

The Perceived Role of the Cooperating Teacher: Differing Perspectives on Enactment

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Abstract : The purpose of this research was to explore the attitudes of student Art and Design teachers (n=79) and their cooperating teachers in the Republic of Ireland (n=83) as to their interpretation of the role in teacher education. The role is outlined in terms of how the Teaching Council defines the role and then how the students and teachers see it being fulfilled. While overall teachers rated themselves as fulfilling the role expected of them, the interpretation varied greatly, with considerable deficits reported regarding guidance given in planning, observation of the student teacher, and feedback given. Overall, students saw teachers as fulfilling their role effectively, though there was considerable variation reported in experiences. A focus group was conducted in order to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying factors influencing these discrepancies.

Keywords : Irish post primary teaching, cooperating teacher, student teacher, teacher education

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