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# Teacher Education Advancement Network

## TEAN Conference 2024 Abstracts

This is a large document with full conference abstracts – DO NOT PRINT!

Use the hyperlink below to go to the 'at a glance' conference programme

Use author names or keywords or the presentation code number to search for specific abstracts

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- Programme Overview with dates and times and rooms: Page 4
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- Pre-conference Workshops – abstracts: Pages 20 to 24
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- Evaluation and Research Presentations – abstracts: Pages 37 to 112

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## **Presentation 19: Outdoor Learning within Teacher Education: Building student teacher confidence by modelling how to use an outdoor classroom**

**Jen Ager, Lisa MacGregor** University of Cumbria, UK.

Studies have indicated a decrease in children's outdoor time compared to earlier generations. However, there is a collective desire among children to spend more time outdoors, especially within the school environment (Prince et al, 2022). Research shows that a key limitation in the delivery of outdoor learning in schools is teacher confidence (Barrable et al, 2020). We aim to demonstrate how conducting Initial Teacher Education (ITE) sessions in an outdoor classroom can enrich teacher education, increase confidence and prepare the workforce to meet the evolving needs of children.

An outdoor classroom, on a city centre university campus, serves as a dynamic environment for teacher educators. Explicit modelling of its use by teacher educators aligns to congruent teaching (Swennen et al, 2008), allowing for contextualised theoretical concepts and tangible experiences that extend classroom-based learning and be replicated in practice on a school site.

The presenters research, using a sample of undergraduate and postgraduate student teachers, explored their perceptions of teaching in the outdoors, specifically an outdoor classroom. Evaluations of seminars found that students' confidence in planning, teaching and assessing children outdoors, increased. One example being where the students build dens to analyse children's learning. In addition to consideration of children's learning, this experiential session highlighted the transformative effect of the students own learning of pedagogy, resulting in the establishment of a strong learning community specifically linked to the experience of an outdoor seminar. Observations of this then being enacted in a school context was used as a reflective frame in subsequent campus-based sessions. The concept of experiential learning aligns with various models (Beard and Wilson, 2013), emphasising effective acquisition of procedural and substantive knowledge and engaging in hands-on experiences to foster a practical understanding of teaching methods and theoretical concepts.

This presentation aims to detail opportunities and benefits to developing and using an outdoor classroom and the wide-reaching advantages this can have for students, institutions and the teaching profession. Educational partnerships, marketing and recruitment, course content and community benefits will all be explored, with examples provided by the presenters of the direct impact, making this presentation suitable for a variety of stakeholders.

In summary, the pedagogic approach of using an outdoor classroom in university sessions, is fully transferrable to any school. It supports the professional development of teaching students by increasing their confidence to use the outdoor environment daily for all primary school-aged children (Prince and MacGregor, 2022).

### Key References

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## Presentation 21: Supporting the academic literacies of student teachers

**Zoe Proctor:** Leeds Trinity University, UK.

An Academic Literacies approach is increasingly being seen as important for student teacher development. Not only for assessment purposes but as a key area of development that supports identity, employability and one that students need more support with, particularly on transition into HE.

The focus in the literature is on theoretical models, tutor perspectives and pedagogy for Academic Literacies meaning there is a distinct lack of student voice and an understanding of their perceptions. Course design should consider how student teachers perceive their development within an academic literacies approach and become research informed professionals with the ability to make evaluative judgements of their own academic performance.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis of student teacher perceptions of academic literacies highlighted commonalities and differences in perceptions of identity and support. Academic Literacies were defined through student teacher's current lived experience of developing and receiving feedback for this area of learning within their programme and through the lens of theoretical models (Lea and Street, 2006) and current research into creative programme approaches (Abegglen et al, 2019). This study found students predominantly view Academic Literacies as visible study skills and mainly surface level features of reading and writing. They also believe that students should proactively seek support to develop their academic literacies.

"It's there if you look for it!" (Student A, Focus Group 2023)

However, clarity of expectations is underdeveloped for students and the responsibility of academic tutors and professional services in providing support is unclear to some student teachers. As a result of contradictory guidance and unclear expectations students still struggle to develop academic literacies with a resulting negative impact on their self-efficacy (Prat-Sala and Redford, 2012) and retention and progression through their course.