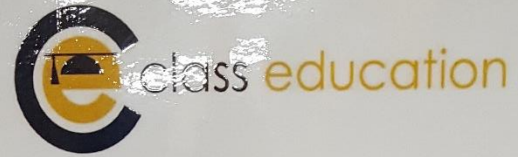


# The best of intentions?

## Reducing workload in initial teacher education



**Dr Caroline Daly**  
**UCL Institute of Education**



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*Introduce  
a teacher*

Would you like to earn yourself

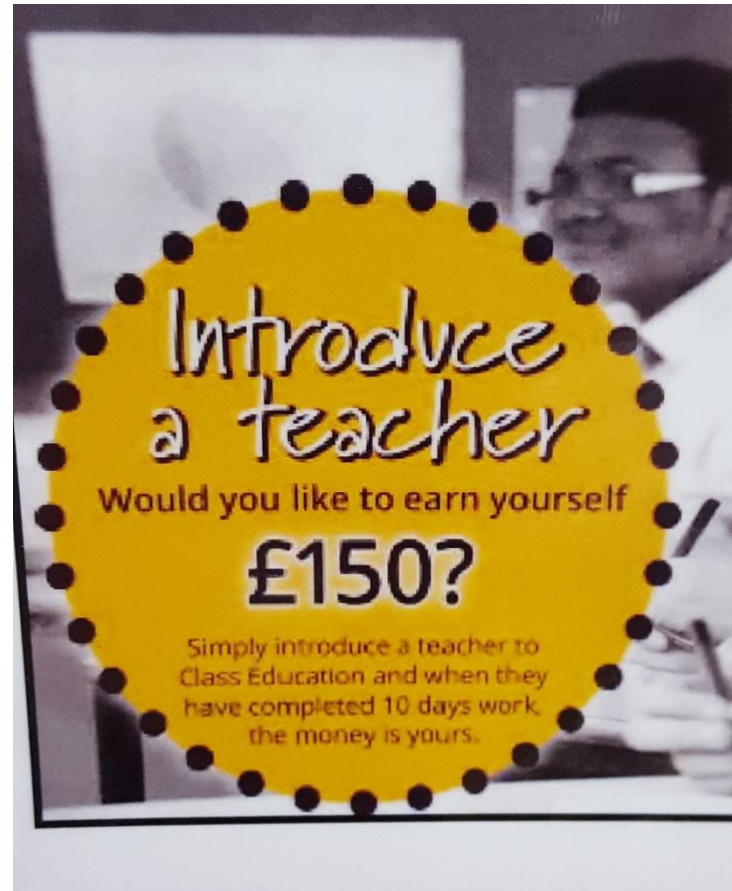
**£150?**

Simply introduce a teacher to  
Class Education and when they  
have completed 10 days work,  
the money is yours.

Global Education  
Reform Movement  
(GERM)  
(Sahlberg, 2011)

financialisation of  
individual worth

‘what works’



“Relates to who we are as human beings,  
what we value...it changes what it means  
to be a teacher and to teach” (Ball, 2013)

neo-liberal agenda  
(Ball, 2003)

marketisation

encroachment of the  
economic into  
education

‘sufficiency’ of  
teachers (DfE)

# Resistance – Stephen Ball (2013)

- ‘Counter discourse is possible’
- ‘Maybe the target now is to refuse what we are’
- ‘Recognise its presence in our everyday lives and relationships – the possibility for struggle and resistance’
- ‘The ethics of opposition’.



# Ideological co-option – the essential problem

- More than acquiescence/giving up/being resigned to workload.
- Internalisation of workload as a proxy for expertise and worth.



Data collection,  
management &  
communication  
are part of being  
a great teacher

Extreme  
workload is  
inevitable – it's  
how we  
maintain  
standards

The best  
teachers work  
extremely long  
hours

Guilt is a natural  
reaction to being  
out of school to  
access professional  
learning

teachers teach  
better by serial  
adopting of the  
latest initiatives

# Ideological co-option of experienced teachers

- They embody such beliefs in their own practices
- They model excessive workload and being able to 'cope'
- They have earned seniority and respect
- They are instrumental in perpetuating the practices that have led to their success
- They believe this *is* intrinsic to a teacher's professional identity
- It becomes part of their professional DNA

# Ideological co-option – the risks of best intentions

- We ask the wrong questions about workload and seek the wrong solutions.
- We develop strategies to maintain the marketised system as it is.
- We become unwittingly complicit in perpetuating the problems.
- As a profession, we need to be critically aware of the consequences of the decisions we make to satisfy the R&R crisis.
- The dangers of the ‘what works’ agenda, now applied to reducing workload.
- We need to be alert to sleepwalking into de-professionalisation of teaching.



# Fabrication, strategic silence and how new teachers learn to keep quiet

## *Ulvik and Sunde, 2013*

- School leaders' 'lack of awareness' of the reality of ECTs' experiences and feelings
- They have different priorities and indicators of leading a successful school
- Concern for assimilation

## *Hobson and McIntyre, 2013*



**'Teacher fabrication** as an impediment to teacher learning and development'

One of the most consistent messages from interview data was a concern amongst [new] teachers to prevent significant others in or associated with their schools from becoming aware of what they felt were inadequacies in their professional practice

# Maintaining the illusion

*No one wants to  
expose their weakness  
... I can openly admit  
when I started  
at this school that I  
wouldn't go to anyone*

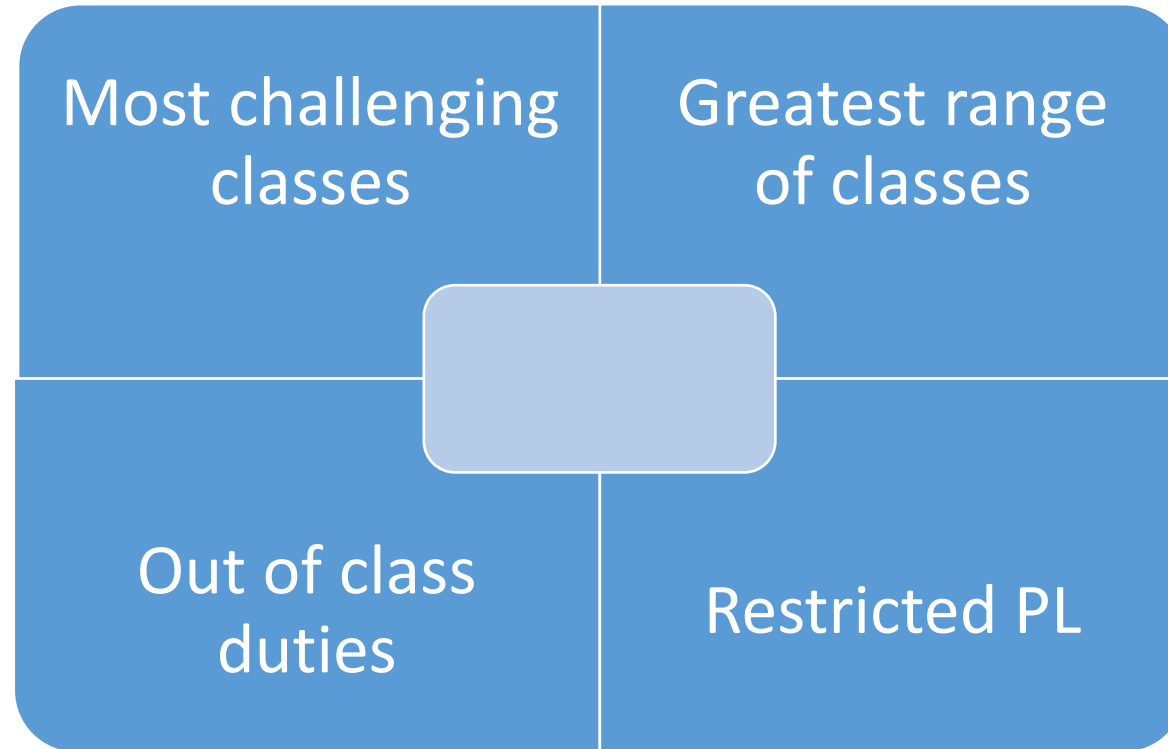
**strategic  
silence**

**FABRICATION**

**strategic  
avoidance**

*You never want to  
mention any potential  
failings that you might  
have to your mentor or  
your line manager ... I  
have got the acting  
down to a fine art*

‘The profession that eats its young’ (Halford, 1998: 33)



Danielson, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Elias, Fisher, & Simon, 1980; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gold, 1996; Killeavy, 2006.

# Workload under scrutiny

The DfE has taken steps over the last year to encourage a reduction in teacher workload, in order to reduce the number of teachers leaving the profession and to encourage more trainees into teaching.

- *Reducing workload: supporting teachers in the early stages of their career* (DfE March 2019).
- *Ways to reduce workload in your school(s)* (DfE March 2019) ('top tips')
- Toolkits for reducing teacher workload, with examples from small scale research studies in twelve settings. Further advice has been written and updated for providers and practitioners.
- *Addressing Teacher Workload in Initial Teacher Education* (DfE November 2018).

‘Addressing workload and changing the culture of burdensome practice through ITE content’

- ensuring evidence collection against the teachers' standards is proportionate rather than burdensome;
- reviewing policies and practice relating to both sending and responding to emails; and
- reviewing the structure of a course to help minimise pressure points associated with academic assignments.

How have you reviewed your provision to develop trainees to focus on planning a sequence of lessons rather than writing individual lesson plans? (p.4)

- Reduce the expectation on trainees to develop individual lesson plans and curriculum resources.
- Transfer the focus to evaluating, using and adapting existing resources, schemes of work and textbooks.
- Introduce a phased approach to move from planning lessons to planning schemes of work as students gain experience.
- Develop more 'light touch planning' over sequences of lessons

# Is it the role of DfE to advise on how teachers learn?

*Companion paper 1 (UCET)*

- Understanding the purposes of lesson planning
  - Understanding what progression means for a student teacher
  - Understanding the training year
  - Advocating professional dialogue around lesson planning with mentors
- 
- Understanding student teachers are learners



# The risks

- A utilitarian agenda for the teaching profession and for what happens in classrooms.
- Neo-liberalism – the managerial agenda that extends ever further into education.
- As teacher educators we need to take back the agenda around workload.
- We need to be questioning the language with our colleagues.
- We need to be asking different questions.

- *How do we ensure high expectations of effective planning? How do we support trainee teachers to focus on the detail of what their learners need to do to learn effectively?*
- *Is there a shared understanding about the purpose of lesson planning for trainee teachers within ITE partnerships?*
- *How do mentors view their role in planning lessons with trainees? What expectations are there that regular mentor dialogue is an opportunity to extend skills in planning for effective teaching?*

# 'Professionally acceptable workload'

*A further companion paper*

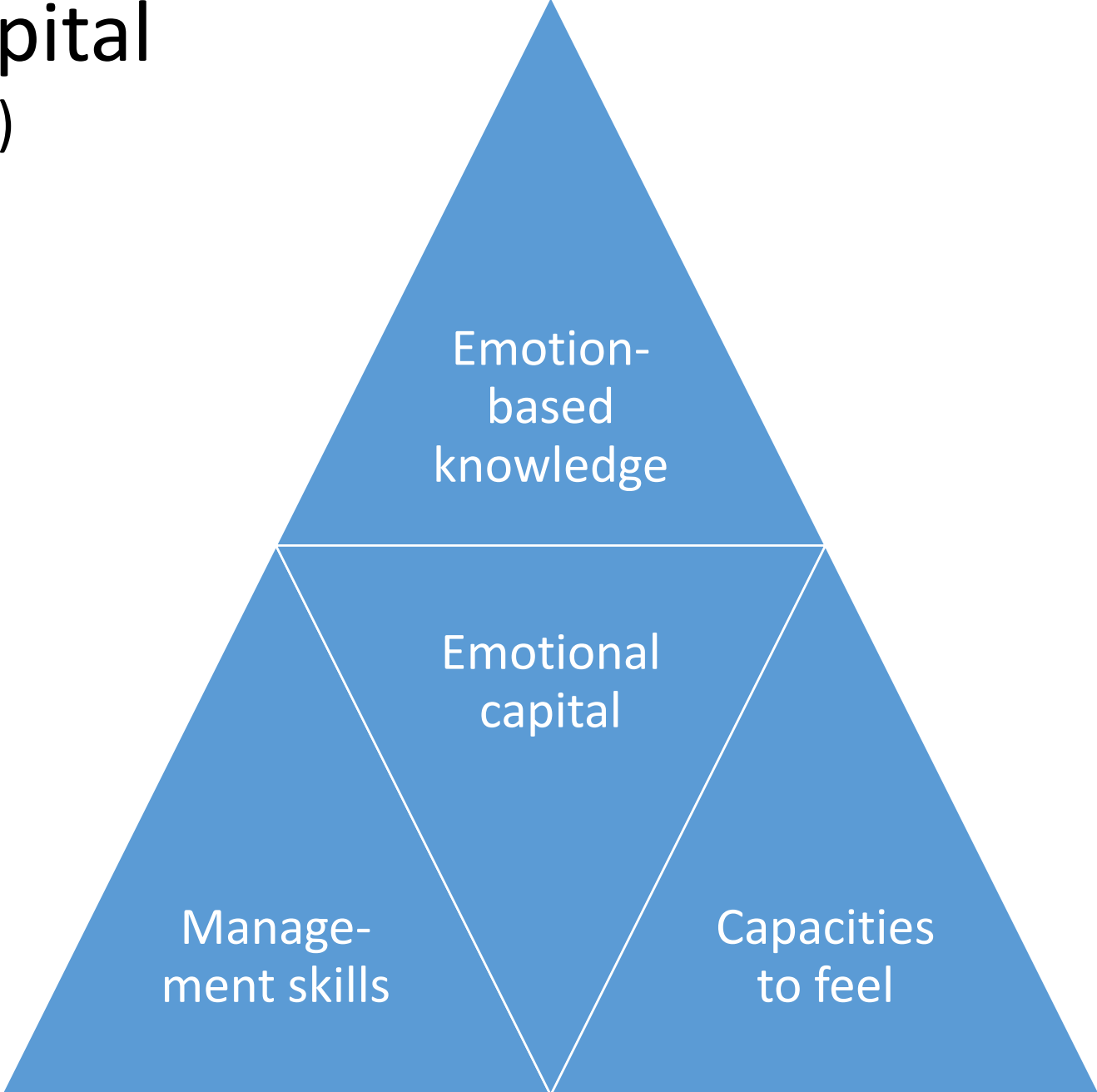
- The raft of national guidance is aimed at institutional and cultural change, which is vital in developing a mentally healthy workforce, who can engage all pupils in learning.
- Cultural change needs to understand the impacts of ideological co-option – hard to shift.
- The profession needs to be central to its own reform.

# Julie Greer – forthcoming UCET companion paper

- To change practice and habits successfully, teachers at all stages in their career will need to learn anew, challenging the culturally acceptable practice that currently equates effective work with ‘hard work’.
- In order to reframe personal responsibility within the hierarchical systems of school management, it is important to situate discussions in the context of emotional capital.

# Emotional capital

(Cottingham, 2016)



A teacher's emotional capital is dependent on the ability to **understand their feelings, use those feelings effectively** within the workplace as a **resource** and to **communicate to others** how **those feelings have been useful**.

In order to employ emotional capital, it is likely that other forms of capital, such as social capital, will also be in place.

The absence of emotional capital might be a teacher who just does as they are told, feels no sense of ownership of tasks, doesn't feel able to critique practice and doesn't feel a probability of success that s/he will be able to effect change within the organisation.

# Impact in complex systems

- Leaders, teachers and ECTs/student teachers work in different ‘Activity Systems’ (Lofthouse and Leat, 2013, Engestrom 2009) or ‘communities of practice’ (Thomas, 2018, Wenger 1998).
  - Stakeholders have different interests and priorities.
  - Policy advice (good and bad) becomes repurposed and accommodated to the existing ways of doing things.
  - Ideas for change are applied according to competing agendas – ‘cherry-picking’.
  - *Can* offer opportunities for creativity, dynamic and innovative research impacts

*Change can only happen through schools as communities and collaborations.*

*It doesn't get less,  
it just becomes  
different*

Do I consider ways  
to develop my  
practice in areas I  
find enjoyable?

Do I consider ways  
to develop my  
practice in areas I  
don't enjoy?



What aspects of my role  
do I enjoy?  
What do I not enjoy?  
Which aspects of my role  
do I find stressful?  
Do I also enjoy them?

*I feel overwhelmed  
sometimes, but I never  
feel I don't want to  
come to work*

*How can I stand up  
and have my voice  
heard?*



- A dialogic process involving all staff.
- Modelled by leaders.
- Co-learners about workload.
- *All* members of school communities need to engage to benefit from their collective knowledge and experience of workload, to build new insights and practices.
- School cultures hugely influenced by leaders.
- Resist utilitarian directives that seek to maintain and protect the source of the dilemmas we face.

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A water droplet is captured mid-fall, just above a pool of water. The impact has created several concentric ripples that spread outwards. The background is a soft, warm yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The water is a clear, light blue.

Be the change  
you want to see in the world

*Ghandi*

???