

Praise for *Thrive*

It is well cited that teachers need to survive their first year in teaching, but there is very little offered to guide them through their formative stages once qualified.

This book provides that extra support which we have all needed, and shares efficient solutions to help new teachers get ahead of the rest and thrive.

**Ross Morrison McGill @TeacherToolkit – the UK’s most followed educator on Twitter,
who writes at TeacherToolkit.co.uk**

Written with wisdom beyond the authors’ years, and presented in a practical and positive way, *Thrive* provides aspiring teachers with a one-stop guide to the initial stages of their teaching journey.

What’s clever about the book is that you can either read it cover to cover or dip into it for specific guidance and inspiration in relation to a particular area of your teaching practice. The references to wider reading and reflection are also really useful, as they allow you to uncover and explore a wide range of other engaging and positive texts.

Thrive is a really welcome antidote to the media’s negative portrayal of teaching and holds true to what I am often told by visiting teachers from overseas, who proclaim that ‘education is Britain’s best export’! I would encourage every teacher embarking upon the first steps of their teaching career to read it.

Rob Carter, Head Teacher, St Paul’s Catholic College

What sets *Thrive* apart from other books is the combination of the authors’ experience that shines through on every page and the authority that comes from their many references to research and wider reading.

Many teaching manuals talk about surviving in teaching as though it will be an ordeal, but this book will give the reader a sense that more is possible than just getting through another day. It is refreshing to see such a resource for those starting out in teaching that is so positive and optimistic, and what also impresses me is the way in which the authors manage to explain the basics clearly and carefully without talking down to their audience. The clear tips, tasks and case studies mean that this book will provide important continuing professional development for teachers who want to maintain the reflective practice they developed as a trainee.

Thrive is an absolute must for anyone who is starting out in their teaching career and wondering what the future holds, whether during their study, on their placement or in those vital first few years in the classroom. This book will, I’m sure, be a constant and much-referred-to guide and a huge help to those entering this at times overwhelming profession. It’s the book I wish I’d had when I started out in teaching.

Mark Enser, Head of Geography, Heathfield Community College and education writer

In writing *Thrive* Martha, Emily and Ben have produced a valuable resource that points beyond survival to help new teachers embrace the real joy of being a teacher.

This is not a textbook issuing a prescribed toolkit approach – rather it presents a significant framework that provides both training and qualified teachers with strategies and reflective ways of thinking that can be applied in all contexts as they navigate through the initial stages of their careers. Each section is carefully thought out and considers those issues that are real concerns for educators at each stage of their early development.

I highly recommend *Thrive*, which will now become required reading for my initial teacher training students.

**Dr Brian Marsh, Principal Lecturer in Science Education,
School of Education, University of Brighton**

The teaching profession is safe in the hands of teachers like Martha, Emily and Ben. In *Thrive* they acknowledge the challenges that teachers face at the start of their careers, but present them with a coherent and realistic path to success.

It is so refreshing to read of young teachers who relish attending to their own professional development – it is clear the authors are committed both to their pupils' learning and to their own careers. Indeed it is the fusing of these two core motivations that keep them happy and fulfilled as teachers.

An innovative feature of *Thrive* is the melding of the training year into the first couple of years of teaching. Beginning teachers view this as one combined phase, but most training courses view these two periods in isolation – it is very helpful here to have the overview of the entire period, with each mini-phase attended to in its own section. The book also contests our media narratives of teaching as a 'profession in crisis', and asserts the enduring value of engaging in research by presenting a compelling notion of evidence-based practice.

Teaching is a stimulating, exciting and rewarding career, but it can be tough at the start. This very welcome book reassures both the newly qualified and the recently qualified teacher that they have made the right career choice and that – especially in this early period of their career – they should aim to 'thrive', not just survive.

**Dr Keith Perera, Assistant Head Teacher, St Paul's Catholic College,
Associate Fellow, University of Sussex**

Refreshingly, *Thrive* is not a book on how to be 'outstanding', nor on how to 'survive' as a beginning teacher. Instead it gives us something we all need, and will benefit from – inspiration and practical advice from teachers who are just ahead of us in their careers, who can recall the challenges we face and who are willing to share their recent experiences and successful strategies.

Indeed, the book not only shows us how to get better at teaching but, just as importantly, illustrates how we can enjoy and thrive during the journey too. The authors take the first three years of developing as a teacher and emphasise the different, complex and fundamental ways in which professional learning happens – from initial teacher training, through the NQT year, to emergence as a recently qualified professional. There are useful sections covering: making the most of professional relationships with mentors, school leaders and other colleagues; practical strategies for planning, assessment, differentiation and managing time; researching teaching and learning; and navigating pathways in professional development and early leadership.

Throughout *Thrive*, Martha, Emily and Ben ensure that readers benefit from the perspectives of established school-based and university professionals alongside their own authentic, evidence-informed and practice-enriched voices. If I were a new teacher at the beginning of my career I'd welcome the opportunity to listen to them, learn from their experiences and, hopefully, thrive.

**Dr Simon Thompson, Head of Education, University of Sussex,
Higher Education Academy 2016 National Teaching Fellow**

In *Thrive* Martha, Emily and Ben have written a realistic, optimistic and valuable guide to the first three years in teaching. The book is logically mapped out and can be read chronologically to give those new to the profession a comprehensive walk-through of what to expect, while it can also help more experienced teachers to pursue further avenues in their career.

Full of fantastic insights from successful current teachers and those directly involved in initial teacher training, it offers an excellent resource of practical tips and advice in clearly delineated sections – I just wish I'd had it available to me during my own teacher training!

A must-read for anyone embarking on, or already in, their first few years of teaching.

Matthew Donald, history and politics teacher, St Paul's Catholic College

Thrive is a no-nonsense, practical guide to all aspects of teaching and being a teacher.

The first few years of teaching can feel daunting, but with this book's support any new teacher can thrive. Underpinned by educational research, the book is like a pocket mentor and provides a good first stop for professional advice as Martha, Emily and Ben draw from their own first-hand experiences – as well as on the perspectives of experienced educators – to offer helpful guidance for aspiring teachers.

An ideal resource for potential teachers, trainee teachers and, above all, newly qualified teachers navigating their formative years in the profession.

**Dr Andy Chandler-Grevatt, Teaching Fellow in Education, University of Sussex
and author of *How to Assess Your Students***

Accessible, inspiring and easily digestible, *Thrive* is also a wonderful read!

The structure of each chapter, complete with to-do lists, tips, stories and signposts to further reading, is useful in allowing the reader to dip into each section as appropriate, and, as a training teacher myself, I consider the guidance included to be very valuable – with need-to-know content appealingly and practically presented for those starting their teaching journey. I feel well prepared for the NQT and RQT years having read this book.

Elisha Hocking, trainee teacher

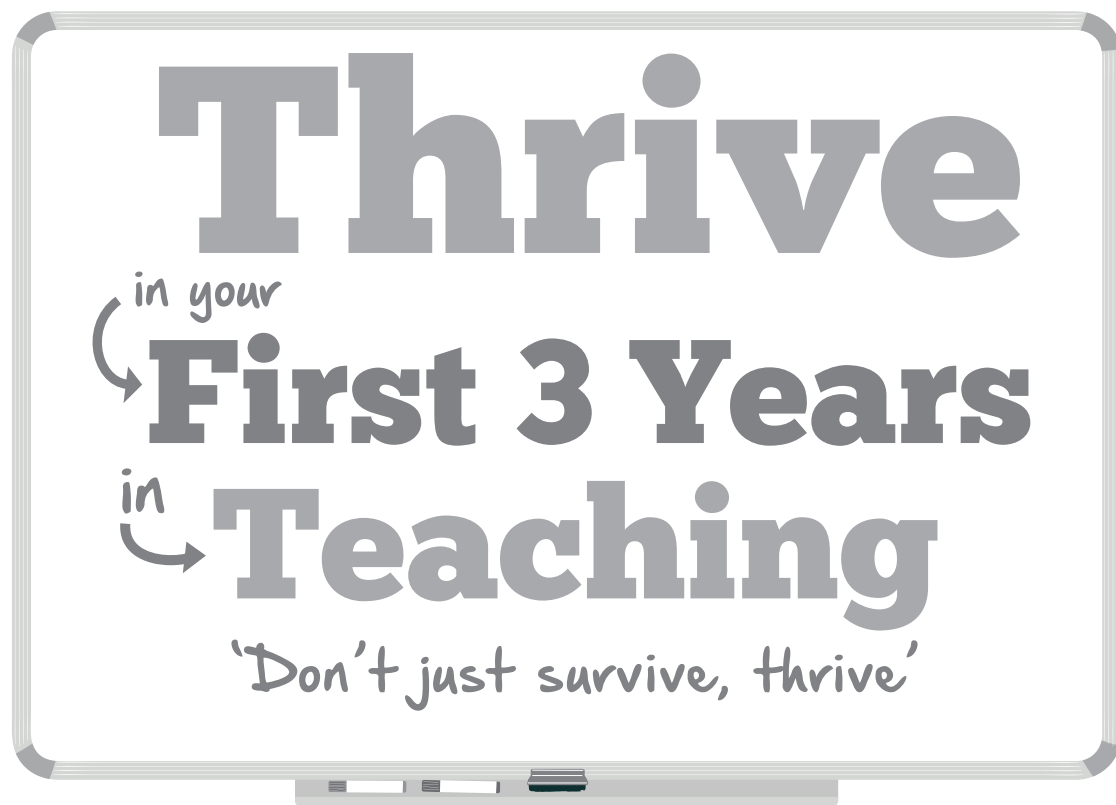
Fantastically practical and written in a friendly tone, *Thrive* offers an honest and supportive perspective of the highs and lows of teaching and breaks down the possibly daunting and overwhelming prospect of embarking on a career in education into simple, achievable chunks.

Martha, Emily and Ben are clearly passionate about the profession and want everyone to share in this – while reading the book I got a genuine sense that they want me to succeed. By sharing their own trials and tribulations they make you feel like you are not the only trainee struggling to find a way through with *that* class. Indeed, the book offers a wealth of strategies which would aid even the most experienced teacher.

Its user-friendly layout allows the reader to dip in and out of chapters when looking for answers to specific questions in times of need and lays out handy to-do lists and up-to-date academic research in an accessible format – allowing the lessons learned to be easily transferred to the classroom using the authors' practical advice. The inclusion of a range of professional perspectives and expertise – from RQTs, deputy heads and PGCE tutors among others – is also a big plus which ultimately makes the book a readily available, round-the-clock team of mentors that celebrates the sharing of ideas and concerns and alleviates any sense of struggling on your own. The authors also actively combat the negative stigma surrounding teaching in the media and recognise the vital role the teacher plays in learners' educational journeys.

Armed with *Thrive*, teachers will be emboldened to take on any class and will feel empowered to not only survive their first few years in teaching but also become valued members of a department, able to inspire students and colleagues alike. It is an all-encompassing guide to teaching that will remain an essential resource for years into your practice.

Nathan Goodby, PE teacher, St Paul's Catholic College



Martha Boyne, Emily Clements and Ben Wright



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Foreword

So, you have picked up a copy of *Thrive: In Your First Three Years in Teaching* and you are holding it in your hands right now. Maybe you are still deciding whether teaching will be the career for you. Perhaps you are preparing to start your training year and are trying to imagine how it will feel to stand, exposed, at the front of a real classroom with real children. Maybe you have already tried on the role for size and only this morning you taught, rather nervously, your first lesson. Perhaps you have successfully completed your training year and are soon to be a full-blown teacher, complete with your own classes and your own tutor group.

Whoever you are – and however new you are to the profession – there is something we need you to know. Teaching is a joy. It is as exhilarating, as wondrous and, at times, as devilishly complicated as anything you have ever experienced before. Sadly, the media in Britain has a lot to answer for when it comes to the portrayal of our profession. Apparently, teaching is at crisis point. ‘Teachers are overworked and beset by punishing accountability systems,’ they proclaim. ‘Teachers are leaving the profession in their droves,’ they cry. ‘Teachers are being set upon by unruly packs of bloodthirsty children,’ they scream. Thankfully, these hackneyed sound bites are galaxies away from the truth. We suggest you ignore them.

While the first few years in teaching are undeniably tough, a sizeable majority of teachers *do* stay on and thoroughly enjoy the achievable challenges of their early careers. The majority of new teachers do learn how to balance their work and home lives. More and more new teachers are taking their professional development into their own hands by combining the shared practical expertise of their colleagues with evidence and theory from the wider education world. Now is an exciting time to become a teacher. Positive change is afoot and the profession is genuinely starting to learn from the mistakes of the past.

That is not to say that there won’t be challenges on your path to expertise! You will never forget the throat-parching experience of standing in front of a class and realising – halfway through your circuitous explanation – that you do not understand the topic you are teaching any more than your students do! Nor will you forget *that* class who still, years later, seem to haunt your dreams like an army of chillingly dark phantoms. And – let’s face it – after the luxury of the holidays the first day of the new term will always feel like a wrench – even for the most dedicated teacher.

The book you are holding is authentic, sensible and very practical. Martha Boyne, Emily Clements and Ben Wright have pooled together their collective knowledge and have proven, once and for all, that it is possible to become a tremendous teacher even in the

first few months and years of your career. This book is both friendly and user-friendly – it can be read from cover to cover or dipped into as required. From behaviour management to being a tutor, from working with students on the autism spectrum to engaging in rigorous reflective practice, this book is packed full of sharp and useful advice on a range of issues that you will encounter sooner or later. It should certainly have pride of place on your first teacher's desk.

Perhaps the book's greatest strength is the way that it promotes a can-do attitude. Martha, Emily and Ben assert that teaching need not be an arduous battle against the odds. You too can thrive in the classroom. There are many ways to master the art and science of teaching – we would recommend you take every opportunity to learn from the wisdom of your colleagues and from the best research evidence available.

Your first step, however, should be to read this book – from cover to cover. We hope you enjoy *Thrive* as much as we have and we wish you every success in your classroom career, as you do just what the title suggests.

Andy Tharby and Shaun Allison

Acknowledgements

There are many people we would like to thank for inspiring and supporting us in the writing of this book. First and foremost, we must thank the amazing Lianne Allison who encouraged us to actually put pen to paper when we first started dreaming of writing this book. We would also like to thank Dr Simon Thompson for steadfastly supporting us throughout the writing process. We must further thank both Lianne and Simon as they also gave up their valuable time to offer the profound and eminently useful insights found throughout the book.

We also want to thank Shaun Allison for his encouragement and for giving us the confidence to find a publisher and to turn our dream into a reality. Shaun and his *Making Every Lesson Count* co-author, Andy Tharby, also kindly agreed to write the foreword to this book, for which we are very grateful. We want to thank everyone at Crown House Publishing for giving us the opportunity to share our vision for thriving in teaching.

We have all worked with some incredible teachers at The Angmering School and St Paul's Catholic College and want to thank the teaching community of which we have been fortunate enough to be a part, especially the heads of department who have pushed us to be the very best we can be. Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the many influential educators, trainers and authors of books on teaching who have passed on their insights, strategies and advice.

We can't forget to thank all of the students we have taught; thank you for being the energy that keeps us going. We must also thank the many cafes of Brighton for providing the coffees and hot chocolates that were absolutely necessary in the writing of this book. Finally, we want to offer our deepest thanks to our ever so patient partners – Philip, Rich and Emily – as well as our friends and family who have supported us throughout.

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List of Acronyms

AfL	assessment for learning	PP	pupil premium
AoL	assessment of learning	PPA	planning, preparation and assessment
CAT	cognitive ability test	RQT	recently qualified teacher
CPD	continuing professional development	SENCO	special educational needs coordinator
DIRT	Dedicated improvement and reflection time	SEND	special educational needs and disabilities
DfE	Department for Education	SKE	subject knowledge enhancement
EAL	English as an additional language	SLT	senior leadership team
INSET	in-service training	SoW	scheme of work
KS	key stage	SPaG	spelling, punctuation and grammar
LSA	learning support assistant	TA	teaching assistant
MFL	modern foreign languages	TLR	teaching and learning responsibility
NQT	newly qualified teacher		

Icon Key

	to-do		Martha's story
	expert advice from the school perspective		Emily's story
	expert advice from the university perspective		Ben's story

Introduction

This is not just a survival guide for your first three years in the teaching profession. Nor is it an academic text designed to be heavy on theory but light on practical ideas. It hasn't been written by someone who has only a distant memory of what standing in front of a class of teenagers for the first time involves. We believe that this book is something very different. It is about giving you the support and guidance to become a thriving secondary school teacher. It is supported by current evidence regarding best practice, but is rooted in practical strategies and ideas. It has been created by three full-time teachers who, at the time of writing, are each about to enter their fourth year in the profession. It has been written by teachers who are fortunate to have so far been successful in the jobs they love and written for teachers who want long, enjoyable and rewarding careers. We hope that you will find this book a useful guide and a source of inspiration; a platform from which to excel during your beginning years in teaching and beyond.

We came about writing this book through our shared passion for excellent teaching. Our story is an example of the power that finding like-minded, passionate colleagues can have. We met through the NQT training sessions during our first year in our first school. It was at a TeachMeet that we decided to set up our school's first ever journal club – a place to discuss academic research and consider how we could use this to improve our teaching. We were soon delivering our own continuing professional development (CPD), presenting at TeachMeets and, two years later, have now written this book. Our passion for enriching the lives of the students we teach and being the very best we can be has driven us to write this book and share our beliefs, ideas and approaches to thriving in teaching. We hope that you too will share our passion for teaching.

We quickly realised that we were not the kinds of teachers who were happy to just survive our early years in teaching; we wanted to excel, to be the very best we could be, to thrive. Our vision of a teacher who thrives is of one who is confident in their abilities. They go above and beyond, demonstrating an excellent understanding of what great teaching looks like and they have the skills to successfully and consistently implement this within the classroom. We want you to become this thriving teacher. So many teachers leave the profession prematurely, citing stresses from the high workload, long hours and tough working conditions as determining factors.¹ It is impossible to ignore these pressures, but we believe that having the right attitude and approach – alongside strategies which will support you to thrive – will enable you to see how the positives of a career in teaching can far outweigh the downsides.

1 Richard Adams, 'Demanding workload driving young teachers out of profession', *The Guardian* (15 April 2017). Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/apr/15/demanding-workload-driving-young-teachers-out-of-profession>.

We hope this book will provide you with clear strategies to equip you to thrive, but also give you a range of insights into the teaching profession that bring what we are advising to life. Each chapter begins with a checklist of what a 'developing' teacher would be expected to do; these are the basics and, with thought and focus, are achievable for all beginning teachers. These expectations are a prerequisite for thriving as a teacher, so ensure you read these carefully and that you are embedding these behaviours into your practice. Each chapter contains our thoughts, personal experiences and advice about becoming a *thriving* teacher. At the end of each chapter, we have included a to-do list so you can use these both to structure the strategies you implement and also as a quick reference guide to return to later. In each chapter this is followed by a to-read list so you can delve deeper into topics that you find particularly interesting or relevant, as space doesn't always permit us to go into the level of detail we could. The book is divided into three parts: detailing what you can expect in the training year, NQT year and RQT year respectively. Before we begin, Chapter 1 offers some advice about choosing your training route, in case you have not already committed to this.

We have included a number of our own personal stories, which demonstrate how we have put some of the ideas and strategies we discuss successfully into practice. We hope that these examples show the substantial, tangible difference that can be made by taking a thriving approach to teaching.

We have also been fortunate enough to have been given the opportunity to include expert advice from two people who are at the very top of their profession. Lianne Allison is deputy head teacher at Durrington High School in West Sussex and director of the South Downs School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme. She has also been a professional tutor. Lianne gives insights from the perspective of a professional tutor and deputy head teacher and she shares her personal wealth of teaching experience through her advice. Dr Simon Thompson is head of education at the University of Sussex, having overall responsibility for the PGCE, School Direct, NQT and further education programmes run by the university. He has directly been involved in training hundreds of PGCE students, supporting NQTs and being a tutor for students completing their master's in education, therefore he offers a wide spectrum of advice throughout the book. We hope that the insights given through our stories, alongside the counsel offered by Lianne and Simon, will add depth to the guidance we seek to provide.

We are passionate about building a community of thriving teachers, so please share your own experiences, ideas, strategies and stories with us on Twitter (@thrive_teach) or by email (thriveinteaching@gmail.com). You are entering into what truly is the best profession – full of meaningful experiences, laughter and deep satisfaction. We wish you a long, successful and thriving career.

1. Getting Ahead of the Game

A prospective trainee will:

- ✓ Carefully consider the different types of courses available as initial teacher training (ITT).
- ✓ Read a couple of books or articles from the recommended reading list.
- ✓ Gain work experience in a school prior to starting ITT in September.

If you have not already decided on your route into teaching, there are several different routes available to you, which are generally split into two camps: university-led training and school-led training.¹ To find the best option for you, try to discuss the possible routes with current trainees. Before you complete your application for either route you could ask the university, training provider or local school if you could be put in contact with some of their current students. Speaking to them directly about their experiences and the positives and negatives that they have encountered will enable you to make a more informed decision. Have a list of questions ready, for example:

- Why did you choose to undertake the particular training route that you are on?
- When did you start your first placement? Some start in September, others later, so have you seen any benefits in the timing you encountered?
- What support was in place to prepare you for writing at master's level?

You will have hopefully completed some work experience in a school setting prior to starting your ITT. Securing a place on an ITT programme should not prevent you from continuing to gain further work experience. Gaining insights from a wider variety of classes – for example, from across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 – will give you an idea of the subject knowledge you will need to develop during your ITT year, as well as the different skills required to teach various age ranges.

You should also try to observe lessons from outside your subject area. You could do this by asking to follow a student around for the day, which will give you an insight into a range of different lessons as well as the student's experience of them. Check with the school though, as you may be limited in terms of what you are allowed to do if you do not have a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly CRB) check.

1 For more information, see <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/teacher-training-routes>.



One of the things that most training providers would expect is for any trainee teacher to have gone into a school for at least five days. I think that's important for two reasons: firstly because it gives that person a clear understanding that this is something they actually want to do, so it reinforces their commitment to teaching and, secondly, just from those five days, the trainee teacher reorients themselves to what it's like being in a school. It allows them to begin to see the similarities to and differences from their own education. Otherwise the only model they go in with is their own teachers, for good or for ill.

I would also hope that they would already have a working understanding of what's going on in education now. They would be up to date with some of the debates and arguments that are taking place among teachers and policy makers, and aware of some of the Government policy that's coming in and start to form their own informed opinions.

Trainee teachers should take advantage of any subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) course offered. You may think that you know your subject because you've just done your degree, but what you're not thinking about is how that knowledge might need to be translated into something accessible for pupils. Even if you have a PhD in a subject a short SKE course can really help.

Finally, one thing you mustn't be misled by is the idea that a thriving trainee is the one who always answers questions and appears incredibly confident. My experience is that this does not always reflect reality and some trainees can be overconfident. You shouldn't be intimidated by those peers on your course. Everyone has a range of prior experiences which can be drawn upon and everyone on the course has been selected because the admissions tutors could identify their potential. As such, make sure you have your own voice and don't feel you have to demonstrate you know as much as someone else who may just have a lot to say.

Dr Simon Thompson, Head of Education, University of Sussex

You should also try to gain work experience in more than one school in order to have a more rounded experience. Only working in one school narrows your understanding of how schools work and your sense of what to expect when you are on placement. The more schools you gain experience in, the better prepared you will be for your ITT year. You

will be more aware of the variations between schools and better understand what to expect if you are placed in a school which requires particularly strong behaviour management or one where you will need to stretch the most able as a priority. You will also develop a more rounded idea of the type of school that you might eventually want to work in when you are looking for your first teaching post.

While you are observing lessons, ask teachers to talk to you about the planning behind them. This will give you a better idea of what will be expected of you when you start planning your own lessons. Focus your observations on lesson structure and behaviour management. An awareness of these aspects will enable you to progress successfully during your ITT year. Look at the advice in Chapter 15: Observing Others for more ways to get the most out of these experiences.

Teaching is a profession which has a love of acronyms. Being familiar with these before you start your course will help you to understand conversations between teachers without feeling like you are listening to a foreign language. These acronyms will become part of your vocabulary but it can feel daunting when you're not aware of what half of these even stand for! We will refer to various acronyms throughout the book, so we have included a list of some common ones in the front of the book.

When I was completing my PGCE at the University of Chichester I was asked to speak to some applicants while they were being interviewed for places on the next year's course. The potential students were able to ask questions not just about teaching, but about my experience of completing the PGCE. Their questions were often based around how I had found meeting the university's expectations for assignments on top of a trainee teacher's workload. They found it helpful and I found myself wishing I had been able to speak to current trainees before I started the course. Take up any opportunity to speak to current trainee teachers on the course you have applied to and ask all the questions you would like to, however big or small. It could help you to make the decision about which course or institution is best suited to you.



To-do

- Contact local schools to arrange work experience and to speak to current trainees or take advantage of local or national schemes that help you to do so.
- Contact your local university to see if you can arrange to attend a session to talk to current trainees.

To read:

Steve Bartlett and Diana Burton, *Introduction to Education Studies*, 4th edn (London: Sage, 2016).

Tracey Lawrence, 'Five ways to ensure a successful ITT year', *UCAS* [blog] (11 August 2017). Available at: <https://www.ucas.com/connect/blogs/five-ways-ensure-successful-itt-year-tracey-lawrence>.

Part One:

The Training Year

So you've decided to take the plunge into a career in teaching – congratulations! We're so excited to be able to share the journey with you through this book.

Teaching is a career which is incredibly rewarding, right from the very first time you set foot in a classroom; something you will soon find out. Your training year is, however, undeniably hard, no matter which route you decide to undertake. We strongly believe that you will reap huge benefits by committing to thrive in your training year, rather than simply aiming to survive it. We will support you to be that thriving teacher you aspire to become.

The chapters in Part One are here to support you through the training year: from starting your course, through to applying for jobs and up until your very last day as a trainee. Whether you are enrolling on a university-led PGCE, School Direct course or SCITT route, everything we mention is relevant and should help you. This is your how-to-thrive guide to this challenging profession, which aims to make your first three years of teaching ones in which you flourish.

2. Making the Most of University Time or Theory Sessions

A developing trainee will:

- ✓ Value the importance of completing the pre-course reading.
- ✓ Consider how the lectures and seminars can impact on their teaching practice.
- ✓ Take time to discuss placements and essay ideas with other trainee teachers.
- ✓ Surround themselves with trainees who are positive, hardworking and fully engaged in the process.
- ✓ Ask questions regularly to ensure they understand how theory feeds into practice.

Starting your ITT may feel daunting and somewhat scary, especially if you have been out of education yourself for a number of years. Indeed, this may well be one of the hardest yet most rewarding years of your life. But if you are well prepared and have an idea of what to expect from your training, it will take the stress off during those first few (very important) weeks. Start your ITT year as you intend to go on by embedding the habits of a thriving trainee.

University time or sessions on theory can sometimes be underappreciated. You are probably eager to get into the classroom and get stuck in, which is understandable, but this time should be highly valued. Whether you're on a PGCE, School Direct or SCITT route, or another ITT programme, the theory researched, discussed and learned will underpin your practice. A thriving trainee will recognise the importance of theory and will ensure that they engage with the academic material in order to build their own practice. Being present during these sessions and taking an active role in discussions will ensure that you get the most out of them.


Start the taught component of your training by networking with trainees from outside your subject area or specialism. This will be invaluable for your experience throughout the course. You may find it interesting to share and reflect on the different experiences and paths that have led you all to ITT. Trainees from other subjects may also have different views on theory, content and practice. This will give you the opportunity to hear philosophical positions on teaching and the education system from a wider range of perspectives. Different subjects will involve different sets of skills and knowledge; some may be far more practical or hands-on than yours, for example, thus working closely with

someone from another specialism is an opportunity to pick up ideas which could expand your own teaching repertoire.

One idea could be to try to sit with someone different each day when you attend these sessions. If you are asked to deliver group presentations, working in a group with people from numerous different subject specialisms will also enhance your work. Don't shy away from these experiences, see them as a platform for you to increase your profile within your cohort. Use these discussions as a way to broaden your understanding of teaching.

A thriving trainee will start to critically reflect on the content covered within these sessions from day one. An easy way to do this is to complete a short daily reflection log for each lecture, seminar or session, focusing on a topic discussed which you have found interesting. For example, your topic could be growth mindset or assessment and you could start by writing about your thoughts on the topic, and then reflecting upon how this relates to the classroom and your own teaching practice. Finally, you could spend a brief fifteen minutes reading some current literature about the topic, adding your thoughts to your log. By including references, you will also be able to revisit these in the future – perhaps as a starting point should you need to complete an assignment on that topic. This process also prepares you for becoming a reflective teacher. Reflecting after each lesson is a crucial skill all thriving teachers practice, so why not begin this process right away?

Don't treat the taught sessions and the school placement as two separate entities. Share your experiences across the two with your subject tutor and mentor. Bounce ideas off other teachers and use this as a way to further reflect on your own successes and areas to focus on for improvement. When in school, your mentor can help you to consider the implications of the theory and pedagogy you have encountered in their specific context. You never know, your discussions could lead to you starting a new initiative within the department, so keep talking!



One important thing to ensure during your weekly mentor meeting at school is that you don't just focus on planning your next lesson or on any behaviour management challenges you are having. You need to reserve some time to talk about the issues you have encountered during your taught component so that the mentor can scaffold the difference between the general ideas that you've been presented with and what's specific to that particular school.

Quite often a tutor might say 'Can you find out what your school is doing about x, y or z?', 'What does differentiation look like in your department?'

Thrive - don't just survive

Martha, Emily and Ben are thriving teachers. In *Thrive* they share their personal experiences and demonstrate how you too can thrive during the tricky training year, the daunting NQT year and the crucial RQT year. To help you lay the foundations for a successful career in teaching – long after those challenging first few years are over – they have also drawn on the insights of established education professionals.

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Elisha Hocking, trainee teacher



Martha Boyne is a secondary school science teacher who has recently completed her MA in education. Martha has published research and also writes for the successful *Thrive in Teaching* blog. She has presented at numerous education events on the subject of how teachers can be supported to incorporate evidence-based practice into their teaching.



Emily Clements is a subject leader for Key Stage 3 science and is also the science subject tutor for the South Downs SCITT. Emily has an MA in education and is interested in supporting teachers in using evidence to inform their practice. She shares her insights and experience regularly in the *Thrive in Teaching* blog.



Ben Wright is lead practitioner of history at a successful secondary school in West Sussex and is passionate about developing thriving teachers, especially during those pivotal PGCE, NQT and RQT years. Ben has completed an MA in education and strives to embed a research culture in schools. He has delivered workshops, has presented widely and, together with his *Thrive* co-authors, regularly contributes to the popular blog *Thrive in Teaching*.

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