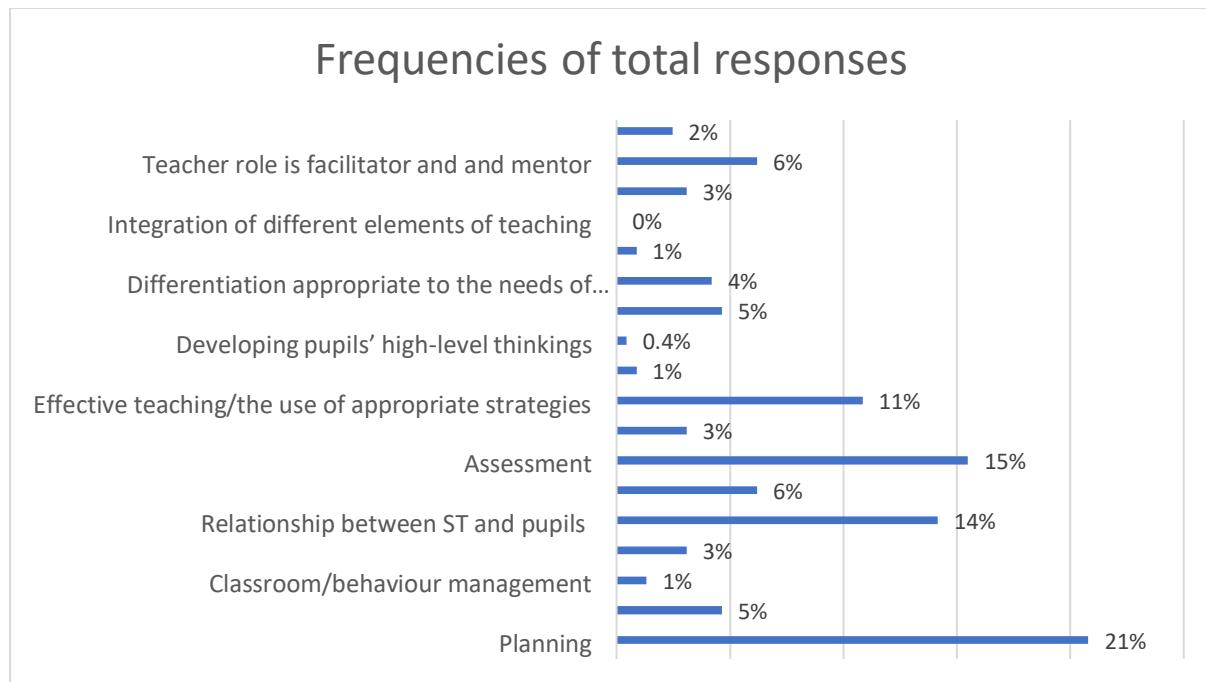
Figure 6: What was most valuable to student teachers in Module 1?



9.2 Benefits from attending TEPD - responses after Module 2

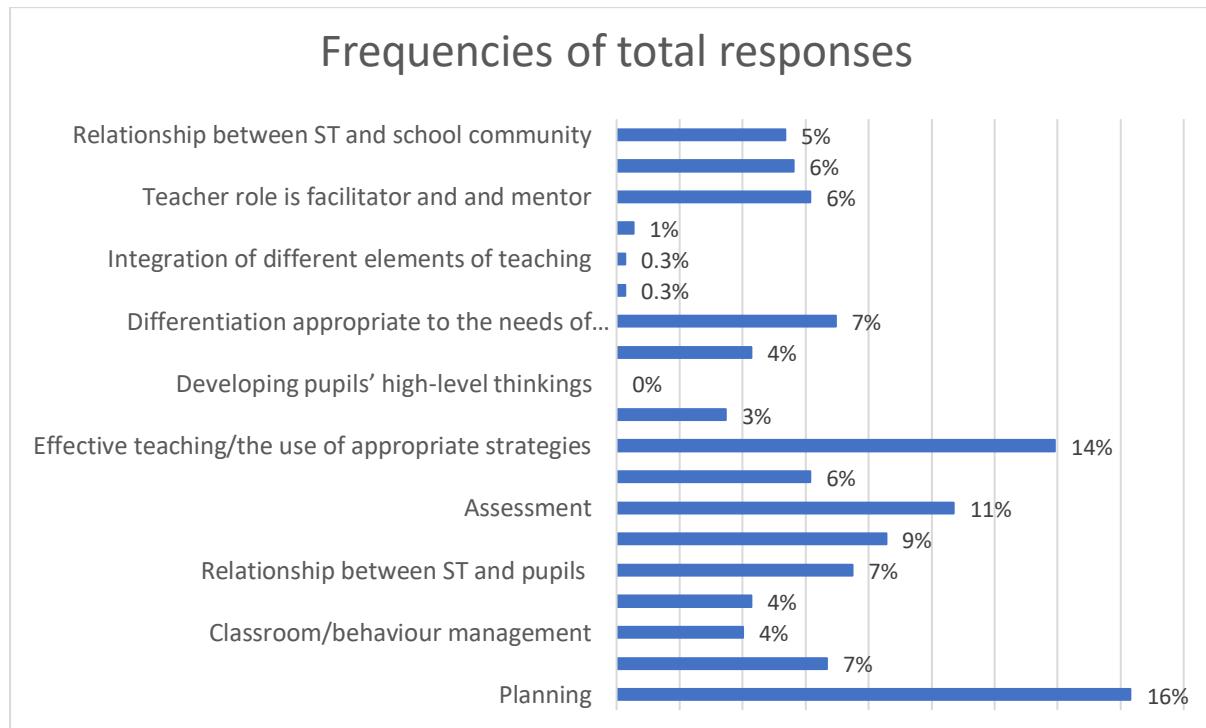
While considering student teachers' perceptions learnt in PLT during the second term of the programme, there were lots of similarities with the answers from the first module. The areas that the participants found most valuable in understanding the role of a teacher were again: planning lessons (21% of answers included this), relationships between student teachers and pupils (14%), and the use of appropriate strategies to make teaching more effective (11%). An area highly valued, which has not appeared before was assessment (15%) – see Figure 7.

Figure 7: Learning in Module 2 'Pedagogies for Learning and Teaching'



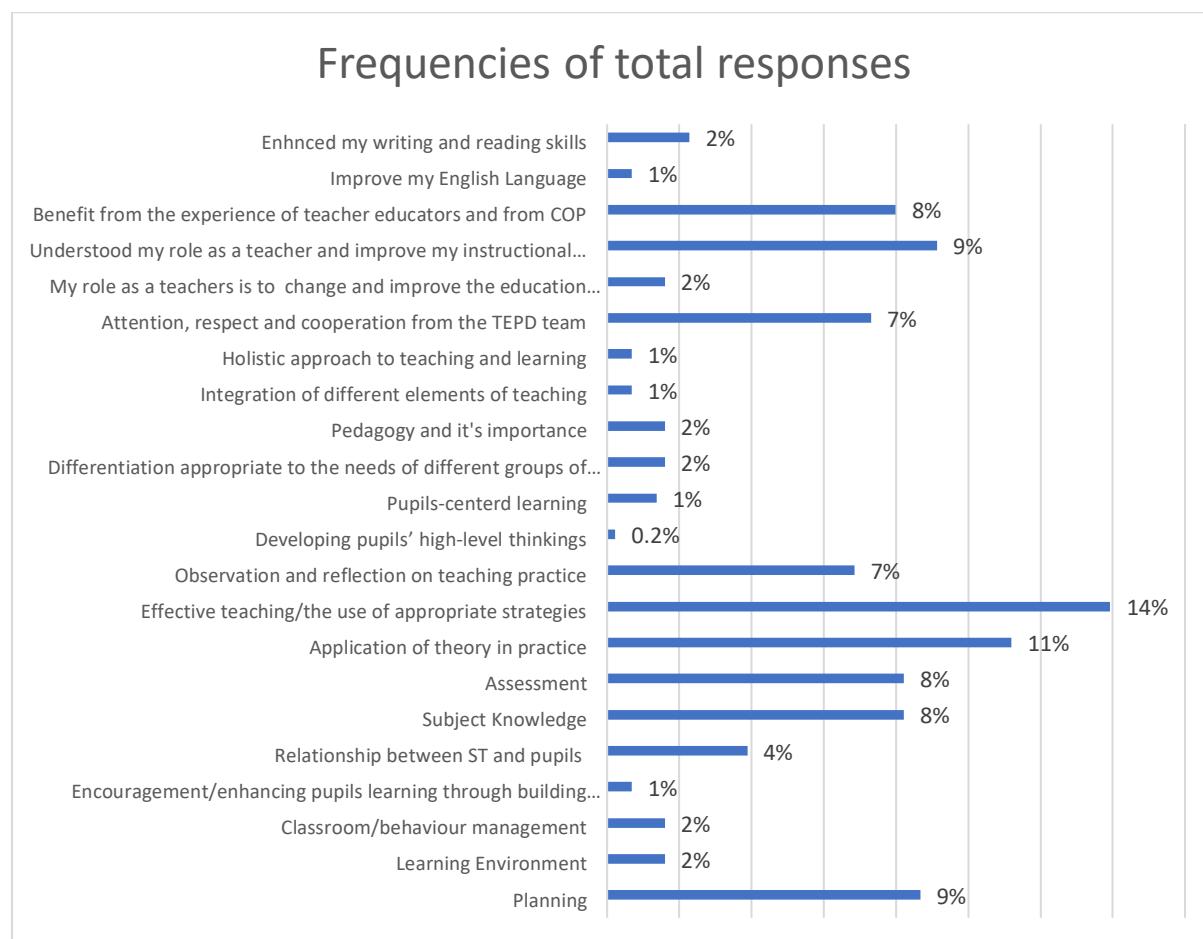
In SEP2 student teachers found several areas valuable in understanding the role of the teacher. Three of them were similar to those which students valued in their academic learning: planning (16%), effective use of teaching strategies (14%), and assessment (11%) which evidences a close relationship between the theoretical elements of the diploma and the school practice – see Figure 8.

Figure 8: Learning in SEP 2



Once asked which general aspects of the second term of the TEPD they found the most valuable, student teachers spoke most often about effective teaching and the use of appropriate strategies (14%). They also highly valued the application of theoretical knowledge from QRTA in teaching practice in schools (11%). This is a very important finding as it shows that the way the diploma is organised provides many opportunities to interrelate these two elements of teacher training. Other frequently given answers included: understood my role as a teacher and improve my instructional practices and skills (9%), planning (9%), assessment (8%), subject knowledge (8%), and benefit from the experience of teacher educators (8%) – see Figure 9.

Figure 9: What was most valuable to student teachers in Module 2?

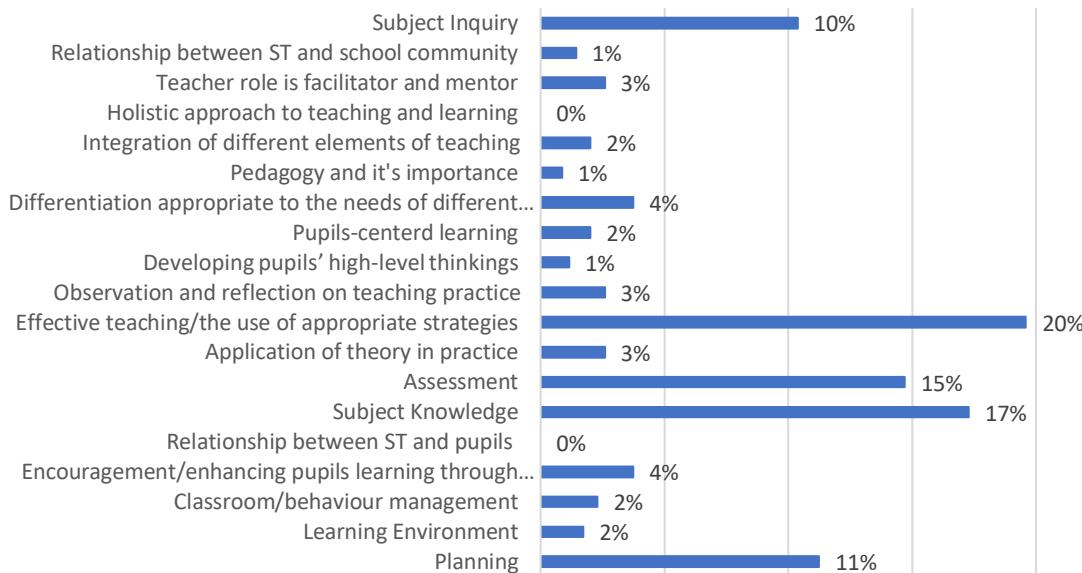


9.3 Benefits from attending TEPD - responses after Module 3

After SEP3 student teachers found effective teaching strategies and the use of appropriate strategies (20%) the most valuable. This was followed by subject knowledge (17%), assessment (15%), planning (11%), and subject inquiry (10%) - see Figure 10.

Figure 10: Learning in Module 3 'Subject Didactics'

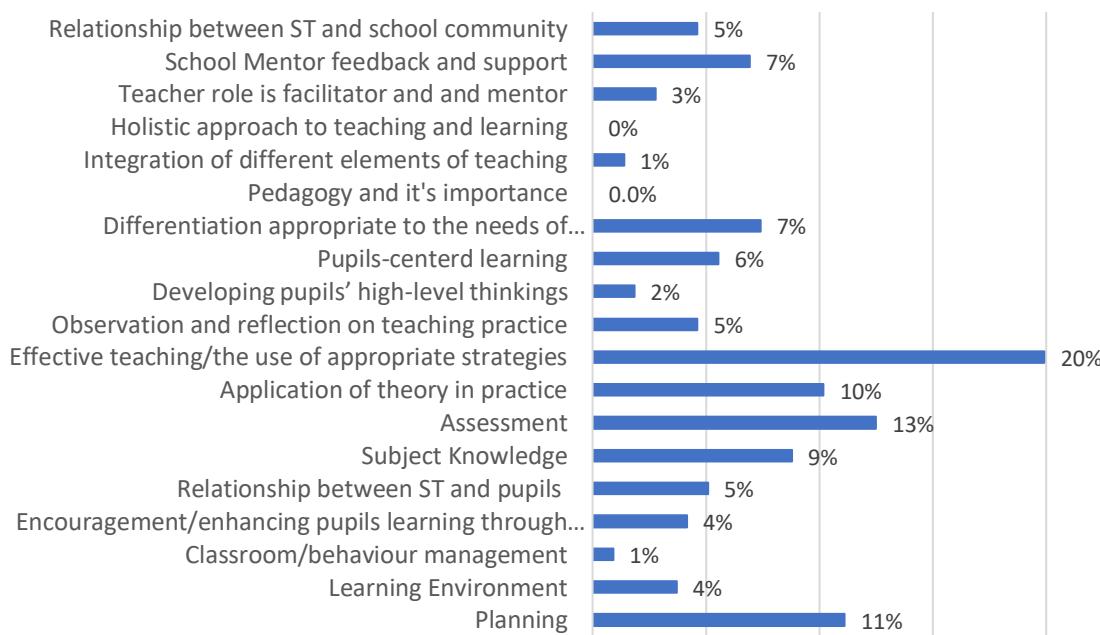
Frequencies of total responses



Student teachers' observations about the most valuable gains after SEP3 were the same as after SEP2, and these included: effective use of teaching strategies (20%), assessment (13%), and planning (11%) – See Figure 11.

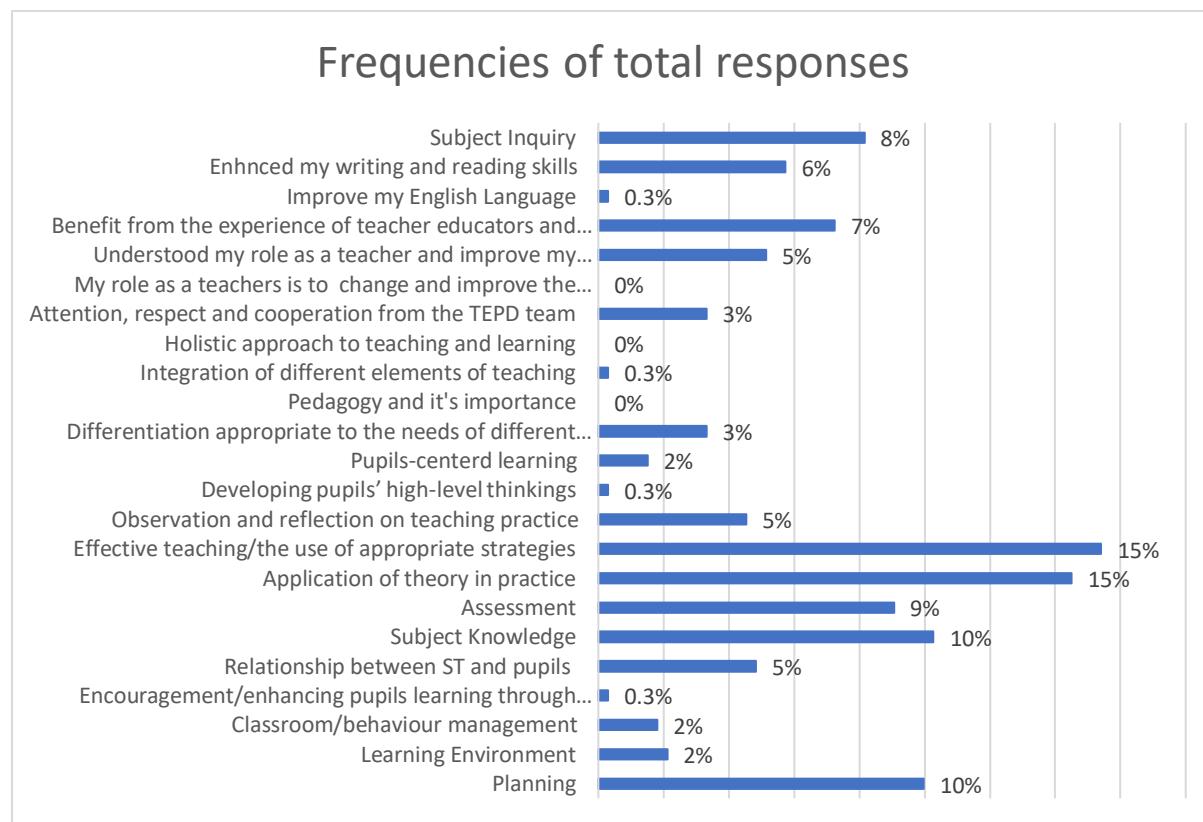
Figure 11: Learning in SEP 3

Frequencies of total responses



Once asked which general aspects of the last term of the diploma they found the most valuable, student teachers again spoke most often about effective teaching and the use of appropriate strategies (15%). The findings also confirmed that they valued the application of theoretical knowledge from the academy in teaching practice in schools (15%) which was a common theme throughout all three modules of the diploma – see Figure 12.

Figure 12: What was most valuable to student teachers in Module 3?



9.4 Challenges experienced by student teachers

While considering the challenges faced in the first term of the diploma, student teachers spoke of matters which were related to the content of the diploma, to the organisation of the course, and cooperation with the schools during school experience. A significant amount of writing and basing much of the assessment on essays student teachers found the most difficult, and 13% of all responses mentioned this issue. This was very closely linked with students' confidence in using English in their studies, and 9% of answers specified this as a challenge, and 4% proposed that some teaching should be done in Arabic.

Further two most frequently spoken of difficulties were related to time commitments: 12% responses pointed to difficulties caused by transport, while another 12% found lecture time and the pressure of tasks very demanding. While the content of the diploma was considered, 5% of the responses spoke of each of the following: the need for greater clarity in language (terminology) used in the programme and in given tasks, the need for more time to be spent on Teachers' Standards, and issues related to practicalities of teaching. Student teachers

mentioned also that the assessment criteria were not always clear and students are rushed in their work.

After the second term of the diploma, student teachers found several areas of it challenging regarding writing, including reflective writing, learning journal, academic writing mentioned most often (18%). Several issues pointed out by the participants were related to the logistics and time pressures they were under such as: long distance between student teachers' local areas and the schools during their SEP as well as between student teachers' local areas and QRTA (10%), difficulties with transport (6%), and related to this, difficulties with tasks and required assignments (12%). Additional area spoken about was a coverage of issues related to practicalities of teaching and difficulties in application of teaching strategies as some pupils do not accept the new strategies that the STs have used (8%).

As the diploma continued into term 3, student teachers were challenged by the same issues as in module 2, such as: academic writing (17%), time pressures related to transport (10%) and the amount of activities required in the diploma (14%). An additional issue not previously mentioned was subject inquiry (9%).

9.5 Student teachers' ideas of improvements

Several of these areas were also mentioned when student teachers were asked to propose what in their view would improve the programme and their experience of it. For example, 13% of answers suggested that this could be achieved by more coverage of issues related to practicalities of teaching, including more lectures about teaching strategies (4%), and providing more chances to discuss the mistakes made during SEP and possible solutions with teacher educators and other student teachers (7%). More in depth consideration of the Teachers' Standards and how they are to be applied in practice was mentioned in 14% of answers.

In terms of assessment, student teachers proposed several ways of enhancing their experience, for example ensuring greater clarity of the assessment criteria (2%), having been given timely and clear feedback, so they can review their work before submission (3%), and providing students with a timetable of all assessments for the whole programme, so they can plan their work more effectively. Student teachers also regarded their school experience and proposed that it could be improved by ensuring that all school mentors have appropriate training and that students can do their SEP in their local areas. One of the most frequently pointed to issues (9% of responses) was the pressure the diploma puts on student teachers, and while this is difficult to avoid without compromising the quality of the programme, perhaps some forms of support for students' well-being should become a consideration for the management of the academy.

Unsurprisingly, student teachers' suggestions for improvements after term 2 were closely related to what they perceived challenging with a proposal of reducing the number of directed activities and duration of lectures being mentioned most often (17%). Other ideas were attempting to improve the logistics with 4% of participants suggesting bringing the academy out to different areas of the country and 8% talking about distributing student teachers to their local areas for school practices. 5% of respondents spoke about ensuring

that all school mentors have appropriate training to help their student teachers. The same amount asked for providing reading materials and some teaching in Arabic.

Further calls for reduction of lectures' time and the amount of activities came from student teachers after term 3 (12%). Having experienced SEP3, 6% of respondents still were not convinced that school mentors were appropriately prepared for their roles, while another 10% proposed that the assessment of the practical parts and student teachers' competencies should be improved. Another 6% would welcome more lectures about teaching strategies.

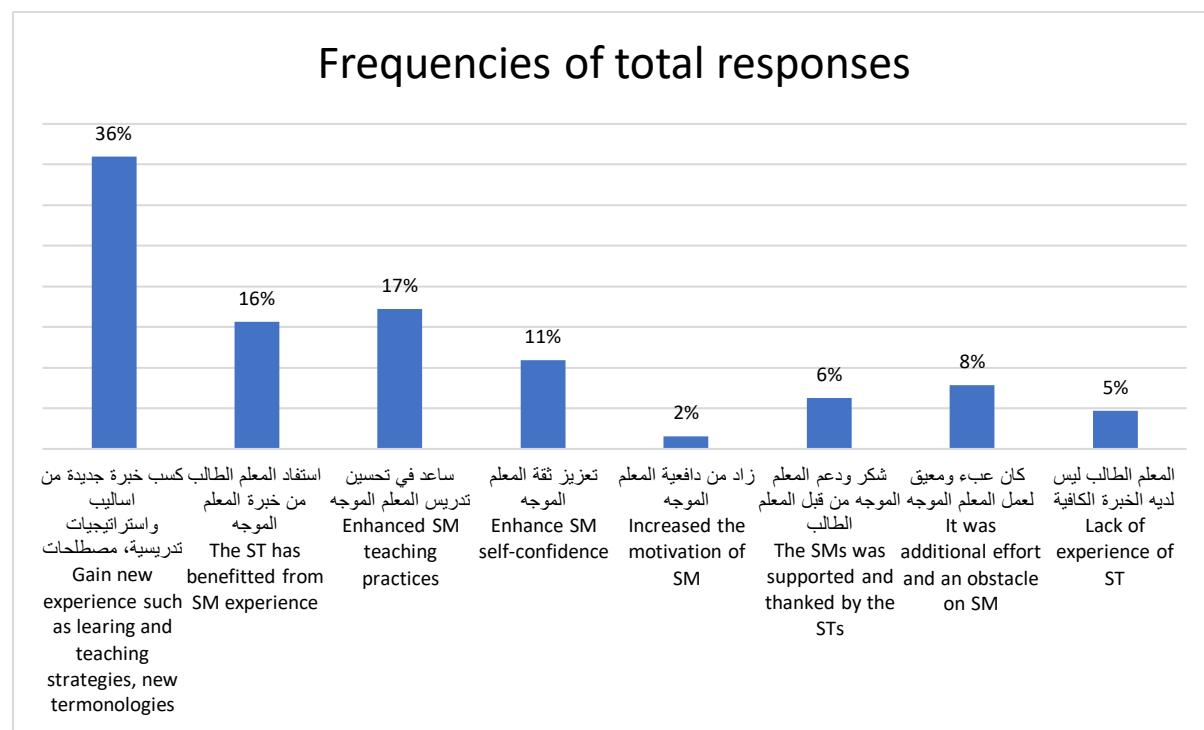
The lowest proportions during SEP1 were in Physics (75%) and Chemistry (79%), and continued to be lower than average for Physics in SEP2 - 86%.

10. Findings from the school mentors' survey

10.1 Benefits gained from being a school mentor at TEPD

In the survey undertaken after SEP1, over half (52%) of the respondents to the school mentors' survey strongly agreed that they found being a school mentor interesting and that it benefited their own teaching and another 34% agreed with this statement. Only 4% did not find being a mentor beneficial to their practice. While explaining what they have gained from being a mentor, the majority of answers (37%) pointed to expanding mentors' knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning strategies and the related vocabulary. Being part of the programme enhanced school mentors' own teaching practice (17%) and their confidence (11%). They also valued being helpful for student teachers and sharing their experience (16%) – see Figure 13.

Figure 13: Benefits gained from being a school mentor at TEPD after SEP1



After SEP2 even more mentors agreed and strongly agreed that being a mentor was interesting and benefitted their own teaching (89%). This was also the case after SEP3 when 86% agreed with this statement. Similarly, to answers after SEP1, 4% of mentors did not agree with this statement and this proportion stayed the same after SEP3. Even more mentors than before (50%) spoke about gaining teaching experience. Over a quarter of respondents were satisfied with how much student teachers benefitted from the teaching practice, and an additional 14% claimed that this opportunity enhanced their own teaching practices. Less mentors than before (3%) said that being a mentor was an additional effort and an obstacle. After SEP3 the answers and percentages stayed the same, apart from that no one felt that the being a mentor was an obstacle to their other duties.

10.2 Challenges related to being a school mentor

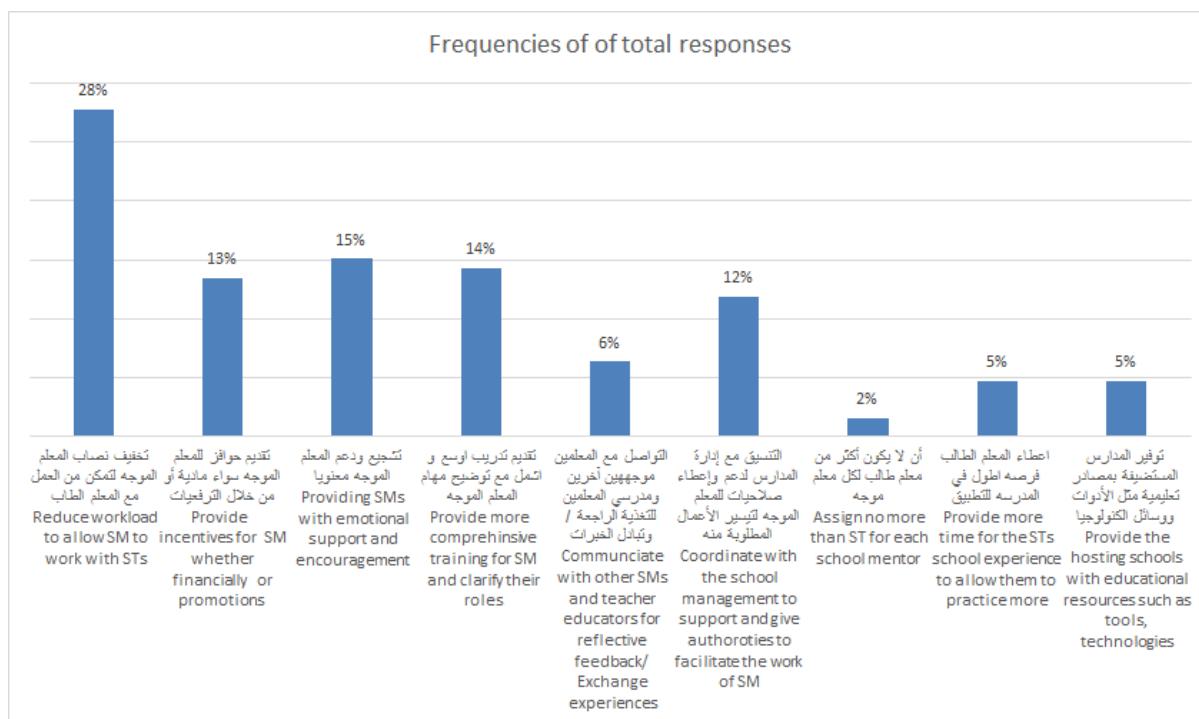
Between challenges experienced as a school mentor during SEP1, those referenced most often were high workload (43%) and lack of time to discuss teaching with student teachers (32%). A proportion of respondents mentioned overly complicated and time-consuming reporting system (8%) and a lack of educational resources (8%).

Answers after SEP2 focused on high workload (30%) and the lack of time to discuss teaching with student teachers (34%). Interestingly, 9% of respondents said that they have not experienced any challenges. These answers were also pointed out in the survey after SEP3 and high workload was mentioned by 43% of respondents, while a lack of time by 16%. 9% of mentors brought up the lack of educational resources.

10.3 Improvement suggestions from school mentors

After the first school experience, suggestions about how to improve mentoring in the TEPD focused on reducing workload to allow mentors work more closely with student teachers, which was included in 28% of answers. A proportion of mentors made further propositions including: providing mentors with emotional support and encouragement (15%), providing more comprehensive training and clarification of their roles (14%), providing incentives for school mentors whether they were financial or related to promotion (13%), and greater coordination with school management so that the work of a mentor is better supported (12%) - see Figure 14.

Figure 14: Improvement suggestions from school mentors after SEP1



Having completed SEP2, the majority of suggestions for improvement from school mentors (34%) revolved around providing more comprehensive training for them and clarifying their roles. Apart from this, mentors proposed that they would benefit from opportunities to communicate with other school mentors and teacher educators to discuss feedback and exchange experiences (17%) as well as from a reduced workload to allow them to work more closely with student teachers.

After SEP3, still 23% of respondents proposed that the improvements to the programme should include providing mentors with more comprehensive training and clarifying their roles, as well as emotional support and encouragement. A similar proportion (22%) said that they should be provided with either financial or career related incentives. The highest frequency of participants (26%) suggested that their workload should be reduced to allow them to work with student teachers. This finding is a confirmation of what was the highest frequency answer to challenges.

11. Findings from the teacher educator survey

In describing the experience of being a teacher educator for the TEPD all respondents were very positive and identified a range of benefits they felt they have gained since joining the diploma: '*It was an enriching and enlightening experience; I learnt a lot about myself and accessed fresh perspectives; Empowering; I learned a great deal about teaching, planning and time management; A shift in a career. It felt enjoyable; It widens your horizons in terms of one's responsibilities, knowing that information conveyed at TEPD will be reflected in different schools among the learning communities of STs; Best thing happened in my life!*'.

24% of respondents said that the QRTA orientation process prepared them for the role of a teacher educator very well, 43% - quite well, 28% - not very well, and 5% did not feel prepared. These answers were evenly split between those teacher educators who joined in

the first year, and those who joined in the second year of the diploma. In view of many respondents, the introduction was helpful, and they were further supported by their colleagues: '*It was provided gradually and in steps to allow clear comprehension; While sessions by IOE were useful; it was shadowing and team meetings/prep that helped solidify what was needed. More focus on working to construct understanding together would be helpful; everyone was very supportive; I was lucky to work with great colleges who helped me to understand the process*'. Some teacher educators found the orientation process insufficient: '*Induction was not coherent and it felt like trial and error approach to induction. Building a new culture needs a social and emotional component, which was missing; Better induction was needed to prepare us for this role; When arriving to QRTA, much of the information was not very clear*'.

100% of participants said that all aspects of their role as teacher educators are clear to them.

The experience of being a teacher educator contributed to respondents' growth on several levels - personal as well as professional - for example, greater knowledge of teaching and learning: '*It has allowed me to understand teaching and learning on a deeper level; I gained more awareness of the science of Education; My learning experience at QRTA deepened my understanding to theories related to education; I have become more reflective and more aware of how much I still have to learn as an educator*'. Many participants spoke about wider benefits: '*I gained new skills, knowledge and attitudes; Being TE takes you beyond teaching and classroom, and gets you involved with educational research, project management, and team work*'. Some also mentioned their personal development: '*It helped me in realising my personal development needs and enforced my self-respect as a person through my effective communication with my students; the most important thing is my personality and how I became aware of the importance of leadership and research skills. Beside that being a TE helped me a lot in developing my social communication skills and to be a team player, open and accept others*'. One teacher educator named the activities from which they benefited the most: '*readings, constructive arguments, some in-institution training, peer cooperation and support*'.

Alongside the benefits, becoming part of the diploma also brought some challenges, the most often one to be mentioned related to the amount of workload: '*Doing many tasks at the same time, with tight deadlines was challenging; we faced many challenges like time and, working under pressure; Bureaucracy is very visible and at times unhealthy for an institution that speaks of innovation*'. The second most frequent challenge was the assessment: '*The most challenging part was the correction and understand the rubric; what standards should be met; The most challenging part was the marking process; Some feedback tasks were repetitive, and I felt TEs were put into too much pressure to write feedback for STs. Sometimes, this feedback, in my opinion, was not necessary (Learning journals feedback for 3 SEPs). Also, M3 reflection tasks were not clear neither to TEs nor to STs. Clarification emails were sent last minute, and without TEs awareness sometimes*'. Other respondents spoke about dealing with student teachers: '*changing the mindsets of STs and the way they think and act is very challenging; the distribution of students all over the country during practicum, as well as more general challenges: language and some of the pedagogies that I was not aware of at first but overcome that through reading; at the very beginning it was very hard to understand general framework of performance, what duties and responsibilities should be achieved; Decision*

makers not truly listening to TEs and the years of experience that they bring with them; Mentor training - I believe the content needs to be reviewed. Timing of recruitment'.

Participating teacher educators were also keen to identify the positive elements of their work and these comments described three main areas:

- Relationships with student teachers – ‘*The relationships with students; I feel proud of my good relationships with the students which enabled them to love learning’;*
- Cooperation with others in the team – ‘*Collaboration, team spirit, different strength points TEs have; Working with others and benefit from their experiences’;*
- Support they received – ‘*The support and the amount of understanding for the conflicts we faced; UCL IOE support has gone a long way toward providing insight and support from day one; The amount and quality of feedback; The space for adopting the design for the Jordanian context’.*

72% of respondents said that they were very satisfied in their role of a teacher educator, and another 28% were quite satisfied. A third would like to develop their career towards leadership within the TEPD, 20% towards research, and another 10% would like to continue to be a teacher educator. Out of these who answered ‘other’, another 25% spoke about research: ‘*Both leadership and research; Mix of research, and project management; I am a module leader but I aim to develop my research skills; I'm looking to improve my research identity as a teacher educator, looking for mastery in both academic and practical application on the field; Continue to be a TE and create content based on research*, while others said: ‘*I'm already at the leadership level that I am interested in. Now it's a matter of fine tuning my skills to meet the needs of the position; Create blended learning department; I love preparing the material and holding guiding sessions with students and colleagues’.*

When talking about how effectively their subject team worked together over this year, respondents highly valued the effective cooperation between the teams’ members, their positive attitude to working hard and resolving any difficulties, and the team spirit: ‘*The team was very cooperative and the brain storming process was efficient and effective; My team was really cooperative. We were all caring about the progress of our STs and that's why we had wonderful results; We have different experiences, that's why we complement each other; Subject team has worked effectively especially now that we teach on the same days. Give subject leads more room to make decisions’.*

There were also some challenges pointed out by the respondents which were related to the leadership: ‘*Our subject team had many challenges such as the lack of organization and lack of follow up from the subject lead; Our team lacked any organization form the leadership side; resistance to the Subject Lead which was uncalled for and counter-productive to building a cohesive team spirit*’, as well as other areas: ‘*We had other issues like sessions were not ready on time, repetitions in some sessions, quality of slides presented, and conflicts in the team; there had been some lack of professionalism in dealing with the team members; some colleagues don't accept criticism, the tasks are not divided between everyone in a fair way, some behaviours are not professional; there had been lack of communication which caused some set-backs’.*

In discussing the administrative support teacher educators received, most participants spoke very highly about the supportive attitude of the whole administration team. However, this

was clouded over by organisational problems, lack of appropriate procedures, and unclear roles: '*it was unclear at first who to go to when you have specific request; Admin support was not organized and roles were not clear; I think admin support is not sufficient; unclear on who does what and who to turn to for help; We stopped being listened to mid-way through the year.*'

Positive experience and good relationships with school mentors was mentioned by most respondents - some put forward observations how to improve this further: '*Overall, it is a positive one. However, I think we need to review which schools need to stay with us as mentoring schools since the quality and attitude in some schools affects our STs negatively; We were able to establish a good rapport with most mentors, however, we need to appreciate their work in different ways to guarantee their support; Visiting big number of students does not allow to build relationship with the mentors due to lack of time. Also, visiting different schools affects the relationship.*'

When exploring their perspective on the relationship with student teachers and their personal development and needs, teacher educators spoke of very close, successful, open, and engaging. They described how they adapt their teaching to the needs of students: '*Students need a lot of support and education and convince them only by linking the material to reality; continuous communication in sessions or through phone or WhatsApp, beside one to one tutorials and meetings, support plans to support struggling students, these all made a difference; I tried my best to customize the learning according to students' needs; I always care for them, and if I feel they are facing any difficulty, I follow up with them.*' These comments were very much aligned with student teachers' observations as described in [sections 4](#) and [12](#).

The respondents provided a range of views about the modifications needed to improve the diploma in future. These comments included broadly the following areas:

- 1. Organisation of the academic year:** '*There should be a well-organized clear academic calendar; Prepared timeline with minimum changes; We need to review the starting date of our academic year; Deadlines for all assignments must be indicated; More planning in decision making!*'
- 2. Preparatory activities:** '*Establish registration and admission department; Start recruitment of student teachers much earlier; reconsider timing of teacher educators' recruitment and enhance their induction; outsource mentor training; propose better arrangements for mentors training; Allocate teacher educators to specific schools/geographical areas to visit.*'
- 3. Enhancements in provision for student teachers:** '*I think we must change the VLE; have speech coach: a teacher stands in front of an audience every day, a coach will help them stand and talk professionally. mainly that many of our STs aren't comfortable doing this; find a tool to make the readings sent to students obligatory and graded.*'
- 4. Assessment:** '*A closer look at how to prepare STs for writing reflective essays; Change grade criteria and try to place descriptors for each standard; assess student teachers in schools with differentiated grades, not just pass/fail; Have a balance in assessment between written and class practices; reconsider the assessment system for the diploma since it is all build on reflection.*'

5. **Professional development:** '*TEs need a lot of professional development and ongoing quality control to the taught sessions; professional development as per need of TEs, provide us with English language courses mainly in conversation; consider reasonable timing to finish Grading and professional development activities like attending conferences and activities outside QRTA'.*
6. **Administrative issues:** '*A clear data base that links all information to make it easier for us and avoid any mistakes because of updates; it should not be considered on how much we spend on work but what quality it is (signing in and out); support prioritising the tasks according to what is related to teaching; Find ways to spread the word about TEPD by going to schools and universities and prepare an effective PR campaign'.*

12. Findings from focus groups with student teachers

Student teachers felt that during the diploma they learned how to deal and communicate with their pupils, build good relationships with them, observe and understand their behaviours, and how to be innovative to encourage pupils to learn and engage. They understood the importance of identifying pupils' academic level, and applying differentiation to engage all pupils and enhance their learning according to their needs. Student teachers developed the ability to critically reflect on their teaching practices and identify the areas for improvement, while their classroom management improved through applying new strategies and practices. They commented on a range of areas: 'I have worked with my pupils to develop their understanding of metacognition and how to apply it to achieve the learning goals.'; 'The weekly reflections we did affected my personality. I started to use reflection in different areas of my life, and asked my students to write their reflections about specific topic.'; 'Based on my interaction with students, I've discovered some learning disability cases in my school and designed customized exams for them.'; 'we gained student's hearts and they changed for us because of good communication.'

Respondents saw broader benefits of the programme, for example the development of leadership skills: 'Our school principals delegate responsibilities to us without hesitation, because they trust our ability, for example I'm responsible for the social committee and parents council, thus our communication with students and parents improved.'; 'our performance and confidence are substantially different from other teachers, we submit our work on time and plan it in a smart way and the school management tends to rely more on us.'; 'Despite my full workload, the school principal keeps delegating the most challenging responsibilities to me because she trusts my leadership ability to organize and manage those issues.'

According to student teachers, academic part of the program should focus more on:

- Taking into account the limited resources and lack of technology in public schools, as well as how to deal with large numbers of pupils in small classrooms.
- How to deal with the challenges such as the level of cleanliness in the school, and how to cooperate with the school community to overcome this challenge and come up with solutions to change behaviour towards tackling this issue.
- How to deal and communicate with parents - student teachers were not allowed to do this in private schools.

- Training student teachers more on technological issues such as EMS (a specific educational system to enter student's results), applying technology in teaching.
- Introducing and explaining labour law and the rights of teachers in more detail.
- Better explanation of differentiation as it is difficult to understand and apply.
- Inclusion of pupils with disability in the classroom; during the programme there was only one session about the inclusion.
- How to best employ formative assessment in schools.
- Providing examples from previous cohorts to better illustrate different processes.
- Greater familiarity with the national curriculum between teacher educators so that their teaching and the methods they are proposing are more realistic.

During the focus groups, student teachers spoke about having a great relationship with teacher educators who were 'very caring and took into consideration student teachers' circumstances and health conditions'; 'easy to communicate with'; 'committed and supportive, even when they discovered a weakness in one of us, they worked to solve it'. Student teachers said that they learnt from teacher educators how to be patient, hard workers, and manage their time well for the sake of pupils' learning. They have also mentioned some communication problems and delays in responses to the inquiry question, as well as the need for more feedback and clarification achieved through using simple words and terminology with which they are familiar.

Student teachers found all three school experiences very beneficial and valuable for developing their teaching practices, learning how to apply them, and facing challenges at schools. On the interpersonal level, the school experiences made them more confident, stronger, and more responsible. They said that 'SEP 2 was the most successful because we were trained in private schools and they had all needed resources and required tools, labs, and venues to apply educational strategies which enhanced our performance.' However, 'mentors in private schools were conservative and didn't allow us to fully participate in lessons' or to communicate with parents. The public sector school experience helped student teachers to understand the school environment, to overcome the lack of resources, as well as improve their classroom management and dealing with large numbers of pupils. Respondents proposed that SEP3 should be longer than six weeks to allow practising teaching and applying the inquiry.

There were also some areas of the school experience which, according to student teachers, needed addressing. School mentors need to be trained more thoroughly so they know how to complete the forms and understand the TEPD and their role and are able to help student teachers get the best from the school experience. Student teachers' attendance during the school experience was not the same for everyone and it should be controlled - some student teachers used to leave the schools earlier with, or sometimes without, permission from their mentors. Student teachers also suggested that better coordination between the academy and the hosting schools would have been helpful for them, and that they needed more information about the schools before the beginning of practicum. One of the respondents mentioned that the school mentor refused to fill more than three points against the teachers' standards during the school experience, and during the tutorial this student teacher could not prove to teacher educator their achieved progress, because the form did not include it fully.

Similarly, to the answers in the survey, the most frequently mentioned challenges were: travel distance, workload, bureaucracy, academic writing, essay-based assessment, English skills, and reliance on computers and technology. Student teachers found weekly reflection and writing the journal difficult because of its novelty, while TEPD weekly schedule was not clear and waiting for the announcement of the results was very stressful.

The student teachers took a range of actions to overcome these difficulties:

- Time - worked from home and allocated part of social time to TEPD work; had a daily schedule for their tasks and duties to manage time; planned their time to arrive to lectures on time.
- Language - allocated specific time to practice English and strengthen listening skills, translated the reading resources to overcome the language barrier; continued to work on improving their language skills.
- Technology - they have slowly learnt how to use technology and cope with it, it did however, cause stress and fatigue.
- Writing - improved skills through writing the journals, attending the academic writing supporting sessions. The lecture about writing, after M1 assignment, helped a lot to understand how to write. Student teachers also read online articles about the academic writing and became accustomed to working together and giving each other feedback about their writing.

The focus group participants had numerous ideas about improving the programme and their experience:

- Changing time of English support to 3-3.30 so it can be more easily attended.
- Having a clear schedule for the diploma including the dates when results are announced.
- Opening other branches of the academy to help student teachers study near their localities; some student teachers were accepted but due to the long distance they could not join the TEPD.
- Student teachers should be told by their teacher educators about the details of the school location.
- Distribution to schools should whenever possible take into consideration where student teachers live.
- Have a canteen at the TEPD venue.
- Have a reading club for student teachers.
- Give student teachers access to the electronic library even after graduation.
- Have office hours for teacher educators so student teachers can meet with them.
- Make the last days of the diploma more meaningful.
- Increase the awareness of the TEPD.

13. Findings from focus groups with school mentors

Training – mentors felt that the training provided for them was sufficient, especially once supported by teacher educators as well as guidelines and videos. Many felt that completing

the forms was not well explained, they have found the paperwork challenging to start with, and some considered being a mentor very bureaucratic. It was unclear whether mentors who received training in the previous year were also supposed to be trained in the second year – some mentors did receive this additional training, others did not. There were some challenges related to training listed by the respondents: the evaluation process for students was not clear, training should focus more on the diploma content rather than pedagogies, training did not explain how to communicate with the TEPD management or how to deal with student teachers, training for English and Arabic mentors at the same time did not work, and some mentors received the memory sticks with guidance too late in the year. One mentor spoke specifically about Physics, but their observations were applicable to other subjects too: ‘training related to written evaluation for ST was not sufficient for me in Physics, I was confused and don’t know how to give my student teacher the right and precise evaluation’. Similarly, to responses in the surveys, many focus group participants said that the role of the school mentor, student teacher, teacher educator and school principal and the means of communication should be explained clearly from the beginning. Some respondents proposed that it would be beneficial to conduct meetings on a regular basis with mentors from the same region to exchange experience.

Communication - Despite changes made to communicating with school mentors, many of them considered this to be one of the most important downsides of the programme. Some claimed that they haven’t received some emails at all, while others said that their emails were responded to quite late. For some, student teachers were a contact point as they had no direct contact with teacher educators and often they were given very short notice before teacher educators’ school visits. Some mentors mentioned that they were not informed about the dates of student teachers’ assignments in time, which meant that they had to rush with this. While talking about teacher educators’ visits, there was a proposition that they should be better planned to give mentors time to take part in the conversations between teacher educators and student teachers (some of these happened without the mentors’ presence) and to avoid any repetition of lessons.

Support for mentors - Participants proposed a number of ways to keep mentors motivated and excited about the diploma. These included: an invitation to student teachers’ graduation from the academy, appreciation certificates or other forms of recognition for all mentors. Several respondents said that this could be achieved if being a mentor supported the development of their careers by: coordinating their workload with the principals before student teachers arrive in schools, giving them priority to work with QRTA in an official way, sending ‘thank you’ letters in a timely fashion so that they can be used in performance appraisals, upgrading teachers who were mentors to an expert degree, selecting the best mentors to deliver training or workshops at QRTA, or giving mentors priority in the hiring process for QRTA. In one of the focus groups, there was a proposal to introduce a ranking system for the school mentors and related certificates. Some felt that during training, TEPD members made what it turned out to be empty promises about the future rewards for mentors and they found it very disappointing.

Alignment between the practicum and the theoretical knowledge from TEPD - Many mentors felt that it would be beneficial to their work with a student teacher if they knew more closely what is being covered by the theoretical part of the diploma at the academy. That would allow them to align their work more closely with the academic content of the diploma. Many learned what they should cover from forms and templates or from students, but if they had a more detailed overview of the diploma, they could coordinate practicum with theoretical knowledge more effectively. Since students often introduce strategies and elements of their academy training to mentors, who then attempt to build students' experience in using these in practice. Our respondents said that knowing what is covered in the TEPD programme would benefit this process. In general, mentors found the handbook was a good point of reference when they needed any information.

Benefits of being a mentor - Most mentors found being a mentor very advantageous to their own teaching practice. The benefit most often spoken about was improving their own practice through learning about new strategies in order to provide the best possible experience for student teachers. The other benefits mentioned were: gaining knowledge of new terminologies; having more focus on lesson planning; starting to use the new methods and sharing them with their colleagues; developing the approach to individual differences between pupils, noticing less active pupils and addressing this. Participants spoke also about: greater experience in documenting school work; becoming more able to coordinate the classroom and the work with student teachers as well as colleagues, as well as developing their understanding of working as a supervisor. Some felt that being a mentor made them more confident in their own teaching practice.

Similarly, to data provided in the termly questionnaires, the issue perceived as the most challenging in the focus groups was the high workload for school mentors. Participants also spoke about an insufficient amount of time available to meaningfully engage with student teachers, as well as the need to arrange additional lessons for pupils in order to complete the curriculum. Some saw the length of the lesson too short for student teachers to employ all teaching strategies. However, this might suggest that mentors might have misunderstood whether student teachers had to use all strategies or adapt the lesson to effectively use the most appropriate ones. This may be an area which needs further clarification in the mentors' training, as well as completing the forms and templates. Completing the necessary paperwork was also a prominent challenge - our respondents proposed that this should be more comprehensively covered in mentor training, while simplifying forms could reduce their workload. They said that the final written evaluation required too much of their time. Some mentors pointed out that a high number of pupils affected the application of some strategies, such as group work, and that in order to complete the curriculum, they had to arrange additional lessons with their pupils. All these concerns are parallel to the findings from surveys.

Although most mentors were happy with the relationships, they had with the student teachers, there were some occurrences of low commitment and lack of motivation and preparation in between the student teachers. There may be a need to put forward a way of tracking such instances across the diploma. It is worth observing that some mentors spoke

about occasions when they felt that teacher educators ignored mentors' ideas and opinions or they were not invited to meetings between teacher educators and students. It is possible that in such cases, student teachers might have been resistant to take advice from the mentors who were disregarded by teacher educators. Caution is advised in interpreting these findings, however, the awareness of them might positively develop these relationships. Difficulty to provide a student with additional learning needs and support in doing this was also mentioned, as well as mentors' observation that some student teachers lacked the ability to communicate with pupils and the school experience did not seem sufficient in solving this.

In working with student teachers, mentors addressed a range of areas which they considered necessary in becoming good and effective teachers. They cooperated with them in planning lessons, preparing appropriate tools and materials, showed them how to use resources and technologies, and allowed students to input their own ideas. Student teachers were involved in assessing pupils, however, mentors allowed students to review and correct worksheets or set exam questions, but correcting exams was undertaken by the mentors themselves. Mentors felt that many student teachers lacked the ability to set questions and it would be beneficial if this was taught in the academic part of the programme.

While observing lessons, mentors observed that many students struggled with managing behaviour and helped them out with this issue. In some cases, it was related to student teacher's lack of confidence or quiet way of speaking, so mentors focussed on psychological support and developed students' self-esteem and motivation. In doing this, mentors explained for the pupils the role of the student teachers and the importance of their school practice so they more easily accepted student teachers and cooperated with them.

An important issue raised by the mentors was student teachers' commitment, since there were several cases where student teachers regularly asked to be released earlier or even left early without asking their mentors for permission. They felt that some form of registering their attendance would be a good way to motivate student teachers and to make sure there is a consistency between different mentors. School mentors valued student teacher's attempts to cooperate with fellow students, for example through social networks. Some said that they made themselves available to student teachers even after school hours. Many mentors involved student teachers in a whole array of activities, such as morning queue and lunch duties, as well as encouraging them to work with the wider school community including the training of other school staff on how to use a smart board or participation in charity work. Student teachers however, said that they were not always allowed to be involved with parents or the wider school environment, particularly in the private schools.

Adaptations to M&E processes

Some adaptations to the M&E component are required to enable the M&E component to best serve the overall strategy of the programme and to inform decision making based on empirical evidence. While the monitoring and evaluation were already robust and rigorous, several adjustments took place during year two, and further enhancement is planned for cohort three to ensure closer engagement of the senior leadership team (SLT) with the

evaluative processes. To enable this, some adjustments which took place during year two and the proposed additions for the following years are summarised below:

1. Following the discussions around the monitoring and evaluation after year one, the M&E team work to acquaint the SLT with the theoretical framework and the M&E processes.
2. Involve the SLT in adaptations to data collection instruments and M&E processes and ensuring their rigour, while making them aware of the practicalities of the evaluation.
3. Present data which are being collected by the M&E team and make it familiar to the SLT.
4. Deliver datasets to the SLT in a timely manner as soon as practically possible after data collection.
5. Provide training and guidance in reading, analysing and interpreting these data.
6. Ensure continuous communication between the SLT and the M&E team so the both sides are well informed, and the M&E work forms the empirical base for decision making.