



Research-Practice Integration in teacher education: an integrative review

Study Team:

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Overview

A practice review of research–practice integration (RPI) in initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) is particularly timely in England. National frameworks such as the Core Content Framework (Department for Education [DfE], 2019a), Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019b), and the reformed National Professional Qualifications (DfE, 2021) all emphasise the importance of evidence-informed

practice. However, despite this policy ambition, the mechanisms through which research meaningfully shapes teachers' professional learning, and vice versa, remain poorly understood and inconsistently realised across the sector.

For this review, research–practice integration is understood as the deliberate, collaborative alignment of research activity with the everyday work of teacher education, ensuring that research informs practice and that professional expertise

shapes ongoing inquiry. RPI is consistently described in the literature as dynamic, relational, and context-dependent, requiring structures and cultures that support sustained engagement between educators, researchers, and institutions.

The project adopts an integrative review approach (Dhollande et al., 2021; Kutcher & LeBaron, 2022), enabling the synthesis of diverse forms of evidence to build a coherent understanding of how RPI operates within teacher education. A distinctive feature of this work is its focus on the entire professional learning continuum, spanning both ITE and CPD, with the aim of generating outputs that are theoretically robust, practically relevant, and directly useful for the National Institute of Teaching (NlOT) and the wider sector.

Research aims and objectives

The planned research attempts to answer five core questions:

1. How is RPI in teacher education conceptualised?
2. What models of RPI in teacher education exist?
3. What activities and strategies facilitate or hinder the integration of research into ITE and CPD?
4. What is the evidence and its quality regarding the effectiveness of RPI models on teacher and pupil outcomes?
5. What are the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders (eg, leaders, trainers, trainees, and policymakers) regarding these activities?

Research design and planned outputs

The study consists of two strands: a Literature-based Review (Strand 1) and a Qualitative Case Study (Strand 2). The project will produce two practical resources:

- RPI Reflection Framework: A tool with reflective prompts to help teacher educators design and implement RPI in their daily work.
- Annotated Case Studies: National and international examples illustrating RPI in action, highlighting enablers, dilemmas, and decision points.

Planned timeline

Oct – Dec 2025	Project set-up, scoping work, and protocol development
Jan – Feb 2026	Publication of project outline; study screening and literature search
Mar – Apr 2026	Data extraction, quality assessment, and primary data collection (interviews)
May – June 2026	Synthesis of data and production of final report and tools
July 2026	Review and submission of final outputs
Sept 2026 onwards	Dissemination via academic publications and conferences

References

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