

APPENDIX D

Narrative Summary – Joshua

<p>Educational background</p>	
<p>Joshua is a male PGCE student in his early 20s. He has a 2:1 degree from a Russell Group University and in addition, he has an MSc in Finance. He said that he <i>'enjoyed my time at school socially, but wasn't too keen on the academic side (apart from PE and Business Studies). However I found with a little bit of work I was able to get fairly good results which meant I succumbed to "coasting" for a bit'</i>. Joshua really <i>'liked the social side of school. I had a close knit set of friends. There were no subjects I particularly detested'</i>. As far as exams went, Joshua said that he <i>'always preferred exams to coursework'</i> and found that his <i>'method of revising always managed to provide me with above average marks on results day'</i>. For him <i>'the decision to go to University was an easy one. Both my parents had gone to University, my dad to Oxford none the less, so I guess it was expected that I go too'</i>. Joshua added <i>'it was always something I'd wanted to do anyway, so there was no other option'</i>. His family <i>'were always very supportive and encouraging towards my education, both at school and at University'</i>. Joshua did admit that <i>'I did not work particularly hard in the 1st year and instead relied upon going through the motions to get me through the 40% pass criteria. However upon continuing this attitude in year 2 of my bachelor's degree and subsequently getting very bad grades in the first couple of assignments, I upped my game somewhat and ever since have worked dedicatedly on University concerned work'</i>. Joshua <i>'knew I hadn't worked to 1st level and so was happy to receive a 2:1 classification'</i>. In studying for his Master's <i>'I 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'</i>.</p>	<p>Q1 Q1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 E E E E E E E E</p>
<p>In categorising him into one of three types; engaged academic, willing/strategic complier or reluctant complier, Joshua would fall into the group I define as an engaged academic (see 3.7.2)</p>	
<p>Becoming a teacher</p>	
<p>Prior to starting the course, Joshua said that he had only previously had holiday or voluntary work. To him, this was just a way of earning some money, without the added responsibility of a career, as his passion was to travel. He did not appear to enjoy what he described as <i>'desky jobs'</i> as he wanted to <i>have 'the freedom to be out from behind a desk... and give me a bit of adventure as well'</i>. He comes from a background where teaching is in the family as his mother is in the profession. He perceives himself to be aware of what the job entails. <i>'Ever since I was so high [indicates height of a small child] she has told me the benefits of teaching'</i>. This career however did not present itself as his first choice, <i>'it was always at the back of my mind but I never considered it as a starting career. I always thought I would go into it in later life'</i>. Following a trip to Australia he <i>'got back into the desk routine and then teaching came from the back of my mind to the front...I enquired more about the course and thought I would apply'</i>. He duly put his application in to join the PGCE course in November/ December 2009, was interviewed and offered one of the available places. Following this, he <i>'went travelling again to India and did a few months there teaching English...I had a fantastic time, being around the kids and teaching them...I fell in love with it and I thought, you know what, I did choose the right thing'</i>. He really enjoyed</p>	<p>I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I1 I2</p>

<p><i>'getting the "hi Sir" in the corridor' from students he had taught, which Joshua thought 'really rewarding, the fact that you are liked'.</i></p>	I2
<p>Joshua is <i>'very much looking forward to becoming a teacher. I was a total beginner in my first placement, now I'm well on my way to developing my own style as well as my own individual style and resources'</i>. However, he has a <i>'certain amount of nervousness not only with the aspect of taking on your own class, but also specifically with the job search. Once I do jump that hurdle and get myself secure for a teaching post in September, I'll be really looking forward to it'</i>.</p>	I2 I2 I2
<p>First Teaching Placement</p>	
<p>Joshua's first teaching placement was at 'a little smaller than the average secondary school' in a large city in the south west of England. The majority of students came 'from predominantly deprived socio-economic backgrounds'. (Ofsted 2008:3). Student attainment is described as 'well below the national average' (ibid) but Ofsted report in their monitoring visit during 2009 that this was improving. The school became a specialist arts college in 2006, following a complete rebuild in 2005. In March 2011, following a consultation with parents, staff and governors, the school decided to apply for academy status (School newsletter April 2011).</p>	O O O W W
<p>At this school, Joshua admitted that he got a lot about <i>'behaviour management here'</i>. The school was <i>'challenging'</i> for him, particularly as a first placement, but he <i>'got on with it'</i> and <i>'gained a lot from it'</i>. He <i>'tried not to sit on my laurels'</i> and be <i>'proactive'</i> wherever possible. He has had to <i>'put a lot of hours in, which has made my social life suffer a bit'</i> but he has <i>'reaped the rewards professionally'</i>. He had a <i>'really supportive mentor, really encouraging...I got lots of complements from her'</i>.</p>	I2 I2 I2 I2 I2
<p>Second teaching Placement</p>	
<p>Joshua's second placement was at a 'larger than average secondary school [with]...specialist status as a language college' (Ofsted 2009:3) based in a town in the south west of England. In this semi-rural school, 'the vast majority of students are white British'. There are few who have English as an additional language and the 'number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average' (ibid:3). The 'attainment of students on entry to the school is slightly above the national average' (ibid:3). 'Students are well motivated and they generally enjoy learning' with GCSE results 'slightly above national averages (ibid:5).</p>	O O O O O O O O
<p>Joshua <i>'much enjoyed this school here as I did my first placement. The fact that they are two such different schools, two ends of the spectrum, has been really beneficial as far as I'm concerned'</i>. He got more in terms of <i>'subject knowledge testing'</i> here than in his first placement, particularly as he described the placement as <i>'a successful school'</i>.</p>	I2 I2 I2
<p>He was involved in an <i>'intervention group'</i> which involved <i>'pulling kids out of classes, those that have the potential to do more and build them up through team building activities'</i>. He also <i>'got involved with the hockey team which I really enjoy, being able to interact with the children on a different level.'</i> It was a <i>'really student focused style of learning with them taking a lot of responsibility themselves'</i>.</p>	I2 I2 I2
<p>Joshua's conceptualisation of the Ideal teacher</p>	
<p>Before he went to his first placement, Joshua <i>'didn't really know entirely what a</i></p>	I1

teacher represented. He knew about *'the classroom based activities'* but not about *'the pastoral side which has a lot of potential to be more fulfilling to me'*. I asked Joshua early on in his course to describe the qualities of a good teacher, his first adjective was *'enthusiasm'*. He expanded, *'you have really got to sell your lesson...I just assumed they [the students] would want to engage with it, but really you have to use a lot of enthusiasm and effort to sell it to the children'* and that *'you have to find a level on which you can engage with each individual child'*. Another key factor for Joshua was his subject knowledge – without this he thought that he would not have the respect of the class if he could not answer their questions. He also considered that *'you have got to have some sense of authority'*. Finally, he moved more to what he does in class, where he tries *'to bring a lot of visuals in, pictures, videos'* [to my lessons].

I1
I1
I1
I1
I1
I1
I1
I1

When I asked a similar question later on during the course, he had similar views; for him it was still *'good solid subject knowledge, resourceful in finding answers to questions, good ability to relate to the children and pitch at a level in which the children are comfortable, have to be good communicators...very hard working and dedicated if they want to do a good job'*. Part of what he does relies on him having *'to be adaptable'*, both in what he teaches, how he teaches and in having confidence to realise that lesson plans are just guidance to what he ideally would want to do, not something written in stone to be followed at all costs.

I2

I2
I2
I2

During the second interview, I introduced prompt cards (emboldened in the following paragraphs) for Joshua to rank order, or discard to stimulate discussion about key characteristics of his ideal teacher. At the top he placed **reflective practitioner**, **flexibility** and **autonomy**. He felt quite strongly that it was *'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'*. In regards to flexibility, *'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'*. He placed **knowledge** and **theoretical knowledge** together next, followed by **making judgements**. On the next line, Joshua put **standards** – he considered the school to be successful *'not only because of the standards it enforces amongst the children but also the staff as well. There is a lot of weight upon staff's shoulders, but it gets results, it's been proven to get results'*. Towards the bottom of his list he placed **social service** *'we are providing a social service through teaching, but also through extra curricula activities'*. Next was **skills** which he thought *'was a difficult one, there are teaching skills that you need specifically but that might come under knowledge, or theoretical knowledge'*. Following on from this, he placed **regulation** *'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'*. He thought that his second placement was *'student focused'* so did not need this level of control, in fact, he described the children as having *'responsibility [for their learning]'*. At the bottom of his list, he placed **technician**; *'there are skills that we need to have, ICT skills, whiteboard skills, but there is great support from other staff...but there are more important skills that a teacher needs to possess'*.

I2

Imagined future career path

As for where Joshua's future career path might take him, he was unsure. He did know that it was *'a career in teaching for me'* however, he *'can't see where I might end up – at the moment I am really enjoying it'*. His driving passion is to be *'an excellent teacher'* and having had opportunities to see a variety of teaching in two quite different schools, he has an idea of what that might look like. He is interested *'in becoming an Advanced Skills Teacher'* (AST) as he *'wants to enjoy [his subject] and developing my skills there'*. During his teaching placements, Joshua has been very involved in extra curricula activities, which he clearly enjoyed. The other role, outside that of a subject specialist teacher he has experienced, is that of a tutor. Here he did have reservations about whether the pastoral role might be the career path for him, thinking that the more obvious route might be through the academic side of teaching to become head of department / head of faculty. However, *'having got more involved in the pastoral side, I am really enjoying that'*.

I1
I1
I1
I1
I1
I1
I1

Joshua described himself as *'a highly motivated person, and if you are a highly motivated person in the teaching industry then the rewards are there for the taking'*. Although there are no extrinsic rewards during PGCE training, Joshua thought he *'had put a lot of effort in and the complements you get about your teaching are really intrinsically beneficial.'* It was, he said *'a lot of work...although it might be possible to get away with less work, I have tried to put everything into it'*. This is balanced by *'the rewards I got from putting that work in, in the classroom, have been huge and I'm really glad I've put that much effort in.'* Joshua really struggled to find any low points *'there really haven't been any for me, which has been a good sign'*.

I2
I2
I2
I2
I2
I2

For Joshua, he was very motivated to do well in his chosen career, *'I want to progress, to have a career...maybe a deputy head or something'*. As identified earlier in discussing his journey, his most pressing concern is that of finding employment for the forthcoming academic year. He is *'really looking forward to having a solid job because all of the jobs I've had so far have been a means to an end to go off around the world, so it will be nice to immerse myself in a career, in a role and do something that I really enjoy'*.

I2
I2
I2

M level study

The assignment is designed to help the trainees further develop their knowledge and understanding of their subject area for which they are either unfamiliar or not particularly confident. Having identified such an area, the trainees devise an action plan to develop and enhance their subject knowledge, such that they should aim to be able to confidently deliver the topic in their placement school. They are asked to reflect upon this process, drawing upon literature to critically evaluate their learning.

Joshua has already achieved a Master's level qualification, so was aware of what the demands of writing at this level meant. He explained *'it was a lot of work but not too difficult having done it before in my other degree'*. It helped that he was *'really motivated to do it'* and that he *'can see a relationship'* (between M level study and teaching). The process he went through to write this assignment seemed important for him to explain; *'I start by first getting a general plan of what I want...I get all of the documents that have anything to do with the assignment'*. He then *'did a sort of mind map with all of the information that I had found...and sort of developed a plan from that'*. Joshua *'planned everything...so that I knew what I was going to write before I*

I1
I1
I1
I2
I2

<i>wrote the first word</i> ’.	I2
However, he <i>‘didn’t find the library system that easy to navigate [to find journals]...I used Google Scholar...easier to search</i> ’ to find journals, which he then spent a lot of time reading, something he found stimulating and rewarding. He did however <i>‘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</i> ’.	I2 I2
The key to his success in this assignment he put down to the fact he <i>‘spent a lot of time planning, probably as much as writing</i> ’ so much so that he <i>‘really knew what I was going to write before I wrote the first word</i> ’.	I2 I2
In reflecting on the process, Joshua then described how things did not go as smoothly as first might appear; the assignment was given out at a time when the trainees had just settled into their first placement, were beginning to take responsibilities for their classes and start the process of being a teacher. Joshua admits he <i>‘had other responsibilities</i> ’ (to the school when the assignment was handed out) and that he <i>‘wanted to immerse myself in</i> ’ [the school]. This had to be juggled with <i>‘wanting to do my best in the assignment but also do my best in the school</i> ’.	I2 I2
He also <i>‘had Christmas competing</i> ’ for his attention, especially as home for him is some distance away from where he is studying. As a consequence, <i>‘learning got put on hold</i> ’. Joshua <i>‘learnt a lot about myself through the activity and got some real highs from some of the activities I undertook...I can replicate these in the classroom</i> .’	I2 I2
There were other learning points too; Joshua said he <i>‘would never enforce reading from a text book because for me it really didn’t work</i> ’. In the past Joshua had <i>‘learnt things almost parrot fashion</i> ’ so that he could <i>‘quote almost anything in the exam</i> ’. This had worked in that <i>‘I got good marks</i> ’ but he admitted that he <i>‘couldn’t remember it a couple of months later</i> ’.	I2 I2 I2 I2
In this assignment, he <i>‘tried out lots of different learning mediums and found other [methods] helpful. A lot of what I learnt in the assignment, I’ve really tried to bring a part of into my lessons</i> .’	I2
Although it <i>‘was a lot of work but 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</i> ’.	I2
He thought that M level credits are important <i>‘in gaining employment</i> ’ as <i>‘the Government is wanting to make teaching a Master’s profession</i> ’ and getting a <i>‘head start in gaining [full] Master’s qualification</i> ’.	I2 I2
However, he considered that he can <i>‘learn a lot from being in school at the moment</i> ’.	I2
The bridge between reflection and practice was linked in Joshua’s mind, and he did try <i>‘out lots of different learning mediums [in his own learning which]...I’ve tried to put some of these into my lessons</i> ’.	I2
One key thing that did not work for him and which he is <i>‘never going to enforce (his students) to do is to is to read out of a text book – it just didn’t work for me</i> ’.	I2
Joshua was <i>‘really appreciative of the time given dedicated to really address the weakness in my teaching repertoire</i> ’.	I2
For him, this was a chance to reflect upon the process of learning and as a consequence he <i>‘got good results from the assignments – that’s a high</i> ’.	
Continuing onto Master’s	
As far as his academic writing is concerned, Joshua applied himself to the task, and as a result, easily passed the written assignments set to date. He wrote with depth, interest and a clear understanding of how to apply theory to his practice. He considered that his previous experience in studying at Master’s level has stood him in good stead for the writing demands of the PGCE course. He admitted that he	I1 Q2

<p><i>'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 Master's before'. This positive attitude to his writing marked him out as one of the higher achieving trainees on the course and is something he clearly enjoys. He said that he 'just likes the challenge of it as well'.</i></p>	<p>Q2</p>
<p>In looking forward to future options, Joshua thought that he <i>'almost certainly' will continue with Master's study</i> and continues <i>'I think there is an extremely high possibility of taking further study in the future, whether an MA or MTL, not only 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'.</i> He does however think that it will not be an immediate step to take whilst completing his first year of teaching, but one that is <i>'definitely the next step after the NQT year'.</i></p>	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q2</p> <p>Q2</p>

KEY

E –Email correspondence

I1 – Interview 1

I2 – Interview 2

O – Ofsted

Q1 – Questionnaire 1

Q2 – Questionnaire 2

W – School/College web site