

# Recollected in tranquillity?

FE teachers' perceptions  
of their initial teacher training

Joe Harkin  
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London and South East  
Learning and Skills Research Network

**research  
report**

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# **1 Rationale and methodology**

The main research question posed by the project was: ‘What are FE teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of initial training in helping them to teach and to support learning?’

The research made use of the key areas in teaching and supporting learning identified in the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) standards for teaching (FENTO 1999):

- assessing learners’ needs
- planning and preparing teaching and learning programmes for groups and individuals
- developing and using a range of teaching and learning techniques
- managing the learning process
- providing learners with support
- assessing the outcomes of learning and learners’ achievements
- reflecting upon and evaluating one’s own performance, and planning future practice.

## **Rationale for the research**

### *The policy context*

From September 2001, there has been a requirement for all teachers in the FE sector to be trained to the FENTO standards, and therefore it is an appropriate time to gauge teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of existing initial teacher training (ITT) provision.

### *Research capacity building*

It was also the intention of the project to enhance the research capacity of staff in FE colleges through collaborative working between the LSDA, higher education institutions (HEIs) and FE colleges.

## **The project phases**

The project began in January 2001 with the following partners: five FE colleges, two HEIs (Oxford Brookes University and City University), and the LSDA. Phase 1 reported potentially important findings that warranted further investigation. Phase 2, therefore, repeated the study with only minor amendments to data gathering, but with only one HEI (Oxford Brookes) and five new FE colleges involved, in order to gather data from new cohorts of respondents.

## **The research process**

In both phases of the research, two main methods of data gathering were employed: a questionnaire survey, based on the key areas of the FENTO standards for teaching and supporting learning (see above); from this, emerging themes were identified by the

research team and investigated by telephone interviews that were transcribed for analysis by the whole research team.

### *Overview of Phase 1*

As the FE staff engaged in the project may have been relatively new to research, and in order to enhance the capacity of the team to conduct the enquiry, the LSDA 'Questionnaire Design' toolkit was piloted.

A questionnaire, based on the FENTO key areas, was designed in team meetings. The questionnaire was piloted by Oxford Brookes University, with the help of Swindon College. Only minor amendments to the questionnaire were necessary. The FE-based researchers then distributed 384 questionnaires (attached as **Appendix 1**) to those of their own staff who had undertaken ITT within the previous 10 years.

The questionnaire elicited data about the background of the respondent; perceptions of the usefulness of the ITT experience in helping them to teach and to support learning; and comments about the most and least helpful aspects of ITT. It also asked if respondents were willing to be interviewed by telephone.

The number of valid returned questionnaires was 122, representing a 32% response rate. These were analysed using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the team as a whole then scrutinised the results and the respondents' written comments, to identify themes emerging from the data. On this basis, a schedule was prepared for a follow-up interview with a representative sample of respondents.

Twenty-one telephone interviews were carried out by the FE-based researchers, interviewing staff from other colleges. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and distributed to all members of the research team for analysis in a joint meeting.

### *Overview of Phase 2*

Phase 2 followed a similar pattern to Phase 1. Minor changes were made to the questionnaire, and as it was decided that more emphasis would be placed on gathering interview data, the LSDA 'Interviewing People' toolkit was piloted by the team.

The FE-based researchers then distributed 428 questionnaires to those of their own staff who had undertaken ITT within the previous 10 years.

Again, the valid questionnaires returned (122, representing a 29% response rate) were analysed using SPSS and themes emerging were identified by the team as a basis for a follow-up interview schedule.

Twenty-nine telephone interviews were carried out by FE-based researchers, interviewing staff from other colleges. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and distributed to all members of the research team for analysis in a joint meeting.

## **2 What is already known about teacher training that is of relevance to this study?**

This is not a systematic review of the literature, as the resourcing for the project did not permit that, but it is, nonetheless, a wide-ranging review of the literature in English relevant to the issues researched in the study. The review is based on the British Education Index, supplemented by a scanning of journals specific to the FE sector; it also draws on a systematic review of initial training conducted by Canadian researchers (Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon 1998), and existing knowledge of the field.

### **The background to training to teach in the FE sector**

At the time of this study, many teachers in further education were untrained and official records were so poor that the qualifications of many others were not known. In 1999/2000, there were 136,750 teachers in the FE sector: of these, 3127 had no formal qualifications; 19,676 possessed no teaching qualification; and the status of a further 40,525 was not known. These Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) statistics (FEFC 2002) emphasise the great need to develop staff in the sector.

The FEFC (1999) investigated professional development in further education in 108 colleges, all of which had received high grades for quality assurance. Despite this, the report summary states, among other things, that there are ‘relatively low levels of finance allocated to staff development’ and ‘low priority given to pedagogic skills’. This report also recorded the substantial increase in part-time staff in the sector, many of them new to teaching, whose training needs must be met.

Government policy to encourage more and more young people to stay on in education after 16, and to increase flexibility so that 14–16 year olds may attend FE colleges has resulted in FE teachers having to teach larger numbers of students, many of whom are more difficult to teach for a variety of reasons. The *Times Educational Supplement* (TES 2002) reported that ‘Disruptive 14–16 year olds are driving college lecturers to take stress-related sick leave.’ Despite this, however, a Learning and Skills Council report (LSC 2002) found that 90% of learners interviewed were satisfied with the education they receive in colleges. True to a long tradition of adapting to change and taking all comers, FE colleges and their staff continue to do a good job, often in difficult circumstances.

### **The history of training to teach in further education in England**

Teacher training for FE practitioners was first recommended in the James Report of 1972 and further developed by the Hodgson Report in 1977 (Armitage *et al.* 1999). This led to the development of one-year full-time, and two-year part-time certificates in education (CertEd), mostly delivered in the polytechnic sector and validated by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) (Silver 1990). However, teaching in the post-compulsory sector was taking place all over England, not always in travelling distance of these new courses. Therefore a parallel development of the Further and Adult Education Teachers’ Certificate (FAETC) delivered through Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and Regional Advisory Councils fulfilled the needs of those teachers not able to access CertEd courses. Many of these courses evolved to be

validated by the City and Guilds of London Institute awarding body and are still known by the course code, the 730. These courses were all part-time, delivered at times to suit the trainee teachers. Typically, training involved an introductory course of about 30 hours, which could be followed by a Stage 2 course of 120 hours. By the late 1980s, some universities were allowing holders of the 730 advanced standing status on their CertEd courses.

In the early 1990s, in line with the national trend towards competence-based qualifications, the 7306 was introduced to replace the earlier 730 which had been assessed through assignments. The 7306 was soon found to present a range of difficulties. The 'portfolio of evidence'-based assessment did not help trainee teachers to develop their academic writing skills, so that by 1998, some universities (most polytechnics had now become universities) chose not to allow full advanced standing towards the CertEd for these competence-based qualifications. It was possible to achieve the 7306 without doing any delivery of assessment and without creating a full scheme of work (or course programme). These were seen as major omissions by the CertEd course leaders (Bathmaker 1999). The 7307, the assignment based version, continued to develop in parallel and included an in-depth individual study, and a compulsory reflective journal.

Each course developed its own identity. This depended on a range of factors: tutors available, the time and schedule of delivery, the number of observations carried out, the number and types of assignment, the use (or not) of a reflective journal, the number of hours that the student teacher had to teach while attending the course, the institutional attitude to funding, the level of funding available, the range of student teachers wanting to do the course (eg health care, armed forces, public services, HE teachers, private trainers as well as FE teachers). Universities added another range of complexities, in that the CertEd and the later Postgraduate Certificates in Education (PGCEs), are assessed at very different levels in different institutions, ranging from first-year degree level to Master's degree level.

In 1996, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) set up the Further Education Staff Development Forum (FESDF). This body, through a wide-ranging system of consultation, wrote professional standards for those supporting teaching and learning in further education (FENTO 1999). After a shaky start, these standards have been well received in that they describe a professional role which begins in ITT and continues to develop throughout the teacher's career. These standards are published by FENTO. To be funded, all courses in England must now be endorsed by FENTO. To achieve this, the course team has to demonstrate that the content of its ITT courses covers the values, knowledge, skills and attributes laid down by FENTO, and that the awarding institution has appropriate quality arrangements (FENTO 1999).

In 2001, for the first time, it became compulsory for all those beginning to teach in FE colleges (on a full-time or substantial part-time basis) to achieve the CertEd, now called the Threshold qualification. Additionally, all those teaching on a lesser part-time basis have to achieve the introductory, and as hours of teaching increase, the intermediate qualifications prescribed by FENTO. All these qualifications must be assessed at a minimum first-year degree level.

## **Is initial teacher training (ITT) worthwhile?**

There is a large body of literature on the training of teachers, but this contains little about the training of teachers for further education. Hankey (2002) pointed out that the only significant body of work in England is in dispraise of the movement towards competence-based initial training (Chown 1992; Chown and Last 1993; Eraut 1994; Hyland 1995; Bathmaker 1999). Some of these publications, such as those of Eraut and Bathmaker, do go beyond the now largely historical issue of competence-based initial training and deal with other issues, and these will be addressed later in this section of the report.

There is a similar lack of published research for the non-university, post-school sector in North America. Grubb's work on teaching in American community colleges (Grubb 1999) found strong support for teacher training – 'Virtually all the instructors we interviewed supported preparation for community college teaching.' – a finding much in keeping with the present study. While the differences between US community colleges and English FE colleges must be acknowledged, there are clear similarities. Grubb found that the community colleges have to teach students from diverse and often 'difficult' backgrounds; the actual processes of teaching are often paid scant attention by the colleges, which focus on measurable targets and outcomes for recruitment, retention and achievement; many staff are untrained and learn only painfully by trial and error.

Grubb found that because 'good teaching comes in many forms', a collegial, reflective practice mode of teacher development seems most appropriate, in which individual teachers are helped to understand, control and extend their own practices, and to develop new equilibria with their students. The essence of Grubb's recommendations is that we should be teaching 'teachers how to teach, teaching them how to research, teaching them how to assess the results of what they're doing, keeping them in communities so they talk to each other.' This expresses succinctly what many ITT and continuous professional development (CPD) programmes for FE teachers in England aim to do.

## **The meaning of 'theory' in initial training**

In a comparative study for the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), Moon (1998) found that in England less attention is paid to the relationship between practical and theoretical components of ITT courses than in most other countries of Europe. In some other European countries, there is a science of 'didactics'; however, whether teachers actually make use of this 'science' in their work is open to doubt.

The meaning of the term 'theory' in relation to teacher education has long been contentious. Buntic (2002) shows that a conceptual continuum may be traced in the relationship between research and teaching. Teaching may be viewed as a science (Reynolds 1998); teaching may be viewed as an art that may be founded on a scientific base (Hargreaves 1997); it may be held that there is an indirect relationship between teaching and research-based knowledge, but recognised that teaching involves other sorts of knowledge too (Hammersley 1997; McIntyre 1997); or that teaching is a form of practical reasoning, an ethical activity leading to unpredictable

ends and so not susceptible to being codified in propositional form (Stenhouse 1981; Carr, 1995).

Eraut (1994) describes and critiques different conceptions of professional knowledge, some of which are relevant to teaching, and shows how difficult it is to conceptualise the complexities of professional knowledge. At the heart of this complexity is the interaction of two broad types of knowledge: publicly codified propositional knowledge; and personal, tacit, performative knowledge.

Thomas (1997) argued strongly that while theory may be useful in the physical sciences – although even here with reservations – it is of very limited use in education for a number of reasons. There is little consensus about its meaning: the term may cow teachers into a conservative practice that undermines their own professional knowledge. Thomas advocates ‘ad hocery’, the piecemeal clearing of confusion and developing better ways of working. Thomas concludes by saying, ‘I return to Carr’s appeal for theory, where theory is reflection and thought. I agree on the merit of reflection and thought, but why call reflection and thought “theory”, when “theory” carried with it the epistemological baggage that it does?’

Eisner (2002) goes back to the Greek origins of some concepts to try to articulate a set of differences between *episteme* – true and certain knowledge; and *phronesis* – the ability to deal with the dynamics of practical situations. This emphasises the importance of particularity which in turn leads to a need for what he calls artistry, which he defines as ‘how people learn to make things well’.

### **Reflective practice**

Issues relating to the nature and purpose of ‘Theory’, with a capital T – codified, propositional knowledge – may be linked to the concept of reflective practice and ‘theory’ with a small t – the theories-in-use that teachers employ. The reflective practice cycle (Kolb 1984) that features in so many publications on teacher education includes a stage of ‘abstract conceptualisation’ where teachers may be encouraged to connect their own performative knowledge to a wider body of codified knowledge in order to prepare to develop their practice.

Tacit knowledge about the nature of teaching may be acquired early in life and be difficult to challenge and develop (Sugrue 1996), whereas propositional knowledge may be difficult to put into practice. In consequence of this dual difficulty, much practice in the development of teachers is based on the concept of reflective practice, in which teachers are encouraged to interrogate their own professional knowledge. In Sugrue’s terms, this involves ‘teacher educators being drawn into a critically reflective conversation’ with teachers in training.

McIntyre (2000) argues that the complexities of the school classroom make short-term perspectives usual: ‘Not thinking in any kind of sustained way beyond the short-term is apparently one very important way in which teachers are able to simplify their task of classroom teaching’. He linked ‘the astonishingly wide acceptance of Schön’s idea of reflective practice’ to ‘a recognition of the rarity and difficulty’ of ‘explicit consideration of the evidence and of the choices to be made for important classroom decisions.’

Many ITT programmes for FE teachers are based on a ‘reflective practice’ model and many overtly address ‘theory’ as a separate issue. For example, Murray (2002) describes an ITT programme in which there are modules on ‘Applied teaching and learning theory’ and ‘The reflective teacher’. This evaluative study recommended that ‘Motifs such as “reflective practice” used to justify and characterise the form and content of curriculum models, should be subject to recurrent processes of analysis’. Reid (1999), in a study of secondary school teachers and initial training found that ‘resonant throughout is the recognition of a type of theory which is similar to what Schön (1987) refers to as “theory of action”’. Jay and Johnson (2002) acknowledge that reflective practice is the *grand idée* of teacher education, but ‘even a brief review of the literature on teaching reflection reveals tremendous variation.’

The problem of adequately preparing teachers for practice may be compounded by some pre-service ITT programmes for teachers in further education being based not on the novice’s need for codified propositional knowledge, in line with the Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) model of professional development, but on various interpretations of ‘reflective practice’, drawn more or less loosely from the work of Schön (1987).

Ecclestone (1996) pointed out that ‘an uncritical acceptance of Schön’s ideas about artistry and intuition in expert professional practice can lead providers of professional programmes to ignore the needs of novices and the realities of professional life.’

Eraut’s critique of Schön’s concept of reflective practice, which he describes as a ‘morass’ of different interpretations, is in keeping with an insight from this study that while the overarching concept is widely accepted, its meaning in particular ITT programmes varies and its continuation post-ITT is problematic. Eraut argues that deliberative processes lie at the heart of professional work, in contradiction to the excessive claims of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) for the role of intuition; and, furthermore, that these processes are difficult to find time for in professional life. This is not only an issue of professional development, but of sustaining existing knowledge. Some professionals ‘allow aspects of their expertise to decay ... Thus there is a need for professionals to retain critical control over the more intuitive parts of their expertise by regular reflection, self-evaluation and a disposition to learn from colleagues.’

Harkin and others (Harkin, Dawn and Turner 2001; Collins, Harkin and Nind 2002; Johannessen, Harkin and Mikalsen 2002), based on studies which engage the views of young adult learners in constructive ways, argue that this disposition for teachers to learn from others should include learners, in a collaborative process based on a shared language. If teachers and teacher educators mean different things by terms such as ‘reflective practice’ and ‘theory’, how much more difficult is it to share a common vocabulary with learners through which to comprehend the complexities of teaching and learning? The fostering of communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) means nothing in education if the voices of learners are excluded. Solitary reflection by teachers is unlikely to challenge habitual thinking and ways of working, and even collegial groups may share common ways of thinking that may or may not be conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Policy for the monitoring of teaching performance in further education is based on observations by OFSTED inspectors, rather than upon self-directed professional development. An FEFC report (1999) on professional development in colleges found that, although the observation of teaching was increasing in colleges and the culture of the 'closed classroom' was being slowly eroded, the nature and frequency of observation varied greatly between colleges and it was not clear how observation of teaching linked to professional development. There was no mention in the report of reflective practice as a principle or process of development.

There is a general consensus in the literature that 'reflective practice' is necessary to the professional development of teachers. The wide acceptance of reflective practice highlights the vital importance of articulating clearly the concept of reflective practice and its relationship to codified, propositional knowledge; and reaching a national consensus about how it should be fostered, both in initial training and continuing professional development.

### **Teaching 'difficult' students**

The difficulties of preparing teachers adequately to face the challenge of 'difficult' students is widespread in the literature on teacher education. Although Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1998), in their systematic review of research on learning to teach, cite no paper that deals directly with community colleges or FE teacher training, they do show that the experiences of beginning teachers on full-time, HE-based pre-service programmes often do not prepare them for the culture shock of actual practice.

Teacher educators often wish to form teachers to change the practice of education along constructivist-humanistic lines that match the students' own preconceptions of what teaching should be about; whereas actual practice, especially by novices in schools with pupils from multicultural backgrounds, may force the teachers to become more controlling than training had led them to expect and aim for. Somewhat ironically, for reasons that will become plain, the conclusion of this review is that ITT should be based on a reflective practice/action research model, partly because propositional knowledge is difficult for novice teachers to assimilate and act on when they are focused on survival in the classroom.

Propositional knowledge, the stock-in-trade of higher education, should be introduced in a gradual and staged process, and in ways that help people to make sense of their own teaching practices. Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon do not suggest that perhaps it is simply inappropriate to locate teacher training so much in universities. Finally, from a research methodology perspective, their review advocates that research into teacher education should take a more ecological approach, focusing less on beginning teachers' narratives of their experiences, which form the great majority of the studies, and more on how this experience fits with a range of other contextual factors, the perspectives of teacher educators, those of learners (about which almost nothing is known), and the development of experienced teachers.

Criticisms of full-time, HE-based initial training, such as those recorded in the North American review by Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1998), led to ITT for school teaching in England becoming mainly practice-based. In consequence, much of the

research on previous modes of training is now irrelevant, except to point up the continuing difficulties of full-time, pre-service modes. In FE training, however, there are still a number of full-time programmes, such as that being taken by the intending teachers in a study by Wallace (2002). She reported the narrative accounts of the first teaching experience of intending lecturers on a full-time FE training course and showed that they were 'surprised by students' and much else besides.

McKelvey and Andrews (1998), in a study of full-time, pre-service FE trainees, found that 'Nearly all students were shocked when they first went into colleges about low levels of lecturer morale.' Bathmaker (1999), in a paper entitled 'Managing messes and coping with uncertainty' argues that the agenda in further education to raise standards of teaching risks blaming teachers for the difficulties of educating young people who are ever more difficult to teach. From a schools perspective, McIntyre (2000) argues that classroom teaching may have had its day and now constrains further progress as more and more young people remain in education.

### **Initial teacher training and continued professional development**

Eraut (1994) makes the point, applicable to professional education generally, that 'the linkage between IPE [initial professional education] and CPE [continuing professional education] has been almost totally neglected. IPE syllabi are notoriously overcrowded because they attempt to include all the knowledge required for a lifetime in the profession.' Models of professional development, such as that of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986), show the difficulty of attempting to frontload professional development. People need alternate periods of propositional knowledge development, linked to practice; and extended experience to transform propositional knowledge to performative knowledge.

Eraut criticises the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model for placing too much emphasis on the role of intuition and overestimating the extent of professional behaviour that it covers, but nonetheless, the model does provide a useful framework with which to conceptualise career-long professional development.

1 = Novice (eg little or no experience but may know some theory)

2 = Advanced Beginner (eg some experience of practising theory)

3 = Competent (eg able to make detached decisions in the light of experience)

4 = Proficient (eg automatic or intuitive practice based on repeated experience)

5 = Expert (eg effortless problem-solving through critical reflection)

In the context of teacher training, the key issues this insight gives rise to are: what constitutes appropriate teacher development at particular stages in a teaching career, and how may this be facilitated? Most particularly in the light of this study, what do we mean by reflective practice, and how may a process of self-directed professional development be continued post-ITT beyond a formulaic mantra? (Ecclestone 1996; Turner 2002; Turner and Harkin 2003).

While the development of ITT for all staff is very welcome, more needs to be done to ensure CPD, not least for teachers who have had little or no time for deliberation about how they tend to teach for many years. As Eraut remarks, ‘Currently assessment schemes which support the principle of lifelong professional learning are almost non-existent’.

### 3 Analysis of data gathered from the questionnaires

**Appendix 3** shows the response rates from all colleges involved in the study, across both phases of the research. From this it may be seen that a total of 812 questionnaires were distributed, of which 321 (39.5%) were returned, and of which 244 (30%) were correctly completed and valid for use in the data analysis.

The response rate, although not particularly high, is acceptable for questionnaire returns. In both phases, the timing of the questionnaire around an end of term may have affected the response rate. In addition, many staff in colleges are under great work pressures, including form filling, and may simply have decided that the questionnaire was one form too many.

SPSS software was used to analyse the questionnaires to search for relationships between the overall helpfulness of the programme and a number of possible factors including:

- the level of qualification taught by the respondents
- the length of teaching service before taking the ITT programme
- the qualification held by respondents at the time of taking the ITT programme
- whether respondents worked full-time or part-time within the sector
- the individual rating of helpfulness of the seven key FENTO areas.

The following tests for statistical significance at the 95% level (ie a less than 5% likelihood of a relationship occurring by chance) were used:

- cross tabulation (including chi-square tests)
- analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA).

Overall, it was difficult to ascertain if there were correlations between the factors identified above, mainly due to the small size of the sample; however, there did seem to be strong links between some areas. More part-time staff, both fractional and hourly paid, rated the overall programme very helpful than did their full-time colleagues, a difference that was found to be significant at the 95% level using chi-square analysis.

Cross-tabs and ANOVA were used to identify whether there was any significant relationship between the general level of helpfulness of the ITT and its helpfulness in relation to the seven key areas of teaching in the FENTO standards. We found that for both the FAETC and the CertEd programmes, those who rated their programmes very helpful had also identified that two key areas – developing techniques and reflecting on own performance – were most helped by the programmes. This relationship was statistically significant at the 95% level. Interestingly, when disaggregated into the two programmes (FAETC and CertEd), a further key area – planning programmes – was significantly related to the rating of helpfulness of the FAETC.

On the basis of the sample of teachers in both phases, there appears to be no difference in either the ratings for the helpfulness of ITT or the individual key areas between those who studied their ITT full-time and those who studied part-time. Nor is

there any correlation between Q10 (helpfulness of ITT) and the quality of ITT tutors as expressed in interviews – one of the problems in exploring such a link is that half the people interviewed had done both City & Guilds and CertEd courses and talked about having good tutors on one course and poor ones on another.

Although care must be taken when undertaking statistical analysis of questionnaire data with low sample numbers, the questionnaire data does provide a firm basis upon which to investigate a much larger sample of practitioners in the future.

**Table A** provides information about the background of the respondents from both phases. The demographic profiles of the respondents in Phase 1 and Phase 2 are broadly similar. In both surveys, the majority of respondents were female, worked full-time and taught mainly learners aged 16–19; in each phase, the largest proportion of respondents was aged 36–45. The table indicates very clearly how heterogeneous are the backgrounds of teachers who attend ITT programmes in further education.

**Table A Profiles of teacher respondents**

| Questions and responses                | Phase 1 |           | Phase 2 |           |
|--|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
|  | No      | %         | No      | %         |
| Q1 Main subject area                   |         |           |         |           |
| Sciences                               | 14      | <b>12</b> | 18      | <b>15</b> |
| Agriculture                            | 0       |           | 1       | <b>1</b>  |
| Construction                           | 4       | <b>3</b>  | 4       | <b>3</b>  |
| Engineering                            | 10      | <b>8</b>  | 5       | <b>4</b>  |
| Business                               | 14      | <b>12</b> | 18      | <b>15</b> |
| Hotel and catering                     | 15      | <b>12</b> | 7       | <b>6</b>  |
| Health and community care              | 24      | <b>20</b> | 19      | <b>16</b> |
| Art and design                         | 16      | <b>13</b> | 14      | <b>12</b> |
| Humanities                             | 10      | <b>8</b>  | 14      | <b>12</b> |
| Basic education                        | 13      | <b>11</b> | 21      | <b>17</b> |
| Other                                  | 1       | <b>1</b>  | 0       |           |
| Q2 Age of students taught              |         |           |         |           |
| 16–19                                  | 85      | <b>73</b> | 72      | <b>62</b> |
| Over 19                                | 32      | <b>27</b> | 44      | <b>38</b> |
| Q3 Type of qualification mainly taught |         |           |         |           |
| General academic                       | 18      | <b>16</b> | 30      | <b>27</b> |
| General vocational                     | 45      | <b>39</b> | 33      | <b>29</b> |
| Vocational/occupational                | 42      | <b>37</b> | 38      | <b>34</b> |
| Access to higher education             | 3       | <b>3</b>  | 4       | <b>4</b>  |
| Professional qualifications            | 6       | <b>5</b>  | 7       | <b>6</b>  |

|  |      |           |        |           |
|--|------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Q4 Age of respondent   |      |           |        |           |
| 21–35  | 17   | <b>14</b> | 24     | <b>20</b> |
| 36–45  | 51   | <b>42</b> | 57     | <b>47</b> |
| 46–55  | 42   | <b>34</b> | 34     | <b>28</b> |
| Over 55  | 12   | <b>10</b> | 6      | <b>5</b>  |
| Q5 Sex of respondent   |      |           |        |           |
| Male   | 46   | <b>39</b> | 41     | <b>35</b> |
| Female   | 72   | <b>61</b> | 77     | <b>65</b> |
| Q6 Mode of working   |      |           |        |           |
| Full-time  | 81   | <b>67</b> | 78     | <b>64</b> |
| Part-time fractional   | 29   | <b>24</b> | 28     | <b>23</b> |
| Part-time hourly paid  | 11   | <b>9</b>  | 16     | <b>13</b> |
| Q7 Length of time teaching in further education (years)        |      |           |        |           |
| Mean   | 10   |           | 7      |           |
| Median   | 8    |           | 6      |           |
| Mode (the value observed with greatest frequency in responses) | 6    |           | 3      |           |
| Range  | 1–33 |           | 0.5–27 |           |

In Phase 2, there was a slightly larger proportion of respondents teaching mainly general academic qualifications, rather than general vocational qualifications. Respondents in Phase 2 also had, on average, been engaged in teaching in further education for a slightly shorter time than those in Phase 1.

These differences are not, however, statistically significant at the 95% level (chi-square test).

**Table B Qualifications and ratings for key areas in teaching and supporting learning in further education**

| Questions and responses (continued)                                | Phase 1 |           | Phase 2 |           |
|--|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
|  | No      | %         | No      | %         |
| Q8 Initial teaching qualifications held                            |         |           |         |           |
| City & Guilds only   | 31      | <b>25</b> | 20      | <b>16</b> |
| CertEd (FE) only   | 45      | <b>37</b> | 44      | <b>36</b> |
| Both qualifications  | 46      | <b>38</b> | 58      | <b>48</b> |
| City & Guilds completion (years ago)                               |         |           |         |           |
| Mean   | 7       |           | 5       |           |
| Median   | 6       |           | 4       |           |
| Mode   | 2       |           | 1       |           |
| CertEd completion (years ago)                                      |         |           |         |           |
| Mean   | 6       |           | 4       |           |
| Median   | 5       |           | 3       |           |
| Mode   | 1       |           | 1       |           |
| Q9 Qualifications held on completing ITT                           | No      | %         | No      | %         |
| Academic only  | 32      | <b>29</b> | 37      | <b>31</b> |
| Vocational only  | 26      | <b>23</b> | 23      | <b>19</b> |
| Postgraduate   | 13      | <b>12</b> | 6       | <b>5</b>  |
| Professional only  | 23      | <b>21</b> | 19      | <b>16</b> |
| Multiple<br>(professional and<br>academic/vocational/postgraduate) | 18      | <b>16</b> | 34      | <b>29</b> |

The responses to Q8 in **Table B** show that a larger percentage of respondents in Phase 2 held both City & Guilds and CertEd (FE) qualifications, rather than City & Guilds qualifications only, when compared with those in Phase 1. They also had tended to have completed their ITT qualifications more recently than those in Phase 1 (discounting the one-year time difference between the two phases) – as would be expected given the shorter average period of teaching in further education, as indicated in the responses to Q7. As the responses to Q9 indicate, there is also a larger percentage of respondents in Phase 2 who already had multiple (professional and academic/vocational/postgraduate) qualifications, rather than purely professional qualifications.

**Table C The perceived helpfulness of initial training to teach (ITT)**

| Questions and responses (continued) | Phase 1 |    | Phase 2 |    |
|-------------------------------------|---------|----|---------|----|
|                                     | No      | %  | No      | %  |
| Q10 Helpfulness of ITT              |         |    |         |    |
| Not at all helpful                  | 2       | 2  | 2       | 2  |
| Quite helpful                       | 21      | 17 | 19      | 16 |
| Helpful                             | 42      | 34 | 36      | 29 |
| Very helpful                        | 57      | 47 | 65      | 53 |

**Table C** shows that teachers found that their ITT experiences were, in general, beneficial in helping them to teach and to support learning, an issue that will be returned to in the discussion. Fifty per cent of respondents rated their ITT as very helpful, and 32% as helpful. This suggests that the government’s initiative to require that all FE teaching staff within the sector must gain a teaching qualification from the beginning of their careers is welcome. However, as other aspects of the data show, within the reported general level of satisfaction, there are a number of aspects of initial training that are particularly valued, and other aspects that may need to be developed on some programmes.

**Table D** shows the close similarity in responses to the rating of the seven FENTO key areas in the teaching and supporting of learning in further education, both between phases of training; and between the two phases of this research project. The arithmetic mean of all the ratings for each area was used to rank the areas in order of the extent to which ITT qualification(s) helped to improve respondents’ ability in each area. From this, it can be seen that the rankings for both qualifications (City & Guilds and CertEd (FE)) across the two phases is strikingly similar, which is reassuring in terms of the Phase 2 findings confirming those of Phase 1. The differences between the responses of the two phases are not statistically significant at the 95% level.

**Table D The perceived helpfulness of particular aspects of initial training**

| <b>City &amp; Guilds</b>               | Mean | Rank | Mean | Rank |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Assessing learners' needs              | 3.42 | 5    | 3.30 | 5    |
| Planning and preparing programmes      | 4.03 | 1    | 4.06 | 1    |
| Developing a range of techniques       | 3.78 | 3    | 3.82 | 2    |
| Managing the learning process          | 3.33 | 6    | 3.29 | 6    |
| Providing learners with support        | 3.17 | 7    | 3.18 | 7    |
| Assessing the outcome and achievements | 3.45 | 4    | 3.38 | 4    |
| Reflecting and evaluating              | 3.99 | 2    | 3.79 | 3    |
| <b>CertEd (FE)</b>                     | Mean | Rank | Mean | Rank |
| Assessing learners' needs              | 3.14 | 6    | 3.07 | =5   |
| Planning and preparing programmes      | 3.66 | 2    | 3.46 | 2    |
| Developing a range of techniques       | 3.55 | 3    | 3.33 | 3    |
| Managing the learning process          | 3.36 | 4    | 3.07 | =5   |
| Providing learners with support        | 3.05 | 7    | 2.98 | 7    |
| Assessing the outcome and achievements | 3.18 | 5    | 3.12 | 4    |
| Reflecting and evaluating              | 3.68 | 1    | 3.76 | 1    |

All seven key areas of teaching and supporting learning in further education were perceived to have been improved by initial training. The most helpful aspects of ITT were perceived to be planning programmes, developing a range of techniques and reflecting on one's own performance. Planning programmes was particularly rated as an area that showed improvement for those who took the qualification within the first two years of their teaching in the sector. All respondents found that their ability to reflect on their own performance had improved as a result of the ITT qualification.

### **Questionnaire comments**

Respondents were invited to comment on the most helpful and least helpful aspect of ITT. The qualitative data gathered from the questionnaires corresponds closely to the ratings of the different aspects of initial training.

There were many individual, idiosyncratic responses, but nonetheless a reading of comments does indicate that some issues emerge more often than others.

### **Most helpful aspects of initial training**

The comments below reinforce the importance, found in the ratings for the FENTO key areas, of the development of practical skills and of reflective practice.

*Developing and practising different learning strategies...*

*Helpful in planning lectures and time management in delivery.*

*Developing and using a range of teaching and learning techniques...*

Comments also emphasised the high value of being observed teaching, and observing others teach:

*Observation whilst teaching and feedback given...*

*Observed sessions well supported...*

*Observation of other lecturers' classes enabled me to observe a variety of teaching styles and classroom management.*

Deliverers of ITT are powerful role models of good practice.

*The guidance and support from the tutors was most helpful.*

*Quality of teaching staff...*

*Observing staff teaching styles...*

Respondents also commented favourably on having the opportunity to reflect.

*Reflective practice – space to think about and support my behaviour and its impact on others...*

*Writing [learning] logs gave me an opportunity to look back and analyse various aspects of a particular teaching session in greater detail. By doing so I was able to develop a more self-critical approach to my own practice as a teacher.*

*Reflecting on my own teaching in a structured, disciplined way...*

The helpfulness of ITT was often linked to building confidence.

*...building up my confidence because I became aware of my limitations and developed strategies to overcome them.*

*The amount of support and encouragement given on the course to build up my confidence...*

Respondents valued the chance to share practice with other tutors from outside their own college or across the range of subject areas.

*...peer teaching – picked up useful ideas/safe environment to test new ideas out.*

*Realisation that other people were actually having the same problems you had to deal with and [finding] methods of dealing with these...*

*Working with others, getting other people's ideas and collaborating in projects.*

## **Least helpful aspects of initial training**

Once again, there were many individual, idiosyncratic responses, but some patterns of response may be identified. In general, though, comments here were sparser than the positive comments.

Interestingly, several people commented that they were unable to think of unhelpful aspects of initial training.

*Not applicable. I found all the lessons to be helpful.*

*I recall nothing that was unhelpful.*

Some respondents perceived gaps in the provision, particularly in dealing with the more problematic issues in working in the sector.

*Not enough on realistic techniques or on class management, particularly with disruptive students, rather than why they are disruptive.*

*Providing learners with support [in areas] such as students with disabilities and especially mixed ability groups...*

Gaps were also perceived in meeting particular subject needs:

*Since the courses are not aimed at any particular range of subjects, many teaching methods suggested were not applicable to my particular subject.*

Some respondents perceived that training was unnecessarily lengthy or repetitious.

*Some areas [were] drawn out and areas were repeated. Too dragged out...*

*Year 2 provided overview and context, but very little of relevance in day-to-day situations or about teaching and learning.*

The place of theory was perceived as problematic by some.

*Too much theory ... in the first half of the year.*

*Studying educational theorists – they inevitably distort an already complex issue.*

*Some of the theory seemed very heavy.*

Micro-teaching was perceived as unhelpful by some respondents.

*The micro-teaching [was unhelpful] because the situation was false.*

*Overemphasis on micro-teaching without sufficient constructive feedback.*

On some programmes, there was perceived to be too much academic essay writing.

*Too much essay writing and unnecessary reading...*

*Having to write large amounts of text based on the thoughts and ideas of someone else...*

It is interesting to note that both groups of respondents rated providing learners with support as the area where they had felt least development.

## 4 Analysis of the interview data

### Interview method

In all, 50 practising teachers who had returned valid questionnaires were interviewed by telephone to elicit their views on a range of issues about initial training that had emerged from the questionnaire data (see **Appendix 2** for the interview schedule). Those interviewed were selected to represent the wide diversity of the FE sector, in terms of gender, academic background, teaching experience, area of teaching and the kinds of ITT they had undertaken. Not surprisingly, this produced many widely different opinions, but there was also strong agreement generally as to the value of ITT and the importance of the training process.

In both phases of the research, the interviews were based on themes that emerged from analysis of the questionnaire responses by the whole research team. As the questionnaire data was congruent between both phases, the interview questions were very similar. In Phase 2 the same questions were asked, but in a simpler structure. For instance, the question on ‘educational theory’ was sub-divided into three parts in Phase 2.

Q6. For some people, the place of ‘educational theory’ in teacher training emerged as an issue.

6a Could you tell me what the word ‘theory’ means to you?

6b Can you give me an example of ‘theory’ taught or used in your initial training?

6c Did you find this or other ‘theory’ useful or not in your teaching?

There were two additional questions in Phase 2: one on individual professional development needs during ITT, and the other on the amount or nature of assessment during ITT.

The interviews were conducted by telephone, taped and transcribed.

Each member of the research team read all the interview transcripts to identify salient issues; in particular, highlighting when a number of respondents raised the same or a very similar issue.

One of the HE researchers then took the issues identified by the whole team as salient and read all (50) scripts to select suitable illustrative quotations. The transcripts were coded and read again three times with a view to identifying illustrative quotes which either supported the emerging themes or represented opinion at different ends of the spectrum on each of the themes. Scripts from Phase 1 are coded A, those from Phase 2 are coded B. In the analysis it is indicated where a sole respondent holds a view; other statements indicate clusters of similar opinion, typically three or four responses.

### *The value of ITT*

*It is hard to define when you will be competent, we are always learning and we are not competent all the time. (B27)*

Based on the 50 interviews carried out in both stages of the project, there was overwhelming support for the ITT they had experienced, even where respondents had been critical of some aspects. Respondents were certain that all FE teachers should undertake ITT, and that this should commence as soon as they started teaching. One stated that:

*Had I been forced upon that programme from day one it would have been much more useful to me than to struggle for a year. (B50)*

Many stated that the relevance, particularly of CertEd courses, was maintained and actually increased over time.

*I thought it was very good at the time and you could say that my good opinion of the course has increased. (A4)*

*As the years go on, I realise that I am able to take more from the course ... I would say in a way it probably becomes more relevant rather than less. (A11)*

Respondents who had taught previously in other sectors (eg primary and higher education) also valued the FE-based training: 'it was brilliant' (B40). There were several comments from teachers who were part-time at the stage when they did ITT. They saw the ITT course as a good source of information and support.

*At the time I was a part-time tutor and I felt very isolated. (A13)*

*We looked at policies and values and I felt that this was valuable to me. Being part-time, you don't always get the full picture of what goes on in colleges. (A16)*

#### *The content of ITT programmes*

The relevance of particular aspects of the training was viewed differently by individual respondents, with a wide disparity of views, many of them expressed by only one person. Many respondents had forgotten the content of their courses, which is unsurprising, as these may have taken place up to 10 years previously. For example, when asked about theory, one person said that he had 'forgotten most of it' (A20). Another said he finished the course two years ago and now, 'I can't really remember much about it' (B48). The value of the content of the course could be assessed by the value laid on the portfolio of material gathered on the course. One respondent, now a teacher trainer himself, pointed out that 'some candidates don't pick up portfolios' (B27), whereas a respondent who is now a union official (A18) was taking his CertEd notes on management home to help with forthcoming negotiations.

The interview data does not provide lists of recalled content. The memories of the course are more often related to process rather than content, though it could perhaps be argued that reflective practice, which many did recall clearly, spans the gap between content and process.

Most thought that the content of the courses was useful and relevant. In some cases, they made the general comment that overall content was relevant.

*I would say 95–99% of it was relevant, perhaps not now, but in five or 10 years time. (A7)*

*The content [of course 730] was very relevant to what I was doing. (A11)*

Sometimes individuals picked on one particular aspect that had been useful.

*The emphasis on planning was a strength of the course. (A8)*

*A session on funding ... really useful ... helped me see the wider picture. (A9)*

*...preparing sessions for individuals... (B23)*

*Well T's sessions stand out because you could take away an idea and put it into practice. (A7)*

*Developing learning packages [was] really good. (A11)*

#### *Practical skills development*

All respondents mentioned the value of planning in the early stages of their training. This included lesson planning, schemes of work and the preparation of resources. Basic practical skills, such as how to use an overhead projector were also highly valued by most.

Perceived gaps in content were sometimes quite specific.

*....how to market a course ... how it is written. (A8)*

*Unions – no-one suggested I should join one. (B32)*

*counselling [should be] developed more. (A11)*

However, there was considerable agreement, in answer to the question about what was missing, that dealing with difficult and needy students was not sufficiently covered.

*...how to deal with difficult students... (A9)*

*Basic skills and dyslexia not covered. Foundation-level lecturers expect too much from their students. (A12)*

*Would like to know how to support learning difficulties. (A8)*

*...classroom management and dealing with difficult people. (A13)*

*More about disruptive students, classroom management. Dealing with students who are not motivated. (B32)*

*It does not prepare us for the type of student we have now. Over 50% of my students have learning difficulties. (B38)*

*Theory: meaning and significance*

The question on theory (Question 6 above) raised widely differing responses. In general, there seemed to be a tendency to view theory as propositional knowledge or published academic work:

*About Skinner's rats and all... (B49)*

Some respondents had a positive view about theory; others did not. This division did not seem related in any obvious way to previous academic attainment or subject area. Many wanted to name theorists in their response, some with more success than others:

*I can't think of people's names off the top of my head. (A20)*

Many were quite disparaging about theory:

*Theory seemed unnecessary...(A3)*

*...very difficult to relate theory to what I was teaching. (A5)*

*some of it ... especially by educationalists was balderdash ... not relevant to everyday teaching. (A10)*

Some mentioned the disputed nature of theory:

*I mean theories are just one person's opinion about something and it might be different for you. (A4)*

*One has one view and someone else contradicts. (A12).*

There were differing opinions of Bloom's taxonomy (one of the more frequently mentioned theories):

*...like Bloom's Taxonomy, went over my head. (A3)*

*The theories were the useful bits for me. Bloom's taxonomy put things into perspective for me. (A14)*

Psychological theories were the most frequently mentioned, such as the work of Bloom, Maslow, Skinner, and the concept of Learning Styles.

*I found the psychology parts of more interest – the theory behind the practice. (A16)*

For some, this was the best part of the course:

*Theory? I loved it, soaked it up like a sponge. All these 'ologies'. (B38)*

In general, however, the comment below sums up many teachers' opinion of 'theory':

*We need to be very clear in the way we design [an] initial teacher training that asks students to apply theory to their practice, rather than just to study it for the sake of it. (B27)*

### *The challenge of ITT*

There was general agreement that the 730 provided good practical knowledge for beginner teachers, but 'one of my criticisms of 730 is that everyone passes' (B41). The CertEd was seen as more challenging.

*The 730 was most helpful in terms of practicality, but I enjoyed the CertEd because it was most challenging in terms of subject matter. (A9)*

Several people commented, however, that they would have liked to be more challenged.

*I felt it was tame ... not stretched or pushed. (A14 – an HE-level teacher of social work who already held two Master's degrees)*

*The level should be more challenging – rigorous – it needs to challenge the brain. (A15)*

*I think my knowledge of these things vastly exceeded anything I discovered on either of these two courses. (A17 – an ex-police officer with 20 years' training experience)*

Some teachers' views of the academic level of the CertEd course were influenced by what they taught. A teacher of adult basic skills said.

*I mainly went with my Childcare hat on, I felt they might wonder why I was doing a CertEd teaching basic skills. (A12)*

### *Course process*

Whereas many respondents struggled to remember the content of the course, there was no problem recalling the various course processes.

### Reflective practice

The questions on reflective practice asked for information about experience during the course and at present.

Q4a. The notion of encouraging reflection/self-evaluation also emerged as important in training programmes. Was this so for you and the programmes that you took?

Q4b. Do you still engage in reflection on your teaching in a way that is indebted to (follows from) your 730/CertEd?

Those interviewed were mostly aware of the concept of reflective practice as part of their teacher training. Some linked it to self-evaluation:

*...still use ... when I do guidance interviews. (A4)*

Others did not see self-evaluation as part of it:

*...reflecting on issues, but not reflecting on myself. (B26)*

As part of the course process, it was seen as useful.

*Yes it was – probably the most important part of it ... because if you don't reflect you forget. (B40)*

*It was quite nice to have it formalised. (B42)*

*I found it was a very helpful technique to make me realise that I had to be a teacher in the class ... important to have this written down from time to time. (B43)*

*It helped me to find out what my weaknesses were... (B46)*

*I think that the whole notion of reflective practitioners seems to remain as a large heading on teacher training programmes and so it should be. (B27)*

Different approaches to supporting reflective practice were evident.

*The 7307 tutor always asked us to fill in an evaluation at the end of the session. This got us in the habit of reflecting on what we had done; this helped us to reflect on our practice. (B35)*

*We did it on the course, but we weren't given a lot of guidance on how to do it ... What would have been really valuable would have been a simultaneous assessment and self-assessment. You write your own thoughts and feelings and compare the two. (B39)*

*...when you are actually having to write it down for a journal for example, you don't just reflect and think 'Oh yah ok I will change that exercise for next year', you sort of write it down and act on it. (B45)*

Some were still using reflection in their role as a teacher.

*I still very much engage in reflection, but it gets harder as the term goes on to actually write it up. I still evaluate my lessons. (B32)*

Another indicated that reflection was part of a wider system:

*... a record of work ... which we do on an ongoing, reflection, literally on a day-to-day sort of basis, we institutionalise this. (B44)*

*I am very analytical about everything, so be it a personal problem or professional issue, I would reflect on it. (B41)*

Particular instances where the use of reflective practice was mentioned were in the area of curriculum development and in adapting skills to deal with teaching 14 year olds.

Many said they had no time for reflection in their full-time teaching role. They missed the opportunity to discuss their reflections with others:

*A lot of it is a bit informal when you do it on your own in a day-to-day way, it doesn't have the same value. (B37)*

And some were not sure whether they were doing it or not!

*I think I reflect, but I don't consciously reflect. (B47)*

### Tutorials

Despite a specific question – Q5b. Was there anything about your tutorial contacts with course tutors which was particularly effective or ineffective? – tutorials did not seem to be a highly significant part of the process.

Tutorials were a positive experience for some:

*...always useful... (A16)*

*...gave me more positive thinking – absolutely more positive. (B33)*

*Tutorials were very useful for me personally... I got a lot of support. (A12)*

Others found them less useful.

*Not very good, I only had two. Syndicate groups of teachers were more useful than tutorials, ten minutes chatting ... tutorials least effective. (A11)*

### Role modelling of tutors

The characteristics of the teachers delivering the courses were commented on frequently. In many cases, this was entirely positive.

*...she was so very professional, so understanding, so proud to be a teacher that she made me feel that I was pursuing a known profession. (B47)*

*...inspired by observing the people who taught us ... in my own teaching I try to replicate that enthusiasm. (A7)*

*To be honest in the 7307, the thing that most impressed me was the way the tutor modelled good practice. (B35)*

*It operates as a model for your own students. (B34)*

Sometimes the quality of the teaching was criticised.

*It must be especially hard to teach on this course – you need good teaching practice – one or two of the teachers were not up to scratch, but then one or two were brilliant. (A15)*

*...individual tutor very good – but some are introvertedly reflective. (B33)*

The most common criticism of university-based CertEd teachers was their lack of current experience:

*Lecturers teaching on the programme get out of touch. (A1)*

*You are really out of date. (B42)*

*The lords and lordesses of the PGCE need to go out and get new stuff – videos – flashier stuff – something more visual. (A15)*

Occasionally the teaching skill was called into question.

*The lectures were delivered, we weren't given a chance to be involved ... We were asked questions but didn't do a thing in groups. (A9)*

*Good teaching should not be the exception. Uninspiring teaching sums it up. (B29)*

### Observation of teaching

One of the most significant findings from the interview data was the importance of observation in the 'learning to teach' process, indicating that for many people, the coaching aspect of ITT is important, a view that emphasises the importance of the role of the ITT tutors.

Observations took several forms:

- observing experienced teachers
- peer observation
- micro-teaching
- being observed.

**Observing experienced teachers:** this was valued either when it was tutors' delivery of the course or visiting classrooms of experienced teachers as part of the course. It was more likely to happen when it was an assessed part of the course:

*We didn't have to on our CertEd and, of course, there is always the issue that if you don't have to, then you tend not to. (B50)*

**Peer observation:** the transcripts made it clear that in some CertEd Courses, student teachers were paired up and expected to observe each other's teaching. This was highly valued, particularly observing and being observed by a peer who taught a different curriculum area at a different college.

*Joining up with someone else was very useful ... we each got quite a lot from that as they're very different areas' (IT and fashion) (A19)*

*...going to other colleges to see their set-up ... seeing how other people teach. (motor vehicle and art) (A20)*

**Micro-teaching:** there was some significant feedback on micro-teaching sessions – mostly positive in retrospect, but with some dissension. Typically these consisted of the student teacher delivering a 10–15 minute session to the peer group. Feedback came from tutor, peers and sometimes self-assessment via a video recording.

For some, it was the highlight of the course:

*That was my favourite ... it was the best bit. (A15)*

*Peer teaching was brilliant. (A2)*

*One of the most effective things was seeing different people teach ... scary but fun. (A4)*

Others were less enthusiastic:

*It wasn't real enough. (B37)*

*....group micro-teaching sessions much too false ... not realistic at all ... [involved] far too much preparation time. (A3)*

This was echoed by another respondent:

*I thought of nothing else for the week. (B47)*

One respondent criticised the management of the session:

*'Those at the end had to truncate their lesson as they had run out of time ... My recommendation would be not to bother with it. (A10)*

Where respondents had been videoed, all were agreed that, although it may have been daunting, it had been a positive experience.

*We were videoed – you could see for yourself how you had done and what you needed to do. (A6)*

*I tell you what was good, that was the video: when they videoed me micro-teaching for 15 minutes. I got a lot out of that. (A20)*

*Extremely effective. (B28)*

Responses suggest that micro-teaching is most effective where topics are given to the student teachers and especially where they are relevant to the course.

*...if you were given the content ... that would take the pressure off. (A7)*

*...topics relevant to the course – I did mine on industrial placements. (A21)*

All collaborative experiences were well received, not just the micro-teaching, but also, for example, a seminar presented to peers, where the paper was given to a peer partner to comment on, before being given to the whole group to read in the week before the seminar (A20).

*We did a team teach, that was really good ... didn't realise at the time how useful it is (A9).*

**Being observed:** there was a suggestion that:

*Your tutor should observe a class that goes well and one that doesn't. (B35)*

As with the micro-teaching sessions, the anticipation of the event was often more difficult than the reality.

*The teaching practices were the best thing and [the] most painful ... the way observations are handled is critical, it has to be done to be helpful. (A5)*

*...although they were daunting at the time, they were very positive. (A11)*

*...a necessary evil ... made me stop and think. (A13)*

Observations were highly valued, but less so where the student teacher was unsure about the suitability of the observer.

*...there were so many different lecturers who had been given observation hours ... it felt like the observation was tacked on. (A9)*

No one complained of having too many observations.

The way that feedback was handled varied, some approaches being more welcome than others.

*Some observers relied too heavily on text-book approach. (A2)*

*I had a fantastic supervisor. Wrote whatever came into her head about what was happening in the classroom. I couldn't have taught without it and certainly wouldn't be the teacher I am today without this. (B39)*

For another, feedback was a bad experience:

*...nearly made me walk out of teaching completely ... It goes to show how important it is that people need to be trained and don't interrupt a lesson... (A10)*

More positive responses include:

*They handled it with no intrusion into class at all. (A18)*

*[there is] value in all observations. (A19)*

*The feedback I got from TPs was excellent – it helped me realise what was good practice and gave me ideas...(A3)*

Student teachers wanted it told 'as it is':

*I think the pool who were observing were too kind actually, and probably weren't critical enough. (B50)*

*Academics tend to talk in grey circles – so I would rather hear five good points, five bad points and you can improve the bad points by...(A7)*

The number of observations varied widely.

*...only five or four observations in [the] year ... it was like I was in a dark corridor and you needed the light to shine through. (B46 – on a full-time course)*

Another respondent complained that there were only two observations:

*Basically you were teaching on your own, if you were wrong you were wrong. (A12)*

One respondent said:

*No one from the programme observed me teaching. (B31)*

### *Structure of training*

The interviewed sample included staff who had been trained via full-time pre-service courses (4) and part-time in-service courses (36). Some had done 730 only (8); some CertEd or PGCE only (19); some had done both 730 and CertEd/PGCE (23). The 730s included assignment-based and competence/portfolio-based courses.

The analysis of interviews presented a pattern – not only of what was remembered and useful in ITT, but a steer towards a standardised core curriculum for FE ITT. In particular, the picture of the ideal training course strongly suggests that it was the management of course structure and process that was valued rather than the particular content.

There was strong support for a practical initial course that started before or as soon as the student teacher began teaching. Stage 1 was:

*...relaxed, a lot of building bridges, really good teamwork, getting to know people, ground rules. (B34)*

This initial course should cover planning in detail and would include micro-teaching, ideally where students were given topics and were recorded on video.

*...making sure students are involved straight away and so achieving something. (A10)*

None of the respondents were critical of 730 courses where this had been the case. There was acknowledgement that there could be more of this activity:

*I would have liked more practice teaching with constructive feedback from peers ... although ... I wouldn't have thought or liked it at the time. (A7)*

The competence-based 7306 brought mixed reactions: the 'NVQ was based on actively doing' (A18). But B50 talks about the 'unnecessary complexity of competence-based jargon' and A17 says that 7306 was 'just collecting various documents, putting them in a portfolio – that was it'.

The group itself was seen as an important part of the process, particularly on the CertEd course.

*There were a greater variety of people on the course from outside the college environment ... it made a difference, there was a wider exchange of ideas. (A6)*

*It was good to meet a group of people from different backgrounds. (A16)*

*A particular strength of the CertEd was that we were all from different environments, not all in house. (A21)*

One respondent liked:

*seeing other teachers' teaching practice. (B26)*

The academic level of the CertEd course was problematic in several ways. For some, with extensive prior experience or qualifications, it was not challenging enough; but for others, it was too challenging.

*I really didn't understand it, to be absolutely honest. (A17)*

*...felt very removed... (A18)*

The academic requirements, essay writing in particular, were mentioned:

*...essays ... really hard to do because I do not feel I was given the information in the first place. (B31)*

*...a painful barrier I had to overcome. (B36)*

Saturday workshops, often a feature of 730 courses, were resented no matter what the content. There was one mention of a residential course which was positive:

*...thrown in at the deep end, like outward bound courses. (B36)*

Two respondents commented that it was:

*Good to have a break between 730 and CertEd ... more experience to reflect on. (A16)*

*One of the most valuable things of the CertEd was to actually stop and take stock and it was nice for the first time in my adult life to be able to do that. (B50)*

Although the peer-group mix, with people from different backgrounds, was valued, an overemphasis on a particular aspect of education was sometimes a source of tension. In one case, it was perceived that there was too much attention paid to adult education and not enough to teaching adolescents; and in another, someone who taught mainly higher education in an FE college felt that there was an overemphasis on further education. There seemed to be a case for offering options during the CertEd, even if they had to be achieved as an independent study.

*More specialisms needed – how to teach a specific subject. (B45)*

*[the CertEd should] involve advanced teaching practice, using more diverse teaching methods. (B41)*

The suggestions of good practice, both as experienced and suggested, have been drawn on to draft an outline model of an FE ITT core curriculum, which emphasises process but includes key content as suggested by or inferred from the interview respondents. This can be found in **Appendix 4**.

#### *CPD and sustaining learning in continuing practice*

Someone who had finished their training only a year earlier commented that he 'realised how easy it is to get out of date' when mentioning a colleague who was currently being trained. Questions on continuing professional development (CPD) raised issues such as lack of available time; choosing to give their students any spare time there was; and wanting to do higher degrees, but there being no funding available.

*...no other industry would expect you to train in your own time. (B50)*

*There are plenty of opportunities, but it is time ... I need to be giving students more time so I don't go to [staff development events]. (A11)*

*I would like to do an MA, but can't get funding. (A10)*

## **5 Discussion of the report's findings**

### **General support for initial training**

The study indicates very strong support for initial training among teachers in further education. This is in keeping with the findings of Grubb's study (1999) of teachers in American community colleges. It may be suggested, in the case of the present study, that 'they would say that, wouldn't they?' After all, the process of professionalisation of these teachers has included initial training. They passed the courses; they are now practising as teachers and are understandably convinced that they have been well trained and that training is worthwhile.

In addition, of course, only 30% of questionnaires were completed as valid returns. As with all surveys, without another separate study, we will never know the views of the other 70% and can only speculate. The generally positive view of training must, therefore, be treated with some caution. Nevertheless, a reading of the data, with over 80% of questionnaire respondents rating the experience as very helpful (50%) or helpful (32%), and a preponderance of positive views expressed in individual comments, does support a positive view. The principle of initial training for all staff in the sector, which is now mandatory, is supported by the study.

### **The quality and structure of the learning experience on individual programmes**

It is also clear, however, that details of the content and process of initial training courses are criticised extensively in the data, without undermining the generally positive view of training expressed. The quality of the learning experienced by individual participants seems to vary widely. One important reason for this may be the inevitable consequences of the great heterogeneity of participants compared to those taking initial training to teach in compulsory schooling. The wide diversity of learning in further education, compared to compulsory schooling and higher education, is mirrored in the diversity of its teaching staff. As **Table A (section 3)** shows, a typical ITT programme for further education will be attended by people who vary greatly in age, academic background, teaching specialism, and previous experience of teaching.

The implications of this for training programmes are, first of all, that no programme is likely to get it absolutely right for all participants, all the time. Second, that a 'core plus options' programme structure may be desirable, especially in the second year of two-year programmes. The first stage of initial training may then focus on a highly valued emphasis on practical skills development, while subsequent stages become progressively more flexible to allow for individual needs. **Appendix 4** shows a draft core curriculum for ITT for further education.

### **Other features of the structure of initial training**

Other features of the structure of initial training that arise from this study are that more emphasis should be placed on career-long professional development. For example, reflective practice (discussed more fully below) is an important organising principle of most ITT programmes, but it is clear that this does not continue in any tangible way beyond training. Similarly, there is no sense that teachers recognise a

continuum of career-long professional development, such as that provided by the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model (Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1986; Eraut 1994).

The size and scope of this study did not enable a thorough examination of whether there are significant differences in the effectiveness of pre-service, compared to in-service, modes of ITT delivery. No significant differences emerged from the data available, but a comparison with the literature on ITT for school teaching, and the culture shock reported in studies of full-time, pre-service ITT programmes for further education indicate that pre-service modes should be less effective preparations for teaching and supporting learning than in-service modes, so long as in-service training begins when teaching commences.

It is clear from the data that training should take place early in a teaching career, preferably within the first two years, although some respondents in the study had taught for over 20 years and still found ITT worthwhile. Pre-service training may be particularly problematic if a reflective practice model is used – on what ‘practice’ should new entrants to teaching base their reflection? Again, drawing on the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model (1986), it may be desirable to emphasise aspects of propositional knowledge for novices, while reserving learning from experience for those who have taught for an extended time.

### **The content and process of training programmes**

#### *The importance of practical skills development*

It is very clear from this study that the content of ITT programmes should emphasise the importance of practical skills development through course inputs, coaching, observations, and work with others, especially in the early stages of training. Respondents want far more than tips for teachers. They want to observe and be observed, with feedback tailored to their specific teaching situation. Novice teachers wish through this process to have their confidence boosted, as well as their repertoire of skills extended. Experienced teachers want to evaluate how well they teach and to extend their practices through learning from one another, as well as from formal course inputs.

#### *Meeting the needs of widening participation*

The courses experienced by the respondents (which may have been taken at any time in the previous 10 years) may not have prepared teachers adequately for the needs of an expanding student population, including many younger people with sometimes adverse views of education. There is a need to ensure that participants studying for an initial teaching qualification are given advice and a firm practical base upon which to work with the wide range of people who now learn in the sector. In particular, being able to work effectively with those learners who may be disaffected, or who have particular learning disabilities or behavioural difficulties is clearly an area that will continue to make demands on both teacher trainers and practitioners in the sector.

If government policies to encourage lifelong learning, particularly among those who have not traditionally taken it up, are to be successful, then teachers in the sector will need to develop their practice to work effectively with a diverse range of learners. The

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has been charged with ‘Promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that the needs of the most disadvantaged in the labour market are best met’ (DfEE 1999). There is, therefore, a strong link also between government policy to foster learning among adults and the professional development of those who facilitate that learning. Have teacher training courses kept pace with changes in the field?

Again, a practical way to ensure that the diverse requirements of teachers in the sector is met effectively, including those who work with younger and more disadvantaged learners, would be to ensure that there is a generic core of teaching standards covered within qualifications, with options tailored specifically towards subject specialisms, or particular generic issues. This method of ‘core plus options’ has been successfully used in some initial training programmes and a sample model is given in **Appendix 4**.

### *Theory and reflective practice in initial training*

The meaning and role of ‘theory’ in initial training (and indeed in continuing professional practice) is problematic for several reasons. First of all, there are debates about what counts as ‘theory’ (eg Thomas 1997) and whether the term ought to be employed at all in education. That it is employed in education and in initial training to teach is widely evident, but like the term ‘reflective practice’, its meaning varies.

This study indicates that theory is perceived, remembered and employed differently by different teachers, although there was no correlation between attitude to theory, level of educational qualifications and academic or vocational teaching area. It may be that teachers’ learning styles might affect their attitude to the theory delivered in formal ITT inputs, but the study did not address this possibility.

During the process of many ITT programmes, teachers are exposed to a variety of theory, but their efforts in this study to remember the names of theorists indicate that they consider Theory (with a capital T) to be published theory, taught to them or found in books, labelled by the name of the author. It is the kind of codified theory about which they may feel hostile or guilty. The data indicates, however, that there are other kinds of theory that are encountered during ITT. This is evident in responses to peer-based processes, such as micro-teaching and peer observation, where comments on the usefulness of seeing others teach and how peer-based experiences inform their practice show the importance, not of published theory, but of ideas – ‘knowtions’ that can be transferred and tried out in their own practice.

If such ‘knowtions’ work in practice, they become personal theory that is integrated into continuing practice. They cease to be seen as theory, but become invisible. If the ‘knowtions’ do not work in practice, they are discarded, labelled as irrelevant, thus indicating that all theory is not applicable. This helps to explain the importance of process in ITT. The various experiences valued by the student teachers expose them to a vast range of ‘knowtions’ that they can try out in practice. This in turn creates broader repertoires of practice on which to draw and better theories-in-action. It increases the number of choices that they can make as professional educators.

It also indicates why reflective practice is valued as an organising principle of ITT programmes, although it is not necessarily maintained in practice. Could the general

development of reflective practice during ITT courses be the reason that Theory with a capital T becomes invisible and unrecalled – for if it works, it ceases to be regarded as Theory? The issues of theory and of reflective practice must be seen as intertwined, and further work is needed to explicate the interconnections between these opaque concepts, and to orientate teacher training towards both a body of public knowledge, and towards the development of personal knowledge based on practice.

### **Implications for quality assurance and accountability**

A feature of the strength of initial training programmes was the high value placed on observation of teaching and good-quality feedback by the observer, who did not necessarily need to be a subject specialist. The evolving inspection of adult learning provision by OFSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) could benefit from good practice in quality assurance of observation of teaching. Great benefit can be derived for practitioners, their learners and the institution if the observation of practice is conducted in a professional way, with consonance between observations made in training and those made as part of CPD. The FENTO standards, which require a reflective approach to professional practice, may be applied in a quality assurance framework, to the mutual benefit of all parties, avoiding any approach that may be construed as a stick with which to beat weary teachers.

### **The need for further research**

There is a need for further research on all the issues outlined here. The present study, small though it is, and located solely in London and the South East, is the largest study made to date of initial training for further education. It has made a start at illuminating the field, but more work is needed in order – among other things – to extend the study nationally, and to explore the wisdom of having a national template for good practice in the initial training and career-long development of teachers in the sector.

What should be the learning experience for beginning teachers in the sector and, even given the great heterogeneity of staff in the sector, should ITT programmes vary so much in content and process? Should there be clear articulation between initial training and on-going professional development; and, if so, how should this be structured? How can employers support qualified teachers to continue in reflective practice as a routine part of their professional role? It is hoped that these and other issues will be researched in the near future in order that the needs of teachers and learners in the sector may be met.

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## Appendix 1: the questionnaire



The effectiveness of initial training in improving teachers' ability to teach and support learning in FE – your perceptions

Please use black ink when completing this questionnaire, to aid electronic scanning, and mark boxes like this

**Q1 The subject which I MAINLY teach would BEST be described as being in the category of**  
(tick one only)

|                          |                                      |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sciences (incl. maths and computing) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hotel & Catering (incl. leisure and tourism)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agriculture                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Health & Community (incl. hairdressing)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Construction                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Art & Design (incl. media and performing arts) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Engineering (incl. manufacturing)    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Humanities                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Basic Education                                |
|                          |                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify below)                   |

**Q2 The age of students which I MAINLY teach would BEST be described as being**  
(tick one only)

16–19 year olds       Over 19 years old

**Q3 The type of qualification on which I MAINLY teach would BEST be described as**  
(tick one only)

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | General/Academic (such as GCSE/A Level)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | General Vocational (such as GNVQ or BTEC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Vocational/Occupational (such as NVQ)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Access to HE                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional Qualifications               |

**Q4 I am in the following age group**

21–35       36–45       46–55       Over 55

**Q5 I am**

Male       Female

**Q6 In this college I work**

Full-time       Part-time fractional       Part-time hourly paid

**Q7 I have been teaching in the Further Education sector for**

years

**Q8 I have these initial FE teaching qualifications** (please tick the relevant boxes and insert dates)

|                          |                |            |                      |                 |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CG7306         |            |                      |                 |                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CG7307         | Start date | <input type="text"/> | Completion date | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | PG/CertEd (FE) | Start date | <input type="text"/> | Completion date | <input type="text"/> |

The basis on which I completed my PG/CertEd (FE) was:  Full-time  Part-time

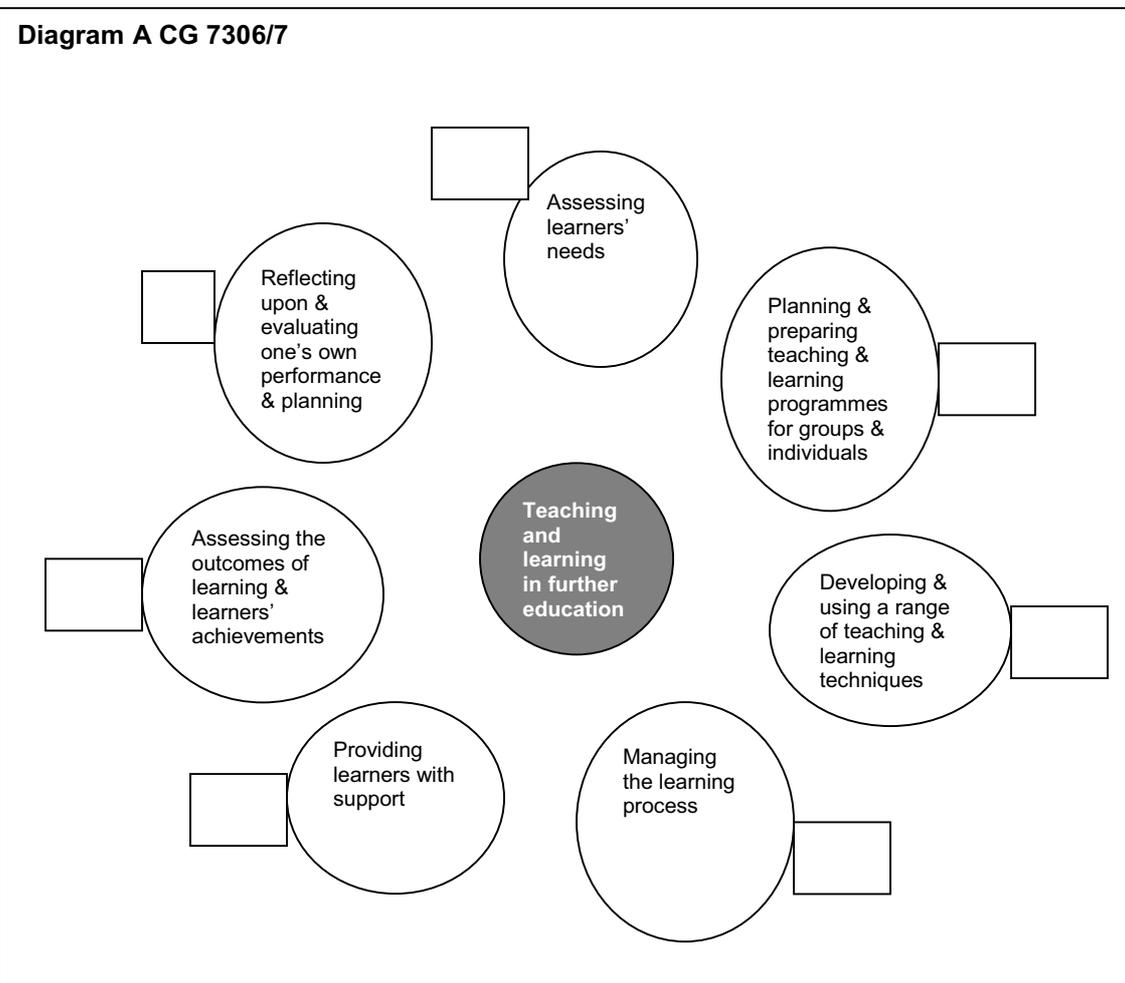
Below, and on the page opposite are two identical diagrams indicating seven key areas in the teaching and supporting of learning in further education. Please think about the extent to which your initial teaching qualification(s) improved your ability in each of these key areas.

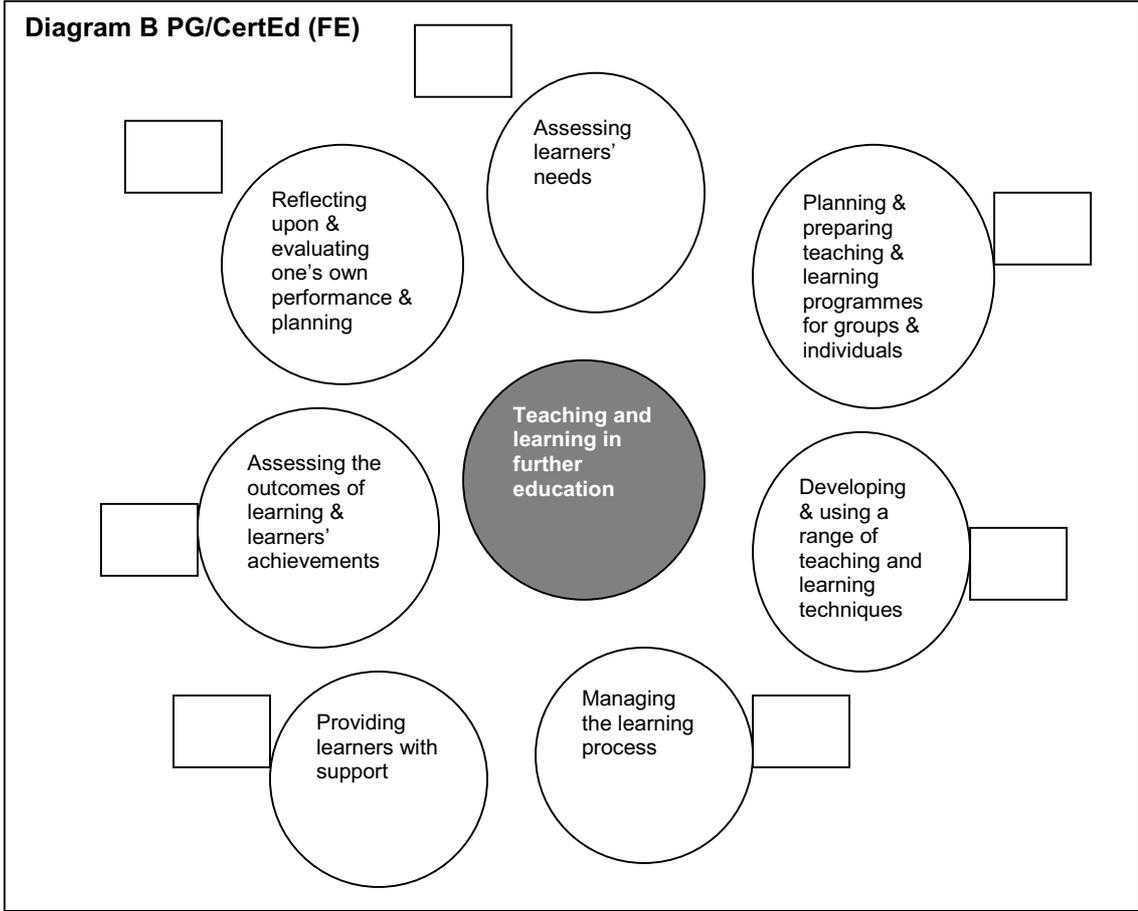
**Complete Diagram A for CG7306/7**

**Complete Diagram B for PG/CertEd (FE)**

If you completed both CG 730 and PG/CertEd (FE) in a two-stage process, please complete both diagrams.

Please insert a number in each box, using the five-point scale where:  
 1= no improvement at all and 5 = greatly improved, with 2, 3, or 4 indicating positions in between.





**Q9 The qualifications I possessed at the time I completed my initial teaching qualification were:**  
*(Please tick all that apply)*

- General Academic (BA/BSc/BEd)
- General Vocational (GNVQ/HNC/HND)
- Postgraduate (MA/MSc/MEd/PhD)
- Professional Qualifications (please list below)

**Q10 In general, how helpful was initial teacher training in improving your ability to teach and support learning?**

- Not at all helpful   
  Quite helpful   
  Helpful   
  Very helpful

For the following questions, please write your answer in the spaces below, or attach a separate sheet of paper if there is insufficient space.

Q11 What was the most helpful aspect of initial teacher training and why?

Q12 What was the least helpful aspect of initial teacher training and why?

Q13 If you have taken part in any updating of your initial teacher training, please give details: (what, when, for how long?)

If you are willing to take part in a short, confidential telephone interview, with an external researcher, about teacher training, please provide the following contact details:

|        |                      |           |                      |
|--------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Name   | <input type="text"/> | Telephone | <input type="text"/> |
| e-mail | <input type="text"/> | Best day  | <input type="text"/> |
|        |                      | and time  | <input type="text"/> |

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.  
Please return it in the envelope provided, to XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, by Monday 18 March 2002.

## **Appendix 2: the telephone interview schedule**

Prior to the interview, the researcher should read the interviewee's questionnaire to identify issues not covered by the general questions below.

### **Introduction by the interviewer**

For example, Hello X, I am Y, one of a team of researchers investigating teachers' perceptions of their initial training.

Thanks for completing a questionnaire and for agreeing to be interviewed. The interview will be taped, in order to be transcribed and studied, but your anonymity is assured; as is that of your college.

As you know, we are trying to find out how useful teachers found their initial training in helping them to teach and to support learning. I have read your questionnaire responses, and those of others, and would like to discuss with you issues arising in general from the questionnaires, as well as issues that you personally have raised. If there is anything you think I have missed that you would like to talk about, we can do that too.

### **General questions to be asked of everyone:**

If necessary, prompt the interviewee with supplementary questions; for example, Can you say more about that? How did you feel about that? etc

1. Tell me a little about what you do at x college
2. \*OPTIONAL – ASK ONLY IF THERE ARE GAPS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE  
I see that you did XYZ teaching course(s), can you tell me, for example, when, where.
3. It seems that the parts of the teacher training courses that dealt with planning learning programmes, and with developing and using a range of teaching/learning techniques, were among those which had the greatest impact for most people. Was this true for you?
- 4a. The notion of encouraging reflection/self-evaluation also emerged as important in training programmes. Was this so for you and the programmes that you took?
- 4b. Do you still engage in reflection on your teaching in a way that is indebted to (follows from) your 730/CertEd?
5. I should like to explore your experience of three other areas in teacher training:
  - 5a. Was there anything about your teaching practice observations which was particularly effective or ineffective?

- 5b. Was there anything about your tutorial contacts with course tutors which was particularly effective or ineffective?
- 5c. Was there anything about your peer or micro-teaching sessions which was particularly effective or ineffective?
6. For some people, the place of 'educational theory' in teacher training emerged as an issue.
- 6a. Could you tell me what the word 'theory' means to you?
- 6b. Can you give me an example of 'theory' taught or used in your initial training?
- 6c. Did you find this, or other 'theory' useful or not in your teaching?
7. Was there enough attention to your individual professional development needs on the ITT course(s) that you took?
8. Have you found that your views, about how helpful your initial teacher training was, have changed over the years since you finished the course?
9. Do you have any comment about the amount or nature of assessment on your ITT course(s)?
10. Is there anything that, in retrospect, you would really want in a teacher training course that was not included in your own course?
11. Was there anything in your course that was so successful that you think it should be included in any future course?

PLUS: Question(s) arising from the individual's completed questionnaire that you wish to probe.

PLUS: Are there any issues about the usefulness of initial training in helping to teach and to support learning that you wish to raise that we have not covered?

*Thank you for being interviewed. Is it possible to talk to you again if there is anything I need to check with you from our conversation today?*

### Appendix 3: Questionnaire response rates

#### Phase 1 (2001)

| College       | Out        | Back (%)           | Used (effective %) |
|---------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| North Oxford  | 90         | 47 (52.2%)         | 36 (40%)           |
| Milton Keynes | 90         | 33 (36.7%)         | 23 (25.6%)         |
| Havering      | 72         | 20 (27.7%)         | 20 (27.7%)         |
| West Herts    | 62         | 29 (46.8%)         | 22 (35.5%)         |
| Southgate     | 70         | 25 (35.7%)         | 21 (30%)           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>384</b> | <b>154 (40.1%)</b> | <b>122 (31.8%)</b> |

#### Phase 2 (2002)

| College        | Out        | Back (%)         | Used (effective %) |
|----------------|------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Basingstoke    | 100        | 31 (31%)         | 16 (16%)           |
| East Berkshire | 92         | 35 (38%)         | 22 (23.9%)         |
| Highbury       | 96         | 41 (42.7%)       | 37 (38.5%)         |
| Tower Hamlets  | 90         | 40 (44.4%)       | 32 (35.5%)         |
| Waltham Forest | 50         | 20 (40%)         | 15 (30%)           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>428</b> | <b>167 (39%)</b> | <b>122 (28.5%)</b> |

#### Combined: Phases 1 and 2 (2001 and 2002)

|                    | Out        | Back               | Used (effective %) |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Grand total</b> | <b>812</b> | <b>321 (39.5%)</b> | <b>244 (30%)</b>   |

## Appendix 4: a draft core curriculum for ITT for further education

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| <p>Teachers and tutors will be:<br/>         Excellent teachers who model good practice in teaching, tutoring, observing and giving feedback<br/>         Up to date in the areas they teach (having done secondments within the last four years?)</p> |
| <p>Groups will be:<br/>         A mixture from different curriculum areas, different colleges and other institutions<br/>         Able to support each other, visit each other and give constructive, developmental criticism</p>                      |

| Stage        | Process  | Content   | Out-of-class activities   | Academic level  |
|--------------|--|---|---|---|
| Introductory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ice-breakers</li> <li>▪ Ground rules</li> <li>▪ Micro-teaching, topic agreed with tutor. Tutor- and peer-assessed</li> <li>▪ Confidence building</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aims</li> <li>▪ Objectives</li> <li>▪ Lesson planning</li> <li>▪ Scheme of work</li> <li>▪ Creation of basic resources</li> <li>▪ Using overhead projector, boards</li> <li>▪ Classroom layout</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visit to observe an experienced teacher</li> <li>▪ Teaching observed once by tutor (appropriately trained and known to student)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sub-degree</li> </ul>                  |
| Intermediate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Micro-teaching, topics relevant to course given by tutor. Tutor- and peer-assessed. Direct constructive criticism essential. Recorded on video for self-assessment</li> <li>▪ Reflective practice and analysis of critical incidents</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced resource creation, eg using video, differentiated resources especially for students with dyslexia or literacy/learning difficulties</li> <li>▪ Dealing with difficult students, classroom management</li> <li>▪ Bloom's taxonomy</li> <li>▪ Basic learning theory</li> <li>▪ Course design</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer observation of teaching, visiting each other's classes</li> <li>▪ Teaching observed at least twice by course tutors</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Moving towards degree level</li> </ul> |

|                                      |  |   |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Gap of one to three years (optional) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Academic skills module for those who are new to academic writing</li> </ul>   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consolidation of skills and knowledge from Introductory and Intermediate course</li> </ul>   |  |
| Threshold                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Team-taught lessons, seminars or presentations, topics given by tutors. Tutor/peer-assessed. Recorded on video for self-assessment</li> <li>▪ Reflective practice, analysis of critical incidents. Self-evaluation (synthesis) using video evidence from a variety of settings; theory covered in content, tutor and peer feedback</li> <li>▪ Independent study of relevance to individual</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced teaching strategies</li> <li>▪ Advanced learning theory</li> <li>▪ Curriculum development</li> <li>▪ Policy (including funding)</li> <li>▪ Dealing with students with emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p><b>Options:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching lower-ability groups with basic literacy problems</li> <li>▪ HE teaching and assessment at graduate and postgraduate level</li> <li>▪ Teaching pre-16 students</li> <li>▪ Teaching students with disabilities, eg visual impairment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least three observations by course tutors, one could be by a subject specialist</li> <li>▪ Peer partner observations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HE Level 2 minimum</li> <li>▪ Master's level for those that wish to achieve a higher-level qualification</li> </ul> |

