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Effective development of pre-service teachers'
metacognitive competencies

Dr Katy Bloom · Associate Professor of Science Education

Think back to your first year in HE

Think back to your first weeks of university.

Did anyone explicitly teach you how to read an academic paper?

How to regulate your own learning?

How to think about your own thinking?

Or did you just... work it out?"

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Five things worth knowing about our Year 1 student teachers

First-generation & widening participation profiles

Dual identity demand: learner *and* emerging teacher

Subject knowledge anxiety (especially science & maths)

The hidden curriculum — assumed, never taught

The metacognitive readiness gap — and why it matters (x2!)

Module design principles

- The supporting pillars: metacognitive development · self-regulated learning · academic reading & writing · core subject knowledge · agency & autonomy · reflection
- Theoretical scaffolding: Flavell, Zimmerman, Wingate
- Design decisions — 20 credits, Year 1, assessed how and why
- The "journey" metaphor: from dependent to self-directed learner [range of contexts and backgrounds; first in family, social justice, lack of metacognition in schools]

Pedagogy in practice

Key learning activities and their metacognitive rationale:
explicit and implicit learning

How academic skills were embedded, not bolted on
(Wingate's "integrated model")

Building agency: student choice [also reflected in
other module assessments], reflection cycles, goal-setting
structures

Authentic assessment design [3000 words]

Module overview

- Identity and belonging
- Introduction to metacognition
- ‘Metacog 2’ · learning journals
- Core subject audits & action planning
- Targets review & consolidation
- Finding reading [inc academic librarian liaison, writing support, study skills]
- Reflective writing
- Critical and evaluative writing
- How to engage with feedback
- Ethical use of AI
- Wider aspects of the teaching role

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What the data showed

- Method: survey + interviews, plenary feedback [Mentimeter]
- brief positionality note
- Headline findings:
 - metacognitive awareness ↑,
 - academic confidence ↑,
 - strong engagement
- Selected student voice themes
 - Learning gains
 - Themselves *as* continuing learners
 - Removing distractions
 - 'Forethought'
 - Time to focus
 - Looking forwards

Harder than expected...

- STs not keeping journals
- 'too hard'
- prevarication
- requires abstract, high-order thinking to monitor and regulate their own learning
- inaccurately assessing their own knowledge
- mistaking familiarity with content for mastery
- effort required to change ingrained, passive study habits

Discussion and implications

What this means for module/programme design in
Year 1 HE

Transferability beyond the home discipline?

Sustainability and longevity

Questions for the ITE field?

Potential foregrounding(s)

- Practitioner research [didagogy]
- Student Voice – lived experiences
- Module as a social justice intervention
- Authentic assessment design
- Disciplinary identity contexts [science]
- Curriculum architecture
- Longitudinal study (consecutive Y1 but also following through to Y2/3 · ITAP?)

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Any questions?

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