

## APPENDIX D

### Narrative Summary – Chloe

<p><b>Educational background</b></p>	
<p>Chloe is a female student in her early 30s. She has a 2:2 degree from a Russell Group University and in addition, has a grade 6 professional qualification (equivalent to an honours degree) relating to her previous career. She said that she <i>'never found school that easy...[as] I was the youngest by far in my year group with having my birthday in mid August...[all] my peers' birthdays were before January'</i>. She explained that she <i>'started fulltime school two weeks after I turned 4 which was far too early for me...I struggled to catch up with my peers until I was around 13'</i>. She told of her dislike <i>'as being labelled at such a young age of being weaker than my peers. I also hated being compared to my older brother. What my brother was like was completely irrelevant to me – my parents never compared us, so I resented my teachers doing it'</i>. Chloe found it hard to think of something positive about school <i>'I'm struggling to remember something I liked'</i>. Eventually, she said she <i>'remembered having a great Maths teacher...she single handedly got me through my Maths GCSE'</i>. Chloe found exams <i>'frustrating, I'm much better at coursework as I tend to panic in exams. I have had no coaching in exam technique and it took me well into my University course to get to grips with them'</i>. It was, she said, an easy decision to go to university <i>'I couldn't wait. I'd outgrown school and knew I wanted to study something that interested me'</i>. Chloe was not the first in her family to go to University, her brother went before her, and <i>'my uncle is a bit of a high flyer and went to Cambridge and various other Universities in the US'</i>. Her family gave her <i>'loads of support, they were always there if I needed them through stressful times'</i> but <i>'it never occurred to me to ask them for money – I'd left home so that was that'</i>. Chloe admitted she could <i>'have enjoyed myself a little less at Uni and worked a little harder, or balanced it better'</i>. She has <i>'to work hard at my education – I'm not a natural so when I try hard, I really try hard and can do really well'</i>. In retrospect, she <i>'got what I deserved' with her 2:2 degree classification, it 'annoys me, I wish I could go back and give myself a big kick'</i>.</p>	<p>Q1 Q1 I1  I1 I1  E E E E E E E</p>
<p>In categorising her into one of three types; engaged academic, willing/strategic complier or reluctant complier Chloe would fall into the group I define as reluctant complier (see 3.7.2)</p>	
<p><b>Becoming a teacher</b></p>	
<p>Chloe had a career that was unrelated to education prior to commencing the PGCE course. However she explained that teaching <i>'was always something that I was going to do at some point'</i>. In considering her career before she graduated from her first degree, teaching was one option she discussed with her family. Her father, who she said was <i>'quite influential with me at the time'</i>, cautioned against teaching. In his opinion, <i>'you don't earn enough money doing that'</i>. As a result, Chloe said that she <i>'fell into'</i> another career, which was unrelated to teaching.</p>	<p>I1 I1  I1 I1 I1</p>
<p>Upon meeting and marrying her teacher husband, Chloe started <i>'socialising with teachers'</i> and, in discussion with them, began to realise <i>'that I could do this'</i>. However, <i>'it never, ever fitted in with life at the time'</i>. She <i>'got used to earning money'</i> and when they had children <i>'family circumstances'</i> made it impossible to take up a place she had been offered on another PGCE course in the North of England. By this Chloe said that</p>	<p>I1 I1 I1 I1</p>

she was living away from both her own and her husband's family, she knew very few people in that area and felt that she had <i>'no support'</i> to assist with childcare when her first child was born. Finally, when her <i>'youngest [started] at nursery ... I thought I'm going to do it'</i> and successfully applied for the course she is currently on.	I2 I2 I2
At interview, Chloe explained about her <i>'family circumstances'</i> , that she had wanted to teach earlier in her life, but until she felt her children were <i>'at an age'</i> when they could be in school or nursery themselves, she wanted to delay commencing a second career. She spoke of her interest in the profession and her experience from being a <i>'house parent'</i> at the school where her husband teaches. This has given her an insight into school life and one where she has pastoral responsibility <i>'for a group of girls'</i> who <i>'board at the school'</i> .	I2 I2 I2 I2
<b>First Teaching Placement</b> Chloe was allocated to an 11-16 school situated a coastal town in the South West of England. This was partly as a result of my asking the trainees about their personal circumstance, ability to travel, access to transport and matching this to the proximity to schools that had offered placements. Chloe was very difficult to place, as in her locality, there was only one school that would offer a placement in her subject, and that was where she wanted to do her second, longer placement. Her first school placement meant a journey of around 25 miles each way, which she was initially unhappy about.	PT PT
The school became a designated Specialist Sports College in 2001. Ofsted inspected the school in 2007, and judged it requiring significant improvement. As a result, it was inspected again in 2008 and described in that report as a <i>'smaller than average'</i> school with the <i>'percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities above the national average'</i> (Ofsted 2008:3). Following this inspection, the school was judged to be <i>'providing a satisfactory standard of education'</i> (ibid:4). Against this, was the impending move for the school to become an academy. This was to be linked to a larger educational charity, incorporating four other academies from the surrounding area. The process took longer to be approved by the Governing bodies than was anticipated and resulted in a <i>'frustrating summer... with news of the delay...and [resulting] disappointment'</i> (School website). It eventually opened as an academy in spring 2011 under a new name. All these factors lead Chloe to believe the school to be weak both in terms of achievement and behaviour management.	O O O O O W W W W W W PT
It could be possible that on reading the Ofsted reports, an assumption could be drawn that this was a "weak" school. That has not been my experience in placing other trainees at the school; however, there is always the possibility that there could be a personality clash between the trainee and their subject mentor (as in any school). Although Chloe said that she <i>'had no expectations of what it would be like'</i> before she went to the school, she (and all of the trainees) looked at the information about their placements on line. They also had meetings with a link tutor, and Chloe spoke of a conversation with them where she quotes; <i>"it isn't too bad, they don't generally carry knives"</i> . Knowing this background, Chloe's account of her time at the school may be coloured by her preconceptions and perhaps biased in a negative way.	PT PT PT
Chloe <i>'found it really difficult to start with, it's a difficult school to be in your first placement or any placement, it's a difficult school to be in. It's difficult in terms of the</i>	I2

<p><i>kids, they can be tricky at times, it's difficult in terms of the mentor as well – had I been 22 and with no experience whatsoever, I'm not sure how I'd got on with him'. Problems with adjusting to her first placement continued because in her opinion, 'he didn't give me much support'. She gave an example; '5 minutes before the start of the lesson, he'd look at my lesson plan and say "oh, they're not going to engage in that"'. This was particularly frustrating for Chloe, as she 'was so preoccupied with lesson planning...taking hours to do something' which on telling her mentor this he 'thought I was having a laugh'. Chloe continued to find the relationship between her and her mentor to be challenging, especially on observing one of his lessons where he incorporated mind mapping. 'To me it was just a way, an easy way, for my mentor not having planned a lesson...to do a mind map'. She also criticised his use of powerpoint, 'just sitting there, pressing a button on the powerpoint'. 'I had him [the subject mentor] being an idiot, the kids being difficult'. She continued 'I found it difficult at the school because I didn't like my mentor'. When pressed for a reason why she found it so, she disclosed that she thought 'he didn't plan or do anything really, so it's a bit difficult when he's tearing your lesson apart, and you think, "well hang on a minute...". 'I had problems with him... that's been my lowest point'. These issues had an impact on her family life, when Chloe described how her 3 year old youngest daughter said to her one day: "please don't go today mummy, please stay at home with me".</i></p>	I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2
<p>Her lesson planning continued to be a challenge in terms of her time management: '<i>at one point I was like – that's it - I've spent hours doing this, the kids come in and say "I'm not doing that"'. However, 'by the end of the placement I got a lot quicker... I had to... I knew what the kids would and wouldn't do by then'. However, despite these issues and setbacks, Chloe said she 'doesn't like quitting at things, even when everything is on top of me ... I've never gone "that's just too difficult"'. She did admit that she would 'like more help with "how to" manage pupils effectively, sort of like "top tips for trainees"</i></p>	I2 I2 I2 I2 I2
<p>Chloe was not forthcoming with discussing any "high points" during her first placement, but after some prompting, did relate the story of how one boy that she chastised during a lesson for rudeness came back to apologise to her, with '<i>a real sorry, not just sorry</i>' (here she demonstrated different emphasis of the word "sorry" to make her point). Chloe did have a good relationship and rapport with the other trainee teachers whilst on this placement. '<i>We supported each other...when one was on a high and the others on a low, we could support one another. It was good</i>'.</p>	I2 I2 I2 I2
<p><b>Second Teaching Placement</b></p> <p>Her second placement was at a mixed independent, boarding and day school for students aged 13-18. This was a school that Chloe knew well, having lived on site and been employed as a house parent there. Entrants to the school at age 13 'are above the national average' and the 'vast majority proceed onto higher or further education' (ISI 2010:1). 'Pupils are articulate, considerate of the opinion of others and can propose coherent and persuasive arguments' (ibid:3). In terms of projected achievement, ability, style of teaching, behaviour, expectations and facilities this placement was the polar opposite to her first school.</p>	O O O O I2
<p>Despite this inside knowledge of the school, Chloe still found things difficult, especially after a period of being a student and back at University before going out on her second</p>	I2

placement. She said <i>'oh no, I've got to get back in front of the class again'</i> . However, once she had begun her teaching practice, she was <i>'soon into the swing of it'</i> .	I2 I2
Her mentor here does not feature in her discussion, instead, it is the ethos of the school and its teaching expectation that comes under her spotlight; The school <i>'does things in a certain way which isn't my way...if I go in all wacky, they just look at me'</i> . Chloe describes the expectations of lessons to be very structured, with little or no in class debate.	I2 I2
In illustrating this point, she describes a lesson which she thought of as <i>'poor'</i> , Chloe expressed her confusion, how she was struck by the quietness of the classroom and how she found her students unnerving. <i>'I was surprised ...I asked them questions, they answered, I asked them to do work, they did it and there was no talking'</i> . After the lesson, Chloe spoke to the mentor, saying <i>'Oh my God that was awful'</i> . She seemed surprised at his response "no, that was really good, they were engaged". Chloe really did not like this atmosphere, <i>'they didn't talk, they didn't murmur, they just sat there, they did as they were told and that came as a real shock. I was not expecting that at all, I was quite uncomfortable with it. I don't like silence in a class, I like a murmur... I need a murmur'</i> .	I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2
Chloe did not have the same level of support in this placement as she had in her first school. Here she was the only trainee teacher at the school <i>'I miss that, [the rapport] it's not always fantastic'</i> . Chloe again found it difficult to identify high points during her placement; She eventually said the best part was <i>'where the kids actually engaged in your lesson, enjoyed what they are doing and talking to you about what they did'</i> . Overall Chloe said that she has found it <i>'wearing emotionally – its draining, it's a real rollercoaster ride'</i> . Chloe admits that she <i>'wasn't expecting that at all – I wasn't expecting it to be easy, I'm not cocky enough to think I know it all, but I just didn't expect it to be such a rollercoaster'</i> . The other thing that she was surprised about was that she <i>'didn't expect to care as much ... getting so engrossed in the class, the kids and what they do'</i> . She is <i>'really looking forward'</i> to becoming a teacher <i>'on placement it's always a bit tricky; it's someone else's classroom, someone else's kids'</i> . Chloe wants to <i>'really get to know them [the students], to put stuff on the walls'</i> , something she feels she has been unable to do thus far. She wants <i>'to be a bit more permanent'</i> .	I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2 I2
<b>Chloe's conceptualisation of the ideal teacher</b>	
In my first interview with Chloe, early in the PGCE course, I asked her to reflect upon what made a good teacher. Her first thoughts were that it was <i>'somebody who can bring the subject to life, can explain things without overcomplicating it'</i> . She also considered <i>'being positive is the key'</i> . Initially, Chloe was quite wrapped up in the mechanics of how to work effectively with a powerpoint presentation, something she considered <i>'I'm not very good at'</i> but feels she needs as a sort of <i>'safety blanket'</i> to support her. She also wanted to have a greater depth of understanding of <i>'case studies and experience of reading papers ... so I can bring real life into [the lesson].'</i>	I1 I1 I1 I1 I1
In her second interview, her focus had slightly changed; now her first point was <i>'being interested in the kids'</i> whereby <i>'you look at them as individuals and that's something I hadn't appreciated before'</i> . Other key points Chloe raised were about <i>'being able to differentiate... and having empathy'</i> . She also considered that <i>'you have to be super,</i>	I2 I2 I2 I2

*super organised, consistent and one step ahead*. For her, it was the *'practicalities of being a teacher'* that were at the forefront of her mind; *'the practical things are way more important to me, to get those right'*.

During the second interview, I introduced prompt cards (emboldened in the following paragraphs) for Chloe to rank order, or discard to stimulate discussion about key characteristics of her ideal teacher. She divided these into two distinct groups which Chloe described as relating to her 'now, and the [remaining] others for future career progression. *'I need to grasp the practicalities of being a teacher first'*.

First on her list, she placed being a **reflective practitioner**. *'What's the point if you teach a lesson and don't think about it afterwards?'* Next was **knowledge** *'its really important you need to know your subject knowledge the kids expect you to know your subject – that's what you're here for.'* Following this came **flexibility** *'really important if you go into a lesson, if it works, that's great, if it doesn't, you've got to be flexible enough to go OK, that plan's out of the window, and do something else.'* Next Chloe put **skills**, something she *'considers important for herself and the pupils, especially with the use of ICT'* and her own *'organisational skill'*. **Social service** came next; *'kids are humans...they've all got different things going on...you've got to have an appreciation of what going on.'* Following this, Chloe placed **standards**; she interpreted this as meaning both QTS standards and *'standards within a classroom'*. She was adamant *'I don't like swearing'* which was an issue in her first placement, as *'it was just their language, they used it all the time'*. Next she put **making judgements** *'its not all about a child's abilities, you need to be reflective and not just judge them'*. Finally in this group, Chloe placed **technician**, which she interpreted as *'being able to deal with things when they go wrong.'*

The second group produced from the prompt cards, which Chloe thought of as less important for her at the present time, consisted of **regulation** *'in terms of the Government, I've not even thought about that at the moment ...it's not on my radar yet...it will be.'* Next she placed **autonomy** *'I am bound by the school's I'm in. My placement school does it in a certain way, which isn't my way. I don't really know what my way is, but I don't think it's that.'* Finally Chloe put **theoretical knowledge** *'I've got the basics of it, with each assignment, but it's not something that's in my everyday life with teaching.'*

### **Imagined future career path**

Chloe described her previous career as having a clear route that she saw and progressed up through. This was different to her perception of how she might progress in teaching. At the moment, it is *'more a matter of me learning my trade and I'd rather do that first and do it well'*. She wanted to develop her skills *'rather than wanting to run things'*. Chloe, in her later interview, still had this view; *'I want to get a grip on classroom teaching – that's my first priority'*. She did now admit that she is *'quite interested in becoming an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) at some point'* but realistically added *'I know I've got a way to go to get there'*. Interestingly she has *'definitely ruled out being a Head of Department at the moment, just because I would rather go down the pastoral route'*. She seemed keen to consider her opportunities to become a Head of Year which she *'thinks is more me, rather than the completely academic'*.

### **M level study**

At the start of the course, Chloe was *'very much on the fence'* with seeing how having Master's level credits could facilitate her development as a teacher. She could not see *'how that might help me'* as the *'past few weeks have all been about lesson planning'*. However, at that stage in the course, she admitted she *'hadn't looked into it in a huge amount of detail'*. However, having completed her assignment, Chloe changed her view from *'being absolutely, totally against it'* to realising that *'we are not that different to the kids' in how they learn'*.

She talked about her approach to the assignment; *'It was 'difficult... all I did was think about what [area of the syllabus] I wanted to do'* and Chloe was still *'preoccupied with lesson planning'*. Having made that decision, she *'got books together ... started to talk to different teachers... doing all the boring, laborious stuff'*. Her method of learning in the past *'was someone who wrote notes and notes and notes and then rewrote them ... almost parrot fashion'*, However she said *'[I] introduced myself to mind mapping'* which she had *'always been against it having seen it used [badly] in the classroom. I tried it and quite liked it, seeing where things link'*. At first, Chloe *'found finding journals quite tricky'* but after attending a training session *'it was quite a revelation how to do it, that really helped'*. However *'some books were utterly useless, others were fantastic'*, but she and a fellow trainee *'shared books'* and resources. If one of them found a good book, *'we swopped'* them between themselves. This support helped with Chloe's feelings of being *'quite isolated, learning by myself'* and *'talking with other people and realising they were all struggling at the same parts'*. She also felt physically isolated from the rest of the group *'living in the back of beyond'* and *'being the only trainee at my school'*. She did however discuss her assignment with one of the NQTs at the school, a previous trainee of the course, but his advice was not always what she wanted to hear. *'Jacob told me he had his first draft in by Christmas'* whereas Chloe had only just decided on her topic at the same stage.

In discussing other ways of being assessed at Master's level, Chloe *'would prefer to do something like making a resource, because that would be really useful'*. She considered that she *'did learn from the essay'* but could not see directly *'what I would do with it in the future'* whereas she could see how *'a resource ... would be more useful later on'*.

### **Continuing on to Master's**

Chloe firstly expressed concern that she *'may have to come back to university'* as she is worried about *'the practical side of it'* with her young family and *'having other people that rely on me ... that's a big part of it'*. She continued *'my husband is hugely career minded ... and I don't have anybody that can help ... so on a practical side it's putting me off'*. Chloe continued to focus on the difficulties, the practicalities due to her *'living in the middle of no-where, it takes me hours to get anywhere'*.

In her later interview and questionnaire, Chloe admits that she *'is not convinced on the Master's level thing yet'* but is more buoyed by the possibility of *'doing it away from university'* [through distance learning]. She still has concerns about managing this; again she reiterates *'we live in the back of beyond, getting anywhere is a nightmare'*. Added to this she *'has two kids and a workaholic husband and no family around to help'*. She thinks that she will *'look into it when the time is right'*. Her first priority is *'to*

<i>get through the PGCE' where she acknowledges that she 'has never worked so hard – it's been a total shock to the system – people always say it's hard work, but ... it's exhausting'.</i>	Q2 I2
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KEY

E –Email correspondence

I1 – Interview 1

I2 – Interview 2

O – Ofsted

PT – Personal Tutorial

Q1 – Questionnaire 1

Q2 – Questionnaire 2

W – School/College web site