

## **CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Since the introduction of Masters degree level credits into the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) award in England and Wales in 2006, trainee teachers have had the opportunity to utilise these credits towards gaining a full Masters level qualification. This was in line with New Labour's policy of making teaching a Masters level profession (DCSF 2008:12). In order to gain Masters level credits, trainees in the Higher Education Institution (HEI) where this study was undertaken, have to pass a written assignment that is assessed at Masters level. However, not all trainees achieve this and therefore have the option of either choosing to resubmit at Masters level or to submit at Honours level and transfer to a different award. This lower level award is also confusingly referred to as a PGCE, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education. However, by retaining the same initials for two different awards the possibility for most trainee teachers to gain a recognised teaching qualification is facilitated.

This thesis explores the history of recent governments drive to turn teaching into a profession that reflects high qualification, high skills and high status, through a narrative case study of a cohort of trainee teachers undertaking a PGCE in a University setting. It examines how they construct their identities as teachers against this background of a shift in policy in teacher qualification as well as their conception of value and self identity. This raises the question, which further study may address, of whether or not this makes for better teachers and, if so, what sort of teachers are they?

This chapter considers the recent history of teacher education in England, covering the last fifty years. This period has been deemed to be the most noteworthy and perhaps important by a number of key researchers (Ball, (2003), Hargreaves (1994) and Whitty (1987)). It is also an era which has had arguably more major changes than other periods in teacher education and consequently merits discussion in this thesis. In order to help contextualise the background in which the research took place, I felt it helpful to explore these changes in policy and how they have shaped the system of how teachers are trained. Some of these changes in policy were not necessarily driven by an aspiration to improve teacher education per se, but by a Europe wide concurrence: the Bologna Agreement (1999). Other changes arose from a desire by the government at the time (the Labour Party) to modernise the teaching profession. These key changes are discussed further in section 1.7.

### **1.1 Rationale for the research**

The rationale for starting this research is both personal and professional. My career as a teacher educator began in 2006, the same year that Masters level credits were brought into the PGCE (see section 1.7.1). I was intrigued how this might fit into a one year programme, already stretched by demands that trainees spend two thirds of their time on school placement. I was also interested to see how the trainees would engage (or not) with the added pressure of writing an assignment at Masters level. By the time I started this research, I had been in post for a couple of years and had witnessed several cohorts of trainee teachers pass through the one year PGCE programme. Some had jobs in partner schools and a few had become subject mentors to new trainee teachers. Consequently, I was able to see their ongoing development as teachers. Additionally, other ex-trainees became students

on the Masters programme, thus continuing a different relationship with the HEI and staff here. This raised questions – why did some ex trainees want to continue with their studies in a formal setting whilst others seem to have no desire to do so? How are these ex students constructing their identity as teachers?

Sachs (2005:15) described teacher professional identity as the construction of ideas in respect of ‘how to be, how to act and how to understand their place in work’. Trainee teachers would express these first two questions often in subject sessions or personal tutorials at the HEI, sometimes more obliquely, for example, ‘what should I wear when I go to my placement school?’ (personal tutorial). This progression towards being a ‘real’ teacher (Furlong 1995, Kyriacou and Stephens 1999), whilst still studying is as Beijaard et al (2000) described, an ongoing process, constantly changing as experiences are gained.

I was interested in the notion of how trainees best learn to become fully fledged teachers? Is it by learning the craft by “sitting next to Nellie” or through academic study in HEIs or both? By considering how trainee teachers view Masters level credits in their PGCE award, both as an academic experience and as a means to securing a job in teaching, I wanted to explore how they view themselves as teachers and how they construct this notion of what it is to be a teacher.

## **1.2 Theoretical Framework and Methodological approach**

I took an interpretivist theoretical perspective on my study (see 3.2.1) with ‘interpretations of the social life-world’ (Crotty 1998:67). I wanted to hear the stories the trainees told and how they understood their development as teachers, and as such used narrative inquiry (Connelly and Clandinin 1999, Kohler Reissman 2008). I was interested in the trainees’ views of their identity not just in their descriptions but rather a deeper, more reflective understanding (Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

In addition, I have been influenced by grounded theory (see 3.2.3), not in the sense of fully adhering to the ideas of Glaser and Strauss (1967), but by utilising some of the principles of generating theory from empirical data and helping to understand the social process’. In doing so, I have developed a framework based on Shain and Gleeson’s (1999) work as a way of encapsulating the data (see 3.8.2). This was not a linear development, rather an interweaving mix of moving backwards, forwards and sideways through literature, data, notes and my research journal until shape and form began to emerge.

The narrative inquiry and grounded theory used in this study are nonetheless linked by the researcher/participant relationship. This relationship is fundamental in narrative inquiry (Connelly and Clandinin 1999) but one that also has a place in grounded theory (Charmaz 2006). In addition, the methods of data collection are common to both narrative inquiry and grounded theory approaches (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Kohler Reissman 2008).

The narrative case study consists of one whole cohort of one secondary subject studying their PGCE award. The narratives in this study resulted from interviews, questionnaires, emails and telephone conversations with trainee teachers, subject mentors in the university where the study took place, senior teachers and head teachers in six schools where trainees were on placement during their PGCE year. The narratives focus upon the understanding of the key participants of Masters level study within the PGCE and how this might shape the identity of the trainee teachers.

This narrative approach enables 'particularities and context [to] come to the fore' (Kohler Riessman 2008:13) and 'attention shifts to the details' (ibid p12). It also allows 'student teachers and teachers to critically inquire into their own experience and construct their own identities' (Savvidou 2010:650-1). This should also facilitate a 'deeper view of life in familiar contexts; it can make the familiar strange and the strange familiar' (Clough 2002:8).

### **1.3 Setting**

This study took place in an Education Department in a Higher Education Institute (HEI) based in the South West of England. The focus of the study was a secondary subject cohort, during the course of their one year PGCE programme (2010/11). The subject specialism has not been identified in order to maintain anonymity. I can reveal it is a social science based subject rather than a scientific one and as such, would expect the trainees to be able to engage with Masters level writing in education.

The teacher educators in the research sample are employed at the same HEI, as is the MTL leader. The senior professional tutors and head teachers are based in six different schools, all in partnership with the HEI.

### **1.4 Participants**

The subject cohort, numbering twenty one trainees, was the main focus of the study. Additionally, other key participants were identified as key in shaping and influencing the nature of the case including teacher educators of all secondary subjects at the HEI, a senior manager at the university with responsibility for MA and CPD provision, Senior Professional Tutors (SPT) in placement schools and Head Teachers.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

Having firstly identified an area of interest in finding out more about the changes to the PGCE award, to include Masters level credits, the issues I wanted to investigate related to the policy decisions that brought about this modification to the qualification. Why did the PGCE award now have Masters level credits included when, for many years, this was not the case? What were the drivers behind this? Did the trainees engage with the Masters levelness of the qualification wholeheartedly or was it another hoop they had to jump through?

I was also interested in the concept of teacher identity and how trainee teachers move from being a student (on a PGCE course) to being employed as a fully qualified teacher in only 12 months. With this move from trainee to teacher came the attendant responsibilities for managing their own planning, preparation and assessment of many students without the safety net of a mentor (from the school and/or the HEI) being with them for much of the time. I wanted to explore if there were links between my two areas of interest (Masters level credits and teacher identity) from differing standpoints as well as from the trainees themselves.

It was conceivable that associated with teacher identity was how the trainees adapted and developed their own classroom practice as they progressed through their PGCE year. I was curious to see if having Masters level credits had any bearing on this. Did it matter to the

trainees? Did their SPT mentors in school notice any difference between trainees that had achieved at Masters level compared with those that did not?

Finally, a major concern for previous cohorts of trainees was to get a teaching post. In the years preceding this study, most of the trainees had been fortunate enough to secure employment, the exception being those trainees who were limited by the geographical area in which they were able to search. I was interested to examine whether or not having Masters level credits had any impact on this search, from the viewpoint of the trainees, SPTs and head teachers in schools.

These areas of interest were crafted into tighter aims for my study; to explore the construction of the teacher in the context of the 1997-2010 Labour government's desire to make teaching a Masters level profession and the Coalition government's ambition to have a highly qualified, highly skilled, high status teaching profession. To examine how these changes influenced the trainees' ideas of what a teacher is and how a two-tier PGCE award has impacted on the trainees' perceptions of their developing professional identities as teachers, their employment prospects and their classroom practice.

From these professional concerns, the following research questions were created.

1. What are the policy developments that have led to making teaching a Masters level profession?
2. How is the development of trainee teachers' professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into graduate teacher education programmes?
3. To what extent does the inclusion of Masters level credits in the PGCE create two levels of professional identities which affect employment and classroom practice of the trainees?

## **1.6 Teacher Education in the last fifty years**

Although there has been a long history of teacher education in England, dating back to the 'pupil teachers' (Sandiford 1910:43) of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it is the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that I focus upon here. Ball (2003), Goodson (2000), Hargreaves (1994), Sachs (2001) and Whitty et al (1987) have all written extensively about teacher education in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and focus on this era as being significant in respect of transformations made. Hoyle and John (1998), Reynolds (1999) and Furlong (2000) all observed teacher education reform undergoing major changes in the last fifteen years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A summary of the major policy initiatives can be seen in Table 1 below.

Date	Policies relating to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in England	Wider policy context of teaching
1963	Robbins Report – a review of higher education	
1964	Post Graduate Certificate of Education compulsory to teach in state schools	
1965	Introduction of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed).	
1972	The James Report	
1984	Formation of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE). (Abolished 1994)	
1988		National Curriculum
1992	Circular 9/92	Ofsted
1994	Establishment of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA). (Re-launched 2005 as the Training and Development Agency for Schools - TDA)	
1998	Literacy, numeracy and ICT testing introduced	
1999	Bologna Declaration	
2006	PGCE awards now have Masters level credits	
2008		Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) introduced

**Table 1 Key points in ITT and the wider context of teaching**

In considering these key points and the wider context of teaching, it can be seen that these policy decisions have moved teacher training towards more regulation and accountability. It also highlights that teacher autonomy has been significantly undermined (Sachs (2003), Whitty (2006) and Ball (2004)).

### **1.6.1 The Robbins Report to CATE (1963-1984)**

The Robbins Report (1963) reviewed the pattern of higher education in the UK. It called for an improvement in academic qualifications of teachers and an enhancement of the standing of the profession (Hoyle and John 1998). It also led to the introduction of a new qualification aimed at teachers; the B.Ed, a ‘four-year professional degree’ (Wilkin 1996:48). However, this new degree attracted criticism from David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, (Blunkett 2000) for its course content and quality (Crook 2002:60). With the introduction of the B.Ed., teacher training now became part of higher education (Furlong et al 2000:99) with expanded provision into teacher training colleges and polytechnics. As both Hoyle and John (1998:73) and Godwin (2002:90) pointed out, teaching was moving towards an all-trained and an all-graduate profession.

By the 1972 James Report, a number of recommendations which would significantly change teacher education were proposed as it found evidence that the system was no longer fit for purpose. It reported that many courses were over reliant on theory rather than preparing students to teach. Taylor (2008:301) believed the status of teaching could be raised by recruiting better qualified candidates, improving standards and making teacher training research based. However, this seemed to instigate a debate about the nature of ITE, where it was situated and who would run it (Smith and McLay 2007:39) which continues to the present with the publication of the Coalition governments white paper, The Importance of Teaching (DfE 2010).

CATE was set up by the Conservative Government in 1984 to advise and approve courses of Initial Teacher Training (ITT). Each course had to meet published criteria covering curriculum content, entry qualifications, length of course and professional experience. If the

courses were found to be inadequate, they were closed. Thus government 'had created a new mediating agency to extend or universalise its influence within the teacher training community' (Wilkin 1996:152). Furlong et al (2000:100) saw this as a mode of reform of teacher education, challenging those who controlled ITT. According to McCulloch (1994:5), this was how accountability was established, monitored and assessed. However, Clemson (1996:90) saw this as a way of controlling teacher education and Wilkin (1996:151) as a way of representing teacher education and educators.

### **1.6.2 Circular 9/92 and Ofsted**

In 1992, the government acted to reduce the dominance of HEIs as 'central prescription and performativity demands' (Whitty 2006:1) became the trend in educational policy. By introducing Circular 9/92 (DfE 1992:1) there became more exacting requirements regarding partnership arrangements. These ensured schools became 'full partners of higher education' and resulted in a substantial increase in the time trainees spent in schools. In the same year, a new body, Ofsted, started its rigorous inspection procedures in both schools and ITT providers.

### **1.6.3 The Teacher Training Agency (TTA)**

In 1994 the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) replaced CATE and assumed responsibility for overseeing initial teacher education (Furlong et al 2000:101). It was set up to fund and sanction provision of ITT (Menter et al 2006:271), continuing a trend of increased centralisation and control over teacher education and courses (Hoyle and John (1998:79).

In 2005 the TTA was re-launched as the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) with a remit for the development and training of the school workforce (TDA 2005). In April 2012, it became the Teaching Agency (TA) and has subsequently become part of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (see section 1.9.4). This seems to reflect central government's ongoing desire to regulate ITT and ensure rigour, simultaneously suggesting a lack of confidence in teacher training providers to do so itself and a wish to more closely control the training.

### **1.6.4 Literacy, numeracy and ICT tests in the PGCE**

From 1998, trainee teachers had to pass skills tests in literacy, numeracy and ICT in order to be awarded QTS, irrespective of either their undergraduate degree subject, or the subject in which they were training to teach. The tests were designed to assess specific skills in the context of the teacher's professional role, however, they did not replace the requirement to have GCSE grade C equivalent in English and Maths.

At the time this research took place, trainees could take their test at any point during the PGCE year, in any test centre of their choice and as many times as they needed. From September 2012 it was no longer necessary to take an ICT test and from September 2013, trainees had to take and pass tests in literacy and numeracy prior to commencing their PGCE course. Trainees are only allowed two attempts at each subject. Any candidate who fails both attempts in either subject must wait 24 months before they are able to resit.

## **1.7 Policy Contextualisation**

In looking at teaching becoming a Masters level profession, two main policy drivers emerge: the Bologna Declaration (1999) and New Labour's idea of modernising the teaching profession. In the midst of these two major policy drivers was the introduction of Masters level credits within the PGCE award.

### **1.7.1 The Bologna Declaration and Masters level credits in the PGCE**

As a result of the Bologna Declaration (1999:8), a pledge was made to adopt 'a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and postgraduate' and was undertaken by twenty nine countries, including the UK, Ireland, France, Germany and Norway. The previous year, the Sorbonne Declaration (1998:2) was signed by France, Italy, Germany and the UK where 'two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate should be recognised for international comparison and equivalence'.

The Bologna Declaration was a way of establishing a European Area of Higher Education (EHEA) and to promote Higher Education study in Europe (van der Wende 2000). This would enable student and staff mobility throughout Europe, a parity of length of courses, qualification transparency and national quality assurance of programmes (Powell and Solga 2010:707). Arguably this could be construed as a way of standardising Higher Education across Europe, however, the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2007:3) felt this was not the intention of the Bologna process. The Sorbonne Declaration (1998:1) identified that Europe is more than the Euro, banking and economics but 'a Europe of Knowledge as well', a phrase repeated later in the Bologna Declaration (1999:7).

The Bologna Declaration (1999:3) acknowledged that it was not its intention to impose reform onto national governments or HEIs, rather a voluntary measure supported by individual governments, without resorting to legislative measures (Powell and Solga 2010:707). The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee report (2007:3) identified the importance of maintaining 'the autonomy and flexibility that defines the UK higher education system'.

The effect of The Bologna Agreement (1999) in the UK was explained in a statement from the QAA (2001)

titles with the stem 'postgraduate' should be restricted to qualifications where the learning outcome of the programme of study match relevant parts of the descriptor for a qualification at M level or above.

A joint statement by key Higher Education organisations: Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Universities UK (UUK), Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP) and University Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) in 2005 highlighted the problem that now existed with the traditional English teaching qualification, the PGCE. This had always been taken 'to stand for Post Graduate Certificate in Education' (QAA 2005). In practice, courses varied from institution to institution as to whether or not they were pitched at final year undergraduate level or higher levels. The Joint Statement (QAA 2005) attempted to clarify this by adding:

It will be a matter for HEIs to determine the appropriate level of their qualifications and to assign the appropriate title, in line with the following guidance:

Professional Graduate Certificate in Education for those PGCE qualifications which are pitched at Honours level, and align with the FHEQ qualification descriptor at H (honours Level)

Postgraduate Certificate in Education titles for those PGCE qualifications which are pitched beyond Honours level and align with the FHEQ qualification descriptor at M (masters) level.

As a result, since September 2006, PGCE courses in universities in England and Wales offer two separate and different qualifications, albeit with the same shortened acronym, PGCE; the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and the Post Graduate Certificate in Education. This has caused anxiety (Jackson 2009:7) that a two-tier teaching profession may result from these changes i.e. one where those teachers who have “only” achieved Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) are somehow perceived as being second rate to those that have achieved both QTS and Masters levels credits.

### **1.7.2 Modernizing public sector services**

In the UK in 1997, under the newly elected Labour Government, there was a discourse of modernization that underpinned institutional reform as a way to update services to meet the increasingly demanding needs of both consumers and business (Newman 2002:79). This modernization was partly as a result of preceding governmental desire to embrace business principles and management techniques from the private sector and bring them into the public sector – New Public Management (NPM). Newman (2007:29) identified a performance related culture and transparency that portrayed the public sector as being more accountable to the public. However, Kolthoff et al (2006:3) felt that NPM was more about indirect control, rather than direct authority. As a result, Hood (1995:95) argued that there was a shift away from ‘policy making towards managerial skills’.

The ‘New Professionalism’ promoted by the DCSF (2008) appeared to connect well with the NPM. The DCSF (2008:13) intended

to develop and improve teacher quality. We want it to build on the ‘New Professionalism’ agenda...[which] respects teachers as highly skilled individuals, who make judgements and exercise professional autonomy in the classroom within a clear framework of accountability

This coupling of ‘autonomy’ and ‘accountability’ seems to be at odds with the Cabinet Office (2009) where new professionalism is partly defined as including ‘greater freedoms for high performers, both for excellent organisations and front-line staff’ – the autonomy of working in a classroom, but without accountability. Professional identity and professional practice were linked (Watson 2006, Connelly and Clandinin 1999, Beijaard et al 2004) with the potential to impact on those teachers who are not deemed to be ‘high performers’.



Concerns were raised by Bottery (1996:193-4) that many promoted teachers had been selected as they demonstrated characteristics found in NPM managers. Wilkinson (2007:384) went further; 'the policies of structural and managerial commercialisation have affected the behaviour, language and thinking of teachers and other educational professionals so as to transform their professional identities'. This implies that teachers must conform if they are to do well, to be promoted. It also opens the possibility some teachers might be excluded from opportunities to advance their career, which could affect how they see themselves as teachers and their identity therein.

Brehony and Deem (2005:401) noted an increased emphasis on accountability. They argue there was a change in the personal qualities that make a good teacher, with more emphasis on 'technical competences associated with managerial and bureaucratic rules' often linked to greater accountability. There is here a dichotomy between teachers being accountable for their actions (as identified by Hood 1995:94) and being defined as autonomous beings (as identified by the Cabinet Office 2009). This dilemma is further muddled by the idea of professionals (such as teachers) being able to define their own standards of excellence and be given 'much greater freedoms to run their own services' (ibid). By setting their own objectives, it is claimed by the Cabinet Office that teachers will be able to draw upon their 'knowledge, understanding and experience to know what works in the present and what is achievable in the future' (ibid). This raises the question are teachers now in the forefront of policy design, as opposed to following procedures?

This start of 'new professionalism' in teaching was signalled in the 1998 Green Paper, where 'as well as being teachers in the traditional sense, they will also become managers of learning' (DfEE 1998:13). Teachers therefore need 'to accept accountability' and 'to take personal and collective responsibility for improving their skills and subject knowledge' (DfE 1998:14). However, David Willetts, Conservative Shadow Education spokesperson at the time, felt higher standards and enhanced professionalism would be better served if teachers had more freedom and autonomy rather than less (Willetts 1998:13)

What had impacted upon the professionalism of teachers and teaching was how much government became involved with the practice of teaching and learning (Furlong J 2005:124). In doing so, education utilised management skills in moving away from professionalization towards commercialisation (Wilkinson 2007:382). For this, Evetts (2009:22) coined the phrase 'professionalisation from above'. This had a twofold effect; re-professionalisation of newly trained teachers in management roles and de-professionalisation of the work teachers do, including additional non-teaching staff becoming prevalent in the classroom (Ball 2008:137) .

### **1.7.3 Modernising the teaching profession**

In 2007, the UK's Labour Government brought out its ten year plan in the publication *The Children's Plan – Building Brighter Futures* (DCSF 2007). In it, the government stated it wanted to 'make teaching a Masters level profession' (DCSF 2007:10) in order to bring the teaching profession in line with other claimed global high achieving educational systems. One way of doing this was the introduction of a new qualification, specifically aimed at new and recently qualified teachers; the Masters degree in Teaching and Learning (MTL). However, these changes elicited a mixed response; UCET suggested the introduction of the

MTL would result in 'one of the greatest step-changes in teacher status and professionalism since teaching became an all-graduate profession in the 1970s and 1980s' (2008:1).

The process of developing MTL policy showed that it was not straightforward, it brought together various influences, and there were unintended outcomes. This is reflected when looking at the key aims of the two main policy documents written by the DCSF, *The Children's Plan (2007)* and *Being the Best for our Children (2008)*. In considering the former document first, the key aim (DCSF 2007:5) is to 'make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up'. The way the policy sets out how this is to be achieved, specifically in relation to the teaching profession, is through an improvement in the quality of teaching resulting in an improvement in 'standards in schools' (ibid:5). There are links here to NPM that Newman (2002:89) describes as the 'goal of efficiency'. That is, if teachers are better at teaching, and subsequently standards of education increase, it becomes a more effective use of teachers as a resource for the school, the local education authority and the government as a whole. The resultant long term outcome of the policy is that the UK will have a better qualified and 'world class workforce' (DCSF 2007:10).

A second aim was to iron out 'variations in quality' of teaching (DCSF 2007:5). Whilst the publication acknowledges that the UK has many teachers and heads amongst the best in the world, there are disparities which need to be ironed out to ensure children achieve their potential. One way of accomplishing this was by adopting from NPM 'more explicit and measurable ... standards of performance' (Hood 1995:97), which, for the DCSF (2007:88), included performance management. For teachers who struggled to meet these performance indicators, assistance would be provided, including help to leave teaching and enter into alternative career pathways.

This discourse of Masters level study leading to improvements in standards and an increase in "good" teachers seems unclear. In their response to the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee's enquiry into ITT and Continuing Professional Development (CPD), the Institute of Physics (IOP) (2009:3) defined the characteristics of good teachers as 'an ability to relate to children, an ability to communicate clearly, a sound subject knowledge or the potential to acquire it, and an enthusiasm for one's subject'. If this is compared with the DCSF paper (DCSF 2007:88) where 'the best teachers constantly seek to improve and develop their skills and subject knowledge', the emphasis is different. The IOP put children at the forefront of their statement, with subject knowledge coming later, whereas knowledge features more prominently in the DCSF statement. Exploring concepts of identity in the light of this emphasis is key in my research. Day et al (2006) found subject in secondary teaching was strongly connected to identity formation. The DCSF appears to establish a direct correlation between improving the quality of teaching and improving standards of education in young people. It seems unclear exactly how this increase in quality of teaching will occur.

Teaching needs to appeal to graduates as a career option and therefore has to compete with other professions to attract the numbers of teachers needed to fulfil Government targets and future plans. This element of competition means that the public sector is no longer separate from market values (Newman 2007:29) and that there needs to be 'a more competitive basis for providing public services' (Hood 1995:97), ideas which are rooted in NPM. DCSF (2008:12) states the MTL will 'rightly further advance the status of the profession'. The hope

was that by increasing CPD options with the introduction of the MTL, teachers will enhance their own professionalism (Evans 2008:30). The government targeted the MTL at those teachers in their first five years of their career. By restricting the uptake of the MTL in the first instance, there is a danger implementation would not be taken wholeheartedly on board.

#### 1.7.4 Funding for PGCE trainees

The Coalition government from 2010 wanted to attract top graduates into teaching in order to drive up standards in schools. In order to do so, financial incentives are now offered to trainees who have the following classification of undergraduate degree, studying for certain subjects (DfE 2013a). This was in part offered as a solution to recruiting high calibre Maths and Science teachers into the profession, where currently there is a shortage (DfE 2010)

	Physics, Chemistry, Maths	MFL	Other priority subjects (English, Geography, History, Latin, Greek, Music, Biology, Physical Education)
1 <sup>st</sup> class degree	£20,000	£20,000	£9,000
2:1	£15,000	£15,000	£4,000
2:2	£12,000	£12,000	nil

Table 2 Funding for PGCE 2013/14

The hope here appears to be that by offering such incentives, graduates who might not have considered teaching as a career might be motivated to do so, or those already in employment might consider a career change. Additionally, the Government wants to 'raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession' (DfE 2010:9) and so act as an incentive those that have higher classification degrees and to be a disincentive to those who do not. Whereas I can see that teaching needs to have entrants to the profession that are competent in their subject, a good classification in their undergraduate degree does not necessarily correlate to being a good teacher in the classroom (see 4.12.2).

#### 1.7.5 Is teaching a craft or a profession?

The Coalition Government from 2010 also sparked a debate whether teaching is a craft or a profession when at the National College Annual Conference in 2010, the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove (2010) purported

Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom.

This reiterated what was said in the White Paper (DfE 2010:19) that 'too little teacher training takes place on the job'. The University and College Union (UCU) disputed this, saying 'teaching is a profession...[that] clearly requires high levels of subject knowledge and pedagogical expertise along with continual reflection on and development of those professional skills and qualities' (UCU 2010b:8). This is echoed by Surman's introduction in SCETT paper (2011:7) summarising the concerns that contributors to that publication share; the belief that 'teaching is a real profession, rooted in subject knowledge, rather than simply being a craft'. Later in that paper, Noble-Rogers (SCETT 2011:14) conceded that 'teaching

is partly a craft...but there's more to it than that'. Lawes (SCETT 2011:24) expanded 'classroom competences is not all that matters and teaching is not simply a craft. Initiation into teaching requires more than practice and observing good teachers' (see 4.12.7).

### **1.8 Summary of the key drivers/themes in teacher education policy**

The move to make teaching firstly a graduate profession (The Robbins Report 1963) and then secondly a Masters level profession (DCSF 2007) was seen as a way to improve standards of teaching and thus increase pupil attainment (DfE 2011). At the same time, NPM techniques were brought into the public sector (Newman 2007) with teachers having increased accountability (Brehony and Deem 2005). The resulting 'quasi market' (Whitty 1997, Ball 1994) also brought an increase in governmental control over teaching and teacher education. This shift in power away from universities into the hands of government mirrors what has happened in schools with a more prescribed curriculum, increased testing, inspections, measurement and league tables (Biesta 2012). As a result, teacher education has been 'reshaped and restructured' (Hodson et al 2012:181) with a focus more on practice based learning and less on theory.

Both New Labour and the Coalition Government have policies which look towards better qualified teachers and a 'world class workforce' (DCSF 2007:10). The expectation is that new entrants to teacher training will come from 'among the top graduates' (DfE 2011:9). The way both governments set about achieving this was different; Labour focused on introducing the MTL and encouraging all new teachers to progress into Masters level study in their first few years of teaching. The Coalition have however, ceased funding the MTL, preferring instead to raise the entrance expectations and funding for initial teacher training. There is more research to be carried out here into the effects changes in how teachers are trained, where this training takes place, the role of the HEI and on the impact of teacher supply and morale. This is also links to my research questions as it is timely to explore conceptions of teaching and teacher identity in the light of such changes.

### **1.9 Changes in education terminology**

As can be seen from the sections above, terminology has changed both in the official government publications and in the profession itself since the early 1990s and the inception of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA). Here I look at how the participants on teacher training courses are known, the change from providers being known as educators to becoming trainers, how the school experience element of becoming a teacher moved from being known as teaching practice, to becoming teacher placement and how the TTA itself was created, its reincarnation and subsequently becoming subsumed into the Department of Education.

The Government Department responsible for Education has also had a number of reincarnations since 1992 (see Table 3 below).

Year	Name	Abrieviation
1964-1992	Department of Education and Science	DES
1992-1995	Department for Education	DfE
1995-2001	Department for Education and Employment	DfEE
2001-2007	Department for Education and Skills	DfES
2007-2010	Department for Children, Schools and Families	DCSF
2010-	Department for Education	DfE

**Table 3 Name changes in the Department for Education since 1964**

It seems to be the case that these name changes reflect the pace of reforms undertaken by successive governments from the late 1980s and beyond. Following on from this, it could be argued that the most significant name change was the one in 2010, which reflected a shift in political ideology and policy priorities from New Labour, to that of the Coalition Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. The implication here is that this change shifts the focus away from children, schools and families back to education in it broadest terms.

### **1.9.1 Trainee teacher versus student teacher**

Those who undertake higher education at undergraduate level are almost exclusively referred to as students by themselves, their lecturers, and those outside the educational environs. In its 1992 Initial Teacher Training Circular, the DfE refers to students throughout, however, by time of publication of Circular 10/97, (Teaching: High Status, High Standards) the DfEE (1997) changed its terminology to describe those participating on PGCE courses as trainees. This is different from those training to become teachers in Scotland, where they are all registered with a university (Menter et al 2006:279) and as such are known as students. In England, once other routes into teaching were introduced that did not have direct university involvement, the word ‘student’ did not fit with the conventional meaning of what a student was and as a consequence, beginner teachers in England became known as trainees. This has implications for trainee teacher identity in how the student/trainee sees themselves.

### **1.9.2 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) versus Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

Likewise, the difference between England and Scotland continues with the discussion as to whether or not beginner teachers are educated or trained. Patrick et al (2003:238) discussed there being a culture of teacher education in Scotland, but an ethos of training in England. Interestingly, Government departmental publications from the early 1990s refer throughout to initial teacher training (DfE1992, DfEE 1997, DfES 2004) and not initial teacher education. This is in line with Ovens’ (2000:177) views that Government official documentation and speeches refer to young people as being educated but beginner teachers as being trained. Furlong (2002:23) highlighted that ‘the official discourse now exclusively refers to teacher “training” rather than teacher “education”’. The TTA, almost exclusively refers to initial teacher training; however, most universities prefer initial teacher education (King 2004:197). Crook (2002) in his overview of teacher training in Britain since the 1950s, refers to ITT throughout. Patrick et al (2003:238) raises an interesting question, ‘do we *educate* beginning teachers or do we *train* them?’

### 1.9.3 Teaching Practice versus Teaching Placement

The DfE circular 9/92 (1992:3:4:2) indicated that students should have the ‘opportunity to practise teaching’ in two different schools in their training. More recently, the DfE (2013a) in its guidance on PGCE course content, explains that trainee teachers ‘undertake supervised teaching practice’.

Somewhat confusingly, many PGCE prospectuses from HEIs refer to both placement and practice interchangeably; Sheffield Hallam (2012) talked of ‘school placements, including two continuous blocks of time on teaching practice’. Worcester University (2013) provide two teaching placements and Kingston University, London (2013) discussed ‘assessed practice placements’. Hull University (2012) has a section in its guidance for PGCE trainees headed ‘Teaching Practice Placements’ and similarly, the teaching union, NASUWT (2012) also had guidance for trainees with this heading.

### 1.9.4 Government ITE/ITT Agencies: Teacher Training Agency (TTA), Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), Teaching Agency (TA) and The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL)

Year	Name	Abbreviation
1994	Teacher Training Agency	TTA
2005	Training and Development Agency for Schools	TDA
2012	Teaching Agency	TA
2013	National College for Teaching and Leadership	NCTL

Table 4 Government teaching agencies since 1994

In 1994 the TTA was established to fund and improve the quality of teacher training, raise teaching standards and provide advice on teaching careers (Records of the Teacher Training Agency and Successors 2012). It was relaunched in 2005 with an expanded remit to include the whole school workforce. In 2012 the Teaching Agency was established as an executive agency to replace the TDA and also included some areas previously covered by the General Teaching Council for England. As such, it was responsible for both the training of teachers and regulating the teaching profession. In 2013, the TA was merged with the National College for School Leadership to form a new agency, the NCTL. Its aim is to improve the quality of the education workforce and to help schools improve (NCTL 2013).

### 1.10 Thesis structure

This chapter locates the context of teacher education by focusing on its history over the past 50 years. It considers how terminology in education has changed from the Government department responsible for education, how beginner teachers are referred to, whether the trainees are ‘trained’ or ‘educated’, if they experience teaching practice or placement, and the different government agencies responsible for teaching.

Chapter 2 examines debates surrounding the role of the teacher, specifically considering teacher identity and professionalism which emerged during the 1980s and 1990s. It traces the arguments surrounding professionalism, professionality and professionalization in teaching. Additionally, I have drawn on literature relating to teacher identity to inform my view of how trainees develop into teachers. This chapter also explains the basis of how I chose to frame my data and categorise the responses gathered.

Chapter 3 provides the methodological rationale for the fieldwork and presents the methods used in this study. The narrative case study allows both points of view of 'narrator and analyst' (Kohler Riessman 2000, no page numbers) to be seen, which assisted in analysing the trainees' experiences in how it shaped their identities. This chapter considers the choices made in respect of the research design, methods and analysis. It also considers the impact of being an insider researcher and the ethical issues which arose from this.

Chapter 4 presents the data of how trainee teachers' self image and their construction of their identities, form as teachers in the light of the push to make teaching a Masters level profession. In addition, I have considered how teacher educators, an MTL Leader, SPTs and head teachers view Masters level credits in the PGCE. This chapter offers a way of categorising trainee teachers in seeing how they develop their identity as teachers, in the light of Masters level study within the PGCE

Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the study. It considers the implications of what a change in policy to make teaching a Masters level profession means from the participants' viewpoints. It discusses how professional identity for trainee teachers develops in the light of this policy change and the impact that having a two tier PGCE award has on employment prospects and their classroom practice.

## **CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Since the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) the role of a teacher has changed significantly, particularly within the relationship between the Department for Education (DfE) and Local Authorities (LA) in giving new responsibilities to schools. A large percentage of the budget held by LAs was devolved to schools through Local Management of Schools (LMS), Key Stages were brought in where educational objectives were set, the National Curriculum was introduced for most subjects and parents were given an element of choice as to where their children could be educated. These changes were in part a result of the government's response to political and financial problems caused by the increasing cost of providing public services (such as schools) and the subsequent difficulties in managing employees in this sector (Evetts 2009:26). As a result of these changes, a culture of accountability emerged, particularly impacting on how teacher professionalism is structured and formed (DCSF 2008). A connection could be made that this resulted in a shift in power with less autonomy and more accountability (Evans 2008:21). She exemplified this by pointing out that most of these changes were as a result of government intervention most notably during the 1980s and 1990s (Evans 2008:23). This period too was when teacher identity emerged as a research area (Beijaard et al 2004:108). Quicke (2000:303) and Furlong (2005:120) believed that professionalism was redefined by government policy in the 1980s and 1990s and as such, my literature review starts from this point.

This chapter concentrates on two particular areas; professionalism and identity. As can be seen in section 1.7.3, New Labour wanted to 'boost the status of teaching still further, we now want it to become a masters-level profession' (DCSF 2007:88). It therefore seemed important for this study to look at what a profession is and whether or not teaching can be classified thus. It became apparent when researching this area, that there was debate surrounding professionalism, professionality and professionalization and how these can be defined. I also considered what changes have occurred in the professional landscape regarding teaching and therefore what professionalism looks like in teaching. This is covered in the first section of this chapter. The second section looks at what identity is, how trainee teachers might develop their own teaching identity, what multiple identities are, how identities may shift and how identity could be linked to communities of practice. The final section looks at how other researchers have researched Masters level credits in the PGCE.

### **2.1 What is professionalism, professionality and professionalization?**

As Furlong et al (2000:4) stated the concept of professional is a contested term. Hoyle (1982:162) defined professionalism as the improvement of status of an occupation and professionality as the improvement of skills within that occupation. Professionalization, Hoyle (ibid) characterised, as the process whereby an occupation meets the criteria (more or less) of being a profession. This contrasts with Ozga (1995:35) who viewed professionalism as a form of occupational control of teachers. As Evans (2008:23) pointed out, professionalism is not just about how much control teachers actually have but how proactive they are. Hilferty (2008:161) stated that professionalism is something that is constantly being 'defined and redefined through educational theory, practice and policy'. Helsby (1995:318) in her research into teacher professionalism found there to be a dichotomy between characteristics such as commitment and highly skilled practice. She termed the former group as professionalisation



and thought these related to the self interest of the group and the latter as professionalism, which she felt had a more altruistic rationale to them. The challenge to gain the characteristics that a profession was deemed to have, Whitty (2000:282) termed 'professionalization'. Despite this, Helsby (1995:317) maintained that professionalism 'cannot be clearly and simply defined'.

In research by Hargreaves (2000) on teacher professionalism, he suggests four historical stages of evolution: the 'pre-professional age, the age of the autonomous professional, the age of the collegial professional' and 'the fourth age – post professional or post modern' (Hargreaves 2000:153). There are similarities here to Barber's (2005) use of a matrix to describe four periods in education: 1970s uninformed professionalism, 1980s uninformed prescription, 1990s informed prescription and 2000s informed professionalism. There are differences however, whilst Barber is specific about each time frame, Hargreaves is less clear as to when each of his stages begin and end. Hargreaves (2000) espouses the viewpoint of teachers, whereas Barber (2005), as an advisor to New Labour, views his categories from a policy perspective and accordingly, both are shaped by their orientations.

In terms of this study, Hargreaves (2000) echoes Barton et al (1994) that teacher training has shifted from being mostly based in HEIs to predominantly taking place in schools (DfE 1992). This raises the question of how knowledge is extended if trainees can only copy the practices they observe from their school mentors and are not given time and space to reflect? Additionally, who is it that makes the decisions as to what valid knowledge is – teachers or government? These points raise further issues regarding how autonomous trainee teachers will be able to be, once they have qualified, particularly with the introduction of the National Curriculum, the over-reliance on league tables and increased accountability. This raises two key elements in teaching and the teaching profession; what autonomy do teachers have and who decides and controls knowledge acquisition?

The period in teaching prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 has been referred to as the 'golden age' (McCulloch et al 2000:42). They reveal an era of greater teacher freedom to experiment and to teach what they wished; a period of great autonomy. However, Dainton (2005:161) felt this period represented 'a little too much permissive individualism' especially regarding what was taught. In spite of this, Dainton (2005:162) felt that Barber was incorrect in labelling it a period of uninformed professionalism; 'we had a strong sense of our professional identity'. This accords with McCulloch et al (2000:47) who contested 'teacher professionalism is linked explicitly to these ideals' of autonomy.

## **2.2 Is teaching a profession?**

During the 1950s and 1960s, sociologists endeavoured to define what features an occupation needed in order for it to be judged a profession (Whitty 2000:281). The type of features included 'the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge, education and training in these skills certified by examination, a code of professional conduct...and a powerful professional organisation' (Whitty 2000:281)

To Hoyle (1982:163) there was little doubt in his mind that teaching met the criteria to be judged as a profession. He argued now that teaching was an all graduate profession, initial teacher training time had increased and the academic content of courses had improved, trainee teachers now have a more substantial knowledge base. Thus in his mind, a more

competent teaching force has been produced. However, whether or not this has improved the status of teaching is unclear. Similarly to Hoyle (1982), Furlong et al (2000:5) argued that knowledge, autonomy and responsibility are central to the notion of professionalism in teaching. Nevertheless, what it means to be a professional, and in particular, how autonomous teaching is, have been contested

Hargreaves (2000:152) thought that traditionally, professions depend in part on the image of those that belong to them, who promote their interests, have clear technical knowledge, share good practice, can clearly identify client needs, have long training periods and have a high degree of autonomy. It is perhaps however, the last of these (autonomy) that causes most concern for teaching as Government intervention (from all political parties) has impacted on the extent to which teachers have autonomy over what they do and potentially teacher identity.

### **2.3 What does professionalism look like in teaching?**

Sachs (2005:15) describes teacher professional identity as being:

at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society

The implication from Sachs here seems to be that the professional identity of a teacher informs their classroom practice, thereby linking identity with professionalism. This view illuminates the multiple dimensions of what teachers' professionalism is both from a personal and a professional standpoint. Sachs (ibid) continues by pointing out that identity is not fixed or imposed, but something that is collaborated; sense can be made of it through the teachers' experience. It seems professionalism and therefore professional identity could be something that can be shaped, adjusted and even changed dependent upon the experience.

Although Mockler (2005:734) cites exemplars from Australia, her premise that teacher professionalism is 'highly contested' in its relationship between teachers and government has resonance in England too. Other stakeholders including unions, parents and universities are also contribute to this struggle for professionalism in teaching and ultimately, who has control of determining teachers work. The government in England shapes the National Curriculum and programmes of study in state schools, sets attainment targets at the end of each key stage which excludes teacher knowledge of students, abilities, strengths and weaknesses. This highlights not just who has power but emphasizes the lack of autonomy that teachers experience. Trainee teachers have even less autonomy at this stage in their careers; schemes of work have already been designed, classes commenced, assignments set and a way of working established. For the trainees, teacher professionalism must seem prescribed with little chance of shaping it at this point in their career. It is highly likely therefore that trainees will absorb a sense of this model of professionalism during their training: but this requires further research.

Teacher education in England has been reformed in both its structure and content. It has moved from being largely based in universities, to being mostly based in schools (Whitty 2006:6). In addition, new 'standards' were brought in to replace the statements of competences, against which all trainee teachers were to be measured. By focusing on the standards Wray (2006) suggested it concentrates on the practicality of what trainees do

rather than how they think. As Whitty (2006:7) pointed out, these competences needed to be 'underpinned by clear professional values' if teachers were to become the type of professionals needed for the future. Ofsted too inspect teacher training providers to ensure its effectiveness. If HEIs are judged not to be up to standard, then there is a real danger that future allocation of training places at that HEI will be cut or even removed altogether. These factors combine to impact on and influence how teacher professionalism is viewed.

It could be considered an attractive proposition for an occupation to be deemed a profession and for workers to be called professional (Evetts 2003:396). She suggested that researchers need to move away from trying to define what a profession is towards an analytical approach to how professionalism can help with occupational change. In her view, 'accountability and performance indicators have now become a fundamental aspect of professionalism' (Evetts 2003:408). This is a point emphasised in the Green Paper of 1998, where teachers were advised to 'accept accountability' (DfE 1998:14) as part of new professionalism in teaching (see 1.2.3).

Levitt et al (2008:vii) were commissioned by the GTCE to undertake a literature review in order to inform proposals for a new accountability framework for teachers in England. They observe that major changes have occurred in schools in respect of their practices and policies and as a result, there has been an increase in external monitoring. This was in part the rationale behind the establishment of the GTCE and consequently it regulated teachers' professional conduct and practice.

Levitt et al (2008:23) found the public perception of the role of a teacher was 'educating', 'responsibility for children' and 'controlling the class' were common words used to describe teachers duties. There was little mention of 'expertise', 'qualifications' or 'nature of work' often found in descriptions of other professions. However, that is to say these latter ideas do not exist; rather they are not in the forefront of the public's mind in that research. This might be regarded as a problem, particularly if Government (both the Labour party and the Coalition) want to encourage more graduates to consider teaching as a career choice. If new graduates are of the same opinion as the respondents in Levitt et al (2008) then they might be discouraged from thinking teaching offers opportunities for expertise or the status which other professions do.

The Hay McBer (2000) report, commissioned by the DfEE, analysed behaviour of a small number of outstanding teachers and extrapolated the professional qualities these teachers had in order to improve schools. These qualities were categorised under three headings: Teaching skills (see figure 1 below), professional characteristics (see figure 2 below) and classroom climate. However, BERA (2001) felt this only gave a limited insight into the complex work teachers do. This linkage of teacher behaviour and pupil outcome correlates with the political driver to improve educational standards in schools (Wrigley 2003). If teaching is reduced to a series of individual competences, it implies low trust and high levels of scrutiny (Mahoney and Hextall 2000) that can be observed and judged.

Whilst Hay McBer (2000) identified strong characteristics that many excellent teachers have, there is a suggestion of a causal relationship between particular skills and characteristics of the teacher on one hand, and the performance of the student on the other. It does not seem that Hay McBer takes into account the differences in types of students, in styles of schools, in work pace. The report does not suggest any particular teaching strategies that teachers

might adopt in order to be the excellent teacher described and as a result, it feels like a list of competences that need to be achieved in order to be a truly professional teacher.

(Figure removed due to copyright)

**Figure 1 Hay McBer (2000) Professional characteristics**

(Figure removed due to copyright)

**Figure 2 - Hay McBer (2000) Teaching Skills**

Some of the status and standing that is necessary for teaching to be considered a profession, came from the fact that to enter teaching, participants have to have a degree (Maguire 2008:49). What it appears the current Coalition Government has done, is to have tried to raise the status of teaching still further by funding students by the classification of undergraduate degree they achieve (see 1.7.4).

Although recent reforms to teaching have challenged the concept of teacher professionalism, Sachs (2001:153) did not consider there to be a problem with the idea of a professional identity; she viewed it as something that had been forced onto teachers and the teaching profession from within teaching and by policy makers outside education. Sachs (2001:154) drew a parallel between policy and identity, and whilst that perhaps is uncontested by most researchers, she does assume that teachers will engage with a collective view of the political and professional. I am unsure whether or not this is necessarily the case for trainee teachers, when they are still in the embryonic stage of their own development as teachers.

Swann et al (2010:555) surveyed teachers to establish their views of professionalism in teaching and initially found 50 key statements that were identified as key concepts. These were later reduced to 33 in their final survey. I suggest that this is still a large list for respondents to a questionnaire to digest and grade on a Likert scale. Indeed, the response rate was 15% (ibid:556) which might be down to 'questionnaire fatigue' (ibid:557). Their findings suggested that teachers do not have a 'single integrated view of professionalism' (ibid:566) but a range of concerns in this area. The greatest difference was found in teachers' views on autonomy in teaching (ibid:563). This is something that will be explored further in the research process when discussing the data in Chapter 4 (see Table 76).

In exploring how teachers' professionalism and subsequent opportunity for progression has changed since the Education Reform Act 1998 (ERA 1998) and in particular the period of Government under New Labour, Leaton Gray and Whitty (2010:18) focused on three particular roles associated with teaching; Firstly, Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA). This raised the issue of levels of teacher autonomy, the blurring of roles and questions what teachers actually do in the classroom (Wilkinson 2005:429). Secondly the role of Teach First and how teacher knowledge is acquired. Whilst teaching has been a graduate profession for some time, the introduction of the Teach First initiative seemed to shortcut the need for specialist professional training, through PGCE courses. There is also the question of commitment to teaching as those on Teach First programmes are only expected to stay in teaching for two years. In practice, many do stay longer, but there still remains a conflict between the two methods of training as to how teacher professionalism is conceptualized. Finally, Advanced Skills Teachers (AST) where good teachers are encouraged to remain in the classroom rather than apply for senior management posts, although this role has now ended, resulted in a competency based approach to promotion to AST, not seen in those choosing to go through the deputy head route. From their investigation, Leaton Gray and Whitty (2010:20) conclude that there is 'significant professional fragmentation' occurring which made it virtually impossible for teaching to remain cohesive and as a result, made it difficult for the public to really know what it is that teachers do. However, Leaton Gray and Whitty (2010) did not consider the introduction of Cover Supervisors in their research; this raises the question of the role a teacher has in the classroom and the need for specific qualifications to deliver that function. The growing number of other adults in the classroom may also result in confusion in the mind of the pupil as to who to turn to for support, help or advice. All of these factors could cloud how a teacher views their own identity and additionally, the notion of the public perception of teachers and teaching.

## 2.4 What are the changes in the professional landscape regarding teaching?

In 1998, the DfEE published *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change*, a Green Paper to bring in an era of new professionalism in teaching. In this, the Government wanted teachers to have high expectations of themselves and their pupils, be accountable for their actions, take responsibility for their own professional developments and work with others such as parents, business and other schools in order to change and innovate (Thompson 2001). This was referred to by Sachs (2001:153) as 'democratic professionalism' and by Evetts (2009:23) as 'occupational professionalism'. What professionalism meant and the attributes that it entailed had been difficult to determine (Helterbran 2008:124). She felt that the literature on the subject does not have a universally accepted view of what professionalism is. In her research with trainee teachers, she found that when asked what contributes to their professionalism, most listed items that related to teaching competences. Although her research was carried out in the United States, it is reasonable to assume similar results would be found here in the UK.

It has been argued that over a period of several years, various policy interventions have resulted in less autonomy and greater accountability through increased monitoring and target setting (Gleeson and Knights 2006:280). This point is echoed by Evans (2008:21) who stated that 'autonomy has evidently given way to accountability'. The result, Gleeson and Knights (2006:280) argue is a decrease in trust and a possible de-professionalizing professional practice. This concurred with the ATL's view (2005:3) that Government policy demonstrated a lack of trust in the teaching profession. Gleeson and Knights (2006) paper was written on the basis of a sociological discourse rather than an educational one. Nevertheless, education has been subject to much the same marketisation and managerialism that other such public professionals have been party to. Quicke (2000:303) went further in his exploration of marketisation; head teachers now have a greater role in education and have become responsible for ensuring their schools are able to meet the market demands, to be more flexible and more efficient. Indeed Whitty (2000:285) felt that some teachers would be given greater autonomy and flexibility if for example they made suitable progress by passing through the performance pay threshold.

The Government paper, *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* (DfES 2004:66) discussed a variety of changes to teaching which claimed would

usher in a new professionalism for teachers, in which career progression and financial rewards will go to those who are making the biggest contributions to improving pupil attainment, those who are continually developing their own expertise and those who help to develop expertise in other teachers.

However, Dainton (2005:163) found this to be naive and arrogant of the Government to think it might define professionalism on behalf of teachers; she believed that it was up to teachers themselves to determine what it means to be a professional. The issue here seems to be that teachers themselves have not had a consistent voice. This is in part due to the proliferation of teachers and head teachers unions, subject associations and (in the past) the GTC, all having to compete for members and all having slightly different vision both in what they want to achieve and how they approach it.

It could be argued that external agencies that have defined the boundaries of a profession's authority, power and influence, which Evans (2008:23) referred to as 'a service level agreement, imposed from above'. Similarly, Whitty (2000:283) portrayed this as 'regulated autonomy' where teaching became subject to market forces and where there was greater control and monitoring by the government. This is prevalent in the UK, particularly from the 1980s onwards, where the governments from all political parties have increased their role and the control exerted over the teaching profession.

There appears to be a culture in England that demanded a performance from its teachers. This included target setting, the introduction of Ofsted inspections at all levels in education, school league tables, the use of performance management techniques to motivate staff, performance related pay, the introduction of threshold assessment necessary to progress further up the pay scale and the creation of advanced skills teachers. According to Troman (2008:620), this made teachers accountable for their actions. The underlying government policy behind the introduction of these measures was to improve pupil achievement. However Troman (ibid) considered there were unintended consequences for identity, commitment and how teachers viewed their careers. Although his study was based in the primary sector, I feel that there are significant similarities in how teachers are accountable and how these techniques are used to drive up achievement in the secondary sector to have relevance here.

## **2.5 Masters level credits in the PGCE**

As discussed in 1.7.1, the Bologna Declaration instigated the move to have Masters level credits in the PGCE. As a result, HEIs offered differing Masters credits for the PGCE, with 60 credits being the most common. (Graham-Matheson (2010:2). As Sewell (2007) also noted, there are many different configurations of how HEIs meet the requirements of the PGCE.

From the perspective of the teacher educators, assessment of Masters level work can be an issue (Graham-Matheson (2010:13), particularly at the borderline between pass and fail. Some tutors may have limited experience of assessing work at Masters level and as such, may need additional support (Sewell 2007). However, assessment can be a concern, even for those tutors who were experienced (Edwards and Pope 2006:51). This is perhaps symptomatic of the rush in which this policy was implemented in HEIs, offering little opportunity to train teacher educators.

Both Graham-Matheson (2010) and Edwards and Pope (2006) appear to have focused on Masters level credits from the perspective of either teacher educators or HEI in which they work. Neither seems to have included the trainees' voice in their papers, nor other stakeholders in the PGCE such as partnership school heads or mentors. Both raise similar issues with the inclusion of Masters level credits in the PGCE, including the time constraints of the course, assessment and moderation of what constitutes Masters levelness and the capability of tutors to support such studies. Sewell's (2007) paper, written at the time Masters level credits were brought into the PGCE, was part of a guide aimed at teacher educators discussing how such programmes could be organised and how to incorporate Masters level teaching into an existing course.

Having Masters level credits in the PGCE also raises the question of how students link the relationship between theory and practice and what constitutes teacher knowledge? There

can be a disparity between practical and formal knowledge that exists with trainees (Korthagen 2010). Perhaps the introduction of Masters level credits can go some way to bridging this by promoting links between theory, research and practice (Sewell 2007).

In Jackson's (2009:61) study, head teachers were 'hazy' about Masters level study within the PGCE and seemed undecided about its benefit. The feeling seemed to be that Masters level study was perhaps best suited for those more established in their career, rather than those just embarking in the profession. In her summary, Jackson (2009:62) found heads and teacher mentors felt

not all teachers need this; there is a difference between the 'job' of teaching and this 'academic' qualification which is separate and somewhat irrelevant to everyday practice; a 'good' teacher is not someone with high qualifications.

It is possible, that at the time Jackson carried out her research (in 2007 and 2008) HEIs were still in the early stages of implementing the change to the PGCE award and as a result, may not have invested much time in training heads and mentors in this area. There may also be an issue here about how HEIs markets their PGCE courses; are there clear references to the two different awards in the prospectus, the website and in correspondence with partner schools?

Following a change of Government in 2010, and the publication of the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE 2010) little has been said about educating teachers to Masters level. New Labour wanted teaching to be 'a Masters level profession' (DCSF 2007:10) and one way to achieve this was by introducing the MTL (see 1.7.1). This qualification could follow on from the PGCE and was specifically aimed at NQTs'. The Coalition Government however has cut funding to the MTL, instead saying teachers should decide for themselves which Masters courses they should pursue (TES 2010). They have also raised the entry level requirements to commence a PGCE (DfE 2010:21) and introduced incentives to encourage the best graduates to enter the teaching profession (see 1.7.4). Nevertheless there are similarities between both governments' policies: Teachers who are both highly skilled and highly qualified, with teaching having a high status. It is the method of achieving this which differs.

## **2.6 Review of literature on professionalism**

From the literature on professionalism, two key elements emerged in relation to my study; autonomy and knowledge. Hargreaves (2000) felt the notion of autonomy for teachers related to government interference, employers' control and other professionals. According to Sachs (2003), Whitty (2006) and Ball (2004), there has been significant undermining of teacher autonomy with the introduction of the National Curriculum, of increasing inspections and with National Strategies dictating how literacy and numeracy should be taught. As a result, teachers 'teach to the test and follow standardized curriculum scripts' (Hargreaves 2003:xvii). However, the Government felt 'teachers must be free to use their professionalism and expertise to support all children to progress' (DfE 2010:42). Yet, this freedom is restricted to academies and free schools and not available to all state schools. Even in these settings, both pressures from Ofsted and from the publication of league tables mean schools continue to be judged on the performance of their students and exam results. As a



consequence, teachers are now more accountable but have limited say on the development of the curriculum; therefore, can they really be autonomous?

The second element in the literature on professionalism is knowledge acquisition (Hargreaves (2000), Furlong et al (2000) and Swann et al (2006). In the Green Paper of 1998, teachers were called upon to 'to take personal and collective responsibility for improving their skills and subject knowledge' (DfE 1998:14). Later, the White Paper (DfE 2010) moved this emphasis onto the necessity and importance of academic qualifications in order to train to be a teacher. Professional knowledge was described by Eraut (1985:120) as 'the knowledge possessed by individuals that enables them to perform professional work with quality'. This links to Hargreaves (2000) idea that it is necessary to have a strong knowledge base to support teachers' professionalism. However, subject knowledge is only one aspect of knowledge needed to teach. Consideration also needs to be given to pedagogical knowledge; that is, not just about knowing your subject but about disseminating that knowledge appropriately to the students.

## **2.7 What is identity?**

Beijaard et al (2000:750) stated that identity formation is an ongoing process, interpreting and reinterpreting experiences as they are lived. Similarly, Flores and Day (2006:220) described identity as something that is a continuing, active process which involved making sense of and interpreting values and experiences. The research here appears to be saying that identity is not a stable entity, that it is a continuous, changing and shifting concept that helps teachers to make sense of themselves both in context to others and where they work. Despite having only one participant in her study, Watson (2006:509) offered a case for not thinking about identity, rather a continuing course of identification. This, she claimed, was because identity is not just something inside of one, but is connected to the relationship between the individual and others. In the professional context of teaching, she maintained that who we believe we are impacts on what we do. This is a similar concept to Connelly and Clandinin (1999:3) who discussed the link between teacher identity, knowledge and context. Watson (2006:510) took this further to consider how this link could be achieved and one way of doing this would be to construct a narrative in which teachers tell themselves and others of their lives. These links she conceded were complex (ibid:525) as professional identity and professional practice are not just linked in one directional way but change and shift with time and differing perspectives. However, narrative allows a place where practice and identity can meet.

Beijaard et al (2004:122) reviewed literature on teacher identity. However, they restricted themselves to a 12 year period which they considered to be the era when research into teacher identity emerged. Nevertheless, they found it hard to find a consensus to define teacher identity within the literature. They found more explicit definition within stories that represent teacher identity. This links to Connelly and Clandinin (1999) and Watson (2006) who researched identity through narrative accounts of teacher identity.

Stronach et al (2002:116) thought that there is 'no such thing as a teacher or a nurse...teacher and nurse 'identities' suggested a more fragmented possibility'. They considered the notion of identity to be something that is insecure, moveable and often paradoxical in nature. Sachs (2001:155) did not agree and believed that having such an identity is what makes being a teacher stand out as being dissimilar to other jobs or workers.

Watson (2006:509) took a differing view and maintained that there is no fixed point of reference for having an identity, rather it is dependent upon the relationships with others (teachers, pupils, other educational workers, or parents for example). Franzak (2002:258) termed this 'negotiated identity' where teachers have to constantly construct and reconstruct what it is to be a teacher. This appears as if identity is something that is acquired, defined, redefined and socially constructed. This was how Watson (2006:510) saw a link between what teachers do and who they think they are. This was especially true, as identified by Franzak (2002:259), of trainee teachers who, whilst out on school placement, have to negotiate who they are and where they enact this role of teacher.

## **2.8 How do trainee teachers develop their identity?**

Raffo and Hall (2006:64) theorised how trainee teachers' development and growth was impacted on and influenced by placements during the PGCE training year. They found the trainee's disposition towards teaching was strongly influenced by her own and her family's experience of education (Raffo and Hall 2006:61). Her ideals surrounding teaching were exceeded in her first placement, from which she gained a positive outcome. However in her second placement, she was unable to transfer her skills she learnt in her first school placement into the fluid nature of a FE college. This resonates with my research (see 4.5). However, their study focused on only one trainee. Consequently, it would be interesting to know whether the results would be similar for the whole cohort during that academic year, or indeed, the same for other trainees in subsequent years, placed in the same schools and colleges for their teaching placements.

Flores and Day (2006:223) in their research found three key influences on trainee teachers construction of their identity; *prior influences* which related to the trainees' own experiences of being a pupil themselves, *initial teacher training and teaching practice* which considered the trainees' motivation for commencing training as a teacher and their formal learning and the *context of learning* where their experience of classroom practice and the culture of the school in which they were placed were analysed. Although the participants in their study were based in Portugal and working in 'Elementary Schools (10-15 year olds)' (ibid:221), there are similarities in the experiences of these beginning teachers to the trainees in my study (age, having a previous career and motivation to teach) (see 4.2).

Jones (2003:387) found in her study that critical incidents and significant experiences affected and impacted on how beginner teachers saw themselves as individuals, as teachers and the teaching profession as a whole. She found that at times, their personal values diverged from school policy, thus causing angst and stress in their personal and professional development. In her conclusion, Jones (2003:398) contended that to become a teacher, it was necessary to acquire more than just the technical skills; resilience, emotional and physical, was necessary in order to cope with the many challenges that being a teacher presented. This suggests that newly qualified teachers need to be reflective and reflexive if they are to develop as extended professionals.

Cooper and Olson (1996:87) focused more on the trainee teachers' own emotional identities and found that these are in some way suppressed as they develop their own teaching style. They argue this is partly a result of having to become more objective and have more distance in their own emotions to those of their students. This is an interesting premise that I am not wholly convinced by. Trainee teachers do at times become attached to their

students, do become emotional during their teaching placements and are often reluctant to leave their placements, if they have had a positive experience. They do not always have that distance that allows them to be objective, particularly in their first placement. There is almost a dichotomy between being interested in their pupils (and therefore being emotionally close) and retaining a personal distance from them that trainees can find difficult to balance at the start of their careers.

Beijaard et al (2000:761), similar to Flores and Day (2006:223), established that many of the teachers they interviewed were influenced by educators they had had when they were students themselves. Day et al (2006:610) also considered that these past experiences, coupled with constantly changing internal (to the school) and external (national policy) directives often make identity seem unstable and one that changes over time. However, the core beliefs that teachers have about their identity, about teaching and what it is to be a teacher is something that Grier and Johnston (2009:59) felt was constantly changing and evolving according to the respondents' personal and professional experience. These perceptions that teachers have of their own identity, had a bearing on how they were able to cope with the ongoing changes in educational policy and practice (Beijaard et al 2000:750). In addition, their own professional development was also impacted on and influenced by how they perceived their professional identity. Lasky (2005:905) found that the way one of her respondents had been taught to teach shaped her understanding of her subject area, how she should teach it and the method she felt best to assess completed tasks. This link to the subject specialism is one that is particularly strong in secondary teaching, with Day et al (2006:610) connecting the subject and its status to the teachers' identity very closely. **In my study**, this link between subject and identity can be reinforced within the school if there are faculties or departments where subject teachers congregate and socialise together to the exclusion of teachers of other subjects. Trainee teachers may therefore have a restricted view on which to base their emerging identity if their experience is almost wholly subject based.

## **2.9 What are multiple identities?**

Trainee teachers appear to shift in their identities as they go through their initial teacher training and move on into schools as newly qualified teachers. Further shifts in identity may also occur as teachers progress, change schools and engage with broader educational communities.

Grier and Johnston (2009:73) in their study of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) career changers, found that the students brought remnants of their previous career identities with them into their new career as trainee teachers. They used this previous identity to draw on exemplars in their teaching of students in order to help make connections between their past careers and student learning. Although Grier and Johnston's study (2009) was carried out in California, and in a different subject area to my own research, their findings still have legitimacy and relevance here. Trainee teachers are often encouraged by teacher educators to bring their subject specialism to life with 'real-life' examples, thus forging a link between their previous identity in a previous career and their new career as a teacher.

Cooper and Olson (1996:80) suggested teacher identity is continually being informed, formed and reformed over time and through outside influences. Sachs (2001:155) found

teachers in particular occupy many professional identities and that these change from one setting to another. This could be particularly so for the trainee teachers on a PGCE course; they start with an idea of what it is to be a teacher (perhaps based on their own experiences), but often change as they move from their first placement to their second.

Akkerman and Meijer (2011:311) saw identities as being like multiple personalities that come to the fore which they argued was helpful in understanding the conflicts within the nature of teacher identity. They exemplify this in trainee teachers, whom they argued had a philosophy built on experiences at home, in school, during further/higher education, through their teacher training and whilst on school placement (similar to Flores and Day 2006). Some trainees may start to define themselves as teachers, not just by what they are doing at that moment, but by their own personal and social histories. Their beliefs and values can shape what kind of teacher they hope to be (Day et al 2006:610) but are often influenced by what is happening to teachers and teaching in a constantly changing political environment.

The dilemma trainee teachers face on their placement is that their mentors might view them as “student teachers” but pupils may view them as “real teachers”. This is a concern Siry and Lara (2012:4) identified in their research as being a fundamental issue in teacher education. There is almost a conflict apparent here between how the trainee teachers see themselves and how others perceive them. This may well change throughout the PGCE year, and between the trainees’ first placement and their second. Although their research was based in the United States, and was a case study of only one trainee teacher, the experiences she faced whilst first in school has a resonance with both my own PGCE practice as a new student, and that found in my study here. The conclusion that Siry and Lara (2012:28) draw is the importance of the ability to be receptive to learning, not just from her course tutors and school mentors, but also from other trainees on the course and the students in school themselves. Their study shows how important all of these people are in the shaping and development of a teacher identity and how much during the course of training, identity not only changes, but has a multiplicity of beings, sometimes at the same time.

## **2.10 How do identities shift?**

Cooper and Olson (1996:80) described the ‘multiple ‘I’s’ of identity’ where identity is ‘informed, formed and reformed’ over time and with experience. Day et al (2006:610) appear to agree that identity is changed depending upon external factors, such as policy changes, internal factors such as the organisation in which the teacher works and the teacher’s own personal experiences, both current and in the past.

A teacher’s personal history of how they see themselves could be impacted on by the professional influences they are subject to. This in turn could be affected by social history. It seems therefore one encases the other which in turn is encased by another. As a result, it appears identity is not always stable. Teachers’ definition of themselves may also depend upon their own set of beliefs and values regarding the type of teacher they want to be.

## **2.11 Is identity linked to Communities of Practice?**

Lave and Wenger (1991:29) linked learning to engagement in the activities of a community of practice. For them, it was not just about learning the words that form a body of knowledge

in respect of a particular skill, but also the technical skills and cultural knowledge that happens once there is increased participation in that particular field. A newcomer to the field engaged in what they described as legitimate peripheral participation (ibid:29). They emphasised that this was not a teaching technique or a form of pedagogy, but an analytical view of how learning takes place (ibid:40)

Goodnough (2010: 173) found in her research, it was important that Wenger's (1998:176) idea of engagement, imagination and alignment were important factors in developing teacher identity. Although Goodnough's research was carried out in Canada, it was with a group of newly qualified teachers in the secondary sector, sufficiently similar to my own study to be of relevance here. Wenger (1998:149) made a clear link between the personal and the professional self as a teacher, by connecting identity to practice. By the participation in a community of practice, teachers are subject to whatever influences that community has on identity. Student teachers, whose identity as a teacher is still being formed, will particularly feel the impact of this community and how it might shape their emerging identity as a teacher.

The issue with comparing how trainee teachers integrate into communities of practices in their two school placements (and to some extent as students in HEI) differs to how Wenger (1998) described his apprentices. Although communities of practice are complex, Wenger's apprentices are not the same as trainees. Schools are not set up in the same way as the organisations Wenger studied. There is not just one expert in the centre with the trainees on the periphery. There may be several different specialists in schools (the subject mentor, the senior professional tutor, the head of year, head of department, head of faculty) as well as the other staff the trainees encounter on a daily basis. These individuals all may teach in different ways, demonstrating different skill sets and approaches and not all will mesh together in a coherent way in the trainee teacher's eye. This could result in a conflict of ideas that the trainee teacher may find disconcerting, confusing and difficult to assimilate into their own practice. Additionally, schools are not homogenous, having differing ethos and culture, expectations and standards, behaviour management techniques and reward systems and as such, the trainee teachers will have to understand and incorporate these into their own ideas of what it is to be a teacher and how they construct their identity as such.

People are often members of more than one community of practice (Goodnough 2010:168). For trainee teachers, they are a student whilst at their HEI, a trainee teacher in the eyes of their mentors whilst out on teaching placement, and a teacher to the students they teach. Additionally, whilst out on placement, they may also have responsibility for a tutor group, so have a pastoral identity, they may be involved in extra curricula activities and clubs which are outside their subject identity as well as their personal identities such as partner, parent, sibling, child and friend. They may well have other identities in respect of their hobbies and interests (such as skier, allotment holder and baker) all of which influence and impact on their identities.

## **2.12 How can identity be categorised?**

Another insight into how identity in education could be considered was provided by Shain and Gleeson's (1999) research into lecturers' reactions to changes in structure and funding of further education (FE). They found there were three main responses; *resistance*, *compliance* and *strategic compliance*. Those characterized as resistant were critical of the

reforms taking place in FE (ibid:453) and found it difficult to engage with the positive aspects of change. They expressed this by working to ‘the letter of the contract and no more’ (ibid:454). The second response, Shain and Gleeson (1999:455) termed compliance. These lecturers were prepared to be flexible and saw the potential benefits that such changes might bring. Their main strategy was not ‘rocking the boat’ (ibid:455). The third category Shain and Gleeson (1999:456) viewed as strategic compliance. Many of these lecturers were critical of some of the changes being brought into FE but accepting of others. These lecturers adopted strategies that helped them achieve their own objectives, whilst still working within the constraints of the system. These categorisations, although in a study of teachers in further education, could be a way of classifying coping strategies and showing how identity can emerge during key moments of change. As Pollard and Filer (2007:452) point out, these can be ‘adapted and applied in relation to learners in many setting’s’.

### 2.13 Review of literature on Identity

From the literature on identity, researchers agree that identity is difficult to define, is not fixed and has competing, incomparable elements. This seems to be the case for trainee teachers, who start their PGCE course with an image of what it is to be a teacher, often based on their own experiences of education (Beijaard et al 2000, Flores and Day 2006). This can be at odds with what they find as expectations in their placement schools and may cause conflict in their minds as to what it is to be a teacher (Raffo and Hall 2006). In addition, many of the trainees in this study had a previous career, outside of education. As a result, they bring with them elements of their previous professional identity (Grier and Johnston 2009) and need to learn a new vocabulary as teachers. Additionally, the trainees also had to re-enter a community of practice as students, as well as joining a community of practice as teachers. They therefore seem to carry multiple and potentially conflicting identities.

The idea that identity is linked to role is shared by several researchers (Watson 2006, Flores and Day 2006). As trainee teachers began their placements, they often have several roles within the school, even at this early stage in their careers: as subject specialist (in the secondary setting where this study is based), as pastoral tutor as a tutor and many will also take on additional, extra curricula activities. Underlying this is their identity as a student themselves, as they learn what it means to be a teacher (Sachs 2006). This can be summed up by figure 3 below, showing how teacher identity is interlinked and has multiple elements.

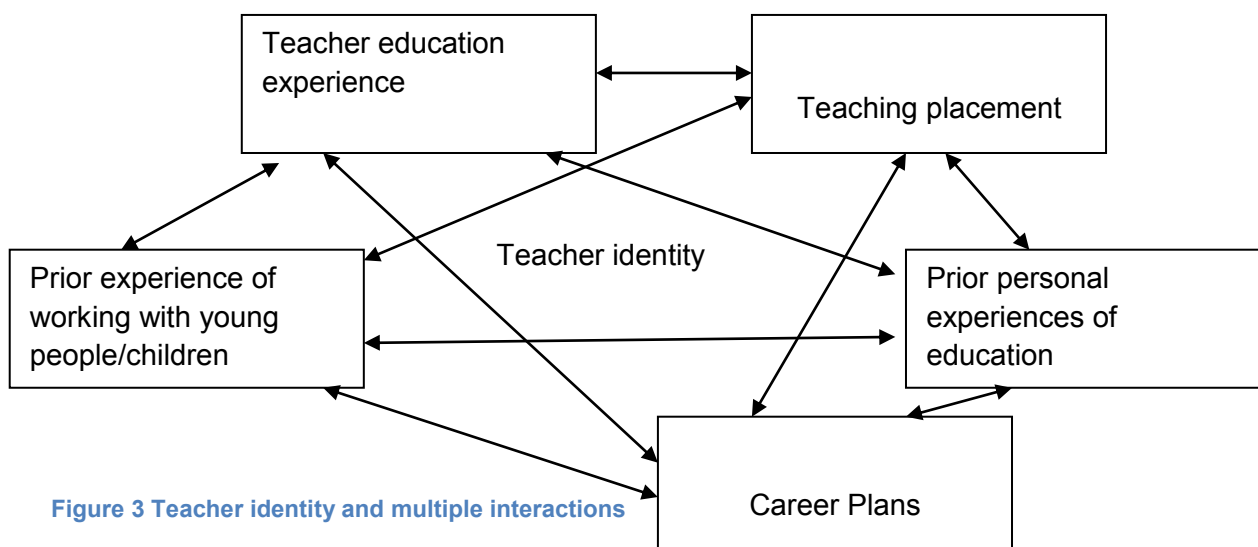


Figure 3 Teacher identity and multiple interactions

Figure 3 shows how the mix of a trainee teacher's past, present and professional future aspirations are linked. There are also connections between personal and professional, for example, how the trainees experienced school as pupils and how they now encounter it as teachers. The locational context also factors into their identity development; whether at the HEI or in their placement schools.

## **2.14 Scope of literature review**

This literature review has considered what professionalism, professionalism and professionalization are, if teaching can be included in a category of professions along with medicine and law, how professionalism appears in teaching and the changes that have impacted on professionalism in teaching. Additionally, identity has been defined, the way in which trainee teachers start to develop their own identity as teachers is explored, what multiple identities are, the way in which identities alter and what influence communities of practice may have on identities. This is not an exhaustive list of all the differing elements of how professionalism in teaching can be viewed, nor how identity can be constructed, but it highlights what I consider to be the fundamental areas that impact how trainee teachers begin to construct their identity as professionals in teaching.

It was important to consider the differing meanings researchers have understood by the terms professionalism, professionalism and professionalization in order to recognise my own position as an ex teacher, a teacher educator and a researcher. Professionalism and being a professional is for me about a way of behaving, about commitment and practice and most closely aligns to Helsby (1995:318). Professionalization for me, like Whitty (2000:282) is about recognition for teaching to be considered a profession. Most people would think that teaching is a profession, but perhaps recognise that it is different to doctors and lawyers. It is more difficult to explain why this might be so. For me the issue surrounding autonomy was perhaps of most interest as trainee teachers may feel they have very little independence during their training year, about what they study, where they are placed for their practical element of the course, or the groups they teach once on placement. Even the way in which they teach their own subject has been mapped out for them by others. How to be a professional is a strong element in trainee teachers and one Sachs (2005:15) summed up as being 'how to be, how to act and how to understand their work and their place in society'. This highlights the dilemma that trainee teachers have in beginning to construct their identities as teachers. For example, they are often lost when they start their teaching placement with even what might be considered simple things such as what to wear to their school (personal tutorial).

The increase in teachers' accountability and how successive governments have brought marketization and managerialism into teaching has immediately put pressure onto trainee teachers to perform. They have to meet a set of standards in order to pass the course. The PGCE course is itself subject to inspection and judgement that it is meeting a set of standards. The schools will be judged and measured by how well their pupils perform with the publication of league tables.

The instability and ongoing changing nature of identity is a dilemma that all teachers face throughout their career, but is particularly apparent during the initial training and first year of teaching. Grier and Johnston (2009:59) saw this change depending upon the trainee / newly qualified teacher's experience both personal and professional in teaching. It was also

apparent that some trainee teachers bring with them an identity from their previous career, more especially so in secondary teaching, than in the primary sector. This multiplicity of identities was something that Siry and Lara (2012:28) found to be an issue with trainee teachers in their placements. To this end, it is key that trainee teachers start to build their engagement with the differing communities of practice they encounter in order for them to start on the path of identity creation.

This literature review has not considered identity formation in the further education (FE) sector. Although it could be argued that there are similarities between working in FE and in secondary schools, the development of professional identity has been subject to differing influences in FE. Until 2007, those who teach in FE have not had to have formal PGCE style qualification, although some teachers there do. Many of the staff teaching in FE have come from backgrounds of 'experts' in their field and as such, have strong identities from this experience and it is this experience for which they have been recruited. Many of the subjects are vocationally based and for them, a PGCE does not exist. Since 2007, a variety of teaching qualifications have been brought in to enable practitioners to become licensed. These include Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning sector (PTLLS), a Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong sector (CTLLS), a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong sector (DTLLS) or a Cert Ed or PGCE for the FE sector (TES 2012).

In theory, colleges of FE are independent of local and national government control (Gleeson et al 2005:447) as they are, by and large, incorporated bodies. They have been described by Avis (2003:329) as 'trusted servants rather than empowered professionals'. FE has been subject to its own funding regimes, inspection protocols and professional bodies. There has not been the culture of research found elsewhere in education. The FE sector also engages with a wider range of learners, including adults, part time learners, offering vocationally driven courses, and has strong links with industry. Gleeson et al (2005:450) are rather sweeping in their generalisation that teaching in FE is not a career choice. For many it would be seen as an extension to their career and open new opportunities to help others begin their careers in an area they feel some passion towards. The other main issue with teaching in FE is that for many, they are employed on short term or fixed length contracts. Whilst this provides the institution with flexibility to staff its courses dependent upon student number recruitment, it provides little in job security for those working in the sector. As a result, the status of many working in FE is low (Gleeson et al 2005:453). It is for these reasons of difference that I have excluded a greater discussion of teacher identity in FE from this literature review.

The other main area of exclusion in this literature review is that of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and its place in the professionalism debate. Whilst CPD is vital if a deeper understanding of knowledge is a necessary part of being a professional (Dainton 2005:166), CPD is not something that trainee teachers tend to engage in greatly, whilst undertaking a PGCE. Trainee teachers have to fully embrace their subject, expand and develop their area of interest and keep abreast of recent developments. This is not delivered through CPD for them. They may well encounter various CPD initiatives whilst at their placement schools. They will engage with debates about issues that affect their teaching, but in the context of the literature and research, it is different to that described by Dainton (ibid). Hargreaves (2000:165) discussed the benefits to the development of professionalism through undertaking CPD, which he described as part of the 'age of the collegial professional' (Hargreaves 2000:162). He believed that teachers learn better in groups than



alone, when delivered on site, embedded into the school culture and supported by the head teacher (Hargreaves 2000:165). Whilst this may be the case for more experienced teachers, for trainee teachers, a relatively short time will be spent in each school placement and what might be one way of working in one school, it may not be the case in another. As a result, the trainee teachers may not be integrated into a professional learning community in the same way that their more experienced colleagues are.

Villegas-Reimers (2003:12) viewed CPD as something of a long term process that is geared to development in the profession, rather than short workshops or in-service training more often linked to CPD. However, Villegas-Reimers does not refer to trainee teachers at all, but only to experienced staff. This I feel supports my decision to exclude CPD as a factor in the professional identity development of trainee teachers

## **2.15 Summary**

Although there seems to be accord between researchers (Whitty 2000, Hoyle 1982, Furlong et al 2000 and Hargreaves 2000) that teaching is a profession, concerns were raised regarding autonomy and control. This appears to stem from policy interventions by successive governments where teachers have less autonomy but greater accountability (Gleeson and Knights 2006, Quicke 2000 and Evans 2008). There seems to be no consensus of opinion as to how best to define either identity or professionalism

The literature on teacher identity showed that this is something that changes over time, is influenced by a range of factors; internal issues such as emotion and external elements such as job experience, all of which can be impacted by the context in which the teacher works. Additionally, identity has been conceptualized differently in research into teachers and teaching. Beijaard et al (2004:109) in their review of research into teacher identity divided their findings into three categories; teacher professional identity formation, the characteristics of teachers' professional identity and how teachers' identity is told through stories. Such research was felt to be important in order to help understand how teachers feel about teaching at a time when rapid changes were occurring.

There could also be conflict with much of the research into teacher professional identity being carried out by researchers writing about themselves (Stronach et al 2002:111). It seems unlikely that these researchers would construct professionalism in a negative light.

## **CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the methodology of the study, its purpose and the choices made in respect of the research design, methods and analysis. The purpose of this study is to explore the changing self image and construction of how trainee teachers form their identities as teachers. This is set against the context of the push to make teaching a Master's level profession. In order to investigate this further, my concern was with what trainee teachers, teacher educators and head teachers think about Masters level credits in a PGCE. My examination involves consideration of how the trainees begin to construct their identity and whether or not Master's level study had any impact on this.

### **3.1 The Researchers role, experience and research journey**

In considering theoretical principles underlying research, positivism and interpretivism are perhaps the most influential. Positivism is based on unchanging, universal laws which everything can be explained by knowledge of these laws. Understanding occurs by recording and observing events systematically (Hughes 2001). This scientific, systematic approach best fits quantitative methodology. Positivism was dominant in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century but was challenged latterly by interpretivism and critical theory. However, to research the construction of trainee teacher identity would not fit this orderly, methodical approach and I rejected this.

Critical theory is less tidily defined and perhaps is more representative of several different types of research. It challenges norms and endeavours to expose structures of power and domination. Mertens (2005) refers to this perspective a transformative research which encompasses several approaches. An example might be in researching how the school system could contribute to a more equitable society. I could have taken this approach if I wanted to research differences between those trainees who achieved Masters level credits and those who did not. However, my focus was on the development of trainee teacher identity and therefore critical theory was discarded

Interpretivist researchers see the world as complex and one which cannot be reduced to numerical values where 'reality is socially constructed' (Mertens 2005:12). Here, there is reliance upon 'participants' views of the situation being studied' (Creswell 2003:8). Interpretivism also recognises the researchers' own background and experience may impact on their research. Qualitative or mixed methods are commonly used in data collection.

On reflection, I felt my research aims were best served in taking an interpretivist approach to my study (see 3.2.1), where qualitative data was used to 'make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:3), I was aware that I could not separate myself from my research. Indeed, it is my decision as to the approach taken and how it is written up (Scott and Usher 1999). The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned in to the experiences and meaning systems of others and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand (Maykut and Morehouse 1994:123). As a researcher, I needed to be aware of the possibility of bias, preconceptions, assumptions and expectations surrounding the study (Greenbank 2003).

In considering the effect that Masters level credits have on the identity of trainee teachers during their PGCE year, I judged narrative inquiry to be well suited to analysing identity (Kohler Riessman 2000). It is embedded in 'interrogating aspects of teaching and learning by storying experience' (Lyons and LaBoskey 2002:21) and allows for the quality of experience to be studied. It is 'a way of thinking about experience' (Connelly and Clandinin 2006:479) which was what I wanted the cohort of trainees under study to begin to do; to share their thoughts and feelings about becoming a teacher, particularly in how they engage with Masters level credits in the PGCE. I realised their stories would provide a rich source of data, but also a complexity. Nevertheless, the stories afforded an opportunity to present how the trainees began to construct their identity holistically and would provide a way of making meaning through reflecting upon the narratives the trainees told.

In addition, there were other research participants who could shine a light on the experience that the trainees had; teacher educators, MTL leader, senior professional tutors and head teachers (see 3.4.2). The fieldwork gathered (see 3.4.1(ii)) took the form of questionnaires, interviews and email correspondence. In addition, I kept a research journal in which I made notes in respect of my thoughts and questions following the primary data gathered. In it, I documented the connections I made between data, literature and the respondents. It also enabled me to consider the narrative accounts I gathered from the trainees about their experiences, thoughts and feelings of Masters level study, whilst reflecting on my own position. This 'mutual storytelling' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990:4) was a key element in constructing the narrative accounts. Most of these accounts were written as close as possible to the time of thinking, however, some were added to at a later date, allowing more time for reflection and further reading.

There were elements of my journey to becoming a teacher that resonated with the stories the trainees were recounting, however, Masters level credits were not part of my PGCE course at the time. I subsequently commenced a part time MA in Education at a later date, having taught for some years. In terms of age, I was a similar age to a couple of the respondents, but older than most. The ethnicity of the group was almost exclusively white British (as I am), with one trainee identifying themselves as Asian and two as white Irish. Educationally, all of the trainees had an undergraduate degree with three of the ten selected trainees having already attained a Masters level qualification. From this it can be seen that there are strong correlations between my own experience and background to that of the trainees. As well as this, I was their tutor, which raises additional issues in respect of insider research (see section 3.6 Insider/Outsider Research).

### **3.2 Research methodology**

Having decided what I wanted to find out the next decision, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), was how I was going to achieve this; the main methodology selected is narrative case study, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For me it was more about 'how' and 'why' rather than 'how many' which to me, indicated a qualitative approach was necessary. This allowed me more flexibility as a researcher; it enabled me to investigate in a less structured way, to move back and forth and to adapt to my findings accordingly (Gerson and Horowitz 2002). By consciously moving 'backwards and forwards between the data and the emerging explanations, analyses and eventually theory' are fundamental aspects of grounded theory according to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:98).

In looking at how trainee teachers construct their identity in the context of making teaching a Master's level profession, I did not start from a theory to be tested; rather I had an open mind, which aimed to end with a theory. However, I did feel that there may be an overlap between qualitative and quantitative approaches; 'both types of data can be productive for descriptive, reconnoitring, exploratory, inductive, opening up purposes' (Miles and Huberman 1994:42). This seems to link to Hammersley (1992) who argues it is more a matter of range than of contrast between qualitative and quantitative methods. As Punch (2005:236) states 'both approaches are needed in social research'. What I have endeavoured to do in this research is to select the approach that best fits in analysing the data. In most instances, this has been a qualitative approach, but at times, a quantitative method seemed more appropriate.

The process of research is not necessarily linear (Griffiths 1998) but twists and turns, pauses and leaps onwards and backwards. This ability to be flexible is key, according to Lewis (2003), as it facilitated a way of dealing with any unexpected issues that arose and to react and reflect on them at the time. However, as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) pointed out, it is not straightforward to define what qualitative research actually is.

### **3.2.1 Interpretivism**

Although I have some prior insight into trainee teachers' identity, I am mindful that I wish to remain open to new ideas throughout the research process. During data collection, I worked with the respondents and as such, constructed a collaborative account. Positivists remain detached from their participants, whereas I am more emotionally involved (Hudson and Ozanne 1998). I have a feeling of what it is that I am looking for, but am not sure how to find it or what to expect. Additionally, I am not necessarily working in a linear, chronological or sequential way. To me, the approach is an interpretative one; I have identified the issue and now want to describe what it is that I have found, rather than just find something (Spradley 1980). It seems to me that the use of qualitative data is an attempt to 'make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:3). Interpretive researchers are interested in people's perception, not just through their lived experience, but through the deeper understanding that comes from reflecting upon those experiences. In my research, this has meant looking at samples that are small in number and scale. I have intentionally selected these based on specified criteria. The data collection methods mean close contact between the respondents and me. The data analysis is open to emerging ideas and concepts and the outputs provide detailed description of the participants' views and understandings.

### **3.2.2. Grounded theory**

Grounded theory has been defined as 'the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research' (Glaser and Strauss 1967:2) where there has been little exploration of the context that affects the research participants lives (Crooks 2001). Although in the 1980s Glaser and Strauss separated and developed their own schools of thought in respect of grounded theory, it is not clear whether these are in fact different, or just a way of expressing a similar idea differently (Melia 1996).

Charmaz (2006) recognised a number of features of grounded theory:

- Simultaneous collection and analysis of data

- Creation of coded and categories developed from the data, and not pre-existing
- Discovery of basic social process in the data
- Integration of categories into a theoretical framework

In being influenced by a grounded theory approach, I knew, as Dey (1999) indicated, how to start my research in that I had already identified my area of interest. I established my case of one cohort, in one secondary PGCE subject, in one HEI in mind, and planned that my sample would come from this group.

### **3.2.3.(i) Advantages and disadvantages of using a grounded theory approach**

Grounded theory has a currency in research in that it is a recognised rationale when carrying out qualitative research. This is especially true of small scale research projects, which are limited by word length or time (as in the EdD). It provided adaptability to the approach taken with the data collection methods to ensure which were appropriate for my research. In respect of the EdD and its focus on practice in an educational setting, grounded theory works well with its application of interpersonal and professional relationships. Finally, for me, it provided a systematic way of analysing the qualitative data and how to make sense of what it was I had gathered. Yet, as Thomas and James (2006:791) pointed out grounded theory constrain the researcher and ‘they risk losing the best of qualitative inquiry’. For that reason I used elements of grounded theory in order to provide a map of how the trainees make sense of their emerging identity, rather than fully engaging with grounded theory techniques as Glaser and Strauss (1967) originally intended.

In Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) initial ideas, grounded theory did not lend itself to precise planning. I needed more structure than I felt this original premise offered, especially in regard to my sample. Their idea that sampling would be theoretical did not fit with my key research question and consequently, I used purposive sampling in order to address this. I could not ignore either the historical and political context which shaped why Masters level credits were included in the PGCE award. Grounded theory tries to divorce the situation from the context, which would not have been feasible in this study. Glaser and Strauss (1967) also appear to indicate there is one correct explanation of things. As a result, I used an adapted grounded theory approach.

### **3.2.3 Alternative approaches**

I could have researched this as a policy issue, looking at it as a problem caused inadvertently with the signing of the Bologna Agreement (1999). It would have been perfectly possible for the government at that time, to have made the decision to rename the PGCE so that it was no longer a postgraduate qualification and thus alleviate the necessity to have M level credits in the trainee teacher qualification. If I had taken what might be described as a problem solving approach to this issue, I would have needed to be aware that ‘self imposed limitations...severely curtail its ability to solve problems’ (Dale 1994:40). The Education Reform Act (ERA) 1998 epitomised Government desire to modernise teaching, and bring the profession in line with current business practices of the time (Ozga 2000) and has been a major driver behind shaping teachers and the teaching profession in the UK. Bottery (1995), for example, compared doctors, the police service and teaching and how their professional autonomy had diminished following the implementation of government policy changes. This and other changes such as the birth of the Teacher Training Agency (in 2013, becoming part

of the National College for Teaching and Leadership) and the setting up of Ofsted, have been discussed previously in Chapter 1.

To my mind, a detailed investigation into the policies behind making teaching a Masters level profession in an era of increasing centralised control and performativity would only partly answer my key underlying question of how this impacts on the trainees' view of themselves as teachers. It would merely provide an explanation of the whys and wherefores, not shed enough light where I felt it was needed. Ball (1994) believed that little had advanced in policy theorisation since the explosion of research following the publication of the ERA 1998.

### **3.2.4 Narrative approach**

Having considered these options, I decided to use a narrative approach which would allow me to hear how trainee teachers reflected upon their experience of training. This enables 'particularities and context [to] come to the fore' (Kohler Riessman 2008:13) and 'attention shifts to the details' (ibid p12). In order to do this, I created narrative summaries of each of the ten selected trainee teachers in order to construct the experiences of these trainees (see Appendix D). In Chapter 4, I have deconstructed these narratives in order to frame responses to my research questions.

#### **3.2.4 (i) Definition and purpose**

Connelly and Clandinin (1990:2) define narrative as 'the study of the ways humans experience the world'. For them, in education, this means that it is 'the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories'. This is an approach that seems well suited to my research, as I am interested in their anecdotes and rationale in what lies behind their desire to teach. I also want to hear about their thoughts on how Masters level study fits into this. However, this process is collaborative and involves 'mutual storytelling and restory-ing as the research proceeds' (Connelly and Clandinin (1990:4). I recorded the interviews with the trainees, and later made notes in my research journal regarding my observations during this process. My journal was also used to note practical issues (problems, highlights, links to other readings) and as such complemented the data gathered. I used both the transcripts and the journal in order to make sense of what I heard, to analyse and to 're-story' (ibid) the trainees' accounts expressed in the interviews. This type of narrative inquiry, clarifying personal knowledge from what was a narrative experience, has been a popular methodology with teachers and teacher education (Goodson 1995) for some time. As such, it has become a way for teachers to question what and how they teach (Lyons and LaBoskey 2002). Bruner (2002:8) discusses a narrative way of knowing, with a main purpose of telling each other things that matter, through 'stories we tell'. These opinions as to what narrative is, appear to stem from Dewey's (1938) theory of interaction, continuity and experience. The narrative inquiry seems more than just being able to tell stories; rather it is more of a systematic investigation into the underlying notions that the story exemplifies (Bell 1997, Conle 1992). For this research, such an approach offers the opportunity to explore individuals' perceptions of policy and practice and their developing professional identity.

By using a narrative case study, Kohler Riessman (2000 no page numbers) suggests that it allows 'the perspectives of both narrator and analyst can come into view', thus the resultant analysis is not just the respondents' words, but mine too. It helps us as human beings make

sense of random experiences by pushing them into some sort of structure (Bell 2002). Additionally, 'personal narratives—the stories we tell to ourselves, to each other, and to researchers—offer a unique window into these formations and reformations' (Kohler Riessman 2000). By listening to what the trainees say, I am able to understand far more about their beliefs and values than I might otherwise do so. These stories, particularly in teacher education, 'allow student teachers and teachers to critically inquire into their own experience and construct their own identities' (Savvidou 2010:650-1), something that Kohler Riessman (2000 no page number) agrees with; 'narratives are a particularly significant genre for representing and analyzing identity in its multiple guises in different contexts'. It is this construction of identity I feel is most difficult to capture. By using narrative, my hope is that it will encourage self reflection and stems from reflecting on practice encouraged by Schon (1983). It would appear that teachers' voice and the stories they tell have become more prevalent in research over the past few decades (Gallas, 1997, Jalongo and Isenberg 1995). This use of narrative enables researchers to open up a 'deeper view of life in familiar contexts: it can make the familiar strange, and the strange familiar' (Clough 2002:8).

### **3.2.4 (ii) Advantages and issues**

Although stories have an everyday meaning, in this instance I refer to stories as being the data collected. This ability to listen to the stories that people tell, irrespective as to whether or not they believe their own tales, allow a window into the storytellers' own values and their experiences. Although some of the apparent 'facts' the respondents report are verifiable (dates or qualifications for example) the importance of a narrative case study is perhaps more to do with understanding the 'changing meaning of events' (Kohler Riessman (2000 no page number) for those telling their stories. What may be important is how the respondents interpret their past, recall the events and tell it to the researcher rather than try to reproduce the past precisely. A narrative approach seems to be less about how true the stories are, but more about the assumptions made that shape those stories (Bell 2002:209). As Kohler Riessman (2000) indicated, it seems less about whether or not the stories are an accurate representation of the past, but more about the connections between the past, present and future that result. By listening to the stories themselves, and to the actions and events surrounding these stories, I was helped to construct these elements into a whole (Polkinghorne 1995). This enabled me to understand those experiences in a more holistic way and perhaps discover things that the respondents may not have been consciously aware of themselves.

For the most part, it is relatively easy for people to tell their stories. All of those I interviewed were very happy to talk about themselves, their experiences and to express their opinions about what this meant. By using these stories it is possible to gain quite in-depth descriptions of events as often these seem to occur naturally when people are relating events through their stories. As such, the respondents often reveal more of themselves than they might otherwise have done, if different data collection methods were used.

However, the use of narrative case study is not without its problems; stories cannot be 'reduced to abstract rules, logical propositions, or the covering laws of scientific explanation. Indeed, stories seem to resist such singular interpretations' (Carter 1993:6). It does require close cooperation and a partnership between researcher and subject and this might cause issues with disengagement at the end of the research period. I think that this is less likely in

my case as the trainees are aware that the course is only one year in length and although they are interested in my research, for them, the main aim is to secure employment in their new career at the end of this period. There are also difficulties in separating 'narrator distance from the main characters in stories' (Carter 1993:9). Researchers can start to 'live the shared story of narrative inquiry, the researcher needs to be aware of constructing a relationship in which both voices are heard' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990:4). Can I get enough of the respondents' voices into the analysis without mine dominating? In this case, I have the added factor of my own role as their tutor. Will the trainees tell me what I want to hear, expect to hear, or will they be able to distance themselves from my role, and view me as a researcher? Great care was taken at the start of the year, and throughout the process, to remind the participants of my duality of role. I made it clear when I was acting as their tutor and when I was researcher. It was imperative that as the researcher I needed to take care of how I imposed my own understanding and meaning on what I have been told. This re-storying is a powerful tool that needs to be carefully wielded. (Josselson 1996)

Additionally, once the data had been gathered, a decision needed to be made about 'what to tell and what to leave out and imposing structure and meaning on events' (Carter 1993:9). This was a key point if the researcher did not want to lose the voice of those they are listening to. They 'might wish to reduce interpretation, even collaboration and return to the role of "Scribe"' (Goodson 1997:112).

For some researchers, there might be a desire to make generalisations from these stories. I did not want to do this, as if I had wished to do so, I would have chosen to undertake a large scale questionnaire or survey, gathering a rather different sort of data. However, this should not 'preclude the careful framing of patterns with respect to certain themes' (Carter 1993:10). In fact, some patterns did emerge from my research with the trainees, and these are discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

### **3.3 Validity**

Kohler Riessman (2000 no page numbers) makes the point that in narrative case studies, 'verification of the "facts" of lives is less salient than understanding the changing meaning of events for the individuals involved—and how these, in turn, are located in history and culture'. Narrative case studies do not necessarily follow traditional empirical research methods in respect of validity (Webster and Mertova 2007:4). They contest that 'narrative research does not claim to represent the exact 'truth' but rather aims for 'verisimilitude'. By this, they mean that the results 'have the appearance of truth or reality' (ibid). In order to do this, Kohler Riessman (2008:189) suggests that researchers 'might rely upon whether 'episodes of a life story hang together? Are sections of a theoretic argument linked and consistent? Are there major gaps and inconsistencies? Is the interpreter's analytic account persuasive?'

### **3.4 Case Study**

Despite the extensive use of case studies in educational research, 'there seems little agreement about what a case study is' (Lincoln and Guba 1985:360). Yin (1993:5) broke case studies into three categories; exploratory, explanatory and descriptive, whereas Stake (1995:3) distinguishes between intrinsic ('where we need to learn about that particular case')



and instrumental where case study research resolves a 'need for general understanding' by studying a particular case to 'understand something else'.

Bassey (1999:116) characterises four elements in assessing whether a case study is suitable for educational research purposes; 'the outcomes must be trustworthy...the conduct of the enquiry and its report must be ethical...the outcome of the research must be that it says something significant to someone...the research must be reported in forms which are meaningful and readable'.

### **3.4.1 Why case study?**

One aim of a case study is to 'understand the case in depth, in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context' (Punch 2005:144). This is something Stake (1995:4) emphasises that the interest is in a particular case. He argues 'case study research is not sampling research. We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case.' In contrast Gerring (2007:20) believes that 'a case study may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is at least in part, to shed light on a larger class of cases'. The underlying premise with these authors is that 'one case (or perhaps a small number of cases) will be studied in detail' (Punch 2005:144) and that 'only a single case or just a few cases will be studied, but these will be studied at length' Stake (1995:7). The case study offers 'an opportunity to investigate issues where they occur ... and to produce descriptive and analytical accounts' (Cousin 2009:131).

However the purpose of studying one case in depth varies: this proposal is perhaps most closely aligned with Stake (1995:3) as I have 'an intrinsic interest in the case'. I want to know about the students, the teacher educators, the mentors, and the heads in relation to THIS University. Apart from the fact of ease of access to the university, being my workplace, it was a conscious decision to choose it as a basis for my case study. Firstly, it is a post 1992 university; as such, it was seen by government as a way of opening up higher education to all – the university equivalent of the comprehensive school. This was important as I wanted to study a range of students, who had selected one particular subject, but came from a range of backgrounds. Read et al (2003:262) term these 'non traditional' in terms of their background, ethnicity and maturity. Secondly, teaching is a vocational discipline; I wanted to study a university where its education faculty or department was an important part of its ethos and structure. Thirdly, the location of the university meant that there were other universities in the surrounding area, that offered PGCE courses, but not in the secondary subject that I wanted to investigate. This meant places on the PGCE courses have become competitive and selective and perhaps weeded out less committed students.

For some PGCE courses in some universities, the need to meet the target number of PGCE places set might result in a more restricted choice of student intake. It is important therefore, to remain aware that this is a study of a 'singularity' (Bassey 1999:59) which contributes to the wider understanding of issues, but does not claim to be representative of all issues in all of their complexity. It is the readers that bring a 'naturalistic generalisation'; (Stake 1995:85) from their familiarity with other cases and their desire to incorporate my study into their understanding.

### **3.4.1 (i) Issues with case study research**

Although in his earlier work in the 1980s, Bassegy argued 'there are no generalisations of any use to teachers (Bassegy 1999:119), he has subsequently changed his stance and introduced the concept of 'fuzzy generalization' (ibid). By this he considers rather than saying that something can be inferred, it may be possible to generalise. This 'estimate of trustworthiness...is a professional judgement based on experience in the absence of research data' (ibid). However, Stake (1995:7-8) was concerned with this notion as he felt 'case study seems a poor basis for generalization...the real business of case study is particularization'. Yin (1994:9) was aware that there are issues with case studies, not least some have a 'lack of rigor' and 'little basis for scientific generalization' and often 'they take too long'. A qualitative case study can afford a valuable insight which is of use beyond the case itself (Schofield 1993). In this instance, it is important that there is sufficient detail in the contextualisation to allow for comparison and contrast with other studies. As I am investigating one cohort, in one university, in one year, it would have been easy to fall into the trap of just describing those students who participated in the study. I have endeavoured to focus on issues that emerged as the most significant, which were their attitude to studying at Masters' level, how they see that in relation to their learning to be teachers and how it helps to shape their identity as a fully fledged teacher.

### **3.4.1 (ii) What the case study involved**

Gerring (2007:33) states that 'case studies may employ a great variety of techniques – both quantitative and qualitative – for the gathering and analysis of evidence'. However he continues 'qualitative analysis comprise a significant portion of the research' (ibid:34). In considering which methods to use in my research, I have drawn upon Stake (1995:40) and his consideration 'to sharpen the search for understanding, qualitative researchers perceive what is happening in key episodes or testimonies, represent happenings with their own direct interpretation and stories'.

The case comprised one whole subject cohort of a secondary specialist subject (n=21) who were undertaking their PGCE award at a university in the South West of England. In addition to these trainees, the case included key participants who shape and influence the nature of the case: teacher educators at the university, a university based MTL Leader, Senior Professional Tutors (SPTs) in schools and Head Teachers. (See figure 4 below)

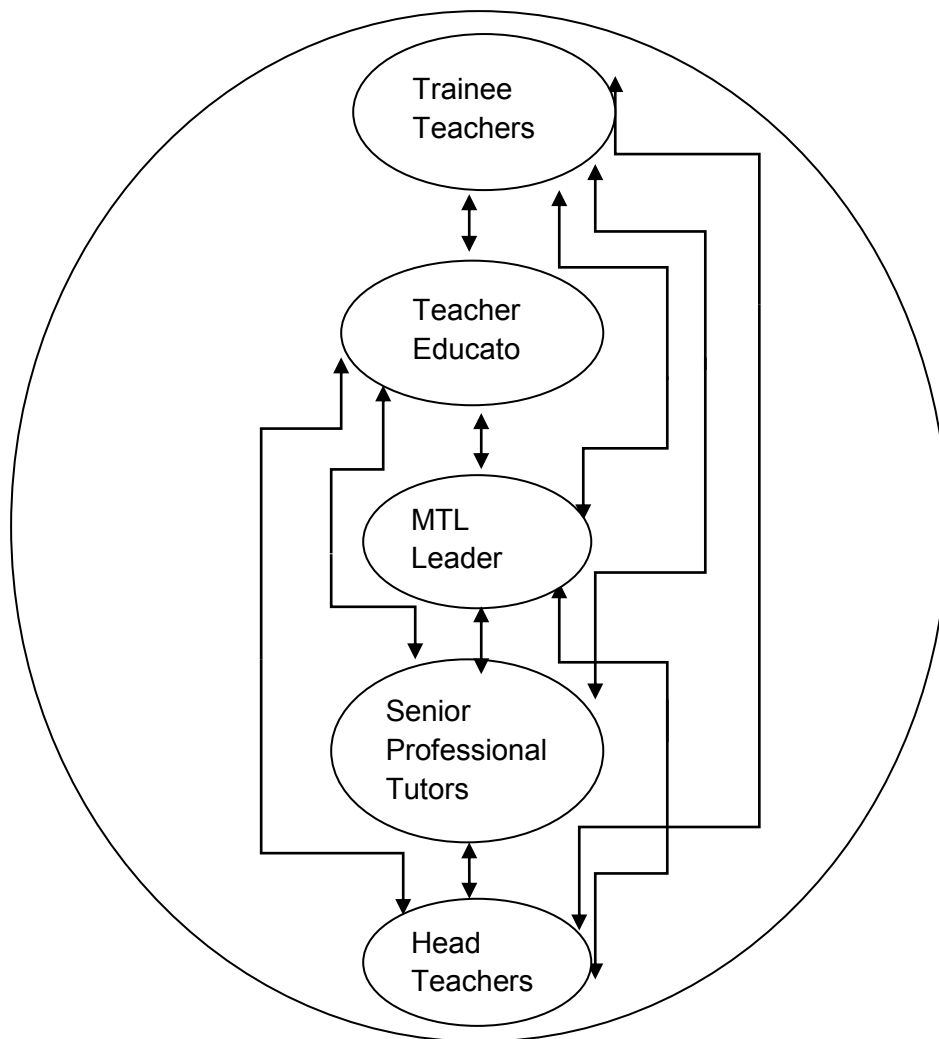


Figure 4 - the participants in the research

In addition to the trainees, I felt the voices of a number of other key participants in the trainee teachers' journey should be heard. To that end, teacher educators in all PGCE secondary subjects at the university were invited to complete a questionnaire. Although they do not form the case itself, they do figure highly in the trainees' experience. As a result, I have chosen to include their perspective in the study. The teacher educators selected trainees for the PGCE course and co-constructed the Master's level content. They are responsible for almost 200 PGCE secondary trainees each year and as such, have a wealth of experience on which to draw

The Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) Leader in the university was interviewed to establish how interpretation of Government policy was enacted in the university and to explore the decision making process: In particular, how newly qualified and existing teachers are encouraged to undertake further study to complete their Master's qualification through qualifications such as the MTL.

SPTs in school have responsibility for overseeing training whilst the PGCE students are on placement in the partnership schools. Many are also involved in the recruitment and

induction of newly qualified teachers, and as such, were interviewed to establish whether or not Master's level credits play any part in the selection process.

Head teachers, as well as their role of setting the ethos of the school, are often involved in the recruitment process of NQTs and thus can provide an insight into the process from a schools' point of view. Each of these participants had a role in shaping the delivery, influencing the output (the qualified teacher) and enacting policy that form the PGCE and the award of QTS. (See figure 4 above).

A summary of the participants in this study, how many were involved, at what point in the research they were involved and how the data were collected can be seen in table 5 below.

Who	Number	When	Method of data collection
Trainee teachers	21	September 2010 and June 2011	Questionnaires
Trainee teachers (sub group)	10	October/November 2010 February/March 2011	Questionnaires, interviews, Interviews and email correspondence
MTL Leader	1	June 2011	Interview
University Teacher educators	9	November 2010	Questionnaire
Placement school Senior Professional Tutors	3	May/June 2011	Interview
Head teachers	3	Summer 2012	Interviews

Table 5 – who was involved, how data was gathered and when this took place

### 3.4.2 Sample

As Miles and Huberman (1994:27) point out, 'qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in depth'. This is what I did in choosing to look at one subject, in one cohort, in one year, in one PGCE course, in one HEI. The cohort numbered twenty one, of which ten were selected for the case study (see 3.4.2 i). This provides insights others can use to compare their situation, it is not necessarily representative of all situations.

I wanted my sample to be purposive rather than random (Kuzel 1992) and for the sample to have a clear boundary in which to define my case study, within the time constraints of completing an Education Doctorate.

Although Erickson (1986) suggested using a funnel system, working from outside in, my research started from the inside (the trainees) and worked outwards (SPTs and Head teachers). I wanted to see who else had influence and impact on my research context (see figure 5 below). This, I felt, provided a clearer indication as to who would receive questionnaires and who would be interviewed.

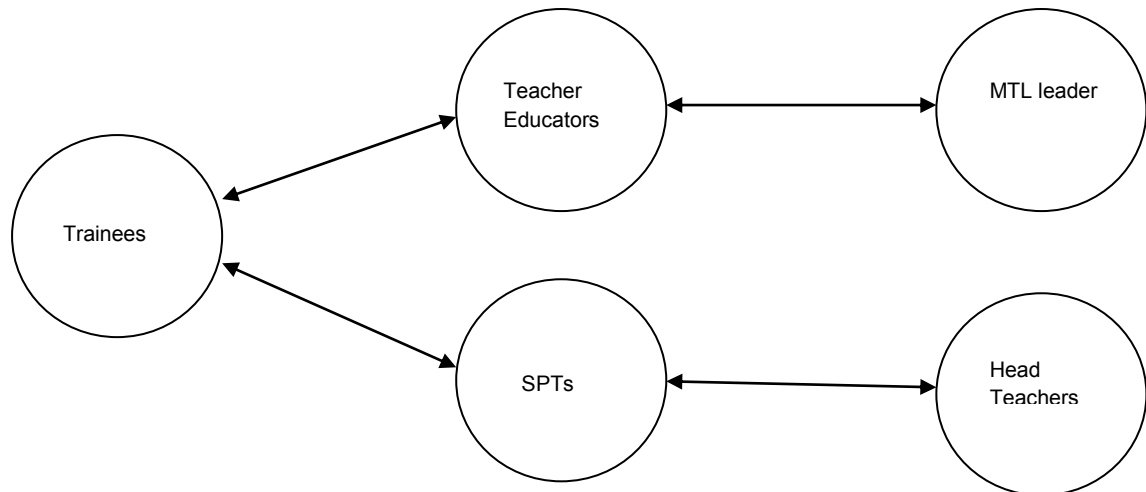


Figure 5 Sample funnelling outwards from trainees

Within a case study, sampling is often 'nested' (Miles and Huberman 1994:29). In this instance, trainees were within two such nests; the HEI and their school placement. It was felt important to have representatives in my sample from both areas as it is the trainees that intersect both (see figure 6 below)



Figure 6 nested nature of trainees, HEI and school placement

These settings were important factors influencing the emerging identity of the trainee teachers and as such, formed part of my case study.

Where my approach to sampling differed to Glaser and Strauss (1967) was that it was my intention to design a study which had the trainees at the heart of it; it was their burgeoning identity, their engagement with Masters level credits, their classroom practice and employment prospects I wanted to research. What I did not do was identify which of these trainees within this cohort would form the eventual sample of ten beforehand. I also had an idea of who the other research participants would be (see section 3.4.1 ii), based on their engagement with the key concept under investigation; Masters level credits in the PGCE. The other main difference in my research to that taken in traditional grounded theory was that my sample was purposive, (see 3.3.2) rather than theoretical (Strauss and Corbin 1997).

### **3.4.2 (i) Trainee sample**

In order to get an overarching picture of one secondary subject cohort, all twenty one trainees were invited to complete a questionnaire (see section 3.5.1 (i)). From this, ten were selected to be interviewed. These were chosen as they were representative of the makeup of the group as a whole in terms of gender, age and undergraduate degree classification. There were 21 trainees in total, 14 female and 7 male. I therefore wanted two thirds of my interviewees to be female (n=7) and one third male (n=3). Half of the total cohort was under 25, half over; thus of the interviewees, 5 were aged 25 or under, and 5 aged 26 and over. Of the total cohort, 2 had achieved a first in their undergraduate degree, 10 gained a 2:1 and 9 a 2:2. This was represented in my case study with 1 trainee with a first, 4 with 2:1 and 5 with 2:2.

### **3.4.2 (ii) Teacher educator sample**

At the HEI under study here, there were nine secondary subject areas, all with a teacher educator responsible for the trainees in each subject. As there were relatively few of them and no guarantee that all would respond, questionnaires were given to all nine (see section 3.5.2).

### **3.4.2 (iii) SPT and Head Teacher sample**

Each trainee was at a different school during their placement. 30 percent of the schools in partnership and 15 percent in each category (SPT and Head teacher) were selected for interview to provide a range of different school types (academies, comprehensive), size and location (rural, city centre).

I felt it important to gather data from SPTs and Head teachers who were based in various schools in order to gather a range views of what teacher professionalism might look like in different institutions. As Sachs (2005:15) seemed to indicate, professional identity is linked to classroom practice; the trainees may well begin to form their own professional identity based on what they see of 'how to be' and 'how to act' modelled by SPTs and school mentors, in their different placements. The culture of the schools and the leadership styles encountered seem to shape and influence new teachers' identities (Flores and Day 2006:229). Similarly, Laskey (2005:905) indicated that a school's culture may impact on how teacher identity is formed. Likewise, Jones (2003:387) found in her research, that culture can be at odds with the trainees' own personal values and beliefs, which could destabilise their emerging identity. There seems to be a resonance here with Lave and Wenger's (1991) work on communities of practice; trainee teachers, as they begin to participate more fully in the school, are subject to the influences of that community ethos on their identity.

## **3.5 Data Collection**

This section looks in more detail at when the data collected from the participants and the methods used. I felt it important to keep in mind what Delamont (2002:46) described as 'fighting familiarity' in qualitative research, which in my case meant the trainees and the setting in which my research took place. There are also ethical concerns with my dual role as both researcher and lecturer which is further discussed in section 3.7.1, Research Relationships.

### **3.5.1 Key data from trainee teachers**

Data collected from the trainees, who are at the centre of the study, during the academic year 2010/11. This was done through interviews, questionnaires and email correspondence. In addition, I kept a research journal. Extracts from this are woven into the narratives. This enabled some of my voice to be included (Kohler Riessman 2000) as well as an element of mutual storytelling (Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Participation in the study was entirely voluntary and it was clearly stated to the trainees at the start of the research that whether or not they chose to participate, would have no bearing on their progress, their assessment, their relationship with me or their reference from the university. In short, every effort was made to separate the two roles I had with them; that as their tutor and that as a researcher (see section 3.6)

#### **3.5.1 (i) Questionnaire 1**

An initial questionnaire was given to all trainees at the start of the course in September 2010 (see Appendix F) to gather background information about individuals, (age, degree classification, university attended for undergraduate study). All trainees in the cohort chose to complete this questionnaire. The final question asked if they would be willing to participate further in the research, setting out what this would mean in terms of time commitment and emphasising its voluntary element. All indicated that they would be willing to take part in further interviews. These questionnaires formed the context of my initial understanding of the trainees and provided a starting point for the interview conversations that were to follow. It also provided a basis on which to select the trainees who would form the case study by showing the make-up of the whole cohort.

Ten trainees were selected for further study (see 3.4.2 i) to include a range of differing backgrounds, ages, gender and experiences. In considering how many to include in the detailed study, 3 would be insufficient to ensure a broad range of responses, and all 21 would not necessarily produce any more variants than 10. This number would provide what Denzin and Lincoln (2000:202) describe as 'purposive and not random sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where...the process being studied is most likely to occur'. The students who made up the sub group are shown in Table 6.

Pseudonym	Age	Degree classification	Type of university attended as an undergraduate	Higher Degree qualification
Alfie	Early 20s	2:2	Post 1992	-
Chloe	Early 30s	2:2	Russell Group	-
Daniel	Late 20s	2:1	Post 1992	-
Emily	Early 20s	2:2	Post 1992	-
Evie	Early 20s	1	Post 1992	-
Joshua	Early 20s	2:1	Russell Group	MSc
Lily	Late 20s	2:1	Post 1992	-
Mia	40s	2:1	European	MBA
Ruby	30s	2:2	Post 1992	MA
Sophie	Early 20s	2:2	Post 1992	-

**Table 6** Basic information on selected sub group of trainees.

### 3.5.1 (ii) Interview 1

I arranged to meet with each of the 10 participants individually at a time that best suited them, during October/November 2010. These initial interviews took place in the university, during which time participants were not in their placement schools. The sessions were separate and discrete from their timetabled sessions with me and after discussions and consideration of other options with the trainees, took place in my office. Although this could be construed as a crossover of my role with them, I tried to make it different to their experience as a tutee. I reminded them that they did not have to participate, that there would be no consequences if they chose to withdraw from the research at any time, I rearranged the seating, removed work related items from my desk, provided drinks and switched off my computer. This, I felt, was the best way to (a) make the trainees as comfortable as possible, (b) make it as different an experience from what they had experienced in that room with me as their tutor and (c) to remind them I was now a researcher. All the trainees were happy with these arrangements, partly because they could engage in this activity straight after their taught sessions ended, without having to make any effort to travel elsewhere. Some of the participants lived some distance from the university and even though it meant they would get home later than normal, were still keen for the interview to happen at the university. I did consider undertaking these interviews elsewhere (the coffee shop on campus, or other venues off site) but I dismissed these partly as a response to the trainees wishing to utilise the time they were on site at the university, partly because I did not want external distractions that might occur if for example, their friends were present at the coffee shop, and finally because I wanted the meeting to feel private so that they may say anything they wish. I was also conscious that there might be an element of personal information disclosed that might not occur in a more public venue.



The next decision was regarding the structure of the interview. Quinn Patton (2002:342) proposed three types of qualitative data collection through interview; informal conversational interview, interview guide approach and standardized open-ended interview. These are not mutually exclusive – it would be possible to combine these. The standardized open-ended interview where the respondents answer the same, carefully worded questions, predetermined in advance, minimises variations, reduces interviewer bias and eases analysis. However, there is little flexibility and it constrains the interviewer/interviewee relationship. At the other end of the spectrum is the informal conversational interview where questions emerge from the context, with no predetermined questions. This enables the interview to match the participant and the circumstance and to flow naturally. However, this means different information is collected from each participant and is often difficult to analyse. The interview guide approach where topics and issues are specified in advance, in outline form allows for a conversational feel to the interview, increases the comprehensiveness of the data and enables gaps in data to be anticipated and closed. However, it could impede new lines of enquiry being followed and data can still be difficult to analyse.

I used the interview guide approach piloting it and verifying its effectiveness in interview one (see Appendix C) where the main areas I wanted to question were identified and possible prompts indicated in brackets. This enabled me to have a broad structure to the interview, regarding the areas I wanted to explore with the trainees and to pursue largely the same basic lines of enquiry. I judged this the best method in which to gather stories about the trainees' experiences in their decision to become teachers, and how their identity is shaped.

Despite these interviews taking place early on in the PGCE year, there were opportunities for some informal conversational interviewing to occur. For example, Chloe spoke at length about the issues she faced whilst she was at school; her birthday was in August and being much younger than her peers, she felt this impeded her academic progress during her pre-teenage years. This provided an insight into Chloe's perceptions of school as she encountered it and linked to Flores and Day (2006) idea that teacher identity is influenced by past experience as pupils.

Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and an hour; some trainees spoke quickly and eloquently, others were more thoughtful and spoke more slowly, some were keen to expand their responses without much prompting, others less so. These interviews provided opportunities for the trainees to recount their stories of their developing teacher identity. For some, this became quite an emotional experience, bringing back strong memories of issues that had occurred in their previous studies. One participant, Mia, became tearful at one point in recounting her story to me, as she opened up about the journey she had travelled from a restricted experience as a student in Asia, where teachers are revered, not questioned, to a more open and inquiring environment she encountered in England. This demonstrates how research on teacher identity is not necessarily transferable beyond national contexts since education systems differ and societal reactions to teachers are often different. The interviews were recorded which enabled me to focus on the trainee, looking at their body language and enabling questions to flow in a natural way, more akin to a conversation, without recourse to long pauses whilst making copious notes. All the trainees were asked if they minded the interview being recorded. None of the trainees was at all concerned by this; the machine used for this purpose was very small and discrete and was able to be operated without recourse to using an external microphone. This meant that the trainees quickly forgot about its presence, were able to concentrate on their responses and relax into the process.

Broadly similar questions were used with each trainee, but as an interviewer, I allowed the conversation to flow as naturally as possible, whilst keeping on topic.

### **3.5.1 (iii) Interview 2**

Follow up interviews were carried out in February/March with the same group of 10 trainee teachers. These interviews were conducted during students' second placement in school at a time to suit them. The trainees were based at their respective placement schools for an extended period of 18 weeks, allowing them to immerse themselves into the culture of the school, and begin to feel part of their community. The interviews were orchestrated and set up by the trainees; their choice of time, venue and room. All these were in private, that is to say, in a classroom or other room, without others present. This gave them the opportunity to be candid about their experiences without fear of being overheard or interrupted.

I again chose to start with an interview guide approach (Quinn Patton 2002:342) to maintain similar lines of enquiry with each trainee and achieve consistency of approach. It would also enable me to continue to hear more stories about their experiences and any significant events which were shaping their emerging identities. I drafted the main areas for discussion (see Appendix C) which are shown in bold text but also included some prompting questions to use if the initial question did not elicit a discussion. By this stage in the year, rapport with the group had increased and I was able to engage in more informal conversational interviews. For example, Sophie spoke at length about becoming a teacher, the journey she had been on so far and was reflective on the differences she found between her two placements.

The interviews were recorded using the same digital device as before, allowing the free flow of conversation, with semi-structured questions. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each. All were transcribed. Points that required clarification were then pursued with individuals by email.

During this interview, I introduced prompt cards. Each card had one or two words on it, taken from Whitty (2000) and his reflections on teacher professionalism. There were eleven cards, with adjectives drawn from his paper as follows: autonomy, flexibility, knowledge, making judgements, reflective practitioner, regulations, skills, social service, standards, technician and theoretical knowledge. From my review of literature, autonomy and knowledge emerged as key themes in teacher professionalism. I wanted to see if the trainees also identified these areas to be important to them. In order to do so, I asked the trainees to rank these cards in order of importance to them, with the most important one at the top, least at the bottom. They were encouraged to discuss their choices as to how and why they had ranked them in the order they chose. These findings are analysed in section 4.7.

Researchers including Bell (1993), Cohen and Manion (1994) and Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) have helpful advice about how to plan and carry out interviews. At times it was not as prescribed or as neat as they suggest. Interviews carried out with SPTs and Head teachers were generally smooth and flowed easily, perhaps as they were more used to answering questions. I continued to use the interview guide approach. However, at times, some of the trainees that I interviewed needed more encouragement to speak freely and easily. This I feel was a residue from the duality of my role with them; as researcher, but also as their tutor.

Despite every effort to make them as comfortable as possible with my role as researcher, some of them still appeared reluctant at first, to talk freely. However, over time, this reluctance decreased to the extent that I felt the trainees almost forgot I was their tutor at times. Extra care was taken to manage this duality and to encourage them that my two roles were to be kept entirely separate (see section 3.6). As an insider researcher, i.e. researching the organisation they work in, I know that to some extent that it can never be truly objective (Smyth and Holian 2008). Nevertheless, as an insider researcher, I am afforded a unique insight due to knowledge of the culture in which I work, the history of the organisation, the course I am researching and those people that are involved in it. Alvesson (2003) described this as being an observing participant, rather than the more traditional idea of a participant observer. Robson (1993) sees the advantage of being such an insider as one where the researcher has an intimate knowledge of the study, historically, politically and its hierarchy. In my research, I already know much of the structure of the PGCE course, the mechanics of how it is organised and the people involved.

All this information would take a long time to gain for someone who was an outsider researcher. Brannick and Coghlan (2007) found that insider researchers have vital knowledge of what the organisation (and in my case, the course) is really like. I believe that as an insider researcher, my view of the course, the students, the teacher educators and senior university staff offers a unique perspective which could otherwise not be obtained. I am aware that I could become too close or have too many preconceptions about the people and the organisation, but I feel by having and acknowledging such awareness, I have negated its effect of bias on the analysis and findings from my data collection. I do recognise that my duality of role needed a great deal of trust from the trainees to keep my role as researcher and tutor separate. I was very conscious of the need to keep information gained separate in both of my roles, unless the respondents specifically indicated that I could transfer this knowledge from one area to the other. I made it very clear to the trainees that they were able to withdraw from participation in my research at any point they wished, without comeback or criticism from me in any way. I feel very privileged that none of them took this option, despite it being offered at numerous times during the process of data collection. I feel that I laid down very clear signposts as to when I was their tutor, and when I was a researcher, and this framework gave confidence both to them and to me.

### **3.5.1 (iv) Questionnaire 2**

On the return of the trainee teachers to the university in June, the whole cohort completed a final questionnaire (see Appendix G). This provided an opportunity for the group to reflect upon the journey they had embarked on so far and probed more deeply into how they felt about becoming a teacher. The majority of the questionnaire however, focused on the Master's level study they had undertaken during the course and feelings about this. Trainees were once again made aware that it was entirely voluntary, and at that stage of their course, knew that non completion would have little effect on the outcome of their qualification. nineteen out of twenty one trainees completed the questionnaire

### **3.5.2 Questionnaires with Teacher Educators**

Questionnaires (see Appendix H) were given to each of the PGCE secondary subject teacher educators in the case study university in November 2010. This time was selected as at this stage their trainee teachers had departed to their first placement school and it was

perhaps less frenetic than earlier in the term when placements are still being sourced. Not all tutors responded to this initial request, despite being supportive and interested in my research. It took several prompts to elicit seven of the nine responses; some of them being quite detailed, whilst others were briefer in their answers.

### **3.5.3 Interview with MTL leader**

I also arranged to interview a member of staff, with a management role within the university, who had worked with Master's level programmes for many years. This person had been involved in both the traditional MA as well as the newer Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL). As such, I felt that she would be able to discuss the many changes that that have been faced in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers and the drive towards making teaching a Master's level profession. The interview took place in her office, at a mutually convenient time and lasted approximately 40 minutes. I recorded and transcribed the interview, as well as making brief notes. These notes enabled me to recall thoughts and feelings as I went along, as well as proving to be useful prompts for follow up questions.

### **3.5.4 Interview with Senior Professional Tutors**

Senior Professional Tutors (SPT's) from three schools were interviewed during May and June 2011. These are often teachers with a senior or management role within the school, and who act as co-ordinator for all trainee teachers there, regardless of subject specialism. They run group sessions that are generic to teaching for the trainees and support the school subject mentors in their role. Due to their experience with trainee teachers, and their senior role within the school, I decided that these professionals would have a broader overview of the Masters inclusion in PGCE than perhaps the subject mentors might have. I arranged to interview three SPTs in their schools, at a mutually convenient time and place of their choosing. Prior to the meeting, I sent them background information about my research, and a broad outline of what I wanted to discuss with them. This allowed them time to digest my request and to consider what they could tell me. All three interviews were recorded and transcribed and lasted from 20 minutes to almost an hour.

### **3.5.5 Interviews with Head Teachers**

The interviews with the head teachers proved to be more difficult to arrange than I first thought. This was mostly down to finding a convenient time during their busy school day when they would have time to allow me to interview them. Several heads were approached, a number declined saying they 'had already been interviewed for another project' that the university was carrying out, or that they 'would prefer not to at this time'. Three schools accepted my invitation to participate, and in advance of the interview, I sent them a briefing sheet, explaining what my research was about and an outline of my expectations of what might take place. Two of the interviews took place in their school, in their office, the other, over the telephone, due to time constraints. All were willing and able to talk freely and at length in order to answer my questions. All three interviews were uninterrupted throughout. The interviews were all recorded, after obtaining consent for this, thus enabling me to concentrate on listening to their responses and building a rapport with the heads. None of them were known personally to me, although all had worked closely in partnership with the

university in having trainee teachers placed with them. The interviews were all transcribed and lasted between 35 minutes and an hour.

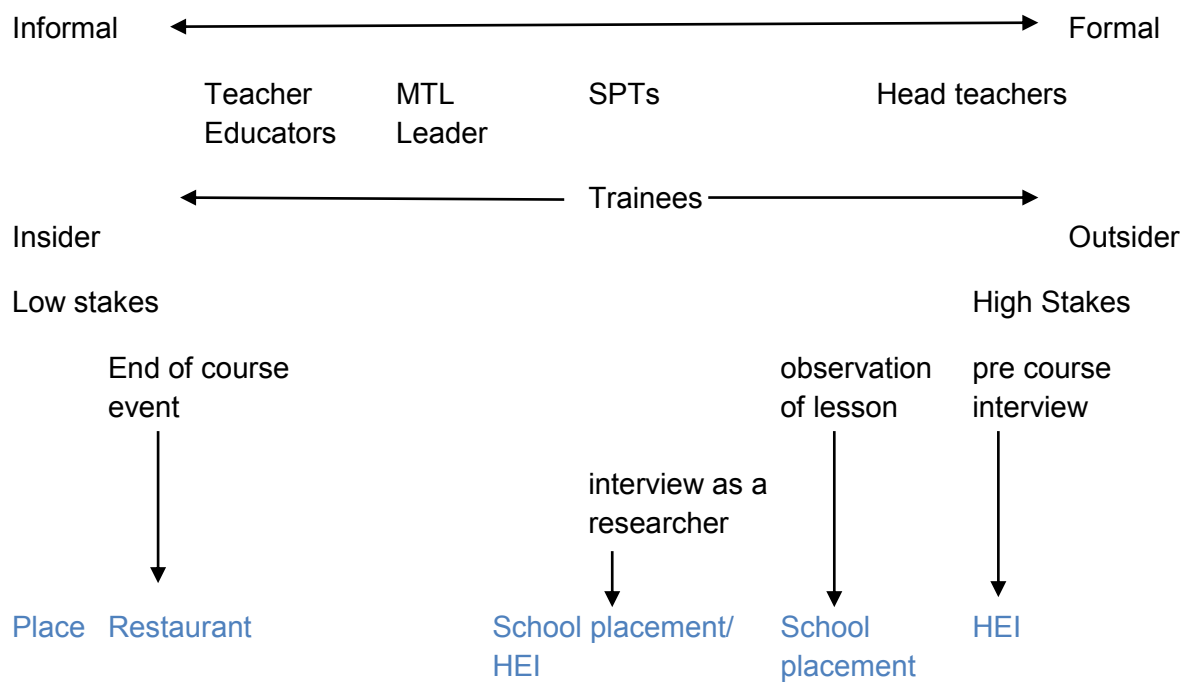
### **3.6 Insider/outsider Research**

Clough (2002:8) spoke of making the 'familiar strange and the strange familiar' and this is perhaps the conundrum that the researcher who uses their own setting as a basis for their data finds themselves in. I am familiar with the policy context surrounding the drive to 'make teaching a Master's level profession' (DCSF 2007: 83), the PGCE course within the HEI and the partnership between placement schools and the trainees. Having taught in schools myself before moving into an HEI, I am aware of how schools function and the relationships within them.

Insider researchers are very aware of their own surroundings, their colleagues and even their subjects, and this is the case with my own research here; I am investigating trainees with whom I work intensively throughout their training year and as such am very familiar with them and they with me. My colleagues in my HEI are familiar as I see them every day and would regard my research relationship with them as informal. The MTL leader I see less frequently and holds a higher grade than I. As a result, I felt the research relationship was more formal than with the teacher educators. The relationships I have with other respondents in my research (the SPTs and head teachers) are more distant and to some extent more formal in their nature. (See figure 7 below)

The formality factor I felt was a key element as it affected my relationship with the respondents and how they react to me. It also has an influence on how easy it was to access them, with informal being the easiest, formal the most difficult. Informal could almost equate to my insider-ness and formal to my outsider-ness (see figure 7 below)

The relationship with the trainees moved along the continuum, depending upon time, (whether at the interview prior to commencement of the PGCE course, or later on once a rapport and relationship had been established), activity (whether I was lecturing, tutoring, observing their teaching on placement, interviewing them in my role as researcher or at the end of course event) or place (whether at the HEI, in their placement school or outside of either of these venues). In addition, some of these activities were high stakes (their interview to decide if they were to be offered a place onto the PGCE course) or low stakes (the meal at the end of the course). See Figure 7 below



**Figure 7 Informal/formal, insider/outsider and low/high stakes continuum**

The concept of insiders and outsiders in research was defined by Merton (1972:21); ‘insiders are the members of specified groups and collectives, or occupants of specified social status. Outsiders are non-members’. This was further clarified by Griffiths (1998:361); insiders have a ‘familiarity with the group being researched’ and outsiders do not ‘have any intimate knowledge of the group being researched, prior to entry to the group’. By either of these definitions in respect of both the trainees and teacher educators, I am an insider researcher. The trainees are very familiar to me; not only in terms of being in the role as group tutor to the PGCE secondary cohort for a number of years prior to beginning my research, but also as I interviewed them all, in order to establish who was to be offered a place on the course prior to its commencement. With the teacher educators, I was part of the team that met regularly, with whom good practice was shared and a rapport had developed over a number of years.

Building on figure 7, my relationship with the MTL leader is slightly further along the continuum, as I work less closely with her than with the teacher educators. With the SPTs, my research is both less formal and less of that of an insider. I do have a familiarity with their role, their school, but have no direct part in either. I also have limited contact with them when I visit the schools in order to carry out observations of the trainees on their teaching placements. With the head teachers, I rarely have contact with them and have less knowledge of their role. As such I feel that I am more of an outsider researcher, which, according to Burgess (1984:23) would allow me to ‘stand back and abstract material from the research experience’. I was not such an outsider to complicate access to head teachers, but far enough removed from their role to allow me to approach my data with criticality. However, I had a shared understanding of terminology, setting and culture to avoid misunderstanding and could be considered an informed outsider.

Although Simmel (1950:405) contended that only a neutral outsider can be really objective due to distance and detachment from their research subjects, Merton (1972:15) argued the opposite; only those who are insiders can have the ability to understand what is really going

on, and have the experience to recognise what they are seeing. I feel that without being an insider, I would not have gained the trust of the trainees, found out what they really thought of the Masters level credits and how they really approached tackling that particular assignment. I also would not have had the understanding of the course, the assignment and my knowledge of the trainees would have been considerably less, had this not been the case.

### **3.6.1 Benefits of insider research**

There are, as I see it, four main advantages to being an insider researcher:

- (i) Ease of access
- (ii) May be less intrusive
- (iii) Familiarity with the subjects/ topics/ language
- (iv) Rapport

(i) Access – the trainees are on hand for part of their PGCE course (12 of the 36 weeks of the programme). It was relatively easy to set up mutually convenient times to interview them whilst they were at the HEI, but without disrupting or impacting upon their taught sessions. This was also the case with the MTL leader and the teacher educators. It was not as easy to have access to the SPTs or the head teachers. This is perhaps indicative of them being further along the line of continuum of insider / outsider research (see figure 7)

(ii) Intrusive – I tried to be as unintrusive with my research as I possibly could with any of the participants . I went to great lengths to explain to the trainees that any participation would be entirely voluntary, that they could withdraw from their involvement at any time, whether they participated or not would not affect their progression, reference or placement, that anything they said to me in my role as a researcher would not be brought into my role with them as their tutor. I endeavoured to be as flexible as possible in arranging times for interviews that suited the trainees, in places that were most convenient to them and with as little disturbance to both their studies and their personal lives as possible. However I acknowledge that this cannot ever be really known, as I cannot run the same research with the same cohort without being in my role as their tutor. I did however, mitigate as much as possible any blurring of my dual role with the trainees (see 3.7.1).

With the teacher educators and MTL leader, I did not disclose my feelings about the Masters level credits in the PGCE and as such, feel I did not influence the responses I received from them. Again, all were asked for their co-operation in my research on an entirely voluntary basis (not all did respond) and I do not feel that my relationship with either of these participants changed as a result of this. Similarly with the SPTs and head teachers, all were asked if they would like to participate, which some did decline to do. All interviews took place at their convenience, and predominantly at their school site (one head teacher was interviewed by telephone due to his time constraints).

(iii) Familiarity – Having worked in the HEI for a number of years before undertaking this research, I have an understanding of the setting, the ethos, the trainees, their experiences and the PGCE course. At first I was concerned that the trainees in particular would be less than candid with me in their responses. I was anxious that they might be worried about sharing information with me that might show them in a poor light or that what they said might upset me in some way. I did reiterate that my role as a researcher would be quite separate

from that of their tutor. I believe this was accepted, as became apparent when interviewing Alfie for example. In discussing the Masters level assignment he admitted he had trouble with his time management and did not get down to starting work on this as early as he might; *“the Masters thing was not that high a priority”* (interview 2), that he *“was looking for a way of just passing it”* (interview 2) and thinking about the minimum *“of what I need to do”* (interview 2). This honesty was indicative of his trust in me as a researcher that I would not use his comments in later discussions with him in the role of his tutor. The trainees may not have been so candid with their reflections in interviews and in their responses to questionnaires had I not been known to them or had such a good relationship with them.

The teacher educators and MTL leader also understood what I was trying to achieve in my research (a number having undertaken an EdD themselves), so therefore knew the HEI and understood the terminology used. All this I believe helped them feel comfortable when answering my questions and assisting in my research. Although the SPTs and head teachers were not necessarily familiar with me, they knew the HEI, the trainees and had experienced the quality of the course (as an Ofsted grade 1 provider of teacher education). All this, I considered to be relevant to gaining access to them, and having their support in my research.

(iv) Rapport – the time that I spent with the trainees at the start of the course was quite intense and as a result, enabled a rapport to be achieved over a short timeframe. They had trust in me as a tutor that my research would not harm their studies on the PGCE course, it would not damage their possible future career by them divulging information and that if they chose not to participate, that too would also have no adverse consequence.

I do feel that the rapport I had with both the teacher educators and the MTL leader was built on a solid background of working with them for a number of years. They understood my desire to research and undertake my doctorate, they knew and understood the trainees as a whole cohort and were supportive of me. Had I been an outsider researcher, this relationship would have been more distant and access much harder to negotiate and sustain.

With the SPTs and head teachers, I had a short time to build the rapport before I interviewed them. I contacted them by email and followed up with a phone call. I sent them a background outline to my research and I explained they could decline to participate at any time. The interviews were set up at their convenience and at their schools, which I believed helped them be more relaxed about the process. I was conscious of my body language when interviewing, trying to be as open and relaxed as possible and endeavoured to be as encouraging as possible, nodding my head (as appropriate) and smiling.

This was a disadvantage in interviewing the head by telephone. I could not see any social cues he may have been displaying (discomfort with my line of questioning, encouragement to follow a line of questioning). I had no image of where the interview took place, whether the head was fully focused on me, or whether he was checking emails/messages whilst answering my questions. As such, there may have been less spontaneity in both of our responses and reactions to questions/answers. However, these were balanced by the interview having been arranged at his convenience, being able to pick up on points raised during the interview and gaining valuable data which otherwise I would not have access to.



### **3.6.2 Disadvantages of insider research**

There has been debate over whether or not insider research alters the process (Sikes 2006, Hockey 1993). Have I had more impact on the research by being an insider than I would have done had I carried out my research in another institution? I do not believe that I had a detrimental effect on the outcomes and that the benefits outlined above support my belief that I have gained deeper and thicker descriptions (certainly from the trainees) than I would otherwise have done.

As my research was carried out in my workplace with a relatively small cohort, it could be argued that this affected my ability to critically engage with the data and information I have gathered (Drake and Heath 2008:129). I therefore needed to 'self triangulate' (ibid) by ensuring a range of data was gathered from a variety of sources, having discussions with critical friends, to challenge any underlying assumptions I might have had.

This leads onto another area of difficulty with insider research; the ability to remain neutral. Whether or not I thought Masters level credits are a good thing in a PGCE was not shared with any of the participants. However, as an HEI, the decision was made to offer the PGCE at Post Graduate level and therefore had to include Masters level credits. This meant that the default position for the trainees was that they would be entered at this level, unless they consciously opted not to be. As a result, teacher educators actively encouraged the trainees in their studies to strive to achieve their assignment at this level. Additional support was offered to those trainees who, it was felt, might struggle to meet the required standard in their writing. All these factors indicate to the trainees my implicit support of Masters Level within the PGCE. It was not something I could hide or change and therefore acknowledge it here. That being said, I did encourage the trainees to express their own opinions; for example, Evie thought "*I don't need to do an assignment about it, because nearly everything I do, I teach*" (interview 2) and Lily was "*more stressed as it was a Master's level assignment*" (interview 2).

I could not un-hear what had been said to me. Whilst my research did not delve into deeply personal issues that for example a researcher investigating medical conditions may encounter, there were instances when respondents did reveal personal feelings and thoughts. Gaining such privileged information may not have been the case had I been an outsider researcher. In some ways, this is a double edged sword. I feel honoured that such information has been shared with me, but on occasions burdened by it.

### **3.6.3 Summary of insider/outsider research**

Drake and Heath (2008:141) contend that insider research 'can never be clean, neutral, objective' and that this needs to be acknowledged by the researcher as such. As Floyd and Arthur (2012:178) point out 'insider researchers need to accept the challenge of anticipating the moral and professional dilemmas they may face'. The benefits that accrue from being an insider researcher, I feel, outweigh the issues that arose from this position and as such, I feel, gave me an insight that might otherwise not have been possible.

## **3.7 Ethical Issues**

### **3.7.1 Research Relationships**

There was an element of a power relationship between the trainees and me, which stemmed from my role as their lecturer and tutor. It included assessment of their written assignments and writing of their references which ultimately could decide whether or not they passed the PGCE course, and/or whether or not they were successful in obtaining employment as a teacher. The trainees also thought that I would be judging them in their placement schools, when I observed their teaching. This was not the case. Although I would do a formal observation of their teaching three times during the year, it was the school that made recommendation as to whether or not they considered the trainee passed that element of the PGCE or not. I went to great lengths to explain this to the trainees before the observations commenced. They were, however, still apprehensive about my visit.

I tried to dispel this anxiety by asking them to think about the observation as an opportunity to show off, to demonstrate all the good things they could do in their classroom and by reiterating it was the schools' role to advise on this part of the course and not mine alone. This seemed to help, but it took the first visit to really instil in the trainees that this was the case. Word spread through the group via social networking sites, emails and texts that the observations "were alright" and as such, the trainees appeared more relaxed. Of course, if there was an issue with their teaching, I would pick up on this, and discuss it with them afterwards, suggesting various approaches they might use in future to avoid such matters being repeated. This approach was supported through having their subject mentor or class teacher participate in a joint observation with me, thus allowing a moderation of opinion regarding the lesson to take place.

My role as course leader for this secondary subject PGCE was one where I had previously built a relationship of trust with the trainees. I did this through demonstrating my support for them throughout the programme, by being positive and celebrating their achievements and assisting them in the process of getting a job. There was however, a tension between my role as their tutor, writing their references and that as a researcher and hence took account of BERA (2011) Ethical Guidelines, whilst maintaining the 'reflective and reflexive stance' needed (Goodson and Sikes 2001:108).

### **3.7.2 BERA Ethical Guidelines**

The British Educational Research Association (BERA) published their revised guidelines for educational research in 2011 and the rights of individuals participating in my research were addressed and supported by these.

#### **Informed consent**

Before starting my data gathering from the trainees, I took time to fully explain what it was I was researching, the processes I intended to use, the purpose of my study and what participation (or non participation) would mean. I went to great lengths to distance my research from the role I had with them as their course tutor, and reiterated on numerous occasions that it would not either help or hinder their progress whether they chose to participate or not in my research. I indicated to them the approximate amount of time it would

take to gather the data I wanted as well as how I was to go about this. A similar explanation was given to the teacher educators and MTL leader.

With the SPTs and head teachers, I sent them background information on my research (see Appendix A) together with a consent form for them to sign (see Appendix B) This provided them with the information about the purpose of the study, how I would collect the data and store it and that participation was voluntary. It also explained that data collection would take place at a venue of their choice, at a time convenient to them.

#### Right to withdraw

The trainees, teacher educators and MTL leader were all informed verbally on several occasions that they had the right to withdraw at any time for any reason (or no reason at all). I was fortunate that no one chose to withdraw from my research once data collection had commenced but was prepared to look at my practice if they had done. I informed the SPTs and head teachers of these rights in their background information sheet. Two head teachers declined to participate before data collection commenced, due partly to being involved in other research at this HEI and perhaps felt interview fatigue.

#### Privacy

All the participants were assured of their anonymity so that the identity of those taking part would only be known by me. To do this, I used pseudonyms for all participants, their schools and organisations and this was explained to them before data collection commenced. The interviews were recorded but were labelled with their pseudonyms rather than their actual names or organisation. The pseudonyms were only known by me and a record linking the actual names to these were kept separately to the data.

### **3.8 Analysis of Data**

#### **3.8.1 Trainees**

Initially, I knew that some trainees engaged with the Masters level assignment more than others, that some SPTs had an idea of there being an assignment in the PGCE course that was assessed at Masters level and that few heads were that involved in the minutiae of the PGCE course. These hunches, similar to what Charmaz (2002:683) referred to as 'sensitising concepts', were the basis to refining and sharpening more precise notions of analysis.

With the questionnaires, some of the data gathered was quantitative rather than qualitative. Those questions that did produce qualitative responses were analysed using the codes generated from the interviews.

In order to understand more about the development of the trainees' identity, I wanted to hear their stories. This is a way of explaining their decisions, as a way of describing what they did (or did not do) and clarifying their actions (Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Using semi-structured interviews gave me an opportunity to start the conversation with a series of prompts, which led onto the stories the trainees wanted to tell about their experiences (an interview guide approach – see 3.5.1.(ii)). This grounded theory approach enabled me to start with a wide topic area, broad questions and a series of prompts to begin the conversation (see Appendix C). As I was researching identity in an educational setting,

narrative inquiry was a methodology commonly used (Goodson 1995). Additionally, it offered a way of considering the experiences the trainees had encountered and to see how they started to construct their identity (Savvidou 2010), indicating key information to resolve my research questions.

I could see the development of categories emerging as I was collecting the data. This became narrower and more tightly focused as the interviews progressed. In doing so, I was able to define the categories more concisely. As I was immersing myself in the data, I tried to see what it was the participants saw as being most significant and important to them; the key stories. For example, I was aware from Flores and Day (2006) and Beijaard et al (2000) that trainees' ideas of what it is to be a teacher is shaped by their own observations of education. I therefore wanted to hear the trainees narrate their stories about their school and university experiences. These are the narrations I gathered and can be seen in Appendix D – trainee narrative summaries.

As I was collecting data from the questionnaires, I gained a sense of emerging key features, similarities and dissonance. I began to code and analyse this in order to shape the prompts I would use in my interviews (Glaser and Strauss 1967). I did not, as Charmaz (2006) suggests, have a random group of people with similar experiences, rather my sample of ten trainees from the original group of twenty one was selected using purposive sampling (see 3.4.2 (i)). The first phase of coding was defined by Strauss and Corbin (1997) as open coding. This was where I found and named general areas of categories or themes from the data. These were kept as wide as possible thus keeping the coding open. These were developed from my understanding of the context of the research I was undertaking and of my reading (Charmaz 2006, Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Dey 1999). I clustered the resultant codes by 'grouping and then conceptualizing' (Miles and Huberman 1994:249) them into variables. These relate to the narrative of how the trainees are making sense of their journey to becoming a teacher; Connelly and Clandinin (1990) may consider this to be how they are experiencing their world. These groupings or variables appear to be the areas of focus that are significant to the trainees (Bruner 2002) and to my research questions.

As an interpretivist researcher, my approach to data is more in line with Strauss and Corbin (1997). I looked for the meaning the data held, and used my coding to interpret the data in a systematic way. Where narrative inquiry and grounded theory intersect for me is in the emergence of the stories; themes begin to appear and are returned to later in the discussion of data. For example, one question posed in the first questionnaire asked about the trainees' previous experience of teaching. I wanted to explore more of this in the subsequent interviews, to find out more of the nature of these encounters and what influence it had on them. Although I had my starting point for this question in interview one, I did not know where this might lead, what stories might emerge or what significance there might be.

All the questionnaires were word processed and handed out to the trainees. They wrote their responses by hand onto them, before returning them to me. The interviews I conducted with the trainees were recorded and transcribed. The result of which was I had a hard copy of all of the data, which I could code. I initially did this by annotating, at the side of the questionnaires or interview transcripts, themes which emerged from the stories the trainees were telling. I had no idea of what they might say in the interviews or questionnaires so could not have a preconceived idea of what these codes might be (Charmaz 2006). As I went through these data several times, I began to merge some codes together as it was apparent

to me they were broadly similar. For example, initially, I coded their own school experiences as a pupil, separately to that when they were at college or university. I then decided to re-code these stories of previous academic experiences as educational background (Beijaard et al 2000, Flores and Day 2006).

From these interviews and subsequent coding, I began to see common themes emerging but which manifested differently in the trainees. For example in the excerpts highlighted below, Joshua was very keen to continue with Masters level study and shows his awareness of governmental policy and how it influences teachers. Lily would like to pursue a Masters degree but was unsure how it might impact on her teaching and Alfie was more concerned about his teaching placement than Masters level.

Extract from first interview with Joshua

<p>I think the government are wanting teachers and teaching to be at Masters level. I enjoy being at university and doing the essays. I have learnt a lot from being in schools at the moment. I think it's definitely the next step after the NQT year. My tutor here is going through her Masters at the moment and I have only heard good things from her so <b>it's definitely something I want to do down the line.</b> I just like the challenge of it as well, trying to get the best possible marks and getting a few more letters after my name!</p>	<p>Coding</p> <p>Academic/motivation Continue study</p> <p>Continue study motivation effort</p>
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Extract from first interview with Lily

<p>I personally think that education is important to me and although I want to teach education, I had to fight to get my education and to do my degree which was a really big deal, so education has a special place in my heart to always do as much as I can because I have learnt that it is the one thing that you can do that no one can take away from you. So <b>I would like to but then again, it just depends</b> on how I am doing teaching and whether I feel its necessary to do it and if it will add anything. I guess it will give me research skills and things like that which I guess I won't use that often other than doing that assignment <b>so I would like to say yes but ...</b></p>	<p>Coding</p> <p>Academic/motivation</p> <p>motivation</p> <p>motivation</p> <p>continue study</p> <p>motivation</p>
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Extract from first interview with Alfie

<p>I think I will be hitting them [the M level demands] to get them [M level units] rather than to change how I operate in the classroom, because I am establishing how I am as a teacher and then that comes in as the masters thing, I don't think that after that assignment I will adapt this. It will be good to get them but in my present feelings, <b>if I get them I get them, if I don't I don't</b> but this year is important to create myself as a teacher and be comfortable with my teaching practice rather than achieving that level.</p>	<p>Coding Motivation/effort Classroom practice  Motivation Effort  Continue study</p>
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I felt this reflected three strong indicators of levels of motivation/identity and used sub-sets of coding as follows (based on the excerpts above).

Motivation – Highly motivated to study at Masters level

Motivated to continue but with caveats

Not motivated to continue

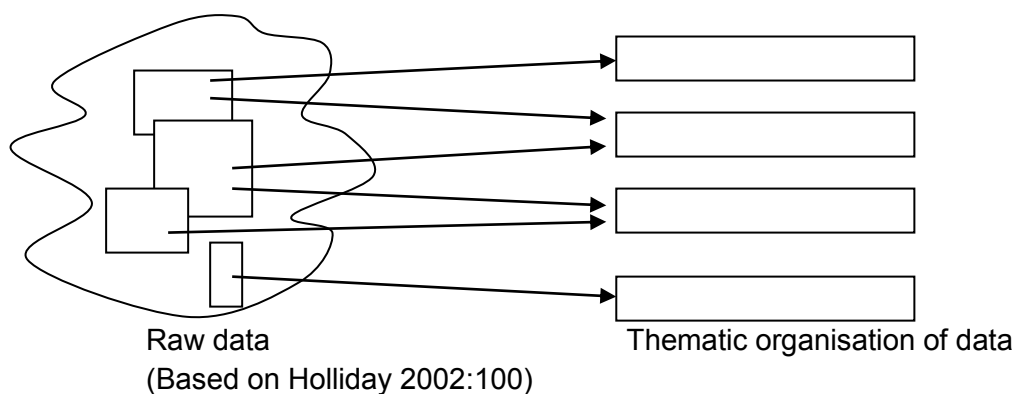
Having read Shain and Gleeson's (1999) work on identity (see 2.12) I felt there was a resonance here in my data with their research. The categories Shain and Gleeson (1999) described did not fit sufficiently closely to use directly, but were ones on which I could begin to base my analysis (see 3.8.3 below). As a result, I changed the names of their categories to ones which better described my data (see table 7 below).

This worked well for all but one of the trainees, Emily. At times, she displayed characteristics which fitted with Engaged Academics, however, she also showed features of Willing/Strategic Compliers. This caused me a problem; which typology to put her in? I considered if she exhibited more features of one group more than the other but decided she did not. I read through her interview transcripts, questionnaires and emails again and again, checking the coding I had used, but felt these were consistent with those used with other trainees. After considering my options, I came to the conclusion that there needed to be another category added to my original three in the typology; Contextual Complier.

### 3.8.2 Framing the data

As described earlier in this chapter (3.5.1 i and 3.5.1 iv) trainees were asked to complete two questionnaires, one at the start of the PGCE course (Q1) and one at the end of the year (Q2). Additionally, interviews were carried out with the selected trainees, one approximately one month after Q1 (which I will refer to as I1) and one approximately three months prior to Q2 (which I denote I2). Furthermore, email correspondence between the trainees and me also took place just after I2, indicated by E1. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed (3.5.1.ii and 3.5.1.iii).

Having coded the data (see 3.8.1), I identified the main themes that emerged from the data and coding (see figure 8 below).



**Figure 8 From raw data to thematic organisation**

I coded the data as I collected it, with each sweep of analysis and codes informing the next set of questions I asked. Interviews were transcribed and coded, questionnaires and email correspondence coded in the same way. The coding was annotated by hand on the original documents. The result was a large amount of information with patterns identified by the coding. I then started to pull together all of the data under the sub headings highlighted by the codes. It became apparent to me there was some overlap so these areas were merged together, to form a more coherent picture. An example of how these were synthesised into the narrative summaries in appendix D is shown from the questionnaire and interview with Ruby.

In questionnaire 1, I asked if the trainees had any previous experience of teaching or training (q7), with space afterwards to write any further information if desired. Ruby responded briefly explaining she taught guitar and karate. She added she also delivered training sessions in her previous employment, but was unspecific about what form these took. This seemed to be an area that might produce interesting and relevant data and was followed up in the first interview – your decision to become a teacher (see Appendix C). The resulting conversation was lengthy and covered a range of careers she had undertaken since leaving university as well as her own experiences observing her teacher mother. The interview was then transcribed and coded. I was then able to cut and paste the coded extracts from this interview into sub-headings which had emerged from the coding. In this example, the sub heading was “Becoming a Teacher”. This was then further edited to remove parts of the account which I felt were repetitive or irrelevant. I was then able to draw these extracts together and weave them into a narrative summary (see appendix D).

These themes under which I organised data were (i) Educational background (ii) Becoming a teacher (iii) First Teaching Placement (iv) Second Teaching Placement (v) Trainee’s conceptualisation of their ideal teacher (vi) Imagined Future Career Path (vii) M Level Study and (viii) Continuing onto Master’s.

This enabled the data on trainees’ experiences to be presented more coherent and allowed patterns to be more easily identifiable. I decided a narrative summary for each of the trainees would be well matched to an emergent and changing concept such as identity. Goodson (1995) recognised narratives were well used in research into teacher identity and Kohler Reissman (2000) acknowledged narrative inquiry is eminently suited to represent

identity. I needed the stories the trainees told in order to find out about their emerging identity. I wrote a narrative summary for each of the trainees (see Appendix D). The voice of each trainee could be heard in each vignette, thus enabling 'particularities and context to come to the fore (Kohler Reissman 2008:13). On each narrative summary, I have indicated where the raw data came from (questionnaire 1, interview 2 and so on). Having done this, similarities between groups of trainees became more evident and I was able to identify emerging typologies.

I was aware that when I was collecting the data, through interviewing the trainees, I was inextricably bound up in the process; it was a shared process (Connelly and Clandinin 1990), a close relationship where I was part of their story. However, I was aware that I needed to move beyond this stage in order to reveal the narratives and become a researcher. I was professionally engaged in the development of the trainees towards becoming a qualified teacher, but my personal learning about them was enhanced by my involvement in this research. Indeed both the trainees and I were growing as we developed in our learning journey together.

Whilst doing this, I was reading journal articles, books and interrogating web sites to identify key research in teacher identity. One of the articles of interest was Shain and Gleeson (1999) and their research into lecturers in further education colleges. They found that their participants appeared to fall into three categories; resistance, compliance or strategic compliance. I was both intrigued and attracted to these terms; might this be a way of encapsulating the shape of my data? However it did not fully explain the data found, for example, some trainees relished the opportunity to study at Master's level, whilst others found it challenging and a chore. As a result, I felt the categories should be amended to better reflect my data, to better address my research question of how the introduction of Master's level credits in the PGCE has affected the development of the trainees' professional identity. The categories then became Engaged Academic, Willing/Strategic Complier and Reluctant Complier. The characteristics of each are discussed below.

### **3.8.3 How does Shain and Gleeson (1999) compare to the categories used in this research?**

The compliers in Shain and Gleeson (1999) research (see 2.12) were relatively new to FE and I felt complied because they felt pressure they may lose their job if they did not. As they were recent recruits to their role, perhaps they did not know differently, or did not want to cause problems so early on in their employment. The trainees in my research were much more active in their commitment to studying, much more enthused about theory and were able to see linkage between theory they were studying and the practice they were undertaking in their school placements. I therefore named them Engaged Academics.

Shain and Gleeson's (1999) description of strategic compliers were staff that fulfilled parts of their contracts that suited them best and ignored other elements. This came closest to the trainees in my study which I refer to as Willing/Strategic Compliers; however, the trainees in this research were more than just complying when it suited them; they were also willing to comply.

The resistant compliers Shain and Gleeson (1999) described were well established members of staff who were opposed to change in their terms and conditions, so much so



that they ignored them. They were dissimilar to the trainees in this study in that although they did not necessarily see the point of studying at Master’s level, they did all attempt to complete their assignment. I therefore felt they were Reluctant Compliers rather than resistant. One trainee did not fit into Shain and Gleeson’s categories. As a result, I made a new category: Contextual Complier.

Shain and Gleeson (1999) Categories	My categories
Resistance	Reluctant complier
Strategic compliance	Willing/strategic complier
Compliance	Engaged Academics

**Table 7 Comparison of typologies between Shain and Gleeson (1999) and my study**

I felt by changing Shain and Gleeson’s (1999) categories, it allowed me to address research question 2, (how is the development of trainee teachers’ professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into graduate teacher education programmes) by developing a way of looking at the different ways in which trainee teachers approach their Master’s level assignment. Additionally, the value the trainees put on achieving these credits and how useful they believe them to be in developing their classroom practice could also be included. The categories provided a contribution to the debate surrounding the construction of trainee teacher identity (including Raffo and Hall 2006, Flores and Day 2006 and Jones 2003 – see 2.8) by considering their identity development from a different perspective not used in previous research.

What these typologies also allowed me to do was to position the other research respondents in this framework to see how engaged they were with having Master’s level credits in the PGCE (see Table 80 Data Analysis). This linked back to research question 2, and enabled these respondents’ typologies to be mapped alongside those of the trainees. This I felt provided differing perspectives to be viewed

### **3.8.4 Teacher Educators**

I used a similar system when coding the data from the teacher educators to that used with the trainees. Although the data was from questionnaires, most of the responses required a written answer, rather than a tick box. For example, there were a number of differences in how the teacher educators assisted their trainees in writing the Masters level assignment. Some offered to read draft work, others ran workshops and a few had exemplars for trainees to view. I coded all of these “support”.

### **3.8.5 MTL Leader**

Having transcribed my interview with the MTL leader, I utilised the same coding system I had developed with the trainees and teacher educators. As an example, when discussing New Labour government’s steer towards teaching being an all Master’s profession, I coded this ‘context’. When discussing ongoing study at Master’s level, ‘values’ were a key element.

### **3.8.6 SPTs**

Again, the interviews with the SPTs were recorded and transcribed. Using the same system described above, discussions surrounding the trainees approach to studying at Master’s

level was coded 'academic', benefits to further study at Master's level coded 'future' and how the trainees engaged with theory whilst on teaching placement coded 'clash'.

### **3.8.7 Head Teachers**

Similarly to the SPTs, the interviews with head teachers were recorded and transcribed. Coding was consistent with that used with other data gathered from other research participants. For example, when the heads discussed what they looked for in candidates during interviews, I coded this 'future'.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter has summarised the way in which data was collected. As the focus of the study is on the trainees' experiences, the bulk of the account explains how I gathered and organised this. It was a conscious decision to collect less data from the other respondents as in my opinion, the data gathered from them provided a light from another angle to be shed upon the centre of my research, the trainees.

In taking a grounded theory approach, I endeavoured to collect and analyse the data. This ongoing analysis informed subsequent interviews with other participants in order to develop further my ideas and theory regarding trainee identity. As such, there was an overlap between data collection and data analysis, thus allowing clear focus on understanding the data in sufficient depth (Eisenhardt 1989). Linking this to a narrative case study enabled the participants' voices and stories to be heard, whilst at the same time, allowing me to frame and structure the responses (Bell 2002). I felt that by using such an approach, I was assisted in analysing the features of trainee teachers' identity in such a way other methods may not have done (Kohler Riessman 2000). It also allowed connections to be made between the previous experiences of the trainees, their current position as students and their future aspirations in teaching to be explored (Clandinin and Connelly 1995)

In addition, in order to gather the trainees' stories, I needed to have a close relationship in order to enable them to trust me enough to tell me more than just what they thought I would want to hear. This took time to build. There were ethical issues too regarding this relationship between the trainees and myself; I was both their tutor and a researcher (see 3.7.1) which needed to be carefully handled. I was also fortunate that none of the ten trainees chose to withdraw from the study. I did not want them to feel obligated to participate, nor disadvantaged in any way if they did or did not take part. Whilst it would have been possible to continue the research with less than ten, by having all of the trainees remain throughout the process gave a depth and colour to the data gathered.

There were issues with the other participants in the study; not all of the teacher educators responded to the questionnaire, something I was disappointed with but not surprised given the demands on their time during a busy academic year. Sufficient numbers did however complete the questionnaire, to provide a range of viewpoints covering both scientific and social science secondary subject areas. Finding head teachers who were willing to participate also proved to be more difficult than I first imagined. Some declined straight away, some did not respond and some needed more information before agreeing. There was also an issue with meeting with one head, eventually resolved by holding a telephone interview. Whilst not ideal (for example, I could not read body language and facial expressions) it did nonetheless provide useful data.

The case study in this instance is one group of ten trainees, from one cohort of secondary trainees, in one particular subject, in one particular HEI, in one year (2010/11). It could be that this case study may 'shed light' on others (Gerring 2007:20) but primarily it is a way of trying to understand this specific group of trainees and how they construct their identity in the light of Master's level credits within the PGCE. It is this particular group of trainees that are of interest to me in this study (Stake 1995).

The next chapter looks in detail at the key findings from data. Its main focus is on how the trainees start to form their identity following the introduction of Master's level credits in the PGCE. Additionally, the other respondents' views of this are analysed in order to further illuminate key issues arising from the data.

## CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the methodology used in narrative case studies, how data was collected and the challenges therein. This chapter focuses on the key findings of how trainee teachers' self-image and their construction of their identities, form as teachers. This is viewed from the perspective of the push to make teaching a Masters level profession. In addition, I consider how teacher educators, an MTL Leader, SPTs and head teachers view Masters level credits in the PGCE.

I have examined the data gathered from two questionnaires with trainees that took place at the start and end of the PGCE, two sets of interviews and follow up emails with ten of this cohort, a questionnaire to the teacher educators at this HEI and interviews with an MTL Leader at this HEI, SPTs and head teachers from partnership schools (see 3.4.1 ii, table 5).

Research questions	Topic sub headings
<p>How is the development of trainee teachers' professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into a graduate teacher education programme?</p> <p>(a) From trainee teachers' perspective</p> <p>(b) From teacher educators' perspective</p> <p>(c) From experienced teachers' perspective</p>	<p>(a) 4.2 Attitude to study 4.3 Studying at Masters level during the PGCE 4.4 Continuing to study for a full Masters 4.7 Conceptualization of an ideal teacher</p> <p>(b) 4.9. Teacher Educators</p> <p>(c) 4.10 MTL leader 4.11 SPT 4.12 Head teachers</p>
<p>To what extent does the inclusion of Masters level credits in the PGCE create two levels of professional identities which affect:</p> <p>(a) Employment</p> <p>(b) Classroom practice of trainee teachers</p>	<p>(a) 4.1 Career goals of the trainees 4.9.6 Employment prospects 4.11.2 Recruitment of trainees (SPT) 4.11.4 Career progression prospects (SPT) 4.12.4 Recruitment of trainees (Head teachers)</p> <p>(b) 4.5 Trainee teaching practice compared to academic work 4.12.7 Head teachers is teaching a craft or a profession?</p>

Table 8 Cross reference of research questions to topic sub headings

In order to link the stories and make connections, I grouped frequently occurring themes so they could be considered together and therefore be accessible. Having coded the data as I gathered it, I revisited it again some days later. In doing so, I was able to reflect (see 3.8.1) and make decisions about where things are linked, what is a new area and whether one coded item can be subsumed into another. I elected to analyse the data by organising it into topics in order to interpret what was said. This thematic approach was described by Kohler Reissman (2008) as the most common form of narrative analysis.

Having identified the main themes, grounded from the narrative, I organised the data under the following headings; educational background, becoming a teacher, first teaching placement, second teaching placement, conception of the ideal teacher, imagined future career path, Masters level study and continuing onto Masters. These themes are shown above in table 8 as topic sub-headings and illustrate how they link to the research questions. It was important to have these sub-headings as similar areas of discussion occurred within different data collected. For example, in interview one, Chloe was uncertain whether or not to carry on with Masters Level study after completing her PGCE. Her main concern then was where this study would take place, as the distance she lived from the HEI would cause problems in managing her family commitments. Later, in interview two and questionnaire two, her concern changed from the practical aspect to a more personal one; what she might gain from completing a Masters? This change in her perception was important to show as Chloe started to think more broadly and at the longer term benefits and issues surrounding additional study, rather than the short term, day to day minutiae of it.

From the narratives gathered in interviewing the trainees, the questionnaires and email correspondence from them, the transcripts revealed behaviour and practices adopted by the trainees in order to become teachers. For example, Joshua described going to the library to get the books he wanted for his Masters level assignment early. Alfie did not start his assignment until after Christmas, protecting his holiday time. These examples illustrate differences in approaches taken by the trainees to the same task and by adapting Shain and Gleeson's (1999) framework, can interpreted based on these behaviours.

I had to make a decision then about how to include this rich array of data gathered. I wrote a narrative summary for each of the trainees, using the themes discussed above. These can be seen in Appendix D. However, these were too long to include in their entirety in this chapter, averaging 3000 words each. This would be half of the word count for the whole thesis. It is not enough for these narratives to speak for themselves, rather, a more analytical approach was needed. I therefore had to be selective rather than exhaustive in my selection of what to include and what to leave out. I wanted to illustrate the key insights and subject these to close scrutiny. At the front of my mind I had the question of how is this helping me respond to my research questions? As identified by Clandinin and Murphy (2007), it is possible only to share a small portion of the overall data from the large amount of data generated in a narrative inquiry. I have endeavoured to make visible more of this data by including the narrative summaries in Appendix D.

As a result of this, I chose to include short extracts and quotes from the trainees, taken from the data and more comprehensive narrative summaries found in Appendix D. I inserted these into boxes in order to clearly show these as narrative and to highlight the difference from the main text of the thesis. It makes the trainees' voices stand out and presents them as being centre stage. The discussions then follow and are referenced back to the boxes by

means of bracketed letters indicating which quote is being referred to at what point. For example, in Table 11, Mia discusses her long-term ambitions; 'I would like to be one of the top teachers' - quote (a). The significance of this is then discussed in the next paragraph and linked to other comments she made in the data.

These provide exemplars for the points I am making and the resultant analysis frames their experiences (Richardson 1990) and sets it into context. By focusing my analysis in this way, it 'keeps in mind what you have set out to do' (Wolcott 1990:30). There were times I had to listen to the stories and not be judgemental (Clandinin and Murphy 2007) in my dual role as the trainees' personal tutor and researcher. Sometimes there were instances where this was particularly difficult to do, for example, when Alfie was discussing the process he went through in completing his Masters level assignment. He felt he was 'looking for a way of just passing it' (interview 2). I noted in my research journal my frustration with his mind-set regarding his academic work; 'this is important for him to get, he needs to understand theory to underpin his practice – why can't he see this?' My role as his tutor made me want to question his attitude to study, to encourage him to put in more effort. However, as a researcher, this was not my function and thus had to remain silent.

The trainees provided rich sources of data for me from questionnaires, interviews and email correspondence. This enabled me to sample throughout the year. For the trainees, their PGCE year is extremely busy; out of the thirty six weeks of the course, they are in their school placements for twenty four weeks, when they are expected to undertake an increasingly significant amount of teaching. In addition, most of the trainees take on the responsibility for being a tutor and many volunteer in helping with extra curricula activities, such as sports clubs, dance and drama productions. At the same time, they do have academic work to complete for the HEI. I was fortunate they agreed to be interviewed and responded to questionnaires and emails on as many occasions as they did

I have inserted some comments in the analysis of data that came from personal tutorials with the trainees. I felt this information was relevant to the study here and helps to give a fuller picture of issues that concerned the trainees and were relevant to my research. I have not included any quotes or comments arising from tutorials that were confidential in nature. Throughout the course of my study, I kept a research journal. In this chapter, I have included observations and remarks I made in this journal in order to include some of my voice (Kohler Riessman 2000) and perhaps a 'mutual storytelling' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990:4).

The first section of this chapter addresses the research question of 'how is the development of trainee teachers' professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into a graduate teacher education programme?' Here I have explored in greater depth how ten trainee teachers engaged with Masters level credits in their PGCE course. This section also considers the research question 'to what extent does the inclusion of Masters level credits in the PGCE create two levels of professional identities which affect employment and classroom practice of the trainees?' I explore the trainees' career aspirations and compare their attitude to both teaching practice and academic work. Finally, I categorised the trainees to reflect their attitude to studying at Masters' level by developing outcomes from Shain and Gleeson (1999) (see 3.8.3).

The second section considers how teacher educators, a MTL course leader and experienced teachers (SPTs and head teachers) view Masters level credits in the PGCE and what effect

this has on employment prospects and classroom practice from their perspective. I also consider how the categorisation applied to the trainees could be applied to the other respondents.

#### **4.0.1 What were the features of the typologies used to categorise trainees?**

I made the decision to amend the categories from the original Shain and Gleeson (1999) to ones more suited to address the research questions in my research, which I felt were more representative of the data gathered (see 3.8.3). Shown below are summaries of each of the typologies to give a flavour of what they represent.

##### **4.0.1 (i) Engaged Academics**

I categorised three of the trainees as Engaged Academics; Joshua, Mia and Daniel. These are trainees who are fully connected with and embrace all activities during their time at university. They are well motivated to continue their academic studies on from undergraduate level and enjoy the intellectual and scholastic challenge of the PGCE course. Their written assignments are at a high standard, are well researched and supported by the literature. They are willing and able to engage critically with the tasks set and appear to enjoy this aspect of the course. These trainees are keen to continue with their studies and pursue a Masters level qualification in the near future. In addition, they are enthusiastic about the opportunities within their placement and often seek out additional challenges over and above what is expected of them. For example, Joshua *'tried to be as proactive as possible'* (interview 2) by assisting with after school activities such as hockey club, as well as helping out with an intervention group to boost students understanding of his subject.

##### **4.0.1 (ii) Willing/Strategic Compliers**

Two trainees, Ruby and Lily, were categorised as Willing/Strategic Compliers. These trainees appear to be keen to continue a career in education, but are also eager to be in the classroom teaching, rather than at university studying. They can and do produce good written assignments, but would much rather be involved in the practical aspects of teaching. They have ambitions to move upwards into a management role within a school environment, however, they do not see that to achieve this it would be necessary to undertake further study to attain a Masters degree. Lily, for example, considered *'education is important to me'* (interview 1) however, she was unsure *'if it is necessary'* (questionnaire 2) to complete a full Masters qualification.

##### **4.0.1 (iii) Reluctant Compliers**

Four trainees, Alfie, Chloe, Evie and Sophie, were categorised as Reluctant Compliers. These trainees are very classroom focused, this is where they want to be and cannot easily see the connection between theory and practice. For example, Alfie *'didn't like the reflection part'* (interview 2). Even when they are on placement, for some, it was just about doing enough to pass the course, without searching for additional responsibilities or challenges within a school setting. They profess a desire to teach, but were keen not to continue with Masters level study once they had completed their PGCE. For many of them, the written assignments were *'a struggle'* (Sophie), so it would be understandable that they would not wish to continue with something they found challenging when there is no current steer from the Coalition Government that this is a necessary qualification to have in order to teach.

#### 4.0.1 (iv) Contextual Complier

It became apparent during my data analysis that one of the ten trainee respondents did not fit easily into any of the above categories. I found Emily to be a mix of Engaged Academic and Willing/Strategic Complier. On the one hand she embraced the variety of activities at the HEI and in her placement. She appeared well motivated to continue her studies at Masters Level; *'I want to carry on and get all my Masters credits'* (interview 1). On the other hand, she was not looking for a senior management role as a career goal and preferred to be in the classroom (interview 1). Emily appeared to change from one group to another depending on the environment, whether at the HEI (Engaged Academic) or in her school placements (Willing/Strategic Complier). For these reasons, I refer to her as a Contextual Complier.

#### 4.0.1 (v) Summary of the trainees' typology

Pseudonym	Typology
Alfie	Reluctant Complier
Chloe	Reluctant Complier
Daniel	Engaged Academic
Emily	Contextual Complier
Evie	Reluctant Complier
Joshua	Engaged Academic
Lily	Willing/Strategic Complier
Mia	Engaged Academic
Ruby	Willing/Strategic Complier
Sophie	Reluctant Complier

Table 9 typology of each trainee

#### 4.1 What were the career goals of the trainees?

In reflecting back at the data gathered, it became apparent, even early on in their training, that the trainees were concerned about obtaining a teaching position once they had completed their PGCE. Several of them said this 'was a priority' (personal tutorials) for them, especially if they had personal commitments limiting their geographical search area. I wanted to establish at the start of the course what the trainees thought about a career in teaching and where they might be in five or ten year's time. This could also illuminate their perceptions of Masters level study and how it might impact on their career aspirations.

The ten trainees were asked how they viewed their career path progressing in the future. This elicited a range of responses, with more than one option being discussed. It became apparent that many trainees, especially during the first interview, were unsure of the career options available to them and what these diverse roles might involve.



### 4.1.1 Engaged Academics

Joshua is a trainee in his early 20s, a Russell Group graduate who, in addition, has an MSc. He has a passion for travel, and whilst on a trip to India, taught English to young children where he 'had a fantastic time...I fell in love with it [teaching]' (interview 1). This cemented his decision to become a teacher, having not enjoyed his previous 'desky jobs' (interview 1).

Engaged academics' like Joshua, were enthused about a career in teaching (a).

- (a) *'there is not another job which offers you that much flexibility to do everything that teaching does'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'I think I can be an excellent teacher'* and was interested in *'becoming an Advanced Skills Teacher'* (AST) (interview 1).
- (c) *'the academic side'* of teaching appealed (interview 1).
- (d) *'I want to progress, to have a career...maybe be a deputy head'* (interview 2).

**Table 10 Joshua on career aspirations**

In interview 1, Joshua appeared stimulated and well motivated about his chosen career path, something he retained during the second interview. His aspirations as to where his career might take him appeared to shift from having a management role but still retaining a classroom presence (b), to one that might be considered a more traditional career trajectory (d). He seemed to realise his strength lay in his academic ability (c) and that could be a career strength and offer a progression.

Mia is a trainee in her 40s, originally from China and who graduated from a European university. She also has an MBA. Prior to starting the course, she worked in an administrative role in a university. In addition, she also has experience of working as a teaching assistant whilst living in China. She felt she would be 'very happy as a teacher' (interview 1). Mia is married with a young family.

Mia had high aspirations and long terms goals for herself (a).

- (a) *'I would like to be one of the top teachers...I think it is a "Highly Skilled Teacher"?' [Further discussion revealed she meant an AST]* (interview 1).
- (b) *'the expectation I have of myself, I want to be better, always'* (interview 1).
- (c) *'I would like to be a head teacher'* (interview 1).
- (d) *'the school was so different, the students were so different and what we learn is much broader'* (interview 2)

**Table 11 Mia on career aspirations**

Mia considered teaching to be a very good career choice (interview 1) and had high expectations and targets for herself (a), (b) and (c). She appeared determined to succeed despite finding a cultural difference between her own schooling and that experienced on her placement (d). Her own experience of being taught was one where students listened, did not question the teacher and accepted what they were told. On her teaching placement, she *'was shocked by the behaviour side, how tolerant teachers are'* (interview 2). However, her aspirations had not changed between interviews; she still expressed a desire to proceed into a management role (c).

Daniel is in his late 20s and graduated from a university in Northern Ireland. He worked as a retail manager, and had responsibility for training staff within this role but 'wasn't getting to do much' (interview 1). He had no other experience of teaching prior to commencing his PGCE.

Daniel, by his own admission, is an ambitious person (a).

- (a) *'I get frustrated if I don't see myself progressing...I want to constantly improve'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'I can move from being a young teacher to a teacher with experience to a confident teacher...and then from that take on a bigger role like a head teacher'* (interview 1).
- (c) *'managing other people is an interesting concept, because it's not just about the student but its managing other teachers as well'* (interview 2).

**Table 12 Daniel on career aspirations**

Like Joshua, during both his interviews, Daniel appeared enthused about his decision to become a teacher. Throughout the year, he retained his interest in moving into a management role, something he first raised in interview 1 (b). He explained he had great respect for those in senior positions in school, showing awareness of the responsibilities which would come with it (c).

All the Engaged Academic trainees, when asked in interviews 1 and 2, articulated an interest in a senior management role. Daniel and Mia expressed an interest in becoming a head teacher, the only trainees of the ten interviewed to do so. Joshua and Mia spoke about becoming an AST, providing them with the opportunity to remain in the classroom, whilst still providing a career pathway with a salary commensurate with that of a leadership post (DCSF 2009). These examples illustrate the Engaged Academics' ambitions, not only to stay in teaching for an extended period of time, but to improve their practice and move into a management role. They are imagining themselves in a future post with significant responsibility and are constructing their identity with this in mind.

#### **4.1.2 Willing/Strategic Compliers**

Lily is a trainee in her late 20s with a degree from a post 1992 university. She worked for three years prior to commencing her PGCE. This was mostly as her father wanted her to experience another career 'just to make sure' (interview 1) if teaching did not work out, she would have something else to fall back on. Like Joshua, Lily spent time in India, teaching orphaned children basic English.

In working outside of education Lily had an insight and an opportunity to move into supervisory roles (interview 1), but which was not something she seemed keen on venturing into as a teacher (a).

- (a) *'the more leadership roles you take the less you are actually teaching'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'teaching is a little bit different for me, at the moment it's about teaching rather than trying to climb that ladder'* (interview 2).
- (c) *'I might want to take a more backwards role than that in regards to management'* (interview 2).
- (d) *'I want to concentrate on being the best teacher' possible* (interview 2).

**Table 13 Lily on career aspirations**

Although Lily seemed quite sure that she did not want to return to a management role (a) and (c), as in her view, this would take her out of the classroom, it did seem to pose a problem for her. In her previous career, she had been ambitious, wanting to move upwards (b). However, she explained she still had a strong desire to succeed and to be an excellent teacher (d).

Ruby is a student in her late 30s with a degree from a post 1992 university. In addition, she has an MA. She worked for a number of years in the education department of her local authority, where she had a supervisory role and was involved in running training courses. She also taught guitar and karate (questionnaire 1). However, Ruby felt she 'wanted a bit more quality out of my job than I was getting' (interview 1).

- (a) *'not a head teacher, I don't see myself there as I don't ... most of the heads I know I look at them and think it's a shame they stopped being teachers, because they are business people'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'Why would I do a PGCE to teach if I end up in an office...if I had wanted to do that, I would have stayed in my old job?'* (interview 1)
- (c) She would like to be *'head of department, definitely, head of faculty, so that I can still teach as well as manage'* (interview 1).

**Table 14 Ruby on career aspirations**

As a result of her previous job, Ruby knew a number of head teachers (interview 1). This appeared to put her off the role (a) as she saw heads as no longer being in a classroom, but office based (b) which, to her, seemed at odds with the point of retraining and studying to complete her PGCE (b). Nonetheless, Ruby did have ambitions to further her career (c) but wanted to retain some classroom based role.

Both of the Willing/Strategic Compliers saw themselves remaining in education for some time to come. What is different from the Engaged Academics is where they imagine their roles will take them. Both wished to move into management, but not to the level expressed by the Engaged Academics; the Strategic/Willing Compliers wished to remain at least partly classroom based. In addition, both expressed doubts as to whether or not a Masters level qualification would be necessary in order for them to achieve this. Thus they do not necessarily see having a Masters qualifications as being part of their future teacher identity.

### 4.1.3 Reluctant Compliers

Alfie is in his early 20s with a degree from a post 1992 university. He had a short career in industry before he 'sort of went down the route of a TA to see how I enjoyed being in a school' (interview 1). He wanted to 'give and contribute more in a lesson' (interview 1) so applied for the PGCE course.

Alfie was interested in several different roles; head of year, head of department (a) or SEN (d).

- (a) *'I want to be a Head of Year or Head of Department'* (interview 1)
- (b) He wanted to *'be known by all of the kids, not just the ones I teach'* (interview 1)
- (c) *'I still want to be head of a lower year...have some role in key stage three...so the students know who I am'* (interview 2).
- (d) *'I would quite like to go into SENCO'* (interview 2).
- (e) He did not want to *'be stuck teaching my subject in my class'* (interview 2).

Table 15 Alfie on career aspirations

However, the point that Alfie made in both of his interviews was about wanting to be known by all the students, not just those he taught (b) and (c). This seemed really important to him and perhaps raises the issue of how he perceives his identity as a teacher. It did not seem enough for him to teach his subject (e) but he seemed to need a wider role that brought him into contact with many more students than just those he taught.

Chloe is a student in her early 30s with a degree from a Russell Group university. Like Lily, her father cautioned against entering teaching as 'you don't earn enough money doing that' (interview 1). Chloe heeded this advice and worked for a number of years in industry. She had no previous experience of teaching herself, but is married to a deputy head teacher in a private secondary school. They live on-site and Chloe now acts as houseparent to a group of girls who board at the school.

In her previous career, Chloe was clear about how she would progress (interview 1). However in teaching, she felt differently (a).

- (a) *'I don't have a career path [in mind]... in teaching for me it's more a matter of learning my trade'* (interview 1).
- (b) She *'didn't want to be a head teacher'* but learn *'to be a good teacher rather than running the whole shebang'* (interview 1).
- (c) Chloe *'definitely ruled out being a Head of Department'* and thought she might like to be *'Head of Year which 'is more me, rather than completely academic'* (interview 2).

Table 16 Chloe on career aspirations

It seemed that Chloe, rather than have a positive view of where she might set her career goals, had a more negative approach, preferring to say what she did not want to be (b). This was indicative of both interviews (research notebook – 'Chloe uses the word "difficult" a lot, in respect of her own schooling, her placement, her mentor and the assignments. I really had to push her to find something positive to say'). Chloe explained she was very concerned about learning how to teach (a) and (b) at this stage, rather than look forward to what her role might be in a few years time. It also seemed as if the craft of teaching was her focus,

and she did not need to be distracted by further studies in her career path. When pressed in interview 2, Chloe felt a pastoral role (c) might suit her.

Evie is a trainee in her early 20s with a degree from a post 1992 university in Ireland. She had a number of jobs and 'tried everything' (interview 1) before settling on teaching as a possible career option. She had a friend who was a teacher and was 'really envious of her holidays' (interview 1). Evie had some experience of training others in her role as a dance teacher.

Evie seemed unsure of the career options open to her and was less specific about where she saw her career going (interview 1). As a result, she was quite vague about what she wanted to do and where she saw herself.

- (a) *'I know I want to be a teacher. I enjoy it'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'For me there is a lot of uncertainty as I know I will be going back to Ireland and won't be spending another year in England which is tricky and I need to get around barriers in Ireland to be a teacher, but I think I will and I'll be a teacher in Ireland'*.
- (c) *'I might like to move into the pastoral role'* (interview 2).
- (d) SEN *'sounded like a really nice job'* (interview 2).

**Table 17 Evie on career aspirations**

There was an added complication for Evie; she wanted to return home to Ireland to teach, once she had completed her PGCE, rather than stay in the UK for an additional period to complete her NQT year (b). Teaching jobs in Ireland are in short supply, and most want experienced teachers (interview 2). Nonetheless, Evie still wanted to stay in teaching. By the time of the second interview, Evie had found more out about the pastoral and SEN roles and seemed interested in these as possible career path options (c) and (d).

Sophie is a trainee in her early 20s with a degree from a post 1992 university. She struggled to find a job after completing her degree but saw an advert for a role as a cover supervisor. Sophie applied for the post, thinking 'I would test the waters to see if I liked it...I love being in the classroom, being with the children' (interview 1).

As Sophie had previously worked in a school, she was more aware of the carer options available and discussed these during the interview.

- (a) *'I see myself as going down the route as a SENCO because that really interests me'* (interview 1).
- (b) She considered being a head of department *'but I don't want loads on my plate'* (interview 1).
- (c) Sophie enjoyed being in the classroom and thought that *'being a head teacher would take that away...however I wouldn't mind their salary!'* (interview 1).
- (d) *'there are lots of teachers here with titles that don't do a lot of teaching'* (interview 2)
- (e) *'I think I would rather be a teacher'* (interview 2)

**Table 18 Sophie on career aspirations**

All the roles that Sophie discussed seemed to revolve around her staying as much as possible in the classroom (c) and not having the additional responsibilities that might come with a promoted post (b). Initially, she was interested in working with SEN (a) but during interview 2, she did not rule any possibility out, as long as she remained in the classroom

(e). She explained teachers she observed in her placement schools who had a management role, spent a lot of time away from the classroom (d) and that was not what she wanted.

Unlike the Engaged Academics or Willing/Strategic Compliers, the Reluctant Compliers did not want to move into a senior management role. There was uncertainty about what route they might pursue, however, all wanted to remain significantly classroom based. What seemed appealing to this group of trainees was to retain as much contact with students as possible. To this end, they viewed a career that had a pastoral aspect (such as head of year) or to work with students with special educational needs. For them, Masters level qualifications had no place in their future identity as teachers.

#### 4.1.4 Contextual Complier

Emily is a trainee in her early 20s with a degree from a post 1992 university. She did initially want to pursue a career in teaching, but 'sort of rebelled against all that was education, all that was authority' (interview 1) whilst at university. Nonetheless, like Alfie, she got a job working as a Teaching Assistant which she loved (interview 1).

As a Contextual Complier, Emily seemed quite sure of her career path in her first interview (a). She was able to discuss a number of options, as Alfie did, as a result of her previous experience in her role as a TA.

(a) *'I do want to be a Head of Department, not head teacher. A teacher and head teacher are two very separate things. I can't see myself being a head teacher. I can't see myself being in an office – that just not me. I have to be in a classroom teaching people'* (interview 1).

Table 19 Emily on career aspirations -interview 1

However, by the time of her second interview, she had changed her mind

(b) *'I always thought I would go the head of department route and be the organised one...but now I am considering a more pastoral role'* (interview 2).  
(c) *'I might like to be an AST...that appeals to'* (interview 2).

Table 20 Emily on career aspirations -interview 2

Emily seemed open to a variety of possibilities for her career pathway. Although she had previously worked in a school environment, she became more aware of the range of possibilities open to her as she gained experience in her two school placements (b).

Emily, as a Contextual Complier, was similar to the Willing/Strategic Compliers in that she visualised a career in teaching where she could have a senior role, but like the Reluctant Compliers, she relished the time she spent in the classroom. She was clear that she did not want to be a head (unlike the Engaged Academics), otherwise, seemed open to many possibilities. She had not ruled out the possibility of Masters level qualifications in forming her future teacher identity.

#### 4.1.5 Summary

Thornton et al (2002) suggested that many trainee teachers decide to enter the profession as a result of their own experiences at school and this appeared to be the case for many of the trainees here. Many of them discussed their 'best teacher', how 'amazing' they were and how much 'support they gave' (interview 1). Similarly, Flores and Day (2006:223) found trainees' prior experiences as pupils started to shape their own identities as teachers. Some of the trainees however came across challenges when on their teaching placements with their perceptions of staff they worked with or observed teaching. This undoubtedly had an influence on their vision of how they saw themselves as teachers and where their future career path may lie.

Draper et al (1998:375) typology of teachers' careers suggested 'stayers' (not previously sought promotion, not intending to in the future), 'movers' (sought promotion in the past, intends to do so in the future), 'starters' (have not applied in the past but will do in future) and 'stoppers' (have sought promotion previously but do not intend to do so in the future).

(Table 21 removed for copyright reasons)

As the trainees have not yet applied for promotional posts within teaching they would all be 'starters'. However, if their previous careers (outside of education) were to be included, then their typology might be considered as shown below in table 22:

Name		Draper et al (1998) Typology
Alfie	Reluctant Complier	Stayer
Chloe	Reluctant Complier	Stopper
Daniel	Engaged Academic	Mover
Emily	Contextual Complier	Starter
Evie	Reluctant Complier	Stayer
Joshua	Engaged Academic	Starter
Lily	Willing/ strategic complier	Mover
Mia	Engaged Academic	Mover
Ruby	Willing/ strategic complier	Mover
Sophie	Reluctant Complier	Stayer

Table 22 Draper et al (1998) Typology applied to trainee teacher respondents

The Engaged Academics are very keen to attain promotion into a management role, being movers or starters (depending upon their previous career – questionnaire 1). It would appear that they have both the desire and capacity to advance their careers. The Willing/ Strategic Compliers are partial movers as they might want promotion, but not into a senior leadership or managements role that would take them too far from the classroom. They seem to have a drive to move upwards in their career, but may need to weigh up the benefits of such a move. The Reluctant Compliers are stayers or stoppers (depending upon their previous career). They are not looking for a senior role but one where they can have as much contact with students as possible, which they have assumed would not be within management. In addition, they often appeared unwilling to assume greater responsibilities that might come with a promotion. These seem to be similar to those Draper et al (1998:382) termed

'resistors'. The Contextual Complier is a partial starter as she would want promotion but not into a senior management position. She seems to have the desire and capability to progress, but may be unwilling to forgo her time in the classroom.

The issue with Draper et al (1998) is that in their study, all respondents had been in teaching for at least five years, whereas in this study, the trainees here have not necessarily had previous careers, and most have not worked in education before. Nevertheless, it provides a way of considering how these trainees view their potential career strategies. This is based on their intentions rather than career patterns, which is comparable with Draper et al (1998:376). Those trainees who have had a previous career (such as Lily and Ruby) may well bring parts of these prior experiences with them into teaching (Grier and Johnston 2009:73).

As the trainees have explained, they have a number of different ideas about where their career might take them; into management, into an expanded teaching role, into SEN or a pastoral position. Their ability to engage with the Masters level credits in the PGCE may well impact on whether or not they achieve their stated ambitions and ultimately could affect their employment prospects in the longer term (research question 3 (a)).

#### **4.2 What were the trainees' attitudes to study?**

To establish how the trainees viewed their pre-university education, their undergraduate study and subsequent degree classification achieved, to provide an insight into their educational experience to date and their approach to study, I asked them about their early education and their decision to go to university (interview 1). This is linked to research question 2, how is the development of trainee teachers' professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into graduate teacher education programmes?

I, like Thornton et al (2002) and Flores and Day (2006:223) believed their prior experiences of education were also likely to shape their views of teachers, how they might start to shape their own identity as a teacher and their mind set towards further study. If they had encountered education from a positive standpoint, enjoyed their studies, as the engaged academics appeared, it would seem these trainees are more likely to want to continue with further studies. However, if they had not necessarily enjoyed their experiences to date, as Reluctant Compliers, they seem less likely to do so.

##### **4.2.1 Engaged Academics**

Engaged academics like Joshua enjoyed their early educational experiences (interview 1) and found success came relatively easily (a).

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) <i>'I enjoyed my time at school socially' and 'found with a little bit of work I was able to get fairly good results'</i> (Email correspondence)</li><li>(b) <i>'the decision to go to University was an easy one' as 'both my parents went'</i> (Email correspondence)</li><li>(c) His family <i>'were always very supportive and encouraging towards my education, both at school and at University'</i> (Email correspondence)</li></ul> |
|---|

**Table 23 Joshua's early education and decision to go to university**



Joshua followed his parents into higher education (b) and seemed very proud his father was an Oxford graduate. The support he received from his family throughout his education was excellent (c) and something he valued (email correspondence).

Daniel also found school to be a positive experience (a).

- (a) Daniel *'found school very enjoyable...I had good relationships with my teachers'* (Email correspondence)
- (b) *'Studying for exams [was] a lot harder than the exams themselves' but although 'I never found exams easy, I enjoyed getting ready for them'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) *'It was 'an easy decision to go to uni – all my friends went...as a family, we all have the same kind of outlook and saw uni as the next step from school'* (Email correspondence)
- (d) *'My mum has recently gone back to uni to study, so we are all like minded and enjoy studying in general...we all genuinely enjoyed going to school'*. (Email correspondence)

**Table 24 Daniel's early education and decision to go to university**

He appeared to put a lot of energy and effort into his studies (b) and as a result, seemed to reap the reward by achieving good results (email correspondence). Similarly to Joshua, Daniel came from a background where previous members of his family had attended university (d) and for him, the decision was straightforward (c).

Like Joshua and Daniel, Mia worked hard whilst at school (a).

- (a) Mia *'prepared well for my exams'*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She described herself as being from an *'educated family, it was expected that I would go to university'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) *'I did not need to contribute to our family life other than to study hard'* (Email correspondence)

**Table 25 Mia's early education and decision to go to university**

Similarly, she too came from a background where previous members of her family had attended university (b) with anticipation she would also continue her studies into Higher Education. She explained her family were very supportive of her (c) and assisted her financially when she continued her studies in another country (email correspondence).

The choice to continue on into Higher Education was an easy one for the Engaged Academics; other members of their family had previously attended university, with Joshua's father going *'to Oxford none the less'* (email correspondence). All their families were supportive in their decision to continue their studies, both emotionally and financially.

Once at university, Joshua did not appear to put in the same level of effort into his studies as he had previously done (a).

- (a) *'I did not work particularly hard in the first year'*. However in his second year, he got *'very bad grades in the first couple of assignments'*. Consequently, he *'upped my game somewhat and ever since, have worked dedicatedly on University concerned work'*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) He *'knew I hadn't worked to 1<sup>st</sup> level and so was happy to receive a 2:1 classification'* (Email correspondence)
- (c) In studying for his Masters degree, he *'worked exceedingly hard throughout the year and would've been disappointed with any mark that wasn't a distinction. Thankfully I got what I had hoped for'* (Email correspondence)

**Table 26 Joshua's undergraduate and postgraduate study**

However, he seemed to realise this was not a good route to continue along and increased his efforts accordingly (b). He was satisfied with the degree classification he received (b) for his undergraduate degree, but explained he worked much harder for his Masters (c).

Similar to Joshua, Daniel felt he did not work as hard as he might during his first year at university (a).

- (a) Daniel worked *'at an average level' for the first year or so at university'* (Email correspondence)
- (b) He *'enjoyed all aspects of life at university'* (Email correspondence)
- (c) Although he was *'pleased to achieve a 2:1'* but *'kind of wanted a first really'*. (Email correspondence)

**Table 27 Daniel's undergraduate study**

Perhaps as a result of enjoying university (b), his final degree classification may have suffered (c). He did appear realistic enough in his assessment of his undergraduate life, that a 2:1 was a fair reflection (email correspondence).

Mia too seemed to find the social aspect of university life appealing (a).

- (a) Mia *'liked the social side of being with my friends'* at university. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She *'worked hard whilst at university'* and was *'quite pleased with the classification'* she achieved (a 2:1). (Email correspondence)
- (c) In her studies for her Masters degree, she *'worked really hard'* and *'achieved a distinction'* (Email correspondence)

**Table 28 Mia's undergraduate and postgraduate study**

She appeared satisfied with the outcome of her undergraduate studies (b). However, she increased her efforts whilst studying for her Masters and seemed very pleased with the outcome (c).

Although all three Engaged Academics enjoyed their time at university, none of them achieved a first, with all gaining a 2:1 classification in their undergraduate degree. Two of them (Joshua and Mia) continued onto successfully complete their Masters degree, both at distinction level. The effort the Engaged Academics put into their undergraduate studies did

not correlate to their approach to Masters level study during their PGCE. All worked very hard, in both placements and academic study. All could see the benefit of doing so, and felt rewarded by their efforts. They all wanted to achieve the Masters level credits, despite Mia and Joshua already having a Masters degree. It was important to them to engage in educational Masters study in order to begin to forge their identities as teachers.

#### 4.2.2 Willing/Strategic Compliers

Willing/Strategic Compliers such as Lily and Ruby, also both enjoyed their early educational experiences (email correspondence).

- (a) Lily found school *'enjoyable experience'* and *'where the work was straightforward...and not challenging'*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) Exams were *'easy...and got through them without too much work'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) It *'felt like a natural step'* to go to university (Email correspondence)

**Table 29 Lily's early education and decision to go to university**

Lily felt she was not particularly tested by what she had to do whilst at school (a) and that she achieved good results with minimal effort (b). Following on from this success, for her, there appeared to be a clear progression onto university (c).

Similarly, Ruby seemed to find school a pleasant experience (a).

- (a) Ruby *'enjoyed my school experience tremendously'* (Email correspondence)
- (b) Work was *'fairly easy and enjoyable...I liked studying and exams have never bothered me'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) She was the first in her family to go to university. (Email correspondence)

**Table 30 Ruby's early education and decision to go to university**

Like Lily, Ruby did not appear to find school work too challenging (b). Despite being the first of her family to go to university, she explained she did not find the decision difficult (c).

The decision for both Lily and Ruby to continue their education onto university was an easy one, despite Ruby's parents not attending university themselves. Nonetheless, both Lily and Ruby's parents were hugely supportive.

Once at university, Lily again found the work straightforward (a).

- (a) Lily found her time at university *'easy'* and *'did not really work hard' to achieve her 2:1*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) *'I would have liked a 1<sup>st</sup> but didn't work hard at all'*. (Email correspondence)

**Table 31 Lily's undergraduate study**

Despite this apparent ease with which she passed her exams, Lily did not put in a great deal of effort (a), As a result, her undergraduate degree classification seemed to be below her

expectations (b) but she seemed pragmatic enough to realise she did not put in the work necessary to achieve a first (c).

Ruby felt she was swayed by her parents in making a decision as to which degree course she would follow (a).

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Ruby found her parents <i>'were too influential in what I studied and now I regret this'</i>. (Email correspondence)</li><li>(b) She worked hard at University, <i>'but lost interest in the last year'</i> of her sandwich course. (Email correspondence)</li><li>(c) She <i>'didn't really want to go back to studying after being on placement'</i> and <i>'didn't get the degree I wanted'</i> (she achieved a 2:2). (Email correspondence)</li><li>(d) Ruby <i>'did work very hard for my Masters...and was delighted with the result of that'</i>. (Email correspondence)</li></ul> |
|---|

**Table 32 Ruby' undergraduate and postgraduate study**

Perhaps as a result of the involvement by her parents, Ruby did not appear fully committed to her degree course (b). With the apparent additional distraction of a year away from university (as part of her sandwich course) she seemed reluctant to return to full time study (c). Her choice to continue her studies to Masters level and the success she achieved in that is perhaps representative of it being her choice of course, at a time that suited her (d).

Although both Lily and Ruby found their school education quite easy, it became apparent that the choice of course to study at undergraduate level was significant in the classification of degree awarded (email correspondence). Ruby did return to studying and completed her Masters degree that related to her previous career (questionnaire 1). Although they were not necessarily convinced that Masters level study would be of benefit to their careers or shape their identity as teachers, both worked hard on the academic part of the PGCE. Not only does this illustrate their work ethic, but also exemplifies the strategic element of their typology; they can and do achieve when they consider it to be tactically necessary.

#### **4.2.3 Reluctant Compliers**

Reluctant Compliers had mixed views about their schooling. Some, like Alfie, enjoyed the social interaction, rather than the academic. Others, like Evie, found it easy.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Alfie <i>'could achieve better if I applied my energy to my studies rather than the social aspects of school'</i>. (Email correspondence)</li><li>(b) Exams <i>'did not faze me...as long as I prepared I felt OK'</i>. (Email correspondence)</li><li>(c) He was the first in his family to go to university and had <i>'exceptional support from them'</i> (Email correspondence)</li><li>(d) <i>'it was always on the cards...it was expected'</i> (email correspondence)</li></ul> |
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**Table 33 Alfie's early education and decision to go to university**

Alfie explained he did not put much effort into his schooling (a). However, he did have to put some work in to get ready for his exams (b). This work appears to have paid off as both his family and school presumed he would continue onto university (d), despite him being the first member of his family to attend.

- (a) Chloe '*never found school that easy...[as] I was the youngest by far in my year group with having my birthday in mid August*' (Email correspondence)
- (b) '*I struggled to catch up with my peers*'. (Email correspondence)
- (c) '*I'm struggling to remember something I liked*'. (Email correspondence)
- (d) Chloe found exams '*frustrating, I'm much better at coursework as I tend to panic in exams. I have had no coaching in exam technique*'. (Email correspondence)
- (e) Both her older brother and uncle had gone to university before her with '*my uncle is a bit of a high flyer and went to Cambridge and various other Universities in the US*' (Email correspondence)
- (f) '*I couldn't wait [to go to university]. I'd outgrown school and knew I wanted to study something that interested me*'

**Table 34 Chloe's early education and decision to go to university**

Chloe seemed to find much about her school life 'difficult' (research notebook) which she seemed to put down to being an August baby (a) and (b). Unlike the other Reluctant Compliers, Chloe experience of school did not appear to be something she remembered fondly (c). Perhaps this was not helped as she did not seem to do so well in exam-based assessment (d). Despite these apparent setbacks, she did follow other members of her family onto university (e), a place she seemed ready for at that stage in her education (f).

- (a) Evie found '*school very easy, I enjoyed school*'. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She was '*not the most academic student, but subjects I enjoyed I did very well in*'. (Email correspondence)
- (c) Evie '*loved performing in school shows and winning talent competitions. I really enjoyed receiving praise and positive feedback*'. (Email correspondence)
- (d) Her exams were '*very stressful as I had a lot of pressure from the success of my brother and sisters to do really well*'. (Email correspondence)
- (e) Evie always '*knew I was going to go to University*' as all of her family had attended previously (Email correspondence)

**Table 35 Evie's early education and decision to go to university**

Evie, similar to Alfie and Sophie, seemed to find school a pleasurable experience (a), despite not considering herself '*academic*' (b). She explained she enjoyed performance related activities (c) the most; something she became involved with in her placement schools (interview 2). Despite appearing to have some family pressure to succeed (d), Evie did follow others members of her family to university.

- (a) Sophie '*found school easy*' however, there were some subjects which she '*found more difficult, especially when doing my GCSE's*'. (Email correspondence)
- (b) '*I never thought I would be intelligent enough...so I never thought about going to university*'. (Email correspondence)
- (c) '*I applied on the Monday and was moving in that Saturday*' (email correspondence)
- (d) Sophie's older sister had gone to university, but left within the first year. However, Sophie's '*family were there when I needed them, when I was stressed during exams*' (Email correspondence)

**Table 36 Sophie's early education and decision to go to university**

Similarly to Alfie and Evie, Sophie's experience of school seemed positive and quite straightforward (a). She seemed to have a low self opinion of her abilities (b), and was very late in applying to go to university (c). Despite there being some apparent difficulties with her elder sibling whilst she was at university (d), Sophie explained she had good support from her family, especially when she was under pressure (d).

Once at university;

- (a) Alfie's choice of university was a '*mistake*' as it '*was too quiet, too small*' (Email correspondence)
- (b) He did not '*put the effort in until the third year...and in my dissertation*' (Email correspondence).
- (c) He hoped for '*a 2:1 but was pleased with a 2:2*' (Email correspondence).

**Table 37 Alfie's undergraduate study**

Alfie seemed unhappy with his choice of university (a) and perhaps this impacted upon how much effort he was prepared to put into his degree (b). As a result, the classification of his degree was perhaps lower than he aspired to, but reflective of the work he invested in it (c).

- (a) Chloe could '*have enjoyed myself a little less at Uni and worked a little harder, or balanced it better*'. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She had '*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*'. (Email correspondence)
- (c) She '*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*'. (Email correspondence)

**Table 38 Chloe's undergraduate study**

Chloe seemed to enjoy her experience at university (a), more so than at school (see Table 35). Academic study did not appear to be something that came easily to Chloe (b). Nonetheless, her undergraduate degree classification seemed to be a disappointment to her (c). Perhaps a 2:2 is reflective of her enjoying the social side of university rather than the academic (a) and (c).

- (a) Evie *'didn't get the right amount of points for the courses I had planned for'* which resulted in her being accepted on a course *'that was the lowest on my list'* (Email correspondence)
- (b) She *'left the course...and moved to one a lot more suited to my likes and interests'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) Evie did not *'work hard enough throughout the years'* at university, but *'did put in a lot of hours'* in the weeks leading up to her exams. (Email correspondence)

**Table 39 Evie's undergraduate study**

Evie seemed to have a difficult start to her university education as a consequence of not achieving the grades necessary for her first choice place (a) and having to move to another university and course the following year (b). Despite putting in limited amounts of work in her first two years (c), she did increase her efforts in her final year, particularly in the closing weeks prior to her exams.

- (a) Sophie was *'happy I went to university, but could have worked harder'*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She *'would have liked a 2:1 because only now do I realise I do not look very good on paper'* (with a 2:2). (Email correspondence)

**Table 40 Sophie's undergraduate study**

Despite her late application to university (see Table 37) Sophie did seem to enjoy the experience (a), but like the other Reluctant Compliers, did not work as hard as she might (a). Sophie appeared to be aware of how the degree classification she was awarded might be judged by others (b) and seemed concerned about how it might affect her job prospects (interview 2).

Alfie and Sophie were first in their families to complete an undergraduate degree, whereas Chloe and Evie have other family members who have done so (email correspondence). Three of the four Reluctant Compliers have a 2:2 classification in their degrees (questionnaire 1), which none of them seemed satisfied with (tables 38, 39 and 41). Two of the Reluctant Compliers appeared to have made poor choices about which university (table 38) or course to study (table 40). None of the Reluctant Compliers continued on with their education further than undergraduate level, prior to commencing their PGCE (questionnaire 1). Whilst all of the Reluctant Compliers seemed to enjoy their undergraduate studies, none of them put in a great deal of effort to achieve the highest classification possible. This is perhaps reflected in their approach to Masters level study in that they just *'did enough'* (Alfie). It also is symptomatic of their ideas as to what shapes their identity as teachers in that Masters does not form part of it.

#### **4.2.4 Contextual Complier**

Emily enjoyed school and initially seemed to do well (a). However, when she moved schools, she seemed to find things became more difficult (b). This perhaps might have happened anyway, even if she had not transferred to another school, as she started to work towards her GCSEs'.

- (a) Emily was *'top in my class in every subject without really having to try very hard'*. (Email correspondence)
- (b) She moved schools in year 8 and *'did drop grades and began to find school work hard'*. (Email correspondence)
- (c) Exams *'were okay, none I found particularly challenging. I enjoyed coursework more, but never panicked or struggled with exams'*. (Email correspondence)
- (d) It was an *'easy decision to go to university...everyone was expected to go'*(email correspondence)
- (e) Emily had *'a huge amount of financial support from parents and grandparents'*. (Email correspondence)

**Table 41 Emily's early education and decision to go to university**

She seemed to have worked through these initial difficulties in changing schools and once settled, did not appear to find exams difficult (c). The ethos of the school appeared to be one where all students were encouraged to move into higher education (d) even though she was the first in her family to attend (email correspondence). Emily seemed to have a great deal of backing from all members of her family (e).

Once at university;

- (a) Emily *'could have worked harder' at university* (Email correspondence).
- (b) She noted; *'I thought I was going to get a 2:2'*, based on how much work she did (Email correspondence)
- (c) She *'would have hoped for better'* than the 2:2 she achieved. (Email correspondence)

**Table 42 Emily's undergraduate study**

Rather like Sophie, Alfie and Chloe, Emily did not seem to work as hard as she could have whilst at university (a). As a result, her degree classification appeared disappointing (c) but was perhaps commensurate with the work she invested in it (b). However, during her PGCE, she did increase her efforts in her academic work. Like the Willing/Strategic Compliers, she was not convinced Masters level credits would benefit her career or shape her identity as a teacher.

#### **4.2.5. Summary**

The way in which the trainees approached their school and undergraduate studies perhaps provides an insight into how they understand their own learning experiences and maybe how they will recognise these elements in the students they teach. It may be that this understanding will help them have empathy when their students do not work at the level they, as teachers, expect. The teachers and lecturers they encountered when they were students may, as both Flores and Day (2006) and Thornton et al (2002) suggested, shape their own identity (research question 2).

#### **4.3 What were the trainees' views on studying at Masters level during the PGCE?**

I wanted to establish how the trainees viewed their Masters level assignment, what they thought the purpose of having Masters level credits in the PGCE was and how it related to



their development as a teacher (research question 2). In this research setting the assumption is made that all trainees will submit the assignment at Masters level. If subsequently they fail, they are offered a tutorial where options regarding resubmission or transference to Level 3 (the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education) are discussed to decide which would be best suited to them. The primary difference between the assignments is the assessment criteria to which it is marked (see Appendix 1); at Masters level the trainees are expected to be able to analyse, evaluate and synthesise ideas in the development of arguments, to use an extensive range of literature, to critically engage with that literature, to be able to critically evaluate their professional development needs and to critically reflect on their own learning. The word count for both assignments remains the same. It is the level of criticality with which the trainees engage which seems to be the key.

#### 4.3.1 Engaged Academics

The Engaged Academics, Joshua and Mia, have already achieved a Masters level qualification, so were aware of the demands of writing at this level (interview 1).

- (a) Joshua felt *'it was a lot of work but not too difficult having done it before in my Masters degree'* (interview 1)
- (b) He did *'raid the library...I got a load of [text] books out. I think I annoyed a few people on the course by go getting out all of the books first'* (interview 2).
- (c) He *'spent a lot of time planning, probably as much as writing'* and he *'really knew what I was going to write before I wrote the first word'* (interview 2).
- (d) *'I didn't find it too difficult because not only had I done it before in my other degree but also because I put a lot of work into it over the period of time, rather than try to get it done the night before'* (interview 2).

Table 43 - Joshua on his approach to studying at Masters level

Joshua seemed really keen to make a quick start to this assignment (b) which could be seen as really conscientious in his foresight to get as many of the relevant text books as he could before other students could take them out (b). He also appeared meticulous in his planning (c) although it could be viewed as him being inflexible in his approach to his writing.

- (e) Joshua *'can see a relationship'* between Masters level study and teaching (interview 1)
- (f) For him, Masters level study would be useful *'in gaining employment'* as *'the Government is wanting to make teaching a Masters profession'* (interview 2).
- (g) Additionally, it gave him a *'head start in gaining [full] Masters qualification'* (interview 2).
- (h) Joshua *'learnt a lot about myself'* and as a consequence he *'got good results from the assignments – that's a high'* (interview 2).

Table 44 Joshua's view on the purpose and benefit of Masters level study

As well as seemingly enjoying the process of writing his Masters assignment (table 43) and (h), Joshua was able to connect the theory he studied to his practice in the classroom (e). Despite already having a Masters degree, albeit not in education (questionnaire 1), he appeared keen to utilise the credits from his PGCE towards gaining an educationally based Masters (g). Additionally, Joshua was one of only two trainees (with Ruby) who recognised

the policy behind the trainees having the opportunity to gain Masters level credits in their PGCE (f).

- (a) Daniel was *'genuinely interested in teaching, I enjoy learning about the theory that goes on behind it'* (interview 1)
- (b) For him it was *'something I do genuinely enjoy doing stuff like assignments, so I would enjoy doing the Masters'* (interview 1).
- (c) He *'enjoyed writing essays...it was good for me to focus on this rather than lesson planning or other school stuff'* (interview 2)
- (d) *'I got all the journals I wanted. ...I enjoy sitting down and writing...I like researching and giving my opinion'* (interview 2).

**Table 45 - Daniel on his approach to studying at Masters level**

Daniel appeared enthusiastic in his approach to the Masters level assignment (a) and (b), almost as if it was an antidote to the rigors of being on school placement (c). Although he had not previously studied at this level, he explained he relished the challenge it brought (d). He appeared more interested in utilising journals than the text books Joshua wanted.

- (e) Daniel thought *'if you have a Masters or working towards a Masters, it shows you are genuinely interested in what you do'* (interview 1)
- (f) He did see that *'there is a massive link between learning and teaching'* (interview 2)
- (g) Daniel found it did *'prompt me to think about theories and the whole teaching and learning issue'* (interview 2).

**Table 46 - Daniel's view on the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Daniel seemed to equate further study with demonstrating his commitment to his role as a teacher (e). This appeared to encourage him to be more reflective upon how theory and practice are connected (g) and how this could help his teaching (h).

- (a) Mia *'tried to find the links...and found the clues to how I learn...I rely a lot on external sources, I borrow books, I look at websites, I talk with people, that's how I learn'* (interview 2).
- (b) Mia *'spent a lot of time on research, a lot of time to think why I learn in this way'* (interview 2).
- (c) She thought it *'was such a lovely journey, I went very, very deep'* (interview 2).
- (d) For her *'the key thing is the liberation of my mind...I am a bit emotional when I think about it...it has completely changed me as a learner...when I was writing my assignment, I was in tears...this critical thinking skills really changed me as a person'* (interview 2).
- (e) In her country *'parents and teachers are senior, and we are junior, we always listen, we don't challenge'* (interview 2)

**Table 47 Mia on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Mia appeared to take a broad approach to gathering information necessary for her to start this assignment (a), taking her time, and thinking carefully about her approach (b). She really seemed to enjoy the process (c) and found it affected her deeply (d). When we discussed

the process she took in writing this assignment (interview 2), she became quite tearful in her description (research notes). As Mia came from a background where teachers are almost revered and not questioned (e), she explained she found it quite hard to critically reflect on what she had read (interview 2). This 'professional culture' (Evans 2008:27) brings into question what it means to be a teacher. For Mia, her own education shaped her ideas regarding teacher identity –her experience in the classroom seems to have provided a framework for Mia of how to 'be' a teacher (Sachs 2005:15).

- (f) Mia thought '*there is a strong link between this assignment and how I teach*' (interview 2).
- (g) She found '*it makes you think about who is your audience, what is their level and how you set the right task for your audience...it will be a great benefit really soon*' (interview 2).

**Table 48 Mia's view on the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Mia, like Joshua and Daniel was able to link the theory she learnt to her practice in the classroom (f). This seemed for her to prompt deeper consideration of 'who' she was teaching and not just 'how' she was approaching it (g).

What can be seen from these snapshots is that all the Engaged Academics put a lot of effort into their studies at Masters level; sourcing journals and books, planning what they will write and taking time to produce their assignment. They clearly wanted to understand more about the theory behind how students learn and took pride in their writing despite the pressure of teaching in their placement schools. This is key to their developing identity as teachers as it is important to them to engage in their studies in this way. They valued the academic studies and saw it as an important part of their progress to becoming teachers; it was not just about their classroom practice, but also pedagogy.

The Engaged Academics appear to see the link between understanding theory of learning and what happens in their classrooms. Additionally, they seem to have found things out about themselves in their deep engagement with their learning which will stand them in good stead throughout their career in teaching and will shape their identity. Not only will it help with the development of their own learning, but will help them understand how others learn too.

#### **4.3.2 Willing/Strategic Compliers**

Of the two Willing/Strategic Compliers, Ruby already has a Masters degree in a non educational subject and like Joshua and Mia, understood what it took to study at this level.

- (a) Lily was '*more stressed as it was a Masters level assignment...I was more panicky on this one ... it made me work a bit harder, as I was panicking about it, I started it much earlier which gave me more time. I was more focused with this one, whereas the last one I was more blasé about it*' (interview 2).
- (b) She '*went to the library to get some books – I'm much better with books. I did use a few on-line journals*' (interview 2).

**Table 49 – Lily on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Lily appeared to find the Masters level assignment more challenging than her previous one and as a result, she put more work in researching for it and taking care on how she wrote it (a). She explained she found locating journals an issue, but appeared to prefer using text books (b).

- (c) Lily wondered *'how is this helping me in the classroom?'* (interview 2).
- (d) She did consider it gives you *'a broader view to what other people think and have found'* but *'a lot of it is what I do in my classroom without thinking about it too much'* (interview 2).
- (e) Lily felt the Masters level assignment a way *'to go on into Higher Education yourself'* (interview 1).

**Table 50 Lily's view of the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Lily did not appear to be able to link theory she had studied as part of her Masters assignment to her classroom practice (c). However, she did concede that she might do some of what the theory suggests anyway (d). The only real benefit Lily could perceive for the Masters level work was that it might assist if she were to work in an HEI (e).

- (a) Ruby *'did a basic plan'* followed by more intensive reading when she *'filled in the gaps'* (interview 2).
- (b) She *'cannot do it quickly as I have to write it, to go back to it'* (interview 2).
- (c) The research *'didn't bother me as I can focus in on certain things I need'* (interview 2).

**Table 51- Ruby on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Ruby, similar to Joshua, (see table 43), did plan her writing and seemed to re-work it several times (a) and (b). As she already had a Masters degree (questionnaire 1) she appeared confident in her capabilities to research (c).

- (d) For Ruby it was about *'looking at things in more depth... analysing things more critically than just churning out an assignment...you have to actually strive, so I suppose it's looking at what we are capable of, to stretch ourselves to that Masters level'* (interview 1).
- (e) Ruby was aware that *'they are starting to look at Masters in school more so than they ever have done before. They are trying to make it a profession like civil servants and doctors...I can see where this structure is coming in now'* (interview 2).

**Table 52 Ruby's view of the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Ruby appeared to comprehend the purpose of Masters level study (d) in more depth than the other trainees. Like Joshua, she was conscious of the Government's policy to make teaching a Masters level profession (e) and in this respect, equated teaching to the medical profession.

Both of the Willing/Strategic Compliers seemed to take the assignment seriously. As with the Engaged Academics they spent time researching their topic, utilising the library and on line

journals. They wanted to do well, in spite of distractions such as ‘*Christmas...and snow*’ (Ruby interview 2). However, where they differed from the Engaged Academics was in their perceived benefits of studying at Masters level. Whilst they worked hard on their academic studies, they did not think it important for their future career prospects (and therefore their continuing identity formation) to pursue Masters level study further than their PGCE course. This also exemplifies the ‘strategic’ part of their typology; it might be useful to gain Masters level credits, but not imperative at the moment to further their careers.

### 4.3.3 Reluctant Compliers

None of the Reluctant Compliers had studied at a higher level than their undergraduate degree prior to commencing the PGCE course. From the comments made during interview 2, they all appeared unsure about how they would cope with working at this advanced level.

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|---|
| <p>(a) Alfie ‘<i>was looking for a way of just passing it</i>’ and thinking about the minimum of ‘<i>what I needed to do</i>’ (interview 1).</p> <p>(b) For him, ‘<i>the Masters level was not that high a priority</i>’ (interview 2).</p> <p>(c) Alfie thought the studying ‘<i>wasn’t exciting...I didn’t like the reflection part...I found it hard to put into words, I could write a couple of sentences but not so many thousand words</i>’ (interview 2).</p> |
|---|

Table 53 - Alfie on his approach to studying at Masters level

Alfie’s comments (a) could be interpreted as him being unconcerned about why he was studying at Masters level, only in doing the bare minimum in order to pass it. My research notes following interview 1 indicated my surprise ‘he is studying a professional qualification, yet he does not seem to want to invest in it’ and ‘how would Alfie feel if one of his students on placement made similar comments?’ In interview 2, it seemed the answer could be connected to the value that Alfie attached to achieving at Masters level (b). Unlike the Engaged Academics, it appeared he did not enjoy the experience (c).

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| <p>(e) Alfie thought he would be ‘<i>hitting [the M level credits] to get them rather than to change how I operate in the classroom</i>’ (interview 1).</p> <p>(f) ‘<i>I don’t think that after the assignment I will adapt this</i>’ (interview 1).</p> <p>(g) He felt ‘<i>if I get them, I get them, if I don’t then I don’t</i>’ (interview 1).</p> <p>(h) He wanted to ‘<i>create myself as a teacher and be comfortable with my teaching practice rather than to achieve at that level</i>’ (interview 1).</p> <p>(i) Alfie believed ‘<i>the organisational side, the enjoying side, the academic side, the pastoral side, the friendship side, the disciplinarian side, all of those things are more important to learn than getting M level credits</i>’ (interview 1).</p> |
|--|

Table 54 Alfie’s views on the purpose and benefit of Masters level study

Linking to table 53 (a) above, Alfie seemed unconcerned about the outcome of this assignment (g) and (h). From his comments (e) and (f), it could be interpreted he was not making links between theory and his classroom practice. For him, it appeared there were areas in his teaching (i) that he wanted to focus on as a priority, above Masters level credits.

- (a) Chloe *'got books together ... started to talk to different teachers... doing all the boring, laborious stuff'* (interview 2).
- (b) She *'found finding journals quite tricky'* (interview 2).
- (c) Chloe did find *'some books were utterly useless, others were fantastic'* (interview 2).

**Table 55 Chloe on her approach to studying at Masters level**

The comments made by Chloe in interview 2 seemed to indicate an overall dissatisfaction and a lack of enjoyment about studying at Masters level (a). This did not appear to be helped by the issues she had with finding suitable resources (b) and (c).

- (e) Chloe was *'very much on the fence'* with seeing how having Masters level credits could assist in her becoming a better teacher (interview 1).
- (f) She could not see *'how that might help me'* as the *'past few weeks have all been about lesson planning'* (interview 1).

**Table 56 Chloe's views on the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Similar interpretations could be drawn from Chloe's comments (e) and (f) on the benefit she saw of Masters level credits in regards to her classroom practice as Alfie made; that is, she seemed unable to make the connection in how theory could assist in her practice.

- (a) Evie explained she was *'not good at referencing and engaging with the literature...and that's where I struggled'* (interview 2).
- (b) She found *'it difficult to find journals...it took ages, time would just go by and I wouldn't have found what I wanted'* (interview 2).
- (c) She *'works better when I know what everyone else is doing and then I get an idea of what I need to be doing...I like to have a look at someone else's work and then do it my way...to see if we are on the same page'* (interview 2).

**Table 57 Evie on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Like Chloe, Evie seemed to have difficulty with accessing suitable journals (b). Added to this, Evie also appeared to have issues with utilising the journals and other sources of information to reflect on her learning (a). In my research journal, I noted 'this was a surprise to me, considering she has a first (questionnaire 1) in her undergraduate degree'. It would appear Evie needed the reassurance of knowing how other students approached this task in order to give her confidence in her own method (c).

- (d) Evie felt *'I don't need to do an assignment about it because nearly everything I do, I teach, I learn anyway before I teach it'* (interview 2).
- (e) She wondered *'if the assignment was that beneficial to me for the future, in what I am going to be doing in the classroom, possibly not? It was something that I had to do, get it out of the way'* (interview 2).

**Table 58 Evie's view of the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Evie too seemed to find it difficult to see what benefit Masters level credits were to her teaching (d) and (e). She appeared to view these credits similarly to Alfie (Table 54 (e)) almost as a chore (e), to get through before moving on to other things.

- (a) Sophie *'got so stuck into my school that I didn't focus on the assignment until the Christmas holidays'* (interview 2).
- (b) She *'panicked'* as it *'all got a bit rushed'* (interview 2).
- (c) Sophie felt *'I'm not good at writing assignments and hitting that level'* (interview 2).
- (d) She *'put too much pressure on myself as I left it too late...if I started it properly in October, I think I would have enjoyed writing the assignment as well'* (interview 2).

**Table 59 Sophie on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Sophie explained she prioritised the work she was doing in school on her placement rather than the written assignment (a) and as a result, hurried her Masters level assignment (b). Similar to Evie, Sophie seemed to lack confidence in her own ability to achieve at the higher level (c). She considered she started later than she would have liked (d), perhaps losing any pleasure she may have gained from the process (d).

- (e) Sophie could see *'that we are all learners' and 'learning a new subject which will benefit me as a teacher...as I am learning it myself'* (interview 1).
- (f) She *'struggled with linking theory to my practice'* (interview 2).

**Table 60 Sophie's view of the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

The only benefit to Masters level credits that Sophie appeared to see was that the assignment helped her to learn a topic she was previously unfamiliar with (e). She seemed to be unable to make the link between theory and practice (f) and how such study could be of benefit to her in the classroom.

What seemed apparent from the excerpts above is that none of the Reluctant Compliers could link their studying at Masters level to their practice in the classrooms. There seemed to be a clear separation in their minds between the assignment and their teaching, almost a disassociation between the work they did in the HEI and what they did on placement. This seems to exemplify the typology of Reluctant Compliers'. Masters level work was not going to shape them as teachers; for them, theory and practice were not linked in their minds, they were separate and distinct areas which were not correlated. Their identity was not influenced by their academic work or studies at the HEI, but what they achieved in the classroom did. There is also a professional implication for teacher educators: how can some Reluctant Compliers be moved forward to see the strategic value of embarking on an MA?

#### **4.3.4 Contextual Complier**

The Contextual Complier, Emily, like the Reluctant Compliers, had not studied beyond her undergraduate degree. Despite this, she was keen to start work on her assignment, and her organisational skills became apparent in the approach she took.

- (a) Emily did start *'working on the M level assignment from the moment [it] was given to us. I went out and bought like an exercise book, a journal and just went from there...I just tested lots of things out over the course, and I did make a revision timetable ...so I had set dates that I was doing stuff, so I planned it around my teaching and planning as I didn't want to rush through it really...I planned it through and filled the journal'* (interview 2).
- (b) She liked *'to be organised'* (interview 2).
- (c) Emily found it hard *'writing the thing...sitting down at a laptop and having to write, it's just not me, it never has been me, ever, so that's what took the most time and most difficult'* (interview 2).

**Table 61 Emily on her approach to studying at Masters level**

Emily was similar to Joshua (see Table 43 (c)), in that she seemed to make extensive plans before she started to write (a). Perhaps this is symptomatic of her desire to be organised (b) and have a structure to her studies. However, unlike the Engaged Academics, she did not appear to enjoy the final process of writing her assignment (c).

- (d) Emily thought she *'learnt a lot about how other people learn and it helped me to understand that not everyone learns in the same way'* (interview 2).
- (e) Emily thought *'if you can get a bit of work done in your training then it will take the pressure off a little bit later on...and it's good to develop these skills early on as they are talking about now upping the degree status for trainee teachers'* (interview 2).
- (f) She found it helpful to have *'it more spread out for the future rather than cramming it all into one little bit'* (interview 2).

**Table 62 Emily's view of the purpose and benefit of Masters level study**

Emily explained she was able to see some benefits of Masters level study; theory of how people learn was something she could perhaps transfer to her classroom (d). Having worked with experienced teachers currently undertaking Masters qualifications whilst on placement (interview 2), Emily seemed to realise the benefit of gaining at least some credits towards a full Masters as early as possible (e), perhaps lessening the pressure later on in her career (f). She was able to link theory studied to how she might act in the classroom. To this end, it seems that Masters level study at least has some impact on the shaping and forming of the teacher identity of Emily.

#### **4.3.5 Summary**

Counsell et al (2010) argued that it is of vital importance for teachers to have a research perspective as well as an understanding of the craft of teaching. They argue that this assists with developing the teachers' practice; it ensures they remain up to date with current thinking and is key in evaluating their own performance. This was indicative of how the Engaged Academics and Contextual Complier felt about their engagement with the Masters level credits in their PGCE. For the other typologies, it was less clear to them. There seems to be a detachment between theory and practice. It could be argued that this difference in attitude



towards theory and studying at Masters level has started to shape what sort of teachers the trainees are becoming, and thus their emerging identities (research question 2).

As Husbands and Pendry (2000) found, trainee teachers do not always prioritise theory, but concentrate on their practice. Similarly, Flores and Day (2006:224) found there to be a gap between linking theory to practice. This was especially true of the Reluctant Compliers and to some extent, the Willing/Strategic Compliers too.

#### 4.4 How did the trainees view continuing to study for a full Masters?

Having established what the trainees thought of Masters level credits in their PGCE, I wanted to know if they considered continuing on to complete a full Masters qualification, once they had finished their PGCE (research question 2). I was also interested in when they thought they would commence this further study, whilst NQT's or later in their career.

##### 4.4.1 Engaged Academics

The Engaged Academics, such as Joshua, worked hard on their Masters level assignment and achieved good passes (see Table 74).

- (a) Joshua felt he *'wouldn't mind doing some further study. I do love being in university and doing the assignments, the academia of it – that's why I did my Masters before'* (questionnaire 2)
- (b) *'I think there is an extremely high possibility of taking further study in the future, whether an MA or MTL'* (questionnaire 2).
- (c) He thought it *'will it help my career, but I enjoy education in general – I'm a bit like a sponge on the learning front – I like soaking everything up – I enjoy the challenge that it offers'* (questionnaire 2).
- (d) For Joshua it is *'definitely the next step after the NQT year'* (questionnaire 2).

Table 63 Joshua on further study at Masters level

Joshua explained he was keen to continue with his studies (a) and (b). He seemed not only to enjoy the process of learning, but also perceived it to be a benefit in his career (c). Joshua appeared to consider starting his Masters degree straight after completing his NQT year, perhaps thinking the momentum would be good to continue (d).

- (a) Daniel found Masters level study *'the one part of the course I enjoy doing...it's interesting...that's what I enjoy, the student side, so I'll be doing my Masters. I'm looking forward to it'* (interview 1)
- (b) He *'enjoyed sitting down and writing the actual assignments, it's difficult to dedicate all your time to that. I'm looking forward to an opportunity when I can take on more Masters credits and focus on specific tasks'* (questionnaire 2).
- (c) *'It's something that will help me get to where I want to be in the future...I love it when it gets me thinking about myself as a teacher...it's good to go really deep into one topic and just read about it. Just reading. I am really looking forward to sitting down and just writing with a bigger word count'* (questionnaire 2).

Table 64 Daniel on further study at Masters level

Daniel explained how much he enjoyed both the research and academic writing associated with his studies (a) and (b). On the one hand, he seemed very clear in linking Masters level study and qualifications to his projected career path (c), on the other, he also make links to how his studies would benefit him as a teacher too (c).

- (a) Mia *'always admired scholars and I don't mind hard work'* (interview 1).
- (b) She felt it *'would be something really good to do in the future, to improve my teaching and also to build up my knowledge'* (interview 1).
- (c) *'Definitely it is worthwhile'* to study for a Masters (questionnaire 2).

**Table 65 Mia on further study at Masters level**

Mia explained she had high regard for *'scholars'* (a), perhaps as a result of her culture (table 47 (e)). Like Daniel, Mia seemed to connect how theory could benefit her teaching (b). Despite already having a Masters (questionnaire 1), Mia appeared to value having the opportunity to gain additional qualifications in education (c).

All the Engaged Academics could see the benefit of continuing onto a full Masters degree. They were aware of the work involved and how this might not be something they could do whilst completing their NQT year, nevertheless, all were keen to continue. Despite both Joshua and Mia already having a Masters degree (but not in the area of education) they too could see it would be advantageous to them in their future careers. As Counsell et al (2010) felt, links the Engaged Academics made between practice and research were important in their emerging identity as teachers. They perceive them to be of value in improving their classroom practice as well as aiding their future careers. They clearly value additional study and see it as a significant part of their future development as teachers.

#### **4.4.2 Willing/Strategic Compliers**

The Willing/Strategic Compliers, such as Lily and Ruby, who worked hard to achieve their pass level in their Masters level assignment, the decision whether or not to carry onto a full Masters qualification seemed less clear than that of the Engaged Academics. Currently, neither could see any clear benefit of further study in enhancing their careers.

- (a) Lily felt *'that education is important to me... education has a special place in my heart to always do as much as I can because I have learnt that it is the one thing that you can do that no one can take away from you'* (interview 1).
- (b) However, she was weighing up *'whether I feel it necessary to do it and if it will add anything'* (questionnaire 2)
- (c) She thought it would depend *'if there is something that will help me be a better teacher, then I would consider doing it. If I don't think it will improve anything, then I'm not sure if I would go for it'* (questionnaire 2)

**Table 66 Lily on further study at Masters level**

Lily explained the value of education to her (a). Nevertheless, she did not appear convinced that completing a Masters would be of help to her (b). She seemed unconvinced as to whether or not additional study would improve her teaching (c).

- (a) Ruby was '*tempted to say I am not interested in the Masters level just because of the time and time management issues*' (interview 1).
- (b) She '*might miss out on something, some part of development*' (questionnaire 2)
- (c) Ruby was able to '*see its place now, more so than previously*' (questionnaire 2)
- (d) She would consider '*a research Masters, not a taught one...that would appeal to me more than going to lectures*' (questionnaire 2)

**Table 67 Ruby on further study at Masters level**

Initially, Ruby seemed unconvinced by the time commitment studying for a Masters might need (a). However, her views appeared to shift by the second questionnaire when she appeared more concerned she might lose out by not embarking on further study (b) and seemed to value the possibility more highly than previously (c). Perhaps as she had already completed a Masters previously (questionnaire 1), she seemed more interested in completing a research based study, than a taught one (d).

For both Lily and Ruby, the decision whether or not to carry on to complete a full Masters degree was dependent upon the value it might bring to them, weighed against the costs in terms of time and effort. Both strongly valued education (interview 1), but both were aware of the commitment doing such a qualification might bring. For these Willing/Strategic Compliers, no firm decision could yet be made as to whether or not to carry on with their Masters journey. What impact further study might have on their identity would depend on what benefit might be accrued from the effort such study would require. If the benefits outweighed the effort, then the Willing/Strategic Compliers would engage with a full Masters, if not, then they would not. This is the Strategic element of their typology. For them, further Masters level study was not necessarily going to shape or define them as teachers, although it might do so in the future.

#### **4.4.3 Reluctant Compliers**

Reluctant Compliers, including Alfie, were very unsure whether to continue on to studying for their Masters degree or not.

- (a) '*I don't know how important my Masters is to me to start with, but if it comes along natural progression then that's fair enough...the qualification is good to get if the school are offering you to do it*' (questionnaire 2)
- (b) Alfie was keen to '*do any CPD that was offered to me...it's a day off school for a start, you get a decent lunch and you get to network...it makes you think of other things...its different ideas of doing things, different ways*' (questionnaire 2)
- (c) However, '*it depends on my NQT*' year (interview 1).

**Table 68 Alfie on further study at Masters level**

Alfie did not appear to see much value in studying at Masters level under his own volition (a). However, if his school would fund his studies, it seemed more likely that Alfie would participate (b). In my research notes, I was puzzled by his comments; 'Alfie is just starting out in teaching, yet he is thinking about getting days off?' He explained that further study could depend on how he felt during his NQT year (c).

- (a) Chloe was *'not convinced on the Masters level thing yet'* (questionnaire 2).
- (b) She would *'look into it when the time is right'* (questionnaire 2)
- (c) However, 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'* (interview 2).

**Table 69** Chloe on further study at Masters level

Chloe, like Alfie, did not appear to see the worth of further study (a) but did not seem to rule it out at some point in her career (b). She explained that she had found her PGCE year demanding (c) and she seemed unsure if she could commit to more study so soon.

- (a) Evie thought *'if there was no credits [within the PGCE] I probably wouldn't [carry onto a full Masters] but because there is...it's a push start into it'* (interview 1).
- (b) She explained *'it's a bit like having a discount on something in a shop, without the discount, I might not get it, but because it does then I think I will'* (interview 1).
- (c) However, she *'will take a nice break from the academic side of things, the NQT year is going to be hard enough...I have been stressed and studying for the past few years'* (questionnaire 2)

**Table 70** Evie on further study at Masters level

Evie seemed to have an interesting view on Masters study; it did not initially appear that it was of concern to her (a), however, as she was likely to gain some credits as part of her PGCE towards a full Masters, then this might make it more attractive to her (a). Her explanation for this, (b), did not seem to relate to education at all. If she did decide to commence Masters level study, she appeared to want to delay starting for a period of time (c).

- (a) Sophie found it was a *'struggle with these assignments...I'm just not at that level yet'* (interview 1).
- (b) *'I'll need to get my writing up to Masters level'* (interview 1).
- (c) For her, *'funding is going to be a huge thing'* in her decision (questionnaire 2).
- (d) Completing her NQT year would *'put me under a lot of pressure'* (interview 1).

**Table 71** Sophie on further study at Masters level

Sophie appeared reluctant to see herself capable of working at Masters level (a) and (b). However, these comments were made early on in the PGCE course, when everything was new and may therefore be a sign of anxiety about the course. At this time too, she seemed to be concerned about the challenge of the NQT year (d). By the time of the second questionnaire, Sophie's concerns seemed to have moved to being financially based (c).

None of the Reluctant Compliers were keen to continue to a full Masters qualification in the immediate future. As all but Chloe either achieved a poor pass or failed their first attempt at the Masters level assignment (table 75) perhaps this was not such a surprise. All were most concerned about completing their NQT year and how much effort that would take, without the added strain of factoring in further studies. They also expressed concern about how having a Masters qualification would assist them, both in the classroom and in their future career paths. For them, a Masters did not add enough value compared with the effort it

would take to achieve and therefore seems not to be a key element in shaping their identity. What also emerged from the data was the inability by the Reluctant Compliers to be able to link theory to their practice (Husbands and Pendry 2000). For these trainees, their prime objective regarding their learning comes from their school placement experience rather than within the HEI (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 1999).

#### 4.4.4 Contextual Complier

For the Contextual Complier, Emily, the decision seemed to be much clearer than the Reluctant Compliers.

- (a) Emily thought '*I want to carry on and get all my Masters credits. I definitely want to get my Masters*' (interview 1).
- (b) She '*would like to do it straight away if that is possible*' (questionnaire 2).
- (c) '*get my NQT year out of the way first and then look to start it in my second year*' (questionnaire 2).

Table 72 Emily on further study at Masters level

Emily seemed to see the benefits of studying education further (a). She seemed less concerned (b) about starting this during or soon after her NQT year than the Reluctant Compliers and in fact felt the momentum she had from her PGCE year could help (c) carry her impetus through into further studies. Her emerging identity as a teacher is connected to her further studies which saw herself achieving a Masters degree. In addition, unlike the Reluctant Compliers, she could see it of benefit to her classroom practice.

#### 4.4.5 Summary

Although all the trainees expressed some level of concern about how they might fit in further educational studies whilst they grapple with a new job in a new school, often in a new part of the country, the Engaged Academics and Contextual Complier felt they could combine both. For the Reluctant Compliers, the perceived lack of time seemed another reason for them not to continue on with further study. They struggled to see a value in having this additional qualification so were unenthusiastic about participating further with it. The Willing/Strategic Compliers reserved judgement on whether or not they would continue with their studies, waiting to see if it might be beneficial to them to engage with it or not.

Similarly to the findings discussed in 4.3, the trainees' attitudes to continuing onto a full Masters, the value the trainees place on their further study and how they connect theory to practice will help shape and form their identities as teachers. If they see themselves as able to continue with further qualifications (like the Engaged Academics) the likelihood is they will form and project a different teacher identity from those who do not (like the Reluctant Compliers).

### 4.5 How did the trainees' teaching practices compare to their academic work?

I wanted to compare the trainees' (in each of the different categories) attitudes to classroom practice with their attitudes to academic study. In order to do this, I revisited the transcripts from interviews, and reviewed their questionnaires to see any correlation. Some of the trainees spoke at length about their practice, others about their academic endeavours, and some both. In order to pictorially represent this, I developed a scale to indicate a very strong connection (where long, in depth conversations/answers took place and clear connections

were made), strong (where some debate was generated and links were made) and weak (where little interest was shown in this area or links made).

		Classroom practice	Academic work
Engaged Academic	Joshua	+++	+++
	Daniel	+++	+++
	Mia	+++	+++
Willing/Strategic Complier	Lily	+++	++
	Ruby	++	++
Reluctant Complier	Alfie	+	+
	Chloe	+ / ++	+
	Evie	+++	+
	Sophie	+++	+
Contextual Complier	Emily	+++	++ / +++

Table 73 Teaching practice compared to academic work

Key - +++ very strong connection

++ strong connection

+ weak connection

For example, a very strong connection seemed evident when discussing classroom placement in Joshua's second interview. He described his first school as somewhere he 'put a lot of hours in, which has made my social life suffer a bit' but he has 'reaped the rewards professionally'. This seems to link to Wenger (1998:4) where identity is constructed as part of a community and where learning is part of doing. Likewise, Van Maaren and Barley (1984:301) found identity came from taking on responsibility.

In comparison, with Alfie there appeared to be a weak connection: in his second interview he explained 'I struggled with placement B' and was in fact very reluctant to go to that school (personal tutorial). Chloe was perhaps somewhere between Joshua and Alfie; she found her placement 'wearing emotionally – its draining, it's a real rollercoaster ride' (second interview).

In terms of academic work, Daniel, in his first interview explained he 'enjoyed writing essays, I like sitting down and writing... I like researching and giving my opinion'. He seemed to have a very strong connection with the academic side of the course, and gained enjoyment from his studies. On the other hand, Evie felt 'I am not good at referencing and engaging with the literature' and she found it 'difficult to find journals [on line]...it took ages, time would just go by and I wouldn't have found what I wanted' (interview 1). She seemed to have a weak connection to her academic studies and in fact did fail her Masters level assignment at her first attempt. Lily seemed to be between the two; the Masters level assignment 'stressed me out more – I was more panicky' than with the first assignment (interview 2) but she was 'more focused with this one' (interview 2).

As can be seen from Table 73 above, the Engaged Academics have very strong association to both their teaching practice and their academic writing, with all three scoring highly in both categories. Daniel spoke at length, saying he was

*genuinely interested in teaching, I enjoy learning about the theory that goes behind it all, learning styles and the way students react to it. I think that if you have a Masters or working towards a Masters then it shows you are genuinely interested the work (interview 1).*

The Willing/Strategic Compliers both engaged well whilst on their school placements, but were much less concerned with the academic side than the Engaged Academics. Ruby was worried about *'the time management issues'* (interview 1) of writing at Masters level but was apprehensive that if she did not do it, she would *'miss out on something'* (questionnaire 2). The Reluctant Compliers had mixed experiences whilst on their placements in terms of how they engaged in the culture and ethos of the school, but none of them was particularly concerned about whether or not they achieved the Masters level credits. This is perhaps best summed up by Alfie; *'if I get them I get them, if I don't, I don't'* (interview 1). The Contextual Complier, Emily, was very keen to do well in her placement schools and *'did a lot of planning'* (interview 2) for her assignment, but did not engage with the writing of it in the same way as the Engaged Academics.

For the Engaged Academics their engagement with Masters level study did appear to impact upon their practice in the classroom. The Willing/Strategic Compliers seemed to have a weaker correlation between the two factors as did the Contextual Complier. For the Reluctant Compliers, there seemed to be no correlation for them at all between theory and their practice (research question 3 (b)).

This accords with Thornton et al (2002) in their findings that some trainees are unable to see the connections between the theoretical elements of study with the PGCE and the practical context of the classroom. Likewise, Flores and Day (2006) found there to be a tension between theory learned at university and the reality of the classroom. This seems particularly true of the Reluctant Compliers. However, the Engaged Academics appeared to make clear links between the work they did in the HEI and what happened in their classes.

It would seem that for some trainees, being in school enabled them to start to engage with different communities of practice (Wenger 1998:4); departments, faculties, year groups, sports clubs and other extra curricula activities. This is similar to Goodnough (2010:168) with trainees belonging to a number of different communities of practice. For example, Joshua was involved with an intervention group and *'build them up through team building activities'* (interview 2) as well as the hockey teams. Evie was involved with a dance show (interview 2). However, other trainees seemed less enthusiastic about their placements, for example, Chloe found her subject mentor *'difficult'* (interview 2) and seemed reluctant to engage with the department in which she worked. As a result, it appeared that for some trainees, being part of a community meant they began to talk and act like members of that community, rather than being a transient addition to the school. It appears for some that their identity is linked to the relationship they have with others (Watson 2006:509), or the context in which they find themselves is key (Beijaard et al 2004:122). This also resonates with Sachs (2001) and Cooper and Olson (1996) idea that trainees will have multiple identities; these include teacher, a personal tutor and facilitator in the extra curricula activities they engage with. These differing and emerging identities can cause conflict in the trainee teachers (Ackkerman and Meijer (2011)). For example, when they are being formally observed teaching on placement, they may feel very much like a trainee, yet to the students they are teaching, they are perceived as the teacher. In these differing functions the trainees have to

interpret and reinterpret their role (Burns and Bell 2011) and as such, their construction and reconstruction of their identities.

#### 4.6 What was the comparison of Masters level assignment outcomes between the trainees?

I felt it useful to see whether the results of the Masters level assignment correlated to each of the typologies with the aim of seeing how this might impact on the trainees' identities (research question 2). In order to do this, I needed to review the results. These were not in percentage form, although I did keep a note of how I thought they performed as I marked them. As such, I have notated the results as (i) good pass – where there was evidence of clear reflective commentaries and engagement with literature throughout the assignment, (ii) average pass – where there were some elements of reflection and some engagement and (iii) poor pass – where there was little engagement with literature or reflection. These poor passes (and that of the failed assignment) were all moderated to ensure the boundaries of pass and fail were consistent across the cohort.

		Good Pass	Average Pass	Poor pass	Fail
Engaged academic	Joshua	✓			
	Daniel	✓			
	Mia	✓			
Willing/Strategic Complier	Lily		✓		
	Ruby	✓			
Reluctant Complier	Alfie			✓	
	Chloe		✓		
	Evie				✓
	Sophie			✓	
Contextual Complier	Emily		✓		

Table 74 - Masters level assignment results

The Engaged Academics all achieved a good pass in their Masters level assignment. Their love of *'getting into the research'* (Daniel) and getting *'loads of books out'* (Joshua interview 2) resulted in them all engaging well with the literature and demonstrated they were able to meet Masters level criteria. This, coupled with their apparent ability to make connections between the theory and their practice, helped them to produce well considered assignments. In addition, two of these trainees had already achieved a Masters degree in other areas (questionnaire 1) so had a vision of what writing at this level would look like.

Of the Willing/Strategic Compliers, Ruby too achieved a good pass, like Joshua and Mia, she already had a Masters level qualification (questionnaire 1), and knew what was expected of her when writing at that level. She had awareness that the Government at the time (DCSF 2008:12) were looking *'at Masters in school more so than they have ever done before'* (interview 2). As a result she could see that achieving at Masters level could be of benefit.

The Reluctant Compliers, such as Alfie and Sophie, struggled with this assignment; Alfie just *'wanted to pass it'* (interview 2) and Sophie *'got stuck in'* (interview 2) at her placement and put her assignment off until the last minute. Both were surprised but pleased they had passed, albeit only just meeting the criteria. Chloe achieved a good pass in her assignment but felt *'there's so much to take in, I haven't had the chance to absorb it'* (interview 2). Evie



started her assignment quite late, and '*found it difficult to find journals*' (interview 2) despite a specific session organised by the education department librarian for this purpose. Evie did not attend this session and perhaps, had she done so, she would have had less of an issue with accessing journals. She was the only one of the ten trainees who failed the assignment, and was very upset about this (personal tutorial). She was able to resubmit a revised version, which subsequently passed at Masters' level. The Contextual Complier, Emily, appeared organised in her approach to the Masters level assignment, getting books out, planning her time and trying to find information to support her writing. She could see that if she achieved some of the credits towards a Masters during her PGCE it would '*take the pressure off a bit later on*' (interview 2). However, writing the assignment '*took the most time...was the most difficult*' (interview 2).

This ability to focus on both their practical teaching element of the course whilst simultaneously coping with the academic component, fitted with the mind-set of the Engaged Academics. For them it was important to succeed at both; each had a place. Their identity was shaped by this attitude and approach; positive, whole-hearted commitment to all aspects of the PGCE. On the other hand, the Reluctant Compliers put significantly less effort into their assignment writing, mostly just wanting to pass it with minimal effort. As a result, their identity formation seemed to have little to do with the academic element of the course. Ruby, as a Willing/Strategic Complier did better in her assignment than Lily. Both however wrote well and could see the credits available in this assignment might have value in the future. As such, their identity seemed more about hedging their bets; weighing up the effort necessary to pass compared to the value of the outcome. Emily, as a Contextual Complier, did not do as well in her assignment as the Engaged Academics. Nevertheless her identity seemed bound up in her ideas of future and further study at Masters level for which she placed value on her academic work.

#### **4.7 What were the trainees' conceptions of an ideal teacher?**

Having established what each of the trainees had experienced in their own education, and finding (as Flores and Day 2006:223 did) that this is a key influence on identity, I wanted to explore how they imagined their ideal teacher to be. In doing so, I hoped this would begin to show how the trainees thought not only of the qualities of other teachers, but of ones they valued themselves. This could illustrate the beginnings of their own identities as teachers (research question 2).

I asked twice what their conceptions of an ideal teacher was, once at the start of the course and once during their second teaching placement. By this stage, they would have encountered two different school settings, and a range of teachers and teaching styles, which I felt would help inform their ideas. A review of the trainees' comments can be found in each of the individual case studies in Appendix D.

I have analysed these in two ways; firstly, I have presented how the four typologies of trainees view their ideal teacher and secondly, I utilised Hay McBer's (2000) framework (see section 2.3) for effective teaching that impacts upon pupil progress. By using both forms of analysis I felt would provide an opportunity for the trainees' voices to be heard and also allow a comparison to a large scale research project, funded by government.

#### 4.7.1 Engaged Academics

Engaged Academics such as Joshua, felt it important to have *'enthusiasm...to engage with each individual child'* (interview 1). In addition, *'subject knowledge'* and *'authority'* were key attributes in an ideal teacher (interview 1). Later, in interview 2, Joshua reiterated the need for *'good solid subject knowledge'* with a *'good ability to relate to the children'*. He felt it important to be *'very hard working'* and *'adaptable'*.

Daniel considered *'control in the classroom'*, to *'get the attention'* of the group key in interview 1. By interview 2, he believed *'making sure learning happens'* by *'adapting to the different groups and ages you teach'* to be key. In addition, having good *'subject knowledge where you know what you are talking about'* to be necessary attributes.

Mia felt it was about *'the heart...how much you really care about your students'* that was important. This linked to her idea that she wanted to *'really know'* her students and *'have high expectations of them'* (interview 1). The theme of having high expectations continued into interview 2, alongside *'subject knowledge is key – you need to understand what you are getting over to the students very well'*.

The Engaged Academics here seem to value the concept of subject knowledge being a key element in their ideal teacher. This accords with Hargreaves (2000), Furlong et al (2000) and Swann et al (2006) in their understanding that knowledge acquisition is a significant element of being a professional. They all felt it important that teachers were able to engage the learners in their subject by having this in depth knowledge. In order to facilitate this, establishing a good rapport with the group was crucial.

#### 4.7.2 Willing/Strategic Compliers

The Willing/Strategic Compliers such as Lily, also felt *'building a rapport with the pupils'* to be the basis of an ideal teacher (interview 1). She also believed using *'assertive and fair discipline'* was necessary. However, she also felt she would *'want to take an interest in them'* (interview 1). By interview 2, Lily still considered *'having a rapport'* key, alongside *'respect'* and a *'willingness to roll your sleeves up and work as hard as they do'*.

Ruby thought being *'consistent...open and honest'* and *'is approachable but quite strict'* important qualities in an ideal teacher (interview 1). She wanted to *'have an open door policy'*, something that she herself had experienced as a pupil. However, she *'did not want to be anyone's friend'*. By interview 2, like Lily, felt *'rapport'* a key quality alongside *'patience'*. She understood that classes would be made up of *'individuals with different needs and wants'* to which she would need to adapt to.

Although the Willing/Strategic Compliers did not refer to subject knowledge as the Engaged Academics did, they gave thought to how they would relate to their pupils and students in the classroom. This pedagogic knowledge is an important aspect of being professional (Hargreaves 2000, Eraut 1985).

#### 4.7.3 Reluctant Compliers

Alfie, as a Reluctant Complier, felt he should *'keep calm...not shout...to be fair'* (interview 1). He thought the students should *'know where the boundaries are'*, whilst at the same time *'being someone they can relate to'*. However, his focus was not entirely on his students; he

also considered himself by *'getting the work/life balance right'*. In interview 2, he believed *'relationships were key'* and he needed to project an identity where he was perceived as *'approachable'*.

Chloe thought it important *'to bring the subject to life...to explain things without overcomplicating it'* (interview 1). Like the Engaged Academics, she felt it necessary to *'know your subject'*. By interview 2, Chloe considered it key to *'be interested in the kids...and have empathy'*. She felt she needed to be *'super organised...with practical things are way more important for me to get right'*.

Evie wanted to *'have command of her class'* whilst at the same time *'setting out a nice relationship'*. She did not *'want to come across as a horrible person'* (interview 1). By interview 2, this had changed slightly; she *'wanted to relate to the students'* and did not *'want to be too strict'*. Yet she still wanted to *'hold your ground, to assert authority'*.

Sophie was also concerned about the relationship she was building with her students; she wanted *'a good rapport with the kids...you have to work on that'*. She wanted to *'respect them, to gain their respect'* but also *'making it fun'* (interview 1). During interview 2, Sophie still felt it key to have *'a rapport'* with her students, whilst at the same time, having *'good classroom management' skills'*. She realised she *'couldn't be their friend'* and like Evie, could be *'quite strict'*.

The Reluctant Compliers seemed to have some divergence of ideas regarding the qualities they valued in an ideal teacher and how this is shaping their identity. This conflict about their emerging identity in trainee teachers is one explored in research by Raffo and Hall (2006). For this group of trainees, it seemed to be more about how they were perceived as teachers than with the other typologies, particularly regarding their relationship with their students.

#### **4.7.4 Contextual Complier**

Emily thought it important to *'have a sense of humour, otherwise they will think you are just boring'*. It was necessary, she felt, to *'have a personality...some sort of charisma, a kind of quirkiness'* (interview 1). By interview 2, she also felt a *'rapport'* with the students was crucial, together with *'being well organised'* and have *'good classroom management skills'*. This would enable *'all the students to learn'*. Similar to the Willing/Strategic Compliers, Emily did not refer directly to subject knowledge, but for her it was about the way she could relate to the students important; the pedagogic knowledge (Eraut 1985).

As Lasky (2005:906) found (see 2.6), beliefs surrounding being a good teacher are inextricably woven into teachers' professional identity. Additionally, Lasky (2005:907) identified that mutual trust between teacher and student was a key factor to enable learning to take place. This links back to the comments the trainees made earlier about their own experiences of being a student (Beijaard et al 2000, Flores and Day 2006), and how it affected their perceptions of what makes an ideal teacher

#### **4.7.5 Trainees and Hay McBer (2000)**

I analysed how the trainees described their ideal teacher and found a key element missing in Hay McBer (2000); subject knowledge. All the Engaged Academics cited this as one of their

important factors, as did one Reluctant Complier (Chloe). I found this a way to check validity of my findings. The results from the trainees can be seen below in Table 75.

		Teaching Skills	Professional Characteristics	Classroom climate	Subject knowledge
Engaged academics	Joshua				
	Daniel				
	Mia				
Sub Total		5	6		3
Willing /strategic compliers	Lily				
	Ruby				
Sub Total		2	6		
Reluctant Compliers	Alfie				
	Chloe				
	Evie				
	Sophie				
Sub Total		5	11		1
Contextual Complier	Emily				
Sub Total		1	3		
TOTAL		13	26		4

Table 75 Summary of ideal teacher characteristics identified by trainees

None of the trainees identified any characteristics that Hay McBer (2000:1.4.1) described as belonging to Classroom Climate; 'the collective perceptions by pupils of what it feels like to be a pupil in any particular teacher's classroom'. Even though by the time of the second interview when this data was gathered, all the trainees had experienced at least two different school settings, none considered the classroom environment instrumental in what makes an ideal teacher. The implication from this appears to be that these trainees do not fit into the extrapolation that Hay McBer (2000) made based on their research of a small number of experienced teachers. This could be due to the lack of experience the trainees in this study have so far, or it could be that Hay McBer's (2000) model does not fit for those so new to the profession.

Teaching skills and professional characteristics were spread equally between the Engaged Academics, whereas for all other trainees, teaching skills featured much less prominently. The one area within teaching skills that almost all the trainees picked up on was managing pupils, (see 2.3 figure 2). This was perhaps unsurprising as it was something that all trainees expressed concern about prior to commencing their teaching placements (personal tutorials).

In the second interview, I introduced eleven prompt cards (see section 3.5.1 iii), each with an adjective drawn from Whitty (2000) and his reflections on teacher professionalism. These were: autonomy, flexibility, knowledge, making judgements, reflective practitioner, regulations, skills, social service, standards, technician and theoretical knowledge, which I wanted the trainees to rank. I wanted this to stimulate discussion of the key characteristics the trainees felt their ideal teacher might possess. It would also provide a different focus and perspective on how the trainee teachers view teacher professional identity. Each trainee's response was recorded and later put into a spreadsheet (see Appendix E). I noted which card they placed first and scored it 1, second place scored 2 and so on for all eleven. The

results for each typology (engaged academic, strategic/willing complier, Reluctant Complier and Contextual Complier) were then added together and ranked as a group result. A summary of their total points score and ranking is shown below in table 76.

	Engaged Academics Total	Engaged Academics Rank	Willing/ Strategic Compliers Total	Willing/ Strategic Compliers Rank	Reluctant Compliers Total	Reluctant Compliers Rank	Contextual Complier Total/Rank
Autonomy	12	4	21	10	42	11	8
Flexibility	11	2	3	1	19	4	11
Knowledge	11	2	8	3	15	1	1
Making judgements	26	9	12	6	21	6	5
Reflective practitioner	4	1	4	2	20	5	3
Regulation	26	9	17	9	27	8	7
Skills	20	7	8	3	16	3	2
Social service	15	5	11	5	25	7	6
Standards	19	6	14	8	15	1	10
Technician	33	11	21	10	30	9	9
Theoretical knowledge	21	8	13	7	34	10	4

Table 76 summary of rankings

In examining the top and bottom ranked items for each of the typologies, the following patterns emerged:

	Engaged Academics	Willing/ Strategic compliers	Reluctant Compliers	Contextual Complier
Reflective practitioner	✓	✓		✓
Knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flexibility	✓	✓		
Standards			✓	
Skills			✓	✓

Table 77 Top three responses for each typology

	Engaged Academics	Willing/ Strategic compliers	Reluctant Compliers	Contextual Complier
Technician	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Regulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Making judgements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Autonomy		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Theoretical knowledge			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flexibility				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Standards				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 78 bottom three responses for each typology

All four typologies of trainees rate knowledge in their top three responses, something only the Engaged Academics discussed when using their own adjectives (and shown in table 75). As McNess et al (2003) pointed out, teaching is a complex and difficult task, part of which includes curriculum knowledge. Hayes (2004) too felt subject knowledge was part of the skill of being a good teacher. In the literature review, subject knowledge was a key characteristic (see 2.6). Hargreaves (2000), Furlong et al (2000) and Swann et al (2006) all discussed the need of having a strong knowledge base in order to support teacher professionalism. In addition, to pass their PGCE, the trainees had to show that they met the teaching standards set out by the TDA. At the time this research took place, Standard 14 specifically stated that trainee teachers had to have a 'secure knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum area' (TDA 2007:9). It is perhaps not surprising therefore that subject knowledge was a key area for the trainees to focus on at this juncture.

Both the Engaged Academics and Willing/Strategic Compliers have almost identical responses in their top and bottom three rankings. This reflects upon their shared ideas and beliefs in teaching and how it should be carried out. Both the Engaged Academics and Willing/Strategic Compliers appear to have a strong work ethic (interview 2) and are keen to reflect on their own practice (interview 2). Both of these groups welcome constructive criticism and see it as a positive experience and as a way to improve their practice. For example, Ruby found her mentor at her second placement to be '*great, really helpful, lots of feedback*' (interview 2).

The Reluctant Compliers rated Standards in their top three, the only group to do so. In fact, the Contextual Complier rated this in her bottom three. In listening to the Reluctant Compliers, they appeared to be most concerned with the mechanics of how to teach. For example, Chloe (interview 1) wanted '*top tips*' to help her with classroom management and found lesson planning '*a challenge*' (interview 1). This contrasts with Emily (the Contextual Complier) who thought '*some of the QTS standards that I have had to meet this year are a bit wishy washy, so I don't think that really means anything in terms of being a good teacher*' (interview 2).

The selection Emily made as a Contextual Complier arguably reflects her mix of characteristics that share characteristics from both the Engaged Academics and Reluctant

Compliers. She values being a reflective practitioner, seeing the benefits that it can bring to her own practice, and at the same time, seeing the significance of skills, as *'a way of applying the knowledge you have'* (interview 2).

In the bottom three, all groups included Technician in their rankings. The trainees did not seem to relate their burgeoning role as a teacher to an increase in surveillance and control of teachers by Government following the Education Reform Act 1988. Joshua felt *'there are more important skills that a teacher needs to possess'* than being a technician (interview 2) and Emily thought *'it doesn't make you a teacher'* (interview 2).

Neither the Engaged Academics nor the Willing/Strategic Compliers considered Regulations significant in developing their ideal teacher. Ruby considered regulations as *'always there in the background'* but that it was not a key feature in her teaching (interview 2). Joshua felt that *'40 or 50 years ago regulation would have been a really important thing in order to keep the children in line, but not so much now'* (interview 2).

Both the Willing/Strategic Compliers and the Reluctant Compliers listed autonomy in their bottom three. Alfie felt *'we don't have any'* (interview 2) and Ruby thought *'we are part of a team'* (interview 2). However, the Engaged Academics rated autonomy quite highly (ranking it fourth) with Joshua believing it *'absolutely necessary for teachers to be autonomous workers – you are left to your own devices for a large part of the day, you have freedom to plan your own lesson, freedom to mark in the way you perceive fit, ways to manage your classroom, however you want to... to be successful teachers you have to be good at working on their own, making decisions'* (interview 2). This is interesting as autonomy was a key feature of teacher professionalism in the literature (see 2.6). Hargreaves (2000) Sach (2003), Whitty (2006) and Ball (2004) have all written at length about the notion of autonomy and what it means for teacher professionalism. One explanation for this difference could be in how the trainees interpret what was meant by autonomy. During their placement, they are given a scheme of work, and told what to teach and when. The Engaged Academics were able to look forward to a time when they had *'their own' classes* (Daniel, interview 2) and felt they would have more control over what they did and how they did it (interview 2).

Only the Reluctant Compliers included Theoretical Knowledge in their bottom three. Chloe perhaps best summed up their thoughts on this; *'I've got the basics of it, with each assignment, but it's not something that's in my everyday life with teaching'* (interview 2). This I feel captures the essence of the Reluctant Compliers – it was something they had to do, but it bore no relationship in their mind to how they approached their teaching.

Flexibility was in the top three for the Engaged Academics, but in the bottom three of the Contextual Complier. Emily stated *'I don't believe you should be flexible, especially in the classroom with students...you should stick to your rules and how you do it...consistency, not flexible'* (interview 2). This contrasted with Joshua, who found *'during the working day you are faced with so many different situations, whether it be in the classroom, in the corridor, with fellow professionals, and also adaptable to be able to deal with all of those situations...we also have to be flexible in delivering the topic'* (interview 2).

As Flores and Day (2006), Calderhead and Robson (1991) and Sugrue (1997) found, the early images of what sort of teacher the trainees wanted to be was formed by their own experiences of teachers by whom they had been taught. In addition, some of their ideas of

what makes a good teacher was also beginning to be shaped by those they saw in their teaching placements, from both a positive and negative viewpoint.

#### **4.8 Who were the other key participants in this study?**

Although it is the trainees' stories I am most interested in and forms the main focus of this chapter, I felt it important to establish the views of other key participants who shaped and influenced the trainees' experience during the PGCE (research question 2). These were the teacher educators, the MTL leader, SPTs and head teachers (see 3.4.2). This offers a triangulation of data (Denzin 1989) and provides a rich picture of how Masters level credits are seen from different viewpoints of individuals who influence the way trainee teachers progress through their PGCE and beyond. What it does not do is track a clear pathway to a single view, rather it sheds light from different directions onto my study in order to illuminate its different facets. It also acts as a verification process (Miles and Huberman 1994) by collecting and double checking from a number of sources whilst data gathering.

The focus of this study is on the trainees; the comprehensive analysis of the preceding section is augmented and supported by the analysis of the other participants that follow. Although important, these are more minor players in respect of the research questions set and hence shorter in length.

#### **4.9 Teacher Educators**

All the Teacher educators at this HEI were given a questionnaire (see Appendix H) to complete in November 2010 to establish how the Masters level assignment set here compared to that of other HEIs, what difference working at Masters level made to the trainees, the pass rates achieved in Masters level assignments, what support was provided to assist the trainees and their views on Masters level study.

##### **4.9.1 How did Masters level credits in the PGCE compare to other HEIs?**

In the questionnaire I asked about the teacher educators' experience of other PGCE courses in other HEIs. Not all the teacher educators worked as external examiners, so were not all able to compare this HEI to how other HEIs assess their PGCE trainees at Masters level. Their responses fell into three areas; (i) broadly similar, where there were comparable expectations of critical engagement, use of literature and standards, (ii) some similarities where one Teacher Educator believed the standard expected at this HEI was higher than their experience on other HEIs or (iii) dissimilar where there were two assignments set at Masters level and a more research based approach to their assignments. This accords with Sewell (2007:1) who found 'there are many different structures used by ITEs to meet the requirements of the PGCE'. One of the key elements common to most was to enable the trainees to think and critically reflect at Masters level, something which they may have not previously been done.

##### **4.9.2 What were the differences in trainees?**

I asked, in question 5, if they were aware of any difference in how the trainees saw themselves post Masters level credits compared to prior with these credits being introduced. The comments from this question fell into two categories; (i) positive attributes from working



at Masters level. Three of the teacher educators found the trainees had become more able to '*critically engage with theory and practice*'. It helped them be '*more knowledgeable of theory*'. For some, it was '*very highly motivating*' to work at Masters level and encouraged them to continue to a full Masters degree.

(ii) Negative features from the experience included a teacher educator who believed there to be a '*sense of negativity about their studies for those who achieve a PGCE at Level 3 rather than at Masters level, likewise for those who fail at Masters level*'. Also raised was a perceived difference in subjects and their pass/fail rates. This was linked to an additional comment that some subjects seemed to have '*greater numbers who had difficulty passing*' the assignment.

#### **4.9.3 What were the pass rates of the Masters level assignment?**

I was interested to see if there were differences in how many trainees passed their Masters level assignment in each subject area. The pass rates of trainees achieving Masters level credits varied from 100% down to 53%. Those teacher educators who reported a less than 100% pass rate explained that the percentage of those not achieving at Masters level varied from year to year and was often dependent on '*the number of dyslexic trainees*' recruited. Some subject areas had trainees for whom English was not their first language, which they also felt had a bearing on the pass rates. To some extent, this mirrors the findings by Jackson (2009:63) who found that some students work in a reflective and critical manner and others do not. However, there is another issue that underlies this; the Government set the numbers for each secondary subject to recruit. Any under-recruitment (or indeed over recruitment) results in financial penalties being applied to the HEI. Whereas this does not present an issue in popular and oversubscribed subjects (such as English) but does put pressure on those subjects which find it harder to fill their allocated numbers (such as Science, Maths and MFL). This might explain why some trainee teachers start their PGCE with a variance in academic abilities and result in a differential overall pass rate.

Secondly, an argument has been put forward by some teacher educators that some secondary subjects are more practically based than others (e.g. Art, Design Technology). There seems to be some underlying implication here that practical skills and academic ability are mutually exclusive. As a result, some trainees do produce creative, practical work but struggle with academic writing and therefore do not pass the Masters level assignment.

#### **4.9.4 What levels of support were provided to the trainees?**

I was also interested in how much help and assistance the teacher educators provided to the trainees and if this differed between subject. All the teacher educators reported they provided high levels of support. A mixed subject workshop run by the English teacher educator was offered to those trainees identified by their subject tutor as needing additional assistance in writing at Masters level. Most of the teacher educators also provide exemplars of previously well written assignments which the trainees found to be helpful. Many teacher educators read draft assignments and provided feedback on areas to improve. All trainees were offered library sessions on how to search for books and journals, however, not all attended.

#### **4.9.5 What were the teacher educators' views on Masters level in the PGCE?**

Questions 7 and 9 provided an opportunity for the teacher educators to discuss their thoughts and feelings on having Masters level credits in the PGCE award. They were all aware of the New Labour's intention to make teaching an all Masters level profession, and as a result, wanted as many of their trainees as possible to achieve the credits available to them as part of the PGCE. It was '*part of the beginning of a Masters level journey*'. For some it was '*presented as normal i.e. a national situation for all PGCEs to have Masters level credits*' and that '*from day one, at interview, I tell them the course is at Masters level*'. For other teacher educators, they '*play down the Master levelness to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on the trainees*'. Some '*assume that all will embark on the assignment at Masters level*'. One did not '*draw their attention to the Level 3 alternative*'.

As Jackson (2009:63) found in her study, some teacher educators were engaged with Masters level study within the PGCE whereas others were not. Although I feel that at the HEI in which this study took place, all the teacher educators are engaged with Masters level study, there still seemed to be hesitancy amongst some in how far they encourage, and indeed, push their trainees towards gaining these credits (teacher educators' questionnaire).

#### **4.9.6 How far did teacher educators consider employment prospects are enhanced by Masters level credits?**

In order to consider research question 3 regarding employment prospects, I wanted to establish the views of the teacher educators on whether or not having Masters level credits made any difference in securing a job (question 6). Not one of them had found that it made any difference. Additionally, more than one teacher educator reported '*they've never been asked at interview to explain what the Masters level credits mean*'. In fact, '*some schools don't even know there are two levels of PGCE awarded*'.

This response accords with that of the SPTs and Head teachers (discussed in 4.11.2 and 4.12.1) that having or not having Masters level credits makes no difference to the employability of the trainees. This is in line with Jackson's findings (2009:61) where head teachers were 'hazy' about there being Masters level credits in the PGCE, and thus not something they looked for in interview. This data seems to indicate that having two levels of PGCE award has no effect on the employment prospects of the trainees (research question 3 (a)).

#### **4.10 MTL Leader**

As part of the support afforded for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to school partners, this HEI offered both the traditional MA and MTL qualifications. The take up from PGCE trainees onto the MTL programme was good initially, but had halved partly due to a change in Government policy and funding for this qualification and partly due to the difficulties beginning teachers have when first starting their careers. Margaret (the MTL Leader) apportioned this to '*the stresses and strains of managing a work/life balance*'.

#### **4.10.1 When is it best to start Masters study?**

Margaret did not think there was a right or wrong time to start their studies; it *'should be a personalised journey'*. She would not want to determine this for the NQTs but for those *'that have Masters level credits in their PGCE, it would be good to see more of a seamless, joined up thinking about ITE and CPD'*. For those that were capable, a better option might be to *'do the NQT portfolio'* where the beginner teachers *'reflect at the end, on their induction year'*. This would assist their critical reflection and *'get them in the mindset'* for further study. Additionally it would provide credits towards a Masters qualification.

Margaret's view on when to commence a full Masters degree is similar to that of the Engaged Academics; they all wanted to start it soon after their NQT year. This would enable them to approach studies whilst research was still at the forefront of their minds and hopefully complete their Masters before looking to move up the career pathway. This appears to make sense for these students as they are all very keen to further their career, which having a Masters would support, and also give them the opportunity to complete it before other commitments, both school and personal, take over.

#### **4.10.2 What are the benefits of studying at Masters level?**

A key element of studying at this level was the ability to *'reflect in practice, something that teachers do all the time'*. However, the *'reflection on action doesn't happen because of the lack of incentive or motivation'*. Margaret felt this critical reflection came from being able to study at Masters level and *'engaging with literature and research in your subject area'*. This would help to shape the beginner teachers' practice and *'widen their outlook, beyond their classrooms'*.

This correlated with the Engaged Academics' view that both practice and academic study are important in becoming a teacher. However, the Reluctant Compliers were very much focused on their classrooms and were reluctant to see beyond that at the moment. What Margaret suggested here was that they do broaden their view of what being a teacher is and start to be more reflective. It seems to me the Reluctant Compliers cannot see the link between reflection and improving their practice at this stage in their careers. As a result they were unwilling to consider what benefits to their classroom Masters study might bring. However, Margaret's view might be tainted as she predominantly works with those students who participate in Masters level study (such as Engaged Academics). She has very little contact with students such as Reluctant Compliers, who do not engage in further study.

#### **4.10.3 What is the impact in schools?**

Teachers who wish to go into senior leadership of schools (Assistant Head, Deputy Heads and Head teachers) *'are required to have NPQH...to enable people to manage'*. There are an increasing number of staff at this level in the school organisation that *'don't have a Masters qualification'* and as a result, *'the fundamental features of Masters level study are not there'*. As a consequence of not having *'someone at the top who is either role modelling'*

*Masters level work or is really valuing it, that is problematic in cascading down the value of the work' to the rest of the staff.*

At the moment, those teachers who are in senior positions in schools would not have studied at Masters level in their PGCE. However, as more and more teachers come through the system that do have Masters level credits and as they begin to move upwards in their careers, these senior staff may begin to see and know the value in Masters level study.

#### **4.10.4 What skills do trainees need to develop during their PGCE?**

The trainees '*need to engage with literature*' and to develop their '*academic writing...which is quite different from the report style writing often demanded once in post*'. The students need '*access to resources...not just books*'. Margaret made the point that secondary PGCE students have focused on their subject for three years during their undergraduate study, now they needed to engage with a '*whole new genre*' about education. She emphasised that these skills '*will enhance their teaching*'. Additionally, as the trainees themselves are engaged in study, there '*is empathy about the stresses and strains*' that their students undergo when meeting a deadline. It also helps them '*recognise failure which they may not have encountered for quite some time*'. This '*emotional state you go through, how that affects your learning*' draws out the trainees' resilience and helps them have '*empathy with the pressures learners are under*'.

Perhaps these skills that Margaret identified will help to shape the identity of trainees in how they approach their teaching and their students (research question 2). She seems also to suggest that trainees need to develop an understanding of themselves and how they deal with the pressures of being a teacher.

#### **4.10.5 What is the impact of Government policy regarding Masters qualifications for teachers?**

At the time of the interview, the Coalition Government had recently been elected and as a result, funding for the MTL had ceased. Margaret reiterated that New Labour had a policy to make teaching an all Masters profession, with NQTs expected to complete their qualification within five years of starting their career. '*This dialogue has now disappeared*'. However, she felt that '*Masters level work is still valued...but not such a high priority anymore*'. She felt this appeared '*at odds with having Masters level credits subsumed within the PGCE programme*'. As a result, Margaret wondered '*why it is still there if people were not going to be encouraged to use those credits*'. In the '*countries we are following, such as Finland*', teaching is already a Masters level profession. This is '*linked to their high [academic] achievement*' and as such has resulted '*in an imbalance here in terms of the messages being given*'. Margaret thought that new teachers would '*not be guided into one particular direction*' in respect of whether or not to continue to study at Masters level, in the way they were under New Labour.

Margaret questioned whether or not the PGCE should have been named as such; '*it is post graduate in the sense it is post their first degree, but it was not at post graduate level as a university would understand*'. She felt this had led to the division currently in the qualification with it still having the same acronym, but where it stands for two separate qualifications. This would be something '*that many people would not know*' but those that do, '*may class those [who achieve the Level 3 qualification] as second class teachers, which is not the case*'. If

the trainees *'can engage in the criticality, it will make them a better teacher'* but that is not to say *'if a teacher has good pedagogical practice then they will be a good teacher whether they have Masters level credits or not'*.

The fact that PGCE now stands for two different qualifications, albeit with the same acronym, does, as Margaret pointed out, give rise to the possibility of confusion. However, as the teacher educators (4.9.6), the SPTs (4.11.2) and the head teachers discussed (4.12.1) this has not (as yet) had any impact on the recruitment of NQTs into teaching.

#### **4.11 Senior Professional Tutors (SPTs)**

Three SPTs (Sarah, Sandra and Simon) were interviewed at their school in the summer term of the academic year 2010/11. These were senior teachers at their school with responsibility for the trainee teachers whilst on placement. They have been trained by the HEI in this role.

##### **4.11.1. How aware of Masters level credits in the PGCE were the SPTs?**

All the SPTs knew that there were Masters level credits in the PGCE, but Simon did not know this led to two different PGCE qualifications; *'I wasn't actually aware that there was accreditation without the Masters level bit'*. As a result, he *'just assumed that everyone just did it'*. Simon was perturbed that both qualifications had the same acronym, *'it's very confusing'*.

In Jackson's study (2009:62) she found less than half of SPTs had been supported by their HEI in respect of Masters level credits. This was not the case in my study, as all the SPTs were conversant with the demands of this particular PGCE course. However, what was an issue was that one SPT had not considered the effect of not passing the Masters level assignment and what the outcome of this might be. This perhaps highlights the difficulty faced with both levels of PGCE having the same acronym and that unless the qualification is written in full, there is no way of differentiating the level at which it has been awarded.

##### **4.11.2 Does Masters level credits in the PGCE affect the recruitment of NQTs?**

The SPTs were all involved in recruitment at their schools in some way and all follow a very similar process; interviewed applicants teach a shortened lesson, face a student panel and have a formal interview. None of them had anywhere on their application forms to specify whether the PGCE is at Post Graduate or Professional Graduate level. Applicants *'just put PGCE'*. This is the point raised in 4.11.1 with the qualifications both having the same acronym.

None of the SPTs asked about Masters level credits at interview. Simon thought that as he *'didn't know that the PGCE can stand for two different things, it suggests that it is not a major thing'*. This reflects the comments made by the head teachers (4.12.4) and is perhaps indicative of how the interview process seems to focus on teaching rather than qualifications. It also seems to imply that the two levels of PGCE had little impact on whether or not a trainee will be employed in the school; there is no indication on the application, or, in these schools, at interview (research question 3(a)).

##### **4.11.3. Are there differences between trainees who achieve Masters level and those that do not?**

All three SPTs saw differences between trainees, but could not attribute this to whether or not they had achieved Masters level or not. Sarah felt this was only really noticeable once they had appointed a NQT when *'reflective thinking and the critical enquiry'* became apparent. She did think however that *'if you are a bright, intelligent individual then you will hit the Masters work and you will do things in a different way to someone who doesn't find it quite so easy'*. Simon noticed a *'difference in trainees'* but again put it down to *'those wholeheartedly embracing the theory side of things and the course in general'* compared with those who are just *'doing the teaching part and the theory is a bit of a distraction'*. Sandra had noticed a difference *'with commitment'* and *'their ability to be independent learners'*.

As Jackson (2009:63) found, head teachers and SPTs consider good teachers not necessarily to be those with the best qualifications. This seems to correlate with the view expressed by the Reluctant Compliers; *'how would this [qualification] help me in the classroom?'* (Evie). Some of the trainees did not engage with Schon (1983) and his notion of reflection in action, despite the expectation that all lessons should be evaluated in order to inform planning and future practice. Korthagen (1999:192) put forward the view that for beginning teachers both the technical aspects of teaching and the ability to reflect are important and are not mutually exclusive. This notion appears more in line with the Engaged Academics and Willing/Strategic Compliers.

#### **4.11.4 What benefits are there in career progression prospects for those trainees with Masters level credits?**

All the SPTs thought there could be better promotional prospects for those trainees who had gained Masters level credits. Sarah believed it was due to *'their mind set of thinking and doing'* and Simon considered it was as a result of *'encouraging that depth of thought'* and *'their reflectiveness'*. Although Sandra thought it would make a difference, she wondered *'whether it should'* as it was not *'necessarily the best teachers in the classroom that are at Masters level'*. All the schools had an expectation that candidates would have *'Masters level qualifications for team leaders and middle management'*. This seems to suggest that having a Masters degree might, in the long term, have an impact on the trainees' employment prospects (research question 3(a)).

The Times Educational Supplement (TES) has a job section where it is often possible to view job descriptions and person specifications online. I wanted to review the person specifications for Assistant Heads and Deputy Head vacancies during one week (in one issue w/c 13/5/13) to see if any schools specified Masters level qualifications essential or necessary (see Appendix J). Advertised that week were 28 vacancies that I was able to access details on line. They were located all over England, in a variety of schools.

Of the 28 advertisements I was able to access electronically, only one school thought it essential for their candidates to have the capacity to study at Masters level, and only two schools felt it desirable to have a Masters level qualification. Three schools felt it desirable to be seeking further qualifications, but what these might be were unspecified.

These findings do not support the comments made by the SPTs that their senior teachers and leaders should have Masters level qualifications. Perhaps the week I looked at the TES was quite late in the year to be appointing senior staff, and the schools wanted to open the

opportunity to apply to as many candidates as possible. Maybe the schools had advertised previously and had been unsuccessful in appointing and therefore amended their person specifications, or maybe the schools in which I interviewed the SPTs had consciously made the decision to value Masters level qualifications highly in their senior staff. Either way, the picture seems patchy at best as to whether such qualifications would pave the way for entry into senior management or not.

Only two schools specified the NPQH qualification. Perhaps schools view this qualification as more appropriate for staff applying for headships rather than deputy or assistant head positions. Additionally, this qualification is no longer a mandatory requirement for headship. Nonetheless, over 80 percent of schools' governing bodies still have NPQH as a pre-requisite for candidates (IoE 2013).

#### **4.11.5 When is an appropriate time for new teachers to start Masters study?**

In considering whether or not to continue with Masters level study, whilst commencing a new role as an NQT, was *'down to them'*. Sandra had seen *'some that want to get it all out of the way at once'*. Simon thought as *'they need to reflect and engage in theory alongside their practice during their NQT year, it would just mean adding a few more hours to that'*. Sarah considered they *'should just keep going'*. However, all agreed that the NQT year was a challenging time and that some NQTs would want to *'have a gap year'* from studying before embarking on their Masters.

Engaged Academics and the Contextual Complier were very keen to start Masters study as soon as possible with Joshua, Mia and Emily stating they would like to complete their NQT year first and then make a start. Daniel did not specify a timescale, but was keen to commence his studies. The Willing/Strategic Compliers were less sure about starting their Masters, and the Reluctant Compliers unwilling at this stage to consider it.

#### **4.12 Head teachers**

Three head teachers (Hannah, Harriet and Henry) were interviewed in the summer term of the academic year 2011/2012 (see Appendix K). All had been in post for some time and all had worked in partnership with the HEI, providing teaching placements for the trainees for many years. All the head teachers studied for an undergraduate degree (question 1). Henry and Harriet both entered careers outside education following the completion of their degree. Henry worked for a year, Harriet for three years before both returned to university to complete their PGCE. Hannah *'always wanted to be a teacher'* so commenced her teacher training immediately after her degree. All heads were involved in the recruitment of NQTs.

##### **4.12.1 What qualities are key in NQTs?**

Between them the head teachers listed 25 qualities that they look for during an interview (question 2). I clustered these into the same four variables utilised when the trainees described their ideal teacher; (i) classroom attributes (ii) personal attributes (iii) pupil focus and (iv) knowledge focus (see section 3.7.1). The most frequently occurring variable was personal attributes with 19 of the 25 responses in this category. Pupil focus scored 3, knowledge focus 2 and classroom attributes 1. As all the head teachers expected to see a lesson as part of the interview process, the classroom attributes appeared to be a separate element to them.

#### **4.12.2 Which qualifications are significant in NQTs?**

Although all the head teachers looked at the A level and classification of degree that potential NQTs have, none of them seemed convinced that this was an indicator of the sort of teacher they might be (questions 3 and 4). Harriet believed *'A's and A\*'s does not necessarily make a good teacher'*. Both Henry and Harriet commented on graduates from Cambridge *'might be absolutely hopeless in the classroom'* (Henry). Hannah thought *'there were some really good teachers who have got thirds. Your first class honours degree does not necessarily make you a fantastic teacher'*. Harriet wanted to *'look at the person in front of you...how they have lived their life, what they have done and how they have applied themselves'*. Henry concurred *'the quality of the degree is no way in line with the quality of the teacher you end up with'*.

#### **4.12.3 What are the differences between routes into teaching?**

Question 13 asked which different routes new members of staff had come through. As well as PGCE students, all the schools had also had trainees through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). Harriet thought these were successful in her school *'as you are growing your own...having someone who understands the context and the problems of the area'*. Hannah agreed that GTP trainees *'start with an advantage – they know the kids, they know the workings of the school'*. Henry was *'going to recruit a Teach First graduate next year'* as he was *'interested in the model'*.

All the trainees in my study were PGCE students; none had applied for other routes to enter the profession. The GTP programme will end in the summer of 2013 to be replaced by School Direct Training Programme. The heads' interest in other routes into teaching reflects the Government's plans to expand the Teach First programme (DfE 2010) and to start to move more teacher training into schools. Nevertheless, the heads could see there could be issues with training teachers in schools (see 4.12.5).

#### **4.12.4 Are the two levels of PGCE significant?**

None of the head teachers seemed aware that the PGCE could be two separate qualifications, one with Masters level credits and one without (question 5). Harriet appeared horrified *'it's something that's just passed me by...how could something as major as that have so little impact...it's not even in my consciousness'*. There was no space on any of the school applications *'where it can be put down'* (Hannah) and *'we haven't asked that'* (Henry). This seems to equate to what the SPTs related (section 4.11.2) in that the two levels of PGCE appear to play no part in the recruitment or employment prospects of the trainees (research question 3(a)).

This reflects Jackson's findings (2009:61) that Head teachers were 'hazy' about Masters level credits in the PGCE and the existence of a two tier award. As the head teachers in my research do not have a direct input in the PGCE training like the SPTs, perhaps it is less surprising that they were unaware. However, given that making teaching a Masters level profession was a significant policy driver by New Labour, both as a researcher and as a teacher educator, I was disappointed they knew so little about it.

#### **4.12.5 What is the preferred method of training teachers?**



In questions 16-23, I wanted to probe what the heads felt might be the best way to train teachers. Henry *'fell back on my own experiences. I think the best bit of learning is the experience in a school'*, however, it needed to be *'supplemented by some theory as well'*. Harriet agreed it needed to be a mix *'because you need that time out to reflect'*. Hannah concurred that trainees *'have to have time to do the academic study; they need to immerse themselves in the different literature'*. Despite this, all the head teachers wanted more time for trainees in school.

None of the head teachers thought that they were able to *'deliver the academic side of it'* (Henry). Harriet felt there *'was a benefit to being off-site and away from the operational side'* however, it was important *'there was not a disconnect between the two'* [school and HEI]. This is at odds with the Coalition government, who believe *'too little teacher training takes place on the job'* (DfE 2010:19) and is perhaps indicative of a gulf between government policy in theory and the practicalities of implementation.

These comments suggest the heads see an advantage in the academic side of a PGCE supplementing the practical teaching elements, although none of them felt they (or their school) could offer this at the current time. As in Jackson's study (2009: 61), heads could see the benefits of trainees being more reflective and felt that time in HEIs provided some space for this to happen.

#### **4.12.6 What Continuing Professional Development is offered?**

I wanted to find out whether or not the heads offered further training to staff once they had qualified and what shape this CPD might take (questions 11 and 12). All the head teachers expressed the importance they felt for NQTs to continue learning. The issue however seemed to be financial. Hannah thought her school *'very supportive, but not financially so'*. Henry *'would part fund'* further study *'if there is a direct link to practice in the classroom'*. Harriet embraced the opportunity for her staff to engage with the MTL. When the course *'was free, there were over 40 members of staff doing their Masters'*. However *'now we will see it diminishing as it costs too much'*. Like Henry, Harriet wanted to see *'how it impacts on the classroom...what difference is it making there?'* Similarly, Hannah needed CPD *'to have some basis in improving classroom practices'*.

These comments raise questions about whether or not the trainees under study here would be able to fulfil their plans to continue to complete their Masters qualifications if schools are reluctant to fund this. Although the Reluctant Compliers were not intending to carry on their studies at Masters level, some were keen to engage with CPD, if only for *'a day off school for a start, you get a decent lunch and you get to network'* (Alfie).

#### **4.12.7 Is teaching a craft or a profession?**

Following Gove's statement (2010) that teaching is a craft, I wanted to find out the views of the head teachers on this (question 24). Henry explained teaching *'is mostly a craft'* but something that *'needs to be underpinned by why you are doing it...you need a mixture of both'* [theory and practice]. Harriet seemed to agree *'it is a craft...but you have to understand its history, you have got to understand the theory'*. Hannah concurred *'there is a craft involved, but it needs to be informed by your academic study and one can't be done without the other'*.

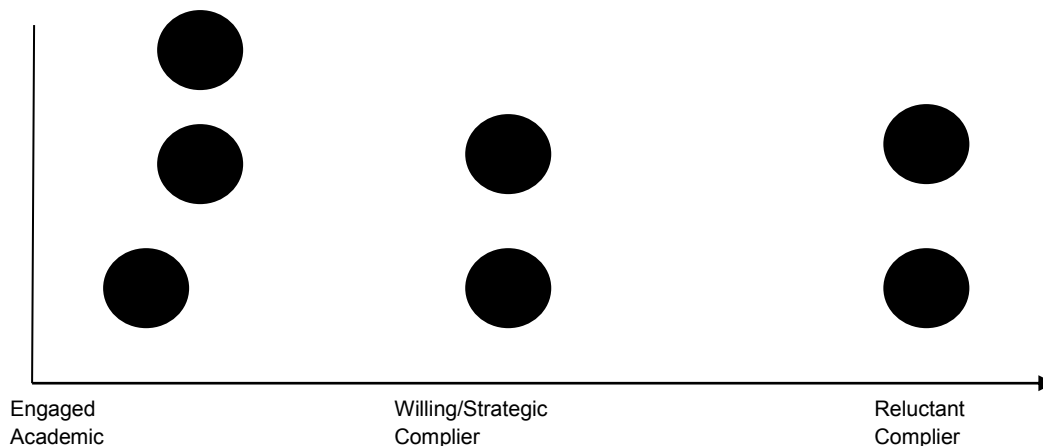
Hannah thought *'trainees are the future; we have to invest in them. Trainees bring an immense amount to the school'*. Harriet believed *'this is a profession to be proud of, this is a profession I would never give up...I feel proud to be where I am, despite being wacked over the head by the government...it is important to get enough people in front of the trainees who can transmit this, enthuse and motivate and take them back to the core purpose of why we do this'*.

This debate seemed to me to demonstrate the differences between Engaged Academics (who see teaching as both a craft and a profession) and the Reluctant Compliers who view teaching almost exclusively as a craft, with the emphasis on what they do in their classroom. Both the Willing/Strategic Compliers and the Contextual Complier see it on a continuum closer to the Engaged Academics than Reluctant Compliers. This also seems to correlate to whether or not Masters study impacts on the trainees' classroom practice (research question 3(b)); if the trainees view teaching as a craft, then they do not appear to value the academic input and do not relate theory to practice (like the Reluctant Compliers). If they do see a value in their academic studies, and relate this to their classroom practice (like the Engage Academics) then perhaps they view teaching as a profession.

Government policy on whether or not teaching is a craft or a profession (see 1.7.5) seems to be at odds with what the heads thought. Both theory and practice form a necessary part of the whole teacher (interviews with head teachers). I too feel it important for the trainees to encounter a wide range of different experiences, both observing a range of teaching styles in schools and having the opportunity to engage with literature and research to underpin this. To have one without the other seems to me to be short-sighted if the Government has the aim of improving teaching standards to bring it into line with 'the best performing countries in the world' (DfE 2011:4).

#### **4.13 Summary**

In reviewing and analysing the data, it seemed to me that it was not just the trainees who fitted into the framework adapted from Shain and Gleeson (1999) but all respondents did to some extent or other. To illustrate their position on the scale, see Table 79 below.



**Table 79 respondents as Engaged Academic, Willing/Strategic Complier or Reluctant Complier**

**Key**

- Trainees
- Teacher Educators
- MTL Leader
- SPTs
- Head teachers

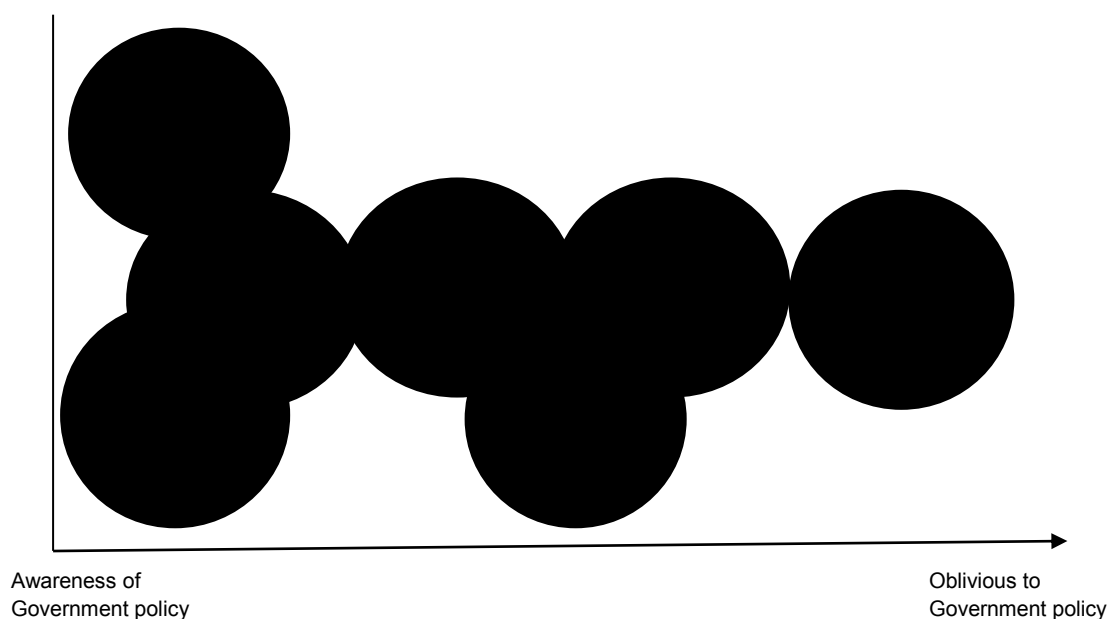
The teacher educators, although fully supportive of the trainees’ efforts to achieve Masters level credits in their PGCE, expressed concerns about the effect that studying at this level had on some trainees. Despite this, I feel they are Engaged Academics.

The MTL Leader was very encouraging of the trainees and their engagement with Masters level work, both in their PGCE and subsequently. However, she was uneasy about the lack of direction from government regarding the Masters level credits and what the trainees could use them for. None the less, I believe she is an Engaged Academic.

SPTs were mostly aware of the Masters level credits in the PGCE but did not believe that this was a factor in recruitment. They can see the benefits of engaging with theory but their immediate concern was how the trainees perform in the classroom. I consider this makes them Willing/Strategic Compliers.

The head teachers were not aware of the two tier PGCE award, or of there being Masters level credits within the PGCE. They were very focused on how the trainees functioned in the classroom and how they affected the students in their school. For this reason, I judge them as Reluctant Compliers.

Additionally, I felt it helpful to show how aware of Government policy regarding Masters level study each of the respondents appeared (see Table 80 below). A number of trainees, both Engaged Academics and Willing/Strategic Compliers, had some awareness that New Labour wanted teaching to be an all Masters profession as well as there being Masters level credits in their PGCE. The Reluctant Compliers were also aware of the Masters level credits available to them, but seemed oblivious of the bigger picture in respect of the teaching profession as a whole. Unsurprisingly, the teacher educators and MTL Leader were well informed of this policy and practice. SPTs were mindful that trainees had their Masters level assignment to complete whilst they were on teaching placement, but demonstrated less awareness of there being two levels of the PGCE award. The head teachers had some awareness of the policy to make teaching an all Masters profession but not of there being Masters level credits in the PGCE or of the two different levels of PGCE.



**Table 80 Respondents awareness of Government policy regarding Masters level study**

- Key
- Engaged academic trainees
  - Willing/Strategic Compliers
  - Reluctant Compliers
  - Teacher Educators
  - MTL Leader
  - SPTs
  - Head teachers

## CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS

### 5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed how trainee teachers' self image and their construction of identity is formed from the policy drivers of making teaching a Masters level profession. Data was gathered primarily from the case study of trainee teachers, but also included teacher educators, an MTL leader, SPTs and Head teachers as these shape and influence the nature of the case.

In carrying out this study, I took an interpretivist approach as I felt there was more than one reality and knowledge generated was perceived through socially constructed and subjective interpretations (Hudson and Ozanne 1998). I did have some prior insight to my field of study at the start, but was not sure how to find it or what to expect. In collecting the data, I was dependent upon my respondents to interact and to construct a collaborative account of their perceived reality. I felt an interpretivist approach would facilitate my understanding of how and why some trainees engaged with Masters level study and others did not. It enabled me to be alert to differences as they occurred in the data collection and in my analysis. For example, in analysing the diverse behaviour of trainees in their approach to the Masters level assignment, in October, Joshua 'raided the library...I got loads of books out' (interview 2) whereas Alfie, did not start thinking about his until after Christmas as 'it was not that high a priority' (interview 2). However, the data collected from questionnaires, interviews and emails were complex and sizeable. This required a great deal of time to code, analyse and reflect upon.

The research here started by exploring the trainees' attitudes to studying at Masters level in their PGCE and how it shaped their emerging identities as teachers. In doing so, I attempted to categorise these attitudes by using Shain and Gleeson (1999). As explored in section 3.8.3, Shain and Gleeson's categories were not expansive enough to fit with the data I had collected. I adapted the three categories they used in their research and renamed them in order to reflect my findings (see table 81 below). Building upon these, I developed a fourth category, to enable all of the trainees to fit into this framework, rather than try to force them into something which was not quite adequate. In doing so, I found evidence within the data of behaviour I named Contextual Complier. This original contribution could be tested, utilised or applied by other researchers to check whether it could be found in other contexts.

Shain and Gleeson (1999)	My typology
Compliers	Engaged Academics
Strategic Compliers	Willing/Strategic Compliers
Resistant Compliers	Reluctant Compliers
	Contextual Complier

**Table 81 Comparison of Shain and Gleeson (1999) to my typologies**

For me, these categories were important as a way of exploring how teacher educators need to have a different focus for each of the categories of trainees. By acknowledging and identifying these differences, teacher educators can meet the differing needs of these

trainees. For example, Engaged Academics may well relish opportunities to spend time researching learning theory whereas Reluctant Compliers would prefer to hone their classroom practice. In doing so, the result would be a more individualised learning approach for the trainees.

## **5.1. Research Outcome One**

What are the policy developments that have led to making teaching a Masters level profession?

### **5.1.1 Introduction of Masters level credits in the PGCE**

In 2006, Masters level credits were introduced into the principal teaching qualification in the UK, the PGCE award. This policy appeared to have been founded on a technicality rather than a considered and thought through approach to improving the standing and status of the teaching profession (see 1.7.3). The Bologna Declaration (1999) required any qualification with the words 'post graduate' in the title to include evidence of study at Masters level. For most PGCE courses at that time, this was not the case.

Unlike Jackson (2009), this study shows that these teacher educator participants did engage with Master level credits in the PGCE (see 4.9.5), albeit at differing levels of connectivity. Most of the teacher educators here presented Masters level credits as being the norm, although some did play down their significance in the PGCE course. There was a feeling that many trainees found it '*highly motivating*' (Teacher Educator questionnaire), however, for those trainees that did not achieve their PGCE at Masters level, there was '*a sense of negativity*' (Teacher Educator questionnaire) surrounding it. It could also be the case that as time has moved on since Jackson's research, teacher educators have become more adept at engaging with Masters level credits; they have become more used to what Masters levelness means to the course, themselves and the trainees. As a result, Masters level work may be more embedded in PGCE courses now than when Jackson completed her research.

The MTL leader felt that for trainees such as Reluctant Compliers for whom writing at this higher level did not come easily, studying at Masters level could create a level of empathy with their own students (see 4.10.4). She felt this might improve their practice (see 5.3.2) in helping students overcome learning challenges.

The SPTs in this study all understood how Masters level credits were included and assessed in this HEI (see 4.11.1). In Jackson's (2009) study, this was not so, with less than half appearing to be aware of their existence. It would appear that the issue Jackson (2009) found could be related to communication issues between mentors and HEIs, something which did not emerge from this study. It could also be that there was a difference in her study between the quality of practice or expectation between HEIs and their partner schools.

Similarly to Jackson's (2009) study, the head teachers in this research were unaware that the PGCE was now an acronym for two separate qualifications, the Post Graduate and the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (see 4.12.4). This lack of awareness is perhaps symptomatic of how policy is decided at Government level is communicated down to some, but not all, stakeholders (such as heads). Perhaps heads have a responsibility to be conversant with such a policy, however, at a time when there is such an emphasis on

student results, competition with league tables and a close inspection regime, it is unsurprising that such policies do not appear to be a focus for head teachers.

One ramification regarding Masters level credits in the PGCE is that if the term 'postgraduate' was removed from the PGCE qualification, it would undermine and devalue teacher education and conceivably teacher professionalism as a whole. This would impact upon the Coalition Governments plan to raise the quality of new entrants into teaching (DfE 2010:9). It is likely that fewer graduates would be attracted into teaching if it no longer held a postgraduate qualification.

### **5.1.2 Policy to make teaching a higher qualified profession**

In 2008 the Labour Government of the time, introduced a policy to make teaching a Masters level profession (DCSF 2008:12) – see 1.7.3. This push towards a higher qualified profession was also reflected further in New Labour's policy of making 'teaching an even higher status profession' (DCSF 2007:86), of the UK having a 'world class workforce' of teachers (DCSF 2007:82) and to bring the UK 'in line with the highest performing education systems in the world' (DCSF 2007:87). By boosting the qualifications and making teaching a Masters level profession, New Labour believed that 'improving teacher quality is the single biggest driver for improving educational standards' (DCSF 2007:85).

One way New Labour aimed to achieve this was by the introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), a practice based qualification that was fully funded by the TDA. However, under the Coalition Government, funding for this qualification ceased in 2011 (DfE 2012).

This research explains how the trainees view continuing their studies to achieve a Masters qualification, whether MTL or a more traditional MA (see 4.4). The Engaged Academics could see that a Masters qualification could be of benefit to them, both in the classroom and in furthering their careers. For the Willing/Strategic Compliers, whether or not they would complete their Masters depended upon the value it might bring compared to the cost (in time and energy) it would take to complete. Reluctant Compliers were not interested in further study at this stage of their careers and could see little benefit from pursuing additional qualifications. The Contextual Complier could see there might be advantages from further study, both from an intrinsic and extrinsic perspective.

The MTL leader, perhaps unsurprisingly, felt progression onto a Masters qualification would be of benefit to the trainees (see 4.10.2). The issue that emerged from the data was not just whether or not to continue onto higher level qualifications, but when to do so? It was New Labour's intention that NQTs would begin their MTL within five years of starting their career. Although aware that it was a '*personalised journey*', the MTL leader felt starting studies soon after the PGCE would enable a transition when there was still a mindset of study. Similarly, the SPTs felt the reflection necessary for MTL study would '*sit alongside*' the work necessary to complete their NQT year. Perhaps this would suit Engaged Academics who seem to relish study but not Reluctant Compliers many of whom found it a challenge to achieve one assignment at this level.

What also emerged from the data was the cost implication of progressing onto Masters level study for schools. Now funding has ceased for the MTL (DfE 2012), head teachers wanted to

see '*a direct link to practice in the classroom*' if they were to subsidize such training (see 4.12.6). Schools seem less willing and able to finance CPD and to some extent are undermining the desire of government to make teaching a Masters level profession without some monetary support provided. Additionally, the cessation of funding for the MTL may de-incentivise many NQTs from continuing with their studies, despite the Coalition Government still having an ambition for teaching to be a Masters level profession (DfE 2012). The issue remains how to convince new entrants into teaching that further study will be beneficial to their career and to the profession as a whole.

### **5.1.3 Improving the quality of teachers**

Despite a change in Government in 2010, comparable policy statements emerged regarding how standards in schools could be improved; the 'most important factor in determining the effectiveness of a school system is the quality of its teachers' (DfE 2010:19). Similarities to Labour's Children's Plan (2007) become apparent in respect of the status of teaching in the UK compared to other countries; 'in the highest performing countries, teachers and teaching are held in the highest esteem' (DfE 2010:19). Furthermore, the need for trainee teachers to be highly skilled (again with a comparison to other countries) 'the best education systems draw their teachers from the most academically able' (DfE 2010:19) and overall, the desire for 'skilled teachers' (DfE 2010:18).

Under the Coalition, the bar for entry to PGCE teacher training was raised by 'ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for applicants who do not hold at least a 2:2 degree or equivalent from September 2012' (DfE 2010:21). In addition, government are providing 'stronger incentives for the best graduates to come into teaching, especially in shortage subjects' (DfE 2010:22). In practice what this means is that trainees with a first class degree in physics, maths, chemistry and modern languages can gain a training bursary in 2012/13 of £20,000, whereas trainees in other subjects such as psychology, business studies and citizenship receive no bursary, regardless of classification of degree (see 1.7.4).

Although the trainees in this study all had at least a 2:2 classification in their undergraduate degree, only two of the whole cohort achieved a first (questionnaire 1). For the secondary subject researched here, that would be a typical profile of a cohort. This suggests that students in this particular subject specialism, who do achieve high classifications in their undergraduate degree, do not choose to enter teaching, but move into other careers. Both the Coalition and New Labour Governments are keen to encourage high academic achievers into teaching (DfE 2010:19) which they believe will improve standards in schools (ibid). However, the head teachers here did not feel that the classification of degree trainees held had any correlation with the resultant quality of the teacher (see 4.12.2).

From the data gathered in this study, the classification of undergraduate degree did not correlate to how well they passed their Masters level assignment (see 4.6). For example, a trainee with a first (Evie) failed at her original attempt at the Masters level assignment and had to resubmit, whereas Chloe, with a 2.2, did. There are also links here to 5.1.2 (i) and their attitude to studying at Masters level which might explain why some trainees do well and others do not.



In this study, half of the trainees were over 25 (questionnaire 1), which was typical of a cohort in this secondary subject specialism. As a result, many had a period of time working or travelling before returning to university for their PGCE. It could therefore be argued that teaching was not the first career choice for a number of these trainees and so they may have been less concerned about the classification of their degree, if they did not necessarily intend to enter the teaching profession. It also raises a much bigger question as to what the purpose of a university education is. Is it just about getting the best classification of degree you are able, or are there wider issues, such as individual and personal development?

As far as the SPTs were concerned in this study, differences between trainees could not be attributed to whether or not they had achieved their Masters level credits, or what classification of degree they held (see 4.11.3). The SPTs here felt if the trainees were reflective practitioners (as the Engaged Academics were) they are more likely to achieve higher grades or marks in their assignments. They considered these trainees to be better as 'independent learners' who embraced both the practical side of teaching as well as the theoretical (interview with Simon).

Similarly, head teachers in this study seemed unconvinced by an undergraduate degree classification being any sort of indicator of what kind of teacher the trainees might be (see 4.12.2). Henry and Harriet both expressed that just because a person has a good degree from a top Russell Group university, this does not necessarily make them a good teacher. Conversely, Hannah knew of good teachers who had achieved a third in their undergraduate degree. This is in line with Jackson's (2009) research where good teachers are not necessarily those with the best qualifications.

It seems unclear to me how the Government can correlate undergraduate degree classification and ability to teach. Whereas I can see having good subject knowledge in secondary teaching is imperative, this is something that can be relatively easily rectified by trainees to boost their expertise in unfamiliar areas. For example, many HEIs offer subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) courses to students prior to commencing their PGCE in order to boost areas of subject weakness. Additionally, the degree the trainees studied at undergraduate level may not cover the exam syllabus being studied in the schools exactly and gaps in knowledge will need to be filled irrespective of how well they did at that time.

#### **5.1.4 Is teaching a craft or a profession and where should teacher training take place?**

When Michael Gove made a speech stating 'teaching is a craft' (see 1.7.5), he sparked a debate amongst teachers, educationalists and policy makers as to whether or not teaching is really a profession and not a craft. It also raised the issue whether teaching was being 'deprofessionalised' (SCETT 2011).

This research reveals Reluctant Compliers view teaching more as a craft with a strong emphasis on their teaching placements and the value therein, rather than the academic challenge of studying at Masters level. For them the two elements (practice and theory) are disparate, that they cannot see how they are linked, or even why they need to engage with theory in order to teach. This accorded with Thornton et al (2002) who found some trainees were unable to see the connections between the theoretical elements of study with the PGCE and the practical context of the classroom.

Engaged Academics on the other hand relished both opportunities of being on placement and writing at a higher level on their PGCE course. They were able to see a clear link between theory and research. This is unlike the findings of Husbands and Pendry (2000), where trainee teachers do not always prioritise theory, but concentrate on their practice.

Willing/Strategic Compliers here engaged well on their placement but were less concerned with academic theory than Engaged Academics. Their experience was perhaps more in line with Flores and Day (2006) who found there to be a tension between theory learned at university and the reality of the classroom.

As all the trainees chose a PGCE route into teaching, rather than school based options, it would appear they placed some value on some of their training taking place in an HEI. Further research into how these findings would compare to trainees who took a different route into teaching, may produce differing results and would be an interesting study to conduct.

Teacher educators confirmed a similar picture with some trainees able and willing to 'critically engage with theory and practice' and other trainees less so (see 4.9.2). The Head teachers in this study felt that both theory and practice are necessary attributes of a good teacher (see 4.12.7). This appears to be at odds with the Government's stance of teaching being a craft 'best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman' (Gove 2010).

This raised the question of how do trainee best learn to become fully fledged teachers? Is it by learning the craft by "sitting next to Nellie" or through academic study in HEI's or both? The research here shows that head teachers, although welcoming the opportunity to '*grow your own*' trainees (Harriet), by having schemes such as GTP, Teach First and School Direct, they had concerns about how schools would manage to '*deliver the academic side of it*' (Henry). Additionally, the heads could see that there could be benefits for the trainees to spend some time during their course off site, away from the school to enable them to have space to reflect (see 4.12.5).

## **5.2 Research Outcome Two**

How is the development of trainee teachers' professional identity affected by the introduction of Masters level credits into graduate teacher education programmes?

The concept of teacher identity has resulted in much debate in research and is 'highly contested' (Mockler 2005:734). For these trainees here in this study, my research on their identity was designed and focused as viewed through the prism of the inclusion of Masters level credits in their PGCE. In doing so, I found there to be a framework, like Sachs (2001:15) where they construct 'their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society'. There was a layering of influences that shaped their identity; their past experience of being educated, their tutors in the HEI, their subject mentors and SPTs when they were on placements and their lesson observations of other teachers ((Raffo and Hall (2006), Flores and Day (2006), Beijaard et al (2000)). Underpinning this was their level of engagement with the theoretical aspects of becoming a

teacher (Husbands and Pendry 2000), how they embraced their studies and the value they placed on it. Although these factors have been researched separately before, they have not been linked together. In doing so in this study, it provides a contribution to knowledge and a way of researching teacher education not previously explored.

As Beijaard et al (2000) found in their research, identity formation is an ongoing process. Flores and Day (2006) described identity as a continual process, involving making sense of and interpreting values and experiences. The trainees' identity was shaped and formed by the experiences they had in their two placement schools, the teachers they observed there and their previous encounters of education as pupils/students. For example, Chloe found her mentor in her first placement 'difficult' and she did not consider he demonstrated good practice of how to plan a lesson (interview 2). Sophie on the other hand was able to observe a range of different teachers and teaching styles which 'helped me focus on different things' (interview 2). These different experiences affected the trainees in both positive and negative ways, shaping how they began to construct their identities as teachers. It would appear for them, their identity formation will continue to adapt and change as they progress through their teaching careers.

This research supports Maguire (2008) who suggests that although policy may dictate a particular version of a teacher, the teachers themselves may choose to ignore, reject or reconstruct their own image of a teacher identity. This resonates with my typologies; for example, Reluctant Compliers either reject or ignore the issues surrounding their engagement with literature, whereas Willing/Strategic Compliers reconstruct by consciously selecting elements they engage with, depending on whether or not it suits their purpose or has value to them. This contribution sheds light from a different angle onto the debate about teacher identity, not only from the view point of trainee teachers, but also by considering how government policy has impacted on what they do in their training year.

Lasky (2005) found beliefs surrounding being a good teacher are inextricably woven into teacher identity. Each of the typologies has its own ideas as to what makes a good teacher (see 4.6) which reveals their identity. For example, Engaged Academics, Willing/Strategic Compliers and Contextual Compliers all cited being a reflective practitioner was an important factor in their professionalism. Reluctant Compliers found it challenging to be reflective and could not identify how to it would help them become a teacher.

Autonomy, an element that Furlong et al (2000) argued is central to the notion of teacher professionalism, was not considered key by Reluctant Compliers or Willing/Strategic Compliers, yet Engaged Academics, such as Joshua, felt it

*absolutely necessary for teachers to be autonomous workers – you are left to your own devices for a large part of the day, you have freedom to plan your own lesson, freedom to mark in the way your perceive fit, ways to manage your classroom, however you want to... to be successful teachers have to be good at working on their own, making decisions.*

It was apparent that many of the trainee teachers experienced conflict between their ideal teacher and the reality of what they saw in their placement schools. For example, Chloe felt it would be 'somebody who can bring the subject to life, can explain things without overcomplicating it' (interview 1) yet when she observed her mentor teaching in her first

placement, he took 'an easy way... not having planned a lesson...just to do a mind map' (interview 1). This also raised the question of a good fit between particular teacher identities and the schools in which they work. For example, Emily, in her second placement, described how she came 'up against a lot of barriers, the way I teach isn't the way someone else would do it' (interview 2). Linked to this was the pressure some trainees felt to accept the first job they were offered (as discussed in personal tutorials). This may not be the best one in terms of their expectations of the school or staff they will be working with.

University based Teacher Educators saw Masters level credits in the PGCE as part of the journey that trainees embark on as they strive to become teachers (see 4.9.5). Engagement with this and with reflective practice was seen as vital by Teacher Educators for trainees to become fully fledged teachers. Similarly, the MTL leader found this engagement '*widened their outlook*' and she linked this with their personal development as teachers (see 4.10.2).

The SPTs (see 4.11.3) found some trainees '*wholeheartedly embracing the theory*' aspect of their studies and compared them with those who appear to concentrate on classroom practice and for whom theory is a '*bit of a distraction*'. This revealed that the SPTs are starting to see the emergence of the typologies I attributed to the trainees. Engaged Academics such as Joshua, welcomed the opportunity to study at a higher level; he enjoyed researching and writing, whereas Reluctant Compliers such as Alfie wanted to concentrate more on his teaching practice, rather than focus on the theory.

Head teachers in this study (see 4.12.4), were unaware of the two tier levels of PGCE now awarded, as researched earlier by Jackson (2009). They had some consciousness of there being Masters level credits in the PGCE, but appeared to assume that all trainees achieved them. From this research perspective, it appeared that to the Heads, Masters level credits were unimportant in the trainees' identity formation as teachers.

### **5.3 Research Outcome Three**

To what extent does the inclusion of Masters level credits in the PGCE create two levels of professional identities which affect employment and classroom practice of the trainees?

Since 2006, the PGCE has included Masters level credits (see 1.7.1). This has resulted in two separate awards, with the same acronym. In this section, I considered what impact this had on the trainees' ability to secure a job for their NQT year from the perspectives of all of the research participants. I have also considered the effect that two awards had on the classroom practice of the trainees.

#### **5.3.1 Employment prospects**

This research shows how far the trainees value Masters level credits, and the extent they consider them a worthwhile investment in time and energy during a very busy PGCE year. There would now be value for a future longitudinal study considering attitudes over an extended time frame and tracking a group of students over this period.

All the trainees in the study felt they had the desire to pursue a career in teaching. What differed was how they visualised this career and the goals they had in mind. Engaged Academics could all see their teaching career being in a senior management role (head teacher, assistant head, or deputy head). All were ambitious and discussed their desire to

improve their practice and move upwards in their teaching career. All felt that having either a full Masters or at least the desire to study at this level was imperative if they were to achieve the ambitions they held for themselves.

Willing/Strategic Compliers had reservations about whether or not they would want to move out of the classroom into management. They had no desire to move into senior management, but were considering middle management. However, it would depend upon the role, the school as well as their personal circumstances. They too could see that schools may well want teachers with additional qualifications such as Masters for senior roles which figured in their consideration of wanting to continue with their studies.

In reviewing the data from the Reluctant Compliers, these trainees were the least sure of where their career path might take them. They were however, clear on what they did not want; to move out of the classroom. None of them considered a senior management position. They felt roles such as within SEN or as head of year would afford them the possibility of promotion, whilst at the same time, retaining their position as being predominantly classroom based. They believed schools would judge them not by any paper qualification they had or might attain in the future, but on their ability in the classroom and how they related to the students.

The Contextual Complier was also unsure of the direction her career might take her. However, unlike the Reluctant Compliers, she felt she would relish a management role at some point in the future. She too could see that schools would want to employ teachers that not only had a good rapport with the students, but also had the ability to manage others. To be able to do the latter, she felt additional qualifications such as a Masters degree would be necessary.

In the very short term (during their PGCE year) the trainees were most concerned about gaining a position as a teacher. In discussions with the trainees, following job interviews, none of the trainees were asked if they had achieved Masters level credits in their PGCE. In addition, none of their application forms they completed had space to indicate whether their teaching qualification was at Professional Graduate or Post Graduate level.

This suggests a failure by Government in communicating clearly with head teachers and SPTs about their intention to make teaching a Masters level profession and the process that both New Labour and the Coalition intended to achieve this. In addition, there seems to be little understanding of the two tier PGCE award offered by HEIs. One way to resolve this might be for the HEIs to make more explicit to head teachers on their website, in communications, in meetings and training sessions, the difference between the two awards offered. This assumes that the schools recruiting NQTs perceive that there is a difference in potential staff between those that have achieved Masters level and those that did not. However, this was not the case in this research with heads interested 'in the person in front of you' (Harriet) rather than the qualifications they held.

As discussed above, the teacher educators also reported that trainees had not been asked in interview about Masters level credits or which PGCE they were expected to achieve (see 4.9.6). One teacher educator reported that '*some schools don't even know there are two levels of PGCE awarded*'. This understanding was confirmed in this research with SPTs realising there was no space on their application forms in which to specify if trainees

achieved the Professional Graduate or Post Graduate qualification; applicants *'just put PGCE'* (see 4.11.2 and 4.11.4). Additionally, the SPTs did not ask about which award the candidates had whilst at interview. As none of the head teachers realised there were two separate qualifications called PGCE, they did not raise this during interviewing (see 4.12.4). The MTL leader felt that trainee teachers with Masters level credits would be better equipped to advance into management than those that do not have such qualifications (see 4.10.3). I am unconvinced by this; the trainees who have achieved their PGCE at Masters level have only written one assignment that is assessed at Masters level. Although this gives an insight into the expectation of what Masters level might be like, it is only a flavour and not the sustained work expected to complete a full Masters degree. I am uncertain of the correlation the MTL leader made between the ability to write at Masters level and the aptitude to manage people. I feel these are different skills that could be better addressed by offering appropriate management training to those staff who wish to move into middle management, rather like that undertaken by senior staff wishing to progress into headships.

From this research, it can be seen that information regarding changes to the PGCE award has not filtered out into schools. Whilst trainees, teacher educators and the MTL manager were all aware of these differences, participants outside the HEI were not. This raises the question as to who is valuing Masters level credits? Engaged Academics and the Contextual Complier seem to have wholeheartedly connected with these credits and the idea of utilising them in studying for a higher degree. Willing/Strategic Compliers appear to see some advantage of Masters level credits, if schools value it, but not for its own sake in the way Engaged Academics have. The Reluctant Compliers gave the impression of not particularly caring about Masters level credits, but were more concerned about getting on with the job (i.e. teaching in the classroom).

In the longer term, SPTs suggested that Masters level qualifications would be necessary for teachers to become *'team leaders and middle management'* (see 4.11.4). However, a snapshot view of job adverts in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) revealed this to be not necessarily so. Of 28 vacancies, only one listed a Masters qualification as essential, and two thought it desirable. This suggests that the effect of Masters level credits in the PGCE may not yet be translating into full Masters degrees. It may also be indicative of schools (and in particular, head teachers) lack of awareness of potential progression opportunities for staff onto Masters and a reliance on the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) which they may well have achieved themselves.

### **5.3.2 Benefits to classroom practice**

The research shows the trainees had quite a mixed view of how well Masters level credits helped them in their classroom practice. Engaged Academics, such as Daniel, enjoyed *'learning about the theory that goes behind it [classroom practice], learning styles and the way students react to it. I think that if you have a Masters or working towards a Masters then it shows you are genuinely interested in the work'*. Willing/Strategic Compliers, such as Lily, although tried hard with their assignments, was still a little *'unsure how it [theory] related to becoming a teacher'*. Reluctant Compliers, such as Sophie, *'struggled with linking theory to my practice'*. Emily, as a Contextual Complier, could see that an awareness of theory helped her *'understand how others learn'*.

The MTL leader felt that critical reflection, found when trainees engage with the theory behind learning, would '*widen their outlook, beyond their classrooms*' (see 4.10.4). This research suggests that Engaged Academics and Contextual Compliers are able to do this to a significant level. Reluctant Compliers are less sure of the benefit of such engagement, and seem to expend less time and effort in doing so. Reluctant Compliers found it difficult to engage on any level with theory and the only benefit they see is that it provides them with some Masters credits. What became apparent in listening to the trainees' stories is that for many of them, this was the first time they had struggled with their own learning. This may well help them develop greater empathy with their own students and how they strive to understand the subject, once appointed as NQTs.

The SPTs in this study were aware of differences between trainees (see 4.11.3), but were unable to distinguish if this was related to their engagement with Masters level study or not. Perhaps this indicates reluctance on the part of the trainees to discuss such issues with SPTs, possibly thinking this might indicate a weakness. Although the SPTs felt NQTs with a Masters degree would have better promotional prospects than those without, this was not the case when reviewing person specifications in the TES (see 4.11.4). In hindsight, it would have been interesting to see if a review of adverts for senior posts over a longer period of time would produce similar results. Nevertheless, a snapshot at a specific date does reveal a perceived lack of desire by a wide range of schools in different areas of the country to see the value and benefit of having a Masters qualification.

As discussed in 5.2.2, head teachers were unaware of Masters level credits in the PGCE. As a result, they were unable to contribute to the discussion whether or not having such credits assisted in the classroom for the trainees.

#### **5.4 Contribution to new knowledge**

Teacher identity, and more specifically, trainee teacher identity is an area that has been researched previously (Raffo and Hall 2006, Cooper and Olson 1996 and Flores and Day 2006). What this research does differently is that it uses a framework, based on Shain and Gleeson (1999), to identify key characteristics the trainees revealed in their approach to Masters level study in the PGCE. This showed their differing engagement with theory and the values they attributed to this part of the programme in comparison to their teaching placement. It was not my intention in the research to indicate one group produced better teachers than another; it would depend on the school culture and ethos. For some schools, Engaged Academics may be just the type of NQT they would want; ambitious, hard working and reflective. However, other schools may prefer Reluctant Compliers who have a strong desire to remain classroom based and keen to be involved in extra curricula activities such as drama and sports. This could be an area for further research; a longitudinal study to identify how the different categories of trainees with the typology of trainee teachers fit into their first teaching post and their career trajectory thereafter. In doing so, this would not just focus on the people (i.e. trainees/NQTs) but also on the context in which they find themselves (the schools).

Developing this framework allows transferability to other research participants. For example, SPTs were aware of Masters level credits in the PGCE, but could not necessarily see a difference in classroom practice or a benefit in gaining employment (see table 79, chapter 4). Therefore they were categorised as Willing/Strategic Compliers. This framework would also

be transferable to other secondary subject areas than researched here and to primary PGCE trainees. It would also transfer to other HEIs and their PGCE programmes. In doing so, it would open up the debate on Masters level credits in the PGCE and help widen dialogue between teacher educators and policy makers.

The research revealed that undergraduate degree classification is not an indicator of how well a trainee will achieve in their Masters level study in the PGCE. For example, Evie achieved a first, but failed her Masters assignment at her first attempt (passing it at her second attempt). Ruby attained a 2:2 in her undergraduate degree, but passed her Masters level assignment well (see Table 74, Chapter 4). Additionally, this research also shows that head teachers are unconcerned by the classification of undergraduate degree of NQTs. They felt this was not a clear indicator of the quality of a teacher. This is at odds with the current Coalition Governments policy of offering financial incentives to trainees with higher classification of degrees (see 1.7.4) in order to 'raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession' (DfE 2010:9).

Masters level study in the PGCE award was a debate started by Jackson (2009). This study continues and furthers that debate about the benefit and issues with this area of the PGCE. In addition, it brings the construction of trainee teacher identity into the discussion, something which has not been linked to Masters level credits previously. As a result, this study opens up new areas of questioning and debate surrounding Masters level study in the PGCE.

From my research, it was apparent that although SPTs thought career prospects for NQTs with Masters level credits were improved, the heads interviewed were unaware of these credits. Therefore, this study identified the difference in understanding and value of these Masters level credits between management levels within schools. The first implication from this relates to one of the issues raised by the heads when interviewed; the increasing cost to schools in funding their staff to complete a full Masters. For trainees at this HEI, if they pass their PGCE at Post Graduate level, they attain 60 credits towards a full Masters (which require 180 credits). Thus the overall fees to the school are reduced for those NQTs with Masters level credits compared to those staff without. The second implication from this is that if heads are unaware of these credits, they are unable to encourage their staff to utilise them in pursuing a full Masters. Trainees in this study were unaware of this lack of understanding by heads and made the assumption they would be able to continue onto a full Masters if they wished. This was especially true for the Engaged Academics.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

This research had constraints of one academic year in which to gather the majority of data. Linked to this, my research was restricted to one subject group of trainee teachers, in one HEI. This did not allow for any comparison to other cohorts or to other secondary subject areas to be undertaken. More than one cycle of more than one cohort of trainees would give greater depth and breadth to the study, but not necessarily different groupings identified in the framework. Future studies could test out whether or not these categories of trainees within the typology were sufficient or indeed if there are more. What it would have provided was a clearer idea of the transferability of the framework and whether there were differences between subject areas.



As this study was limited to one academic year, it was not a longitudinal study, following the trainees over a period of years. This would have allowed further evaluation of the career trajectory of the trainees during their NQT year and beyond, to see if their ideas and plans expressed in this study came to fruition. It would also allow an insight into whether or not they progressed onto a full Masters and what impact such study had on their careers. In addition, a longitudinal study would enable further research into the development of these fledgling trainee teacher identities and how they grew and matured over time.

The case study (one cohort of one secondary subject, in a one PGCE year, in one HEI) helped to understand the case in depth (Punch 2005) and to investigate the key elements where they occur (Cousin 2009). However, as Yin (1994:9) pointed out in case studies there is sometimes a 'lack of rigor' and 'take too long'. Although I felt Yin's former concern was not applicable in this research, his latter point about time held true here. The time it took, not in gathering data, but in transcribing, coding and analysing was indeed lengthy. It could not be done all at the same time; after each break, I needed to re-read, go back and forward through previous work in order to reflect upon the data.

In retrospect, I would have liked to interview the subject mentors in a number of partner schools, to see if they had similar views and opinions to that of the SPTs. These mentors work more closely with the trainees than SPTs and may have provided a more personal view of the development of the trainees' identities. However, they do not necessarily have the broader overview of policy within the school or are involved with recruitment and employment.

## **5.6 Reflections on the professional doctorate**

In reviewing the experiences I have had throughout this journey, to me, there are three distinct areas of my own identity; me the individual, me the researcher and me the teacher educator.

In my own personal development, studying for a professional doctorate has enabled me to start my research journey, to engage with other academics, to attend lectures and conferences, to broaden my outlook beyond that of being a teacher educator. I have enjoyed the chance to study with others during Part 1 of this EdD and to feel part of and contribute to a Community of Practice of academics. Part 2 has given me the opportunity to develop my own ideas in respect of the research undertaken, to explore my area of interest in greater depth and to have a sustained focus that might otherwise not have been possible.

As a researcher, this study has enabled me to critically reflect on the preceding 50 years of teacher education. It has also been of interest to explore a range of literature surrounding professionalism and identity in light of the Labour Government's desire to make teaching a Masters level profession. How teachers and teaching has been perceived from a variety of standpoints has been particularly relevant as teacher education seems to be being moved out of HEIs and into schools by the Coalition Government.

I have been able to engage in research using a grounded theory approach to narrative case study. This extended study gave me a greater insight into the various nuances that occur with this and provided an opportunity to engage more deeply with this methodology. As a result, my understanding has improved of how to move from my initial theoretical perspective as an interpretivist researcher, through grounded theory methodology and into

questionnaires and interviews as methods (Crotty 1998). In doing so, it has broadened my outlook as a researcher and helped to cement a strong foundation on which to build as my research continues. I see this as very much the start of my learning to be a research professional, as a way of talking about my findings and to begin to widen my scope. I look forward to attending conferences to discuss my work and to write for academic journals. Without stating this EdD journey, I would not have been able to think that this would be possible.

As a teacher educator, this research has made me question the value of leading the trainees towards achieving their Masters level credits during what is a very busy, challenging and demanding year. If schools do not value the achievement, and it makes no difference to the employment prospects of the trainees, why push those who are reluctant to study at this level? Is the role of the teacher educator to provide a space for such intellectual and academic thinking to take place, as well as introducing the practicalities of teaching (for example how to plan lessons and assess work)?

In focusing on one cohort of trainee teachers, in one secondary subject area, in one HEI it helped me to see the PGCE course from the viewpoint of the trainee teachers at the start of their career. The balance between the demands of engaging with different Communities of Practice, whilst at their placement schools and through their studies at the HEI has enabled me to reflect upon and inform my own practice as a teacher educator and more widely on education as a whole. Additionally, this research has provided evidence to support my own professional judgement regarding the conflict that exists between the trainees' idea of what makes a good teacher and the reality. I had a hunch that there were a divergence of ideas, but in carrying out this study, I have been able to evidence this discord and to give a voice to the trainees.

The policy decisions made regarding the place of HEIs in teacher training has also had an impact upon my professional practice. There has been an opening up of new routes into teaching since I started in my role as a teacher educator; Schools Direct, Troops to Teachers, School-centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) and Teach First. This changing context of how teachers are trained raises a number of concerns; there has been a poor take up of places on the Schools Direct programme – in 2013/14, only 6370 of 9580 places were taken up (Universities UK 2013). In addition, the Coalition Government has cut the allocation of PGCE places in HEIs by 15% for the academic year 2014/15 (Universities UK). This has impacted upon the number of teachers being trained and could lead to a shortage of teachers in some subject areas. It may also impact on the ability of HEIs to sustain their Education departments and teacher training provision. This has already begun to happen with the University of Bath pulling out of teacher training. In addition, some PGCE courses have been amalgamated for example history and geography being combined into a humanities group.

As more teacher training is moved into schools, concern about how this will be managed was raised by the heads; they felt ill-equipped to be able to deliver the 'academic side' (Henry) of training and thought it important that trainees have time off site and 'be supplemented by some theory as well' (Hannah). This could result in less time for trainees to be reflective and push trainees to become more like Reluctant Compliers.

There seems also to be a reduction in the promotion and marketing of teaching as a career during the past year. Previously, large campaigns have been run, including television, newspapers and other media advertising taking place. These factors combine to cause uncertainty around the future of teacher training within HEIs. In addition, with the uptake of places falling, there is a real possibility of a teacher shortage in the forthcoming years.

These changes have resulted in a contested context of where and how teacher training takes place. As a teacher educator, this is unsettling for my future career in an HEI. It also questions the support new trainees will receive as they embark on their new profession as teachers. My concern is whether these changes will result in a lowering of standards, skills and abilities newly qualified teachers' possess once they have completed their training, and whether or not this will result in lowering of academic attainment of students.

### **5.7 Future Research**

During this study, I was an insider researcher, having a dual role of researcher and tutor. In future research, in investigating trainees in a different environment from the one in which I work, may have the advantage of wider objectivity as I would not have preconceived notions of the philosophy of the HEI. I would not be known to the trainees and would not know them which could result in a different dynamic of relationship existing between us. I would also not know the other research participants in the way that I knew those in my study which consequently could make the research relationship more formal. There would not be the same power dynamics researching in an unknown environment, that there were researching my own HEI.

In identifying the trainees' as 'stayers', 'stoppers', 'starters' or 'movers' (Draper et al 1998), it would perhaps lend itself to future study in revisiting these categories and trainees. It could be that the trainees have moved category, stayed the same, or even left the profession. A longitudinal study would facilitate such research.

What has been interesting during the time this research has taken place is the differences in policy between New Labour and the Coalition Government in respect of teacher training. More routes into teaching have been opened, for example, Troops to Teachers and School Direct. There has been a move away from training teachers in University based programmes and an encouragement for schools to take a lead in ITE (DfE 2010). As these programmes begin to take shape, research opportunities into comparing how these teachers form their identities would be an appealing prospect for further research.

This links to the responses from head teachers regarding where they think teacher education should take place. A further study involving a greater number of head teachers, to elicit their opinion regarding teacher education, what it is, how it should be implemented, how much input schools should have, what should be included in such courses and where it should take place would be timely and relevant.

What also became apparent is the differences in how trainees view theory and practice in their training and whether or not they are able to link the two. If schools take on a bigger role in training teachers, this raises the question as to whether or not theory will be part of their programme. If so, how might schools manage this? In addition, the move away from a fully funded MTL route for trainee teachers to pursue, to one which relies on teachers and/or their schools funding additional study is a cause for concern. It would be valuable to research

further whether or not this has resulted in a decrease in teachers taking up additional higher qualifications. Furthermore, had this change in policy had an effect on the qualifications that middle and upper management school staff are expected to have? Finally, have these changes in policy impacted on the public perception of teachers, how teachers see themselves and how their identity is shaped?

## **5.8 Summary**

When this research started, under the Labour Government (1997-2010), there was a drive to make teaching a higher status profession, with a world class workforce, to improve educational standards and be in line with other world leaders in the educational field (DCSF 2007). Under the Coalition Government, similar aims were espoused with improving the quality of teachers, improving the status of teaching, having highly skilled teachers who are academically able (DfE 2010). However, the way each government approached these aims differed. Labour wanted to make teaching an all Masters profession, with qualifications gained over the course of a teacher's career and by introducing a new qualification, specifically aimed at NQTs, the MTL. The Coalition on the other hand, ceased funding for the MTL, raised the bar for entry onto PGCE courses and offered incentives for highly qualified graduates to enter the profession. What remains however, are Masters level credits within the PGCE. What is less clear is the pathway trainees and NQT's might take to continue their studies without funding available for the MTL. Related to this is a reluctance by head teachers to fund additional studies that do not have a direct correlation to improving classroom practice. If in future, the only research carried out by teachers is associated with increasing standards, then the research community will be poorer for this and opportunities for interesting, challenging and informative studies will be lost.

As government policy shifts teaching training from HEIs into schools, the opportunity for teachers to engage in research seems to diminish as schools cannot support this 'academic side' (head teacher, Henry). This is despite evidence from BERA (2014) that trainees and NQTs need access to research to underpin practice. Trainees need the opportunity to integrate academic study with practical teaching in school and outside of the classroom. How much they choose to engage with this comes back to their identity; whether or not they are Engaged Academics, Reluctant Compliers or somewhere in-between.

Whether or not the trainees achieve the Post Graduate rather than the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education appears to make no difference to their immediate job prospects. In the longer term, for example when they apply for a management post, it is difficult to predict. At the moment, it appears that Masters degrees are not necessarily those demanded by schools, but as more and more NQT's with Masters credits, progress into senior roles, this could change.

Qui docet discet (those who teach learn)