

Project Report for the Teachers and Citizenship Knowledge Project – Seed Funded by Centre for Teachers and Teaching Research

This project report covers the purpose, experience, findings and recommendations of the seed funded Centre for Teachers and Teaching Research project examining Teachers and their Citizenship knowledge.

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Key words

Citizenship education, powerful knowledge, democratic education, values, generative conversations

Purpose:

Citizenship education in English schools has been part of the National Curriculum since 2002 when the IOE first offered its PGCE Citizenship course. In England citizenship education includes the teaching of democratic principles and and more recent policies, such as Fundamental British Values (DfE, 2014). Teaching about citizenship, the rule of law, democracy and diversity requires extensive subject knowledge, for example, in human rights, peace, media literacy, conspiracy theories, influencing political decision making, the prevent duty and race and racism. This is particularly challenging for citizenship educators because the subject community does not yet have a well-developed professional discourse around the nature of subject knowledge. In the past there has been a focus on the purposes and processes of the subject which is understandable as teaching through community based active citizenship projects and facilitating discussions about controversial issues place novel demands on teachers. However, this has meant relatively little attention has been paid to what it means to develop knowledgeable citizens, and what constitutes the professional knowledge base of citizenship teachers This research project was designed to get at the heart of these questions and explore what lessons can be learned from experienced teachers' practice to further develop the professional nature of citizenship education. This Centre for Teachers and Teaching Research therefore met the following themes.

Building critical research engagement for teachers.	✓
Extending teachers' capacities to 'make a difference' in addressing social, economic and environmental inequalities through their work.	✓

Deepening theoretical understanding of teacher education in complex contexts.	✓
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Methodology:

The project built on the existing work of the PGCE Citizenship led by Hans Svennevig and the development of citizenship student teachers on this programme, culminating in their successful completion of the PGCE and moving to their Early Career Teacher years. The requirement of the Department of Education for teachers to have 'foundational knowledge of what subjects and curricula are' and that they can 'demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge' (DfE, 2019a) provides a policy incentive for this project. Methodologically, we also inspired by Daly, Davidge-Smith, Williams and Jones (2020) model of action research.

In our model of action research we sought to generate insights into knowledge through a series of 'generative conversations'. We invited collaborations from a range of experts in their fields and experienced teachers with connections to the professional membership body the Association for Citizenship Teaching to discuss key topics that citizenship teachers need to know and teach in their classrooms. They presented to the student teachers in masterclass sessions, and conversations were facilitated between the presenters, and between the students and presenters. It was important for us to have specialist teachers able to share their experiences, in a collegiate manner as these conversations rarely happen in schools that may have only one subject specialist in post. We delivered 6 masterclasses for the student teachers:

- 1) The Prevent Duty
- 2) Human Rights
- 3) Media and Conspiracy Theories
- 4) Race and Racism
- 5) Peace Education
- 6) Influencing Political Decisions

In these masterclass sessions an expert presented a viewpoint, a teacher presented materials on how they taught it, and then a facilitator questioned both focus on the selection of knowledge. The student teachers then incorporated this knowledge into their own teaching. They reported on this in later masterclasses. In addition, many students consented to us accessing their final assignments, so we can determine whether / how they have used the knowledge from the masterclasses and what more they would need to do to further develop this as they move into the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b) years.

The final activity of the TASK project was a strategy and writing day in July that brought together several of the external contributor with the IOE project team to plan for the dissemination of results through various types of writing as listed below (academic and professional articles, blogs, reports).

Budget:

We recruited a Research Assistant for the project who assisted in the organising of masterclasses, recorded and transcribed each session. Further we have and continue to engage the research assistant in the discussion of the materials relating to their area of expertise – conspiracy theories as part of the project team. The appointment of the RA and the strategy day were the main expenditures and we kept within the allocated budget.

We were able to give timely reports on our progress to CTTR as the project for the most part ran according to the schedule we originally projected.

Reflections:

In the light of the experience of implementing this project, we have some observations and suggestions

- 1) The process of research has a range of complex administrative tasks and so future projects would benefit from enhanced guidance and support for the recruitment process for hiring research assistants, completing HR processes and Ethics approvals.
- 2) Ethics approval is a complex matter when dealing with generative discussions and all participants are involved in the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. We often considered who is researching whom and how to manage this requirement. As can be seen by the number of team authored participants we felt that those that deliver teaching were eventually to be the named researchers – and our ethical approval only led to anonymised quotations from student teachers from masterclass 2 onwards. Still we felt that just as children are not citizens in waiting, student teachers are part of the development of knowledge and so we were disappointed not to be able to include their names as part of the research group participants.
- 3) We note the importance of flexibility with regard to the initial proposal. We adapted the format of the masterclasses in order to involve the students more in the collective project of identifying and developing key subject knowledge. We provided greater scope for them to ask questions and demonstrate their own techniques and practice in the classroom.

Adaptations:

There were two key adaptations that resulted from these reflections:

- 1) The involvement of student teachers in the development of the knowledge output, and anonymised.
- 2) The final writing day, and budget allocated to this as approved by the CTTR team.

Key findings:

There are already a range of significant findings from this project, and the volume of data means that we expect more insights to emerge from our work in the years ahead. In particular though we have found:

- Specialist Citizenship Teachers draw knowledge from a range of sources of information that they then need to refine in order to make accessible to young people.
- Student teachers can find it challenging to access this knowledge as expert teachers find it difficult to explain it (Toom, 2012).
- Generative discussions in masterclass sessions have the ability to demystify this knowledge.
- Our first output from the project was an article in ACT's Teaching Citizenship journal. We argued there are 4 key areas of Citizenship teachers' knowledge: (i) critical policy knowledge, (ii) pedagogic knowledge, (iii) conceptual knowledge and (iv) epistemic development. We also shared this model with colleagues at the ACT annual teachers' conference, where participants were very enthusiastic about the findings.
- The teaching of Fundamental British Values, involves 'complex ideas to be understood and used rather than simply values to be promoted' (Svennevig, Jerome, Starkey, White and Elwick, 2022).
- Pedagogic knowledge is required by Citizenship teachers to draw out critical discussions with young people about complex issues around the law, extremism and punishment and their relationship to human rights.

- Citizenship teachers can enable their students to understand issues such as the rule of law that they can apply at a future date to other circumstances.
- Citizenship education is interested in epistemic development, how people construct a political interpretation of the world, and how that relates to their actions.
- Student teachers need to be well supported by specialist citizenship teachers in their Early Career Teacher years to continue to develop their knowledge and enable young people to apply this; in particular to focus on key concepts as opposed to quantity of knowledge and to draw on the professional knowledge they will receive.

Recommendations

This project has illustrated how a process of generative professional conversations might be helpful in supporting new teachers in their journeys from initial teacher education through to the Early Career Teacher years. It offers mentors and other colleagues a framework for sharing their accrued knowledge and represents a further step towards developing a subject-specific discourse around what constitutes the professional knowledge base of citizenship teachers.

We recommend;

- 1) Citizenship teachers find time to engage in generative discussions around the acquisition of knowledge, and the delivery of this for their learners in communities of practice, for example led by colleagues at the Association for Citizenship Teaching.
- 2) A short course is developed for non-specialist teachers of Citizenship pertaining to the development of Citizenship knowledge from Citizenship Specialists and how they develop their knowledge. The short course could use knowledge case studies/organisers to help guide non-specialists.
- 3) When considering Young's Powerful Knowledge in Citizenship education further consideration is given on the application of this knowledge to the principles taught for the engagement of citizens within societies – principally active citizenship.

Impacts and outputs (current and planned)

Presented July 5th 2022:

Jerome, L., Svennevig, H., Starkey, H. (2022) Exploring subject knowledge for teaching in Citizenship conference workshop at Teaching Citizenship Conference 2022; Future Proofing the Citizenship curriculum: achieving transformative outcomes for the next generation.

Published:

Svennevig, H., Jerome, L., Starkey, H., White, K., Elwick, A. (2022) Powerful Knowledge: Revealing the Citizenship teacher's professional knowledge base in 20/20 Vision – pt 2. Future-Proofing Citizenship education for the next 20 years. Teaching Citizenship Issue 55. Association for Citizenship Teaching.

Associate Fellowship

Hans Svennevig will continue work with the Centre for Teachers and Teaching Research as an Associate Fellow from 27/09/22 – 30/09/25 (in the first instance).

Masterclass sessions

These will continue on the PGCE with experts developing student teacher practice, in the manner developed for this project. The next two such masterclasses will be on Peace Education in November 2022 and a new Climate Change and Sustainability Education in February 2023.

We have met as a collaborative writing group in July 2022, and have scheduled further writing group events so as to continue to explore the range of data available and draw on these themes in writing.

Pending Publication:

Jerome, L., Liddle, A., Svennevig, H. (2022 Autumn) *Title to be Determined*. TACK and Peace Education Knowledge.

Potential for further development

We continue to draw on the research to write up articles for Journals; London Review of Education, Human Rights Education Review, Education, Citizenship and Social Justice as well as Teaching Citizenship journals. Additionally to this we will develop case studies for the PGCE on the themes and resources developed to strengthen the delivery of the PGCE and are looking at a potential mentors, non-specialist short course CPD programme. We continue to meet after the end of the project funds to work in writing groups to draw together the publication for a book for the 'Knowledge and Curriculum' UCP Press series edited by Arthur Chapman.

Three main potentials for further research are currently being investigated;

- 1) A longitudinal study of new teachers and citizenship knowledge; moving on from the student teachers into their early career teacher years one and two to see how the initial knowledge presented in masterclass sessions continues to grow in their practice.
- 2) A joint project bid led by Professor Hugh Starkey at UCL with Zhejiang University considering peace education and climate change education and the masterclasses to develop and learn about subject knowledge in these areas on the PGCE.
- 3) Further examination on how teachers categorise and prioritise the knowledge that they choose to teach, is this a process of subjective personalisation or a process based on experience related to resources available.

Key literature and weblinks

Daly, C., Davidge-Smith, L., Williams, C and Jones, C. (2020) Is there hope for action research in a 'directed profession?' London Review of Education, 18(3), 339-355.

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values as part of SMSC in schools: Departmental advice for maintained schools Online:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

Department for Education (2019a) ITT Core Content Framework. Online:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974307/ITT_core_content_framework_.pdf

Department for Education (2019b) Early Career Framework Online:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/978358/Early-Career_Framework_April_2021.pdf

Svennevig, H., Jerome, L., Starkey, H., White, K., Elwick, A. (2022) Powerful Knowledge: Revealing the Citizenship teacher's professional knowledge base in 20/20 Vision – pt 2. Future-Proofing Citizenship education for the next 20 years. Teaching Citizenship Issue 55. Association for Citizenship Teaching.

Teaching Citizenship Journal: <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/2085/>

Toom, A. (2012) Considering the Artistry and Epistemology of Tacit Knowledge and Knowing. Education Theory, 62(6), 621-640.

Website for Teachers and Citizenship Knowledge Project: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/centre-teachers-and-teaching-research/teachers-and-citizenship-knowledge-tack>