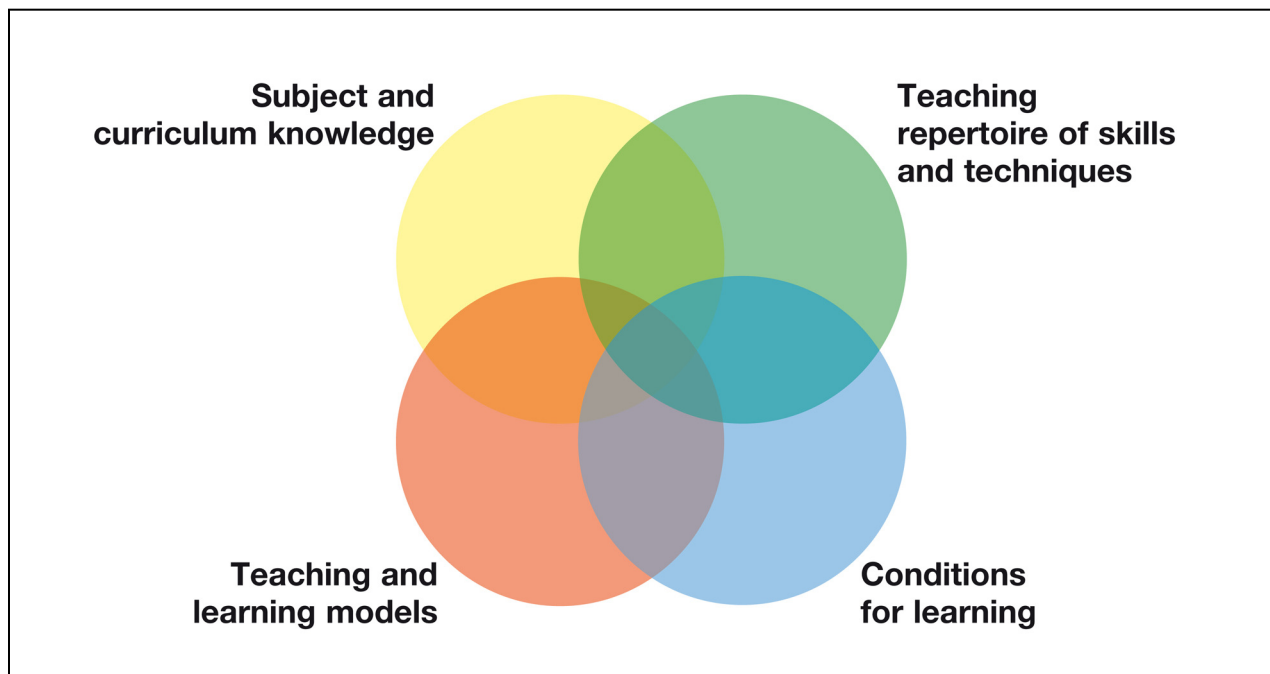


Modern languages: Pedagogical content knowledge

The development of teachers' professional knowledge is based on a pedagogic model in which subject knowledge, teaching repertoire, teaching models and the conditions for learning are integrated elements of one process. So the focus for improvement is not either generic pedagogy or subject content, but 'pedagogical content knowledge' (Shulman 1986), in which content and pedagogy are combined to create powerful learning for pupils and teachers.



Subject and curriculum knowledge

Well-founded and secure subject and curriculum knowledge means developing an understanding of:

- the key concepts, the networks of concepts, the methods of enquiry and the language that define the subject, and making sure that this knowledge is up to date;
- progression within the subject and associated curriculum frameworks;
- how assessment of learning, assessment for learning and a knowledge of the common misconceptions can be used effectively to support learning in the subject;
- which teaching and learning models best meet the needs of different subject objectives.
- how to develop the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT to support learning in the subject.

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Teaching and learning models

Research and practice suggest that learners' attainment can be enhanced by the consistent use of specific teaching and learning models.

A number of teaching and learning models have been developed as a direct consequence of theories about learning. Each can be expressed as a tightly structured sequence that is designed to elicit and develop a specific type of thinking or response.

Well-founded understanding in this area means developing knowledge of a range of models and how the choice of the appropriate teaching and learning model (or combination of models) is determined by the nature of the learning objective.

- Direct interactive teaching is effective in helping young people to learn new skills and procedures and acquire academic knowledge. This includes modelling and explicit teaching sequences, for example for teaching children reading or writing.
- Cognitive teaching and learning models help learners to process information, build concepts and rules, generate and test hypotheses and think creatively. These models include enquiry, inductive learning and teaching through analogy and metaphor.
- Social models require learners to collaborate and learn together; they help learners construct new knowledge and understand concepts. These models include constructivism and group problem solving.

Some subjects draw more heavily on some teaching and learning models than others.

Repertoire of skills and techniques

The teaching repertoire can be characterised as a set of skills and a set of techniques that demand active engagement. Both these will be components of any lesson and may be deployed within any teaching approach. They are the basics that teachers learn to develop their craft.

They include developing knowledge, competence and expertise in:

- planning and structuring learning;
- the generic teaching skills of questioning, explaining, guiding and organising group work;
- teaching the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- a range of active engagement techniques designed to draw the learner in and demand participation.

Conditions for learning

In creating the right conditions for learning, teachers will draw on their understanding of learners' characteristics, of child development and of the creation of learning spaces. Teachers and other practitioners will understand, for different groups of learners, how to:

- manage a class, a group, an individual, and establish routines;
- interact effectively with learners to include them and use language to build mutual respect;
- ensure that learning builds on prior learning and attainment, varying approaches to ensure that children and young people learn in a variety of ways;
- plan effective use of time, space and resources, and make use of the wider environment to meet the needs of different groups.