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## **Outdoor learning for powerful experiential development within initial teacher education. Where could it be used?**

This round table presentation is relevant to educators committed to developing teacher's self-efficacy and self-confidence in the delivery of outdoor learning (OL) in schools. The benefits of OL for children are well documented with increasing prevalence of need; inequality of access to nature could be recognised as a rising concern for children in post-pandemic observations. Schools have been described as 'gatekeepers' for OL experiences, being ideally placed to provide engagement with nature and outdoor experiences (Burt, 2016). Research shows that a key limitation in the delivery of OL in schools is teacher confidence (Barrable *et al*, 2020); there are implications for the role of initial teacher education (ITE) provision in preparing teachers to use OL to combat this lack of confidence (Haxwell, 2019).

Drawing upon the experiences of a successful school-based model to embrace OL as a whole school pedagogical approach (Ager, 2019), this presentation outlines comparable processes that can be transferred to an ITE context. Findings highlighted the importance of increasing teacher's agency through experiences to develop their understanding of how to include OL within their curriculum. As a teacher educator I am keen to explore the effect of creating a contextualised curricula that provides the personal, first-hand experience which could motivate a practitioner to use OL as a teaching approach. Teacher education programmes aim to cultivate expertise, competency, behaviours and deepen pedagogical knowledge. Teacher educator sessions are complex, however explicit modelling by a teacher educator can influence a trainees practice (Boyd, 2014). This presentation maintains that there is potential, by facilitating OL opportunities within teacher education programmes to increase self-confidence and self-efficacy. When learning, engaging with settings that have personal, educational, and cultural significance can be transformative.

Using evidence outlined in the in the Research and Development Project 'Enabling Outdoor-Based Teaching' (EOT) in Teacher Education in Switzerland (Wolf. *et al*, 2022), this round table presentation will invite participants to reflect upon their own professional setting and curriculum overviews, with a focus on what drives the underpinning learning and experiences of participants engaged within ITE. Discussion following the presentation will encourage reflection upon settings, curriculum and the affordance of explicit modelling of this approach across training programmes. The aim, for future teachers to confidently use this in their professional practice. If we include the *know-how* and *know-why* of OL within initial teaching programmes, surely this can lead to better understanding across the sector to *do more* throughout professional careers.

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