

## Chapter 4

# Learning How to Become a Teacher Researcher: Using Rubrics to Support Evidence- Informed, Research-Based Practice

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### ABSTRACT

*Developing the teacher as a reflective practitioner has become a core facet of Irish teacher education, but large gap exists between theory and practice. Research illustrates the positive value of rubrics in terms of student self-reflection and self-regulation. However, few studies explore the use of assessment rubrics*

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*within the broad context of the supervisory relationship. Drawing on Drytons extended supervisory working alliance the authors explored how rubrics can foster student-supervisor relationships during the research process. This study adopted a collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) methodology which enabled the researchers to authentically capture the student and faculty perspectives. It was found that rubrics provided transparency, identified expectations and a language for students to express and interrogate their work. They provided a metadialogue to enable students to take ownership of the feedback process questioning and initiating discussion with the supervisor. This supported the bonding process, shaping conversations and providing the student with context for the feedback.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Calls for research-based initial teacher education (ITE) programmes have increased over the past decade. Many novice teachers struggle to transform ITE knowledge into effective classroom practice (Doyle, 2006; Wanzare, 2007) which calls for a deeper understanding of teacher transition from theory to practice (OECD, 2021). Student teachers must be active participants in the research process during ITE (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Munthe & Rogne, 2015). It is not surprising that the development of teacher researchers is often discussed within the context of ITE reform and development (Afdal & Speres, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2016, 2017). The emancipatory potential of teacher research is also recognised in ITE in the Republic of Ireland. For example, Céim, i.e. Standards in initial teacher education, states that by the end of the ITE programme, the student teacher will be able to “conduct and apply relevant research as appropriate to his/her teaching context, identifying, critically analysing and integrating new knowledge regarding curriculum, pedagogy and assessment into their practice” (pg.23). Developing the teacher as ‘reflective practitioner and ‘researcher’ has become a core facet of Irish teacher education (Teaching Council, 2017, p.14). However research is interactive and incremental, learning occurs through engagement in student-supervisor dialog, self-dialog/reflection and the research process. This requires a process orientated approach to assessment rather than the traditional product and standards based model. Therefore assessment AS learning is key with reflection, self-assessment and dialogical feedback all necessary components to support the research and assessment process. It is the authors view that the integration of formative and summative rubrics into the supervision process can support the development of teachers as researcher. Rubrics can provide a lexis to enable the student-supervisor to articulate feedback, communicate and engage in dialog and also enable the students to engage in critical reflection regarding the research process and their own identity and role. This chapter discusses the role of the supervisor-student relationship in teacher research, the potential for rubrics to support the process and outlines a collaborative autoethnographic study which the authors engaged in to explore how formative rubrics can support the development of teacher-researchers within the research-based teacher education movement. In particular, it will consider the role of formative rubrics in fostering student-supervisor relationships during the ITE research process.

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