

# Beginner Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Preparation, Induction and Early Professional Development: A review of literature

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## **ii. Abbreviations**

ATL - Association of Teachers and Lecturers  
BA/BSc - Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science  
BaT - Becoming a Teacher (research project)  
BEd - Bachelor of Education  
BEI - British Education Index  
CEP - Career Entry Profile  
CEDP - Career Entry Development Profile  
CPD - Continuing Professional Development  
DCSF - Department for Children, Schools and Families  
DENI - Department of Education, Northern Ireland  
DfE - Department for Education  
DfEE - Department for Education and Employment  
DfES - Department for Education and Skills  
DRB - Designated Recommending Body  
D&T - Design and Technology  
EAL - English as an Additional Language  
EPD - Early Professional Development  
ERIC - Education Resources Information Centre  
FE - Further Education  
GCSE - General Certificate of Secondary Education  
GTC - General Teaching Council  
GTCE - General Teaching Council for England  
GRTP - Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes  
GTP - Graduate Teacher Programme  
HEI - Higher Education Institute  
ICT - Information and Communications Technology  
ITE - Initial Teacher Education  
ITP - Initial Teacher Preparation  
ITT - Initial Teacher Training  
MFL - Modern Foreign Languages  
ML - Modern Languages  
MORI - Market and Opinion Research International  
NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher  
Ofsted - Office for Standards and Teaching in Education  
QTS - Qualified Teacher Status  
PGCE - Postgraduate Certificate in Education

RSM - Recruitment Strategy Manager  
RTP - Registered Training Programme  
SARA - Scholarly Articles Research Alerting  
SCITT - School-Centred Initial Teacher Training  
SEN - Special Educational Needs  
SMT - Senior Management Team  
SSSS - Secondary Shortage Subject Scheme  
STRB - School Teachers' Review Body  
TDA - Training and Development Agency for Schools  
TTA - Teacher Training Agency.

### iii. A preliminary note about terminology

While the full title of the *Becoming a Teacher* research project (*'Becoming a Teacher: the nature and impact of teachers' experiences of initial teacher training, induction and early professional development'*), commissioned by the DCSF, the GTCE and the TDA, includes the term 'initial teacher training' (ITT), and while 'initial teacher training' is the phrase currently in official use in England to refer to the process through which would-be teachers seek to gain a formal qualification to teach, we prefer to use the term *initial teacher preparation (ITP)*. 'Training' is sometimes associated with a view of teaching as 'performing a set of mechanical tasks' (Stephens *et al.*, 2004), to the exclusion of 'understanding and intelligent awareness' (Tomlinson, 1995: 11; Cameron and Baker, 2004: 13), with the result that there have been objections to its use. Some writers thus prefer the term 'initial teacher education' (ITE). However, to some extent there is also baggage associated with this term, in that some 'teacher educators' associate the term 'education' more with the learning of declarative knowledge (also known as descriptive or propositional knowledge - 'knowing that') than with the acquisition of procedural knowledge (knowledge exercised in the performance of a task - 'knowing how').

Although use of the terms 'training' and 'education' need not have the kind of connotations referred to above, our choice of the term 'initial teacher preparation' reflects an attempt to remain neutral as well as accurate. Whilst some literature refers to the same pre-qualification period as 'pre-service' training (or education), this is inaccurate in a context where some student teachers are effectively already 'serving' on employment-based routes into the teaching profession.

The reasons that motivate our choice of the term ITP also lead us to prefer the more neutral, if more clumsy, term 'teacher of teachers' to the terms 'teacher educator' and 'teacher trainer'. We also use the terms 'student teacher', 'trainee' and 'trainee teacher' interchangeably for individuals following different kinds of ITP programme, although literature relating to those following undergraduate routes into the profession often refers to these as 'students', reflecting the relative emphasis on their academic studies.

It is also important to note here that in some of the literature the terms 'beginning teacher', 'beginner teacher' and 'new teacher' are used synonymously with Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) (i.e. a teacher entering their first year of teaching after undertaking a programme of ITP), whilst elsewhere these terms are used more broadly, sometimes to include the ITP phase and sometimes to refer to the early stages of a teacher's career beyond the first year. In using the term 'beginning teacher' in this review of literature, we do not include those in the ITP phase, but do include those who are in the first five years of their teaching careers. The terms 'recently qualified teacher' and 'early professional development' (EPD) apply to those 'beginning teachers' between their second and fifth years in post. We use 'new teacher' synonymously with newly qualified teacher (NQT).

Finally, we feel it important to state that whilst the term 'feedback' is often used by writers as if unproblematic, there does in fact appear to be considerable variation in such usage, both in the particular meaning intended and the degree to which this is explicitly indicated. In teacher education and development, it nowadays encompasses a wide range of possibilities, from observer-delivered judgements (about the teaching they have observed) to more collaborative and open discussions. One might, moreover, have reservations concerning the potentially restrictive implications of the kind of narrower interpretations that may be conveyed by reference to 'giving' or 'accepting' feedback, for example that they might imply an external focus on the beginning teacher's performance, to the exclusion of the thinking, planning and pedagogy that might be informing their action. However, whilst we therefore feel that this area is in need of careful exploration, such exploration is not within the scope of the present review, where we have on the



whole simply adopted the terminology of feedback where it forms part of the findings of studies judged more generally to merit inclusion.

# Introduction

## The Becoming a Teacher Project

The *Becoming a Teacher* (BaT) study is a six-year (2003-2009) longitudinal research project that examines teachers' experiences during their initial teacher preparation (ITP) and (for those who remain in the profession) their first four years in post. It has tracked those teachers who entered the profession via a range of different routes (including university-administered undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, employment-based and school-based programmes), over a period of five academic years. The main aims of the research are to:

- explore teachers' experiences of ITP and their first four years of teaching, including their experiences of induction<sup>1</sup> and early professional development (EPD);
- explore any variation in such experiences relating to the ITP route that trainees / teachers followed;
- explore possible relationships between trainees' preconceptions and expectations of teaching and ITP, and their actual experiences of ITP, induction, teaching and EPD during the first four years;
- explore possible relationships between trainees' experiences of ITP and their subsequent experiences of teaching, induction and EPD;
- identify factors contributing to attrition from ITP programmes;
- identify reasons for the non-take up of teaching posts on completion of ITP; and
- identify factors contributing to teachers' decisions to leave the profession within four years of completing their ITP.

Our review of the existing research literature, which is reported in the chapters that follow, has served to facilitate these aims by:

- sensitising thinking about issues which are pertinent to the research;
- detailing issues which inform the development of research instruments and methods of data analysis; and
- providing the broader context within which findings from the empirical strand of the BaT study may be situated.

In accordance with these aims (and especially that of providing a broader context) a wide range of studies drawn from the international evidence base on teacher preparation and early professional experience has been consulted. However, the focus of this review is England, and it should be noted that any statistics cited in the following chapters refer specifically to England unless otherwise stated.

## The genesis and methodology of this literature review

Work on this review of literature began in 2003. It was initially developed around sources with which some of the report's authors were already familiar, and which they had discussed elsewhere (e.g. Tomlinson, 1995, 1999a, 1999b; Malderez and Bodoczky, 1999; Hobson, 2001, 2002, 2003; Chambers and Roper, 2002). This original material has since been supplemented with the results of a more detailed and systematic review of literature involving a four-stage process, namely:

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'induction' is used by many to refer, in broad terms, to the various processes, in different contexts, by which newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are 'inducted' into the teaching profession, and is normally associated with the first year of teaching subsequent to undertaking a programme of initial teacher preparation. In England, the present arrangements for the induction of NQTs were set out in the Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998). They are discussed in Chapter 5 of this report.

- (1) detailed searches of electronic databases<sup>2</sup>, SARA (Scholarly Articles Research Alerting) journal alerts (now Informaworld), and hand searches of material located in the University of Nottingham's *Djanogly Learning Resource Centre* for articles, books and conferences papers potentially relevant to the aims of the study;
- (2) the retrieval of potentially relevant material from the searches identified in Stage (1) above, together with other literature recommended by Steering Group colleagues and the project consultant / critical friend;
- (3) the scanning of retrieved material to determine the extent to which it contained relevant information; and
- (4) the production of a full critical summary for those articles, books and papers which were deemed to be most highly relevant to the project aims.<sup>3</sup>

To date, 108 critical summaries have been produced and information contained in these has been reported, alongside the original material referred to above, in Chapters 1-8 below. In addition, we also make reference in this review to a wider range of literature which was not subjected to the critical summary process, either because its relevance to the project was more limited or (in some cases) because a small amount of highly relevant material was embedded within a wider discourse on a different topic.

We would note that whilst there is a limited (though growing) amount of literature available on teachers' experience of induction and early professional development, and very little to date on the process of new teacher recruitment, the literature on ITP is extensive. In what follows, we focus largely (though not exclusively) on research which has been carried out in England and other parts of the UK (since these are most relevant to the context within which the BaT study is being conducted), and which has been carried out since 1992, which we take as the key watershed in relation to the introduction of the present school-based arrangements for ITP (Department for Education, 1992). That said, we make a number of exceptions to this general rule.

Firstly, although our main focus throughout has been domestic, we have not restricted our search criteria to the British Isles. In addition to supplementing the (sometimes meagre) UK-based research on specific themes, some studies conducted outside the UK may have a particular value in highlighting the potential universality of certain aspects of trainee and beginning teachers' experience, or revealing in sharp relief the rather different nature of such experience in the context of a differing national approach to ITP.

Secondly, we have included a small number of references to pre-1992 research which we regard as both seminal and highly relevant to the present day, for example Huberman's classic study on the lives of teachers, originally published in French in 1989 (Huberman, 1993).

In addition, whilst our principal focus has been on the findings of empirical research and evaluation, we have also made occasional use of, for example, Ofsted (Office for Standards and Teaching in Education)<sup>4</sup> reports of inspection, where (in our view) these throw additional light on areas where other more empirically-based literature has to date been somewhat limited.

Finally, we have also augmented our own systematic searches as reported above by drawing on other systematic reviews of the literature.

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<sup>2</sup> The electronic databases searched include the British Education Index (BEI), the Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Athens (an access management system) and the ZETOC electronic table of contents.

<sup>3</sup> The critical summary template used is attached as an Appendix I. The reference sections and bibliographies of retrieved literature were also examined and additional potentially relevant material from these was retrieved (Stage 2), scanned (Stage 3) and, where appropriate, made the subject of its own critical summary (Stage 4).

<sup>4</sup> Ofsted is the body charged with inspecting schools and ITP provision in England.

Save for some brief references in the Conclusion to this report, we do not discuss emergent findings from the empirical strand of the *Becoming a Teacher* study, partly because this would not comply with the aims of the literature review strand of the study (as stated above), partly because it would greatly add to the length of this report (given that all empirical BaT findings would, by definition, be highly relevant to the review), and partly because these are reported elsewhere (see Appendix II for publications available at the time of writing).

## **Rationale for the chronological presentation of our findings**

Since this literature review was initially conceived specifically to inform and support the *Becoming a Teacher* project, it seemed natural that it should take a chronological rather than thematic approach, first (in order to inform research instrument development) preceding, and subsequently accompanying the year-on-year progression of participants. As their status changed from hopeful new recruits through initial teacher preparation to established but still developing practitioners, so this review changed too, encompassing successive phases of the project but also incorporating as it grew new publications judged to be highly relevant to stages already passed. In common with the empirical strand of the BaT research, the principal focus of this report does not extend beyond beginner teachers' fourth year of teaching, though some of the literature it draws upon does so.

Another feature of the year-on-year development of the embryo review is that (in spite of later revisions and additions) the early chapters still exhibit a higher incidence of references to (relatively) earlier sources. Since the time-span of the BaT project covers the years 2003-2009, much of the literature cited may well be more pertinent to the experience of our research participants when they first entered ITP than it is to those setting out on the journey of becoming a teacher in the present day.

## **Organisation of contents**

As noted above, this review of literature is organised into eight main chapters. In *Chapter 1* we discuss patterns of recruitment to ITP, and explore the motivation of student teachers, recruitment issues relating to gender, age, ethnicity and subject specialism, and recent attempts to boost recruitment. *Chapter 2* considers the preconceptions and expectations that student teachers bring to ITP, and the potential impact on their experiences and development of their differing circumstances and needs. *Chapter 3* then examines the experience of ITP from a range of differing perspectives, including variation in training route, course content and organisation, and the impact of affective issues.

*Chapter 4* moves on to address briefly some issues attendant on recruitment into the first teaching post, as a prologue to *Chapter 5's* consideration of new teachers' experiences during their first year of teaching, commonly referred to in the UK as 'the induction year'.<sup>5</sup> This is then followed in *Chapter 6* by a discussion of factors impacting on recently qualified teachers during their second and subsequent years' teaching, and especially of issues relating to provision for their early professional development.

The following two chapters draw together findings on the loss to the profession of potential teachers during and on completion of ITP (*Chapter 7*), and of others who had gained qualified teacher status, during their early years of teaching (*Chapter 8*). In these two chapters we also discuss some factors identified as tending to promote the retention of trainee and beginning teachers.

Finally, in the *Conclusions* chapter we draw together some of the central themes that cut across the issues discussed in Chapters 1-8.

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<sup>5</sup> The induction period may, in fact, take more or less than a year, depending on the NQT's employment situation and progress.

# Chapter 1: Recruitment to ITP: motivation and opportunity

## 1.1 Introduction

Recruitment into initial teacher preparation (ITP) in England and Wales has grown in recent years from 29,510 student teachers in 2000-2001 to a peak of 41,980 in 2004-2005 (DfES, 2006), since when it has decreased slightly in line with a reduction in government targets. The PGCE remains the most popular ITP route: recruitment figures for 2007-2008 (DCSF, 2008) show that 31,300 new entrants were expected to commence postgraduate ITP courses across England, Scotland and Wales (including school-centred PGCEs). In addition, though, much of the growth in ITP numbers has occurred in what are termed the 'non-traditional' routes into teaching, in particular in employment-based routes (predominantly the GTP), where numbers rose from 1,790 trainees in 2000-2001 to an expected 7,168 in 2006-2007 (DfES, 2006; TDA, 2006a). Inconsistencies over time in how the figures have been presented have tended to make year-on-year comparisons difficult, and at the time of writing there has been no recent central audit of applications for employment based ITT, making it difficult to give a clear overall picture. However, it was announced in 2008 that the numbers of trainees recruited to all ITT courses commencing in 2008-09 were being collected by the TDA and would be published in 2009.

This chapter will consider who the entrants to the profession are and why they enter ITP. It will then discuss research into recent attempts to boost recruitment.

## 1.2 Motivation to enter ITP: 'push' and 'pull' factors

Since motivation is an important factor in both the recruitment of student teachers and their subsequent retention, the decision to undertake ITP has become a key area of research. There is general agreement that perceived intrinsic rewards (such as working with children, intellectual fulfilment and contributing to society) play an important part in attracting new recruits to the profession. This is confirmed by general surveys of undergraduate students (Coulthard and Kyriacou, 2002) and of beginning teachers (Barmby and Coe 2004), surveys by phase of teaching (Reid and Cauldwell, 1997; Bridge, 1999), those based on gender (Johnson *et al.*, 1999), and those based on ethnicity (Carrington and Tomlin, 2000; Basit *et al.*, 2006). For some recruits their own memories of school can prove a powerful motivator: in particular, the influence of individual 'role model' teachers can prove especially potent (Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant, 2003; Younger *et al.* 2004).

In the US, the work of Nieto (2003) on 'what keeps teachers going' seems to suggest that altruistic or intrinsic motives on entering the profession continue to function as important factors in ensuring long-term retention, as do the belief that teaching is an intellectual endeavour, and a sense of belonging to communities of learning. Indeed, it has been argued that more could be done to harness and support altruism as a motive: in her book examining teacher shortage in schools in challenging circumstances, Bush (2005) comments that since some teachers appear motivated from the outset to work with disadvantaged pupils, one approach to the problem of choice and equity in teacher supply is to differentiate teachers according to their motivations and priorities. In support of this proposal she cites Howson's submission to the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2004), in which he argues that for teachers in schools with significant social problems to be successful, they need to be there willingly:

"You need to identify, right from the word go, people who are actually socially responsible and wish to take on the challenge of working in those sort of schools, and give them the training and the support to enable them to be successful with those sort of children" (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004; cited in Bush, 2005: 36).

Coulthard and Kyriacou (2002) found that where undergraduates decided not to go into teaching, they still recognised that the profession offered altruistic and caring roles, but generally did not consider this to be of primary importance in their career choice. Since, as they perceived it, their needs for enjoyment, a manageable workload, and adequate resources would not be met, teaching was for them an unattractive proposition. Edmonds *et al.* (2002) also noted that (at the time of writing) “the aspects of teaching that appear to deter young people from considering it as a career are low pay, paperwork and dealing with disruptive pupils” (p.ii). Issues related to pupil behaviour and workload/marking were also cited (unprompted) by almost a quarter of beginning teacher respondents to Barmby and Coe’s (2004) survey as the factors most likely to have dissuaded them from entering the profession; these were followed in third and fourth place by financial considerations such as salary and the cost of training.

Studies also indicate that attitudes towards the teaching profession are broadly similar across those who choose to undertake ITP and those who choose other careers. What differs, however, is how attractive the two groups rate teaching as a career (Coulthard and Kyriacou, 2002). This is reflected in attitudes towards the status of teaching which has generally been found to be low in England (although not in Northern Ireland or Scotland). For example, according to Bridge (1999), although 87 per cent of students themselves were proud to be joining the profession, many took an uncertain or negative view of the status of teachers as a respected professional group within society. However, Carrington and Tomlin (2000) have demonstrated that, despite concerns about teachers’ pay and conditions of work and levels of morale within the profession, the majority of trainees in their study of recruits from minority ethnic backgrounds had a positive view of teaching.

In their study of the early career decisions of two cohorts of UK graduates who chose to train as teachers, Purcell *et al.* (2005) identified a range of motivations but also comment that frequently these appeared to be interrelated:

“For many, teaching was a long-held ambition and a vocation; many were motivated by altruistic reasons or by intrinsic aspects of the job - particularly working with children. Extrinsic aspects of teaching such as family-friendly work patterns, flexibility and holidays were also mentioned as attractions of the job, as was the opportunity to enter a secure and respected profession. For many, a combination of factors was important; for example, family-friendly work patterns and the intrinsic nature of the occupation” (p.2).

Coulthard and Kyriacou (2002) describe those who wish to enter teaching as a very distinct group, with a ‘teacher personality’ which they suggest is irrespective of gender and age. Similarly, Smethem (2007) comments that over half of the beginning teachers in her small-scale survey articulated the concept of “always wanting to teach” (p.470). However, there is evidence that people with different characteristics do have different reasons for entering initial teacher preparation and are influenced by different factors (Edmonds *et al.* 2002). It should also be remembered that not all who enter teaching do so for positive reasons: Powney *et al.* (2003) found that few participants in their study appeared to hold a developed concept of a career, and noted that some had drifted into teaching because of a lack of suitable alternatives, or to escape “less palatable jobs” (p.29), similar perhaps to those described by Huberman (1989) as “ ‘tourists’ - mostly men who had entered the profession accidentally, just to have a look” (p.44).

### **1.3 Recruitment issues related to gender**

The majority of those recruited to ITP in England and Wales are female. Of those completing postgraduate courses (including SCITT) in 2005, 5,970 were men and 15,220 were women (DfES, 2006). Whether the increased number of routes will reinforce or redress this gender imbalance remains to be seen, with no conclusive evidence to date of an appreciable shift.

Although Coulthard and Kyriacou's identification of a 'teacher personality' suggests that the perception of teaching does not differ between male and female entrants to the profession, research by Johnson *et al.* (1999) identified some gender-related differences in the perceptions of the primary trainees studied. Participants of both sexes saw teaching as an occupation that required a high level of communication skills, had great potential for job satisfaction and was highly suited to women; however, the women trainees appeared to be more motivated by the perceived intrinsic aspects of primary teaching than the men, who placed a greater emphasis on perceived extrinsic aspects. Similarly, Barmby (2006) found that female beginning teachers were significantly more likely than males to value good relationships with colleagues and the ability to combine teaching with parenthood. These findings suggest one possible reason for the imbalance between males and females within the profession.

There are, however, other possible disincentives for males. As suggested above, teaching is a predominantly female profession, particularly in the primary sector (cf. Foster and Newman, 2003). This is reinforced by the perception of primary teaching as an extension of the mothering role (Johnson *et al.* 1999; Thornton, 1999; Edmonds *et al.* 2002), and so less in keeping with stereotypical views of 'masculinity'. As Johnson *et al.* (1999) comment:

"There is an indication that the traditional link between masculinity and the greater degree of intellectual control and access to power it allows persists and may be another underlying part of the explanation as to why it is that the population of primary teacher trainees is increasingly female" (p.63).

Male primary trainees may also be discouraged by negative perceptions of men working with young children and the perceived 'oddness' of their career choice (Johnson *et al.* 1999; Thornton, 1999).

However, research has also identified some positive motives reported by men who choose to go into teaching, and primary teaching in particular. Johnson indicates that the male primary trainees in his study thought it important that men teach in primary schools and valued the contribution they can make, while Lewis (2002) identifies the generalist nature of primary teaching as a reason why some men choose this phase, although he also suggests that the decision to not teach at the secondary level was influenced by issues surrounding behaviour and discipline.

Recently the research by Purcell *et al.* (2005) on the early career decisions of recent graduates has identified some correlations between gender, subject and the decision to study for a PGCE. These will be discussed in section 1.6 below.

#### **1.4 Recruitment issues related to age**

The age range of those entering teaching has widened: in 2006 it was reported that nearly a third of people entering ITT were over 30 years of age (TDA, 2006a). While this may reflect the increased number of routes into teaching (some of which have, in part, been aimed at potential career changers), it may also result from successful attempts to extend the range of individuals willing to consider teaching as a career, or from a combination of these and other factors. Carrington *et al.* (2000), for example, indicated that the minority ethnic PGCE recruits in their study had an older age profile than their white peers and were more likely to be career changers.

Career changers in general often move into teaching in their mid-twenties to thirties, before their increasing personal commitments become a deterrent, and they tend to cite as motivation their perceptions of teaching as a mentally stimulating, diverse and challenging job (MORI, 2001). However, for this group the contrast between teaching and their previous careers does not always show teaching in a better light. Writing of career-changers in the US, Johnson (2004) points out that their prior experience of other employment settings will

affect expectations of workplace facilities, resources, clerical support, teamwork and training, while back in England, Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant (2003) found that what was perceived as the 'rigid and inflexible' nature of school management came as a shock to some second careerists.

As Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant acknowledge, the small sample on which their analysis of personal narratives is based may not be representative of all career changers; however, it does generate useful insights into the experiences of some. Among the different categories of career changer identified is 'the parent': participants in this group said that teaching had a more family-friendly image than other careers, and a career in teaching was seen as offering stability and security, along with the opportunity to prioritise a stable family life. In addition, having their own children gave some people the motivation and confidence to consider teaching. However, for some mature entrants with family and other responsibilities, having an ITP provider within easy reach may become a particularly important factor (Carrington and Tomlin, 2000).

### **1.5 Recruitment issues related to ethnicity**

While Powney *et al.* (2003) report that trainees from minority ethnic groups appear to have broadly similar reasons for entering the profession to other recruits into teaching, another study by Carrington and Tomlin (2000), as we have already noted, had found that on average the students surveyed were older than their white peers and had often already become established in other careers before entering the PGCE. The expectation that teaching would combine well with raising a family was seen as particularly important for minority ethnic families with a lone female at their head (Powney *et al.* 2003), and additional factors cited by members of ethnic minorities joining the profession included the proximity of the training institution, especially for mature entrants (as mentioned above), and a belief that they had a particular contribution to make because of their understanding of minority ethnic pupils (Carrington and Tomlin, 2000; Powney *et al.* 2003).

Yet, whilst the relatively low status of teachers, perceptions of the poor levels of pay and stressful working conditions (factors which affect many other groups) appear to act as deterrents to many potential applicants from ethnic minorities, anxieties about encountering racism in schools were also identified as an additional factor by Carrington and Tomlin (2000). It is particularly important to address such deterrents if this country is to avoid the gradual development of what Whisnant *et al.* (2005) term the 'cultural dichotomy' existing in the USA, where "the student population... is becoming increasingly multicultural" (p.22), yet almost 90 per cent of teachers are white, monolingual and middle class, and recruitment into the profession from non-white groups is in decline.

### **1.6 Recruitment issues related to subject**

If the profile of those entering the profession has attracted attention, so have the subjects they are choosing to teach. Research studies on subject-related issues have tended to focus on shortage subjects,<sup>6</sup> and highlight the difference between these and other subject specialisms, in relation to recruitment to the teaching profession more generally. The literature review conducted by Edmonds *et al.* (2002) found that:

"Studies of mathematics undergraduates suggest that a similar proportion of them would consider teaching for much the same reasons as given by undergraduates of non-shortage areas. Findings from studies of physics undergraduates suggest that a lower proportion of them are interested in teaching" (p.iii).

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<sup>6</sup> Shortage or 'priority' subjects include English (including drama), mathematics, science, information communications technology, design & technology and modern foreign languages. From September 2006 this was extended to include religious education and music.



However, the research conducted by Donnelly (2002) across five universities uncovered little distinction in attitudes to teacher recruitment when considered by subject discipline (or, indeed, by gender). When the attitudes of 1,202 science and mathematics undergraduates were examined, respondents said they were deterred from teaching by perceived characteristics of the job, such as workload, low salary, poor working conditions and poor pupil behaviour. On this basis of this research, subject teacher shortages in physics and mathematics appeared to be due to rather to the small number of undergraduates studying these disciplines than to any other factor.

It has also been argued that a lack of specialist teaching in specific areas of compulsory subjects (for example, the majority of science teachers are biology specialists) can impact on the quality or character of their coverage, which could potentially perpetuate the problem of teacher supply in those subjects (Smithers and Robinson, 2003). Adams (2002) examined recruitment onto PGCE courses in MFL, and noted that it was affected both by the demanding methodology of MFL teaching and the unwillingness of some to teach the full ability range, especially since English children were perceived as unenthusiastic about learning languages. In addition, there were sometimes problems in finding school placements in MFL departments already under pressure. Essentially, as was suggested in relation to science teaching above, the existing shortage of MFL subject specialists could lead to a vicious circle by impacting on the quality of MFL teaching, and thereby reducing the potential pool of recruits. Consequently, more than one in three of all MFL teachers are Foreign Native Teachers, and this in itself may have long-term implications for retention. Although Adams argues that in some respects MFL presents a different picture from other subjects, her analysis of the situation does have implications for other shortage subjects, such as D&T.

Attempts to boost recruitment to certain subjects include a 'Golden Hello' of £5,000 to eligible postgraduates teaching mathematics or science, and of £2,500 to those teaching other 'priority subjects'. However, whilst there is literature on the extent of such schemes, to date there appears to be little evaluation of their long term impact (Morton, 2002).

In their study of education as a graduate career, Purcell *et al.* (2005) found that it was graduates with languages, arts and humanities degrees who were most likely overall to have studied for a PGCE. In addition, though, in some subject areas they identified an apparent gender effect: of the participants in their survey, male natural science graduates were more likely than men from other disciplines to have studied for a PGCE, whilst 19 per cent of women mathematics and computing graduates had opted for a PGCE course compared with only two per cent of men.

However, while on the whole recruitment to shortage subjects on traditional ITP routes echoes that of teaching in general, there is evidence that recruitment to employment-based routes may follow a different pattern. In the next sub-section we go on to discuss the impact on recruitment of the increasing diversity of training routes, followed by an overview of attempts to boost recruitment to ITP more generally.

## **1.7 Patterns of recruitment into ITP**

In their study of the literature on teacher recruitment and retention in the USA, Guarino *et al.* (2006) point out that "the labor market for teachers is nested within and continuously influenced by a larger labor market that includes the markets for all other occupations requiring roughly similar levels of education or skills" (p175). According to the market theory of supply and demand as applied to education, the *demand* for teachers is the number of posts available, and the *supply* the number of qualified individuals willing to teach at a given level of *compensation*. By *compensation* what is meant here is not only financial remuneration but also other factors that could be viewed as positive aspects of teaching, such as working conditions or personal satisfaction. Supply is driven by the attractiveness of teaching in terms of overall compensation compared to all the other activities available to

each individual. In addition to the “altruistic, intrinsic and children-orientated motivations” already discussed (Barmby, 2006: 254), to an individual already interested in teaching the ease or other advantage of a specific route into education might well prove an additional attractant to the profession.

Whilst the PGCE remains the most popular ITP route, much of the growth in ITP numbers has (as stated earlier) occurred in what are termed the ‘non-traditional’ routes into teaching, and in particular in employment-based routes (predominantly the GTP), where numbers rose from 1,790 trainees in 2000-2001 to an expected 7,168 in 2006-2007 (DfES, 2006; TDA, 2006a).

In a small pilot study exploring the views of trainee teachers following contrasting university-led PGCE and school-led GTP routes, Smith and McLay (2007) found that “the two routes appeared to appeal to candidates from different backgrounds, with the GTP group being more likely and the PGCE group far less likely to have had significant prior school experience” (p.53), but that (perhaps more importantly for issues of recruitment) “the two programmes appear to have much to offer to candidates with different life circumstances. The GTP provides more regular financial support, while the level of pastoral care in a PGCE programme might seem more attractive to those who are making a major career change” (p.53).

Reporting on the first year of inspecting designated recommending bodies (DRBs) for the GTP, Ofsted (2005) found that GTP candidates had been recruited from a range of backgrounds: while some had entered training via access routes, others were already academic high achievers. Ofsted judged the scheme to be making a particularly strong contribution to recruitment in secondary shortage subjects and from some otherwise under-represented groups, notably minority ethnic groups and men wishing to teach in primary schools. In addition, recruitment efforts were often driven by regional teacher supply needs, so that the DRB concerned worked closely with LA recruitment officers and community groups. The following year, Ofsted (2006) noted that several DRBs had made good use of taster courses and open evenings, again often in liaison with the local authority recruitment officers.

A different approach to employment-based recruitment is reported in Hutchings *et al.*'s (2006) evaluation of the Teach First programme, initially rolled out in London but with plans for its subsequent extension to other cities. While employment-based routes into teaching were initially designed for well-qualified, mature people who need to earn while they train and are able to take on responsibility quickly, Teach First is intended explicitly for new graduates, and its marketing is aimed overtly at high-fliers who would not otherwise have considered becoming teachers (and with a focus on shortage subjects). It involves a two-year commitment to teach in challenging schools, with QTS normally gained at the end of the first year. Many Teach First recruits participating in the evaluation said they had previously held negative views of teaching as ‘not very prestigious’ (p.22), or had considered and rejected taking a PGCE because they perceived the course itself as potentially ‘boring’ or ‘frustrating’, and lacking in challenge. Others had seen undertaking a teacher preparation course as potentially limiting their future career options, while many were unwilling to continue their studies for an extra year. By contrast, and in the words of one participant, the short time-scale and limited commitment inherent in the Teach First approach, “ ‘just kind of opened your options rather than closing them down’ ” (p.23), while the scheme’s energetic marketing exploited recognised ‘pull’ factors such as the chance of personally making a difference to children’s lives.

Although Hutchings *et al.*'s (2006) report is focused on Teach First it was explicitly commissioned with the aim of enhancing practice in ITP as a whole, by assessing the potential for transferring any innovations that proved successful into other entry routes. Accordingly, the authors draw attention to broader questions such as whether the TDA and providers currently place enough stress on transferable skills in their attempts to attract

recruits into teaching (or, indeed, in the training provided), and whether young teachers could be effectively used as ambassadors for the profession.

The emphasis here on transferable skills could have relevance for some groups of potential teachers who, other evidence suggests, may still experience difficulties in identifying a progression route that is right for them. In their research on the impact of a range of equal opportunities issues on teachers' careers, Powney *et al.* (2003) identified "a perception that support staff do not have systematic progression routes into teaching" (p.69), while some respondents who had qualified overseas were critical of the preparation and support made available to them. Although the same authors comment that the overall number of disabled respondents (104) was too low for them to make meaningful generalisations, they do report that '[M]ost respondents with disabilities reported experiencing difficulties both in entering and in making progress in the profession' (p.vii).

## **1.8 Attempts to boost recruitment to ITP**

In addition to 'Teach First' and the local and regional initiatives reported above that aimed to boost recruitment onto the GTP route (Ofsted, 2005; Ofsted, 2006), there have been a number of attempts (both small- and large-scale in nature) to boost recruitment into the profession more generally. The University of Liverpool School Placement Scheme (McKernan and Taylor, 2002), required university students (volunteers from any discipline) to visit a local school for ten half-day sessions to assist with classroom activities. As a result, many of the participants reaffirmed their original intention to teach, and for several the experiences kindled an interest in teaching. For a small number who had intended to teach, the placement cast doubts on their plans, although as McKernan and Taylor (2002) comment, this should not necessarily be seen as a negative result.

A small-scale mentoring project reported by Foster and Newman (2003) aimed at encouraging more young men into primary school teaching, with male teachers acting as mentors in a one week school placement. The conclusion indicated that:

"There is evidence that mentoring as a strategy made a significant contribution to the career experiences of the mentees, widening their 'horizons for action' in terms of career choice... [The] openness and the image of teaching presented by the mentors was significant in dispelling the notion of primary teaching as solely 'women's work'... Being mentored reinforced for the mentees that working with young children was something that males could be good at, could invest in, could find enjoyable, and gain satisfaction and reward from" (p.26).

The two schemes described above are significant because they aim to provide potential teachers with a realistic view of teaching. As will be seen below, this may have significant implications for retention.

Large scale initiatives have included major advertising campaigns (e.g. 'Those who can, teach', 'Use your head...'), increasing the number of routes into the profession (as described in the Introduction) and a number of financial incentives, including a 'training bursary' for those entering postgraduate programmes, and a Secondary Shortage Subject Scheme (SSSS).<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme (2004), first introduced as a pilot initiative in 2002, is available to NQTs employed to teach one or more of a range of designated shortage subjects, and provides for the repayment of one-tenth of a recipient's student loans for each year of a ten-year period (or until the individual leaves teaching).

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<sup>7</sup> The SSSS was a means-tested hardship fund for eligible trainees in secondary subjects designated as having a national shortage of teachers: design & technology; geography; information and communications technology; mathematics; modern languages; music; religious education; and science. The scheme was discontinued in July 2006.

The evaluation of the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme by Barmby and Coe (2004) includes a more general overview of recent financial incentives aimed at promoting teacher recruitment and retention. While the authors find some evidence in the literature that training bursaries do promote recruitment to ITP, the situation is complicated by the impact of student debt: "With the transfer of the cost of higher education from the State to the individual, any training course will have to compete both with a student's desire to minimise their existing levels of debt and their views of teaching as a career" (Howson, 2001; cited in Barmby and Coe, 2004: 11). We shall return in Chapter 8 to the potential impact of student debt on beginning teachers, and its implications for their retention in the profession.

In their survey of English, mathematics or science teachers participating in the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme, Barmby and Coe invited respondents to rate the importance of various financial incentives in attracting them into teaching. Of the 246 respondents, 84 per cent rated teaching bursaries as 'quite important' or 'very important', compared with 49 per cent for Golden Hellos and 38 per cent for the loans repayment scheme; 78 per cent stated that the loans repayment initiative had had no influence on their decision to enter teaching. However, the implications of this finding are modified by responses suggesting that many were unaware of the scheme prior to entering ITP, a situation echoed in one study of the 'Golden Hello' initiative (Hopwood, 2004; cited in Barmby and Coe, 2004).

The long-term results of such strategies to promote recruitment still need to be addressed. Edmonds *et al.* (2002) note that:

"The available evidence suggests that ... [financial] incentives encourage some people to apply for teaching, but that other factors (such as the location of the training institution) are more influential for many" (p.iv).

While Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) speculate that the £6,000 training bursary for PGCE students might encourage "students with less positive expectations of teaching as a career... to give teaching a try" (p.260), Menter *et al.* (2002) have argued that "Each initiative tends to produce an immediate upturn in recruitment but this has often been short-lived and has not always produced applicants of the right quality" (p.3). This caveat is reinforced by Purcell *et al.*'s (2005) comment that while their interviews demonstrated that the availability of training salaries had enabled some highly motivated candidates to enter teaching, "we also found some evidence to indicate that they had... attracted less suitable entrants" (p.3). A wider but similar point is made by Guarino *et al.* (2006) who note, in their 2006 review of literature on teacher recruitment and retention in the USA, that "the issue of teacher quality is integrally related to the interplay of supply and demand" (p.176), but report finding few research studies that consider issues of recruitment alongside teacher quality, partly, they suggest, because the characteristics of the latter are both hard to define and difficult to identify.

## 1.9 Conclusion

Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant (2003) argue that schools need to adjust to accommodate career changers, and that policy makers should look more critically at why people are coming into teaching, where they are coming from and whether and how institutions can adapt to meet their needs and aspirations. In particular, there could be more recognition of both the responsibilities (childcare in particular), and work-place experiences that career changers bring. In addition, the widening range of training routes available to would-be teachers brings with it a need for ITP institutions to counsel trainees in choosing the route most appropriate to their personal circumstances (Basit *et al.* 2006). The research cited in this chapter (indeed the vast majority of research in this area) provides an insight only into actual, not potential, career changers. Research into the characteristics of the latter group would also be valuable as a means of informing recruitment strategies.

One additional factor that emerges from several of the studies referred to in this chapter is that the motivation, and in some cases the increasingly diverse prior experience, of entrants to the profession may influence their preconceptions about teaching. These issues, and others, will be addressed in the chapter that follows.

## Chapter 2: Student teachers' preconceptions, expectations and needs

### 2.1 Introduction

"When beginning teachers embark on training, they are no more empty vessels than are children as they enter classrooms. It is now widely accepted that the personal knowledge and beliefs they bring with them are both complex and influential" (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006: 42).

For some time research has suggested that, like all learners, student teachers view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of concepts, experience and beliefs (e.g. Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997). This chapter will consider some of the arguments for taking trainees' prior beliefs and circumstances into account, and explore reports of student teachers' preconceptions and expectations about both teaching and initial teacher preparation.

### 2.2 The importance of what student teachers 'bring' to ITP

"It is becoming increasingly important to understand how teachers' initial expectations about teaching as a career impact on their decision to become teachers and to remain in the profession" (Kyriacou *et al.* 2003: 262).

This is, indeed, a subject discussed widely in the literature. Feiman-Nemser *et al.* (1987), in the United States, and Wubbels (1992) and Korthagen *et al.* (2001), in the Netherlands, have shown that trainees' preconceptions about teaching and student learning can impact on their experience of ITP and their early professional development. In this country, Bramald *et al.* (1991) found that some secondary phase trainees came to their courses with strong teacher role identities, through which they interpreted the subsequent teaching and learning process. Sugrue (1996), and more recently Raffo and Hall (2006), have suggested that trainees' prior beliefs can in some cases create barriers to their receptiveness to the different component parts of ITP programmes, since "the complex and real interdependencies of personal biography, identity, predispositions and the social and cultural dimensions of context create particular paradigms of understanding" (Raffo and Hall, 2006: 60). Writing in the US, Haritos (2004) argues that it is important to identify candidates' teaching concerns and teacher role beliefs *before* their entry into teacher education programmes, since these are likely to play a key role in their professional development. She characterises such beliefs as 'interpretative lenses' through which trainees will attempt to identify, understand and ultimately resolve their teaching concerns, many of which may have 'context-specific origins' that relate to candidates' own former experiences as students. An understanding of trainees' early perceptions and beliefs may therefore enable teachers of teachers to offer them more appropriate support and / or challenges, and so help them to learn and gain more from their ITP programmes and be less likely to withdraw from ITP or (subsequently) from the profession. Raffo and Hall (2006) suggest that trainees themselves should be encouraged "to explore from the outset their own predispositions and forms of cultural capital and how and why these appear to be afforded in certain contexts and not in others" (p64). Fosnot (1996), on the other hand, argues that ITP programmes should begin by establishing trainees' existing pedagogical beliefs and subsequently challenging these "through activity reflection and discourse" (Fosnot, 1996: 206). It is important to recognise however, that the task of modifying the beliefs and prior conceptions of learners in general and student teachers in particular is an extremely difficult undertaking due to their entrenched nature (Zeichner and Liston, 1987; Duit, 1996).

## 2.3 Student teachers' preconceptions and expectations of teaching and ITP

A number of English studies have explored in some detail the expectations that trainees may 'bring' to their ITP. Pendry (1997), for instance, found that some student teachers come to their training with pre-existing ideas about pupils as learners, about ways of learning and the complexities of classrooms. Hobson (2002; 2003) found that the majority of trainees enrolled on one-year secondary PGCE programmes expected to learn more from time spent in schools and with school-based mentors, than from time spent in universities and with university tutors. While this view may reflect one aspect of the theory / practice debate, research also suggests that many trainees (especially those without friends or family in the profession) may have based their conceptions of teaching and learning on their own experiences as 'consumers' of education, either as pupils themselves or, for some older trainees, as parents of school-age children. If for them the life and activities of the staff room have so far taken place - literally - behind a closed door, it is hardly surprising that images of the classroom dominate their early conceptions of teaching and may also impact on their expectations of ITP. Indeed, Lortie (1975) suggested that young people's long 'apprenticeship of observation' during their schooling may have a greater influence on them than their subsequent formal preparation to be professional teachers.

In a small scale study of the motivation and preconceptions of PGCE trainees who had recently started their courses, Younger *et al.* (2004) describe how participants recalled inspirational teachers from their own schooling, with an emphasis on their effective instructional strategies and positive, caring relationships with pupils which were based on respect, factors which were also dominant in the trainees' characterisation of 'good' and 'bad' teachers. The authors comment that while their interviewees had some understanding of models of classroom practice, their grasp of its essential characteristics was relatively unsophisticated at this early stage of their ITP. These student teachers expected their university-based learning to focus on subject knowledge (around half of them were concerned about their own deficiencies in this respect); they were often less certain of the value of 'theory'. Almost all placed great value on learning from observation, but many were uncertain as to how exactly they would make use of what they had observed in their own practice. Members of the group expressed general enthusiasm for 'learning through teaching', but some expected to learn directly from engaging in the activity itself, while others thought their learning would result rather from the subsequent analysis of their successes and failures, and / or the supportive 'feedback'<sup>8</sup> of experienced teachers.

Younger *et al.* (2004) conclude that the trainees studied were unable to understand the interrelation between the various components of their course, or to translate knowledge of their own skills and strengths (at this stage still related more to individual characteristics than to teaching skills) into personal strategies for good classroom practice. These authors argue that more priority should be given during ITP to helping trainees to understand both *what* they need to learn in order to become effective teachers, and *how* that learning process will take place.

Smith and McLay's (2007) small-scale study investigating the views of GTP and PGCE trainees suggests that the expectations of entrants to ITP may vary with the form of provision chosen. When respondents were asked what prior expectations they had of the school-based aspect of their training, the feature most commonly mentioned by respondents considered as a whole was of 'hands-on experience' or 'practical experience'. However, when GTP respondents were considered separately the expectation identified by the highest number (though not necessarily ranked first) was of 'professional support'.

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<sup>8</sup> For further discussion on the use of this term see 'A preliminary note on terminology', p.3.

Other research has suggested that as well as trainees' preconceptions about the form their teacher preparation will take, it is important to consider their views on what they wish to achieve, since their individual "values, preconceptions and concerns shape their interpretations of everything they encounter and the criteria by which they judge their success in every task they undertake" (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006: 42). Drawing on their work with primary phase trainees, Edwards and Ogden (1998) found that many trainees come into schools with ready-made identity projects they want to enact, being essentially concerned with presenting an appearance of competent performance to pupils, mentors and tutors. Edwards and Ogden maintain that it is important for teacher educators and mentors to engage trainees in critical interrogation of their conceptions of what learning to teach involves. Similarly, Haritos (2004) recommends the use at an early stage in ITP of exercises that call on trainees to identify and explore their personal teacher role beliefs and concerns, and explain the reasoning behind them.

This focus on trainees' awareness of their personal characteristics and conceptions raises the subject of individual identity, which we address more specifically in the sections that follow, and to which we shall also have reason to return in subsequent chapters.

## **2.4 Student teachers' individual identities**

In addition to the different life histories which trainees bring to teaching (and which may already have influenced their choice of ITP route), a number of authors draw attention to the inherent variation not only in how student teachers learn but also, for example, in the concerns they experience before and during ITP and the different ways in which they deal with stress. This is part of a wider dialogue on the need to consider trainees as unique individuals who will eventually become not 'model teachers' (for there is no one ideal specification), but individual teachers with a range of characteristics. Younger *et al.* (2004) stress the need for teacher educators to help trainees understand and cope with the complexities of teaching, while at the same time forging a professional identity built on their own personal experiences and skills. Hawkey (1995) argues that courses which focus predominantly on teaching programmes, core tasks and activities prescribed for all, may pay insufficient attention to the range of individual prior experience and different learning styles. She argues that reflective practice is more likely to be promoted by approaches that acknowledge the individual's social or emotional context, and so offer opportunities to integrate public with personal knowledge. As Vallance (1997) points out, there is no single personality type that characterises a teacher: different students may learn differently and relate best to different types of learning stimuli, and Vallance describes these typical learning styles in some detail before discussing the differing needs of each type, for example within a mentoring relationship. Such knowledge, he argues, may enhance awareness and promote communication rather than confusion. However, essential for such considerations is the meaningful sharing of personal experience, and many authors stress the need of student teachers for "a language with which they can share their personal experience and learn from others' public experiences" (Tann, 1993; cited in Totterdell and Lambert, 1998: 364).

Some authors have argued that initial professional education needs to take more account of the dominant emotional needs of students (McNally *et al.* 1994), and have chosen to focus on the individual rather than the course, and especially on affective issues. These will be addressed in more detail in the following chapter, in the context of the role and impact of the emotions in ITP.

## **2.5 Student teachers' individual needs**

In addition to their prior conceptions, expectations and concerns about both teaching and ITP, would-be teachers embarking on their ITP bring with them a range of individual needs, depending on their personal circumstances. As the choice of ITP routes increases, and more people for whom the 'traditional' routes were less suitable or convenient enter ITP, there is an accompanying expansion in the range and diversity of individual needs. In some cases at



least, whether or not these needs are addressed satisfactorily by the training provider may impact heavily on the trainee's subsequent chances of success or failure. Whether the help required by an individual is practical or intellectual, or a combination of both, it will need to be taken into account from the very beginning of ITP, or even from the recruitment stage if counselling on the choice of course is needed, as advocated by Basit *et al.* (2006).

While further research in this area would be useful, issues already identified in the existing literature include the need for an understanding and even proactive approach to childcare (especially important for trainees who are single parents) (Basit *et al.*, 2006); a sympathetic response to the differing circumstances of mature students (Coles, 2001); a willingness to meet reasonably the special needs of disabled applicants (Powney *et al.*, 2003); and an awareness that candidates who have come to teaching via access routes - or, more generally, those with lower grades (Basit *et al.* 2006) - may initially benefit from additional and targeted learning support. A more specific recommendation was made by Ofsted (2006), who noted that although the prior experience of some GTP trainees as non-teaching staff was usually taken into account, their training needs relating to the change of role from assistant to teacher were often neglected.

In a wider sense, too, the Ofsted inspection reports on the Graduate Teacher Programme give an illuminating picture of the needs of trainees following an employment-based route. The first inspection of the DRBs administering the GTP scheme (Ofsted, 2005) claimed that only half of DRBs inspected had effective systems in place to identify prior experience and learning, and thus establish a baseline for subsequent training; some had made no needs assessment at all. In both inspections it was noted that the subject knowledge of candidates for secondary teaching was often patchy, leading to their limited understanding of key concepts and, subsequently, lower expectations of pupil learning. The issue of shortcomings in subject knowledge has a much wider application: the limitations in specialist graduates' knowledge of their subject as they would be required to teach it are touched on by Prentice (1997).

Given that the range of available ITP routes has steadily increased during the decade between the early 1990s and the early years of the twenty first century (for example through the introduction of SCITT in 1993 and the launch of Teach First in 2003), the concept of a thorough initial assessment of individual needs, as recommended by Ofsted after both of these inspections, becomes more relevant. Such an approach could be applied with benefit to the whole spectrum of routes into teaching, though this would prove extremely costly in terms of the time required.

## 2.6 Conclusions

Research suggests that a range of factors external to the actual content of ITP programmes may help to determine how trainees interpret aspects of their training, how they cope with its practical and intellectual demands, and how they develop their identities as teachers. Student teachers are likely to engage with different ideas in different contexts depending on the route followed, and their experiences prior to entering ITP will, to some extent, shape their subsequent experiences. It is important for their initial expectations to be seen as part of a continuum, and for research to explore "how such expectations change during the first years of teaching, and the extent to which such expectations impact on the decision to remain in the profession" (Kyriacou *et al.*, 2003: 262).

While the initial concerns and teacher role beliefs that trainees bring with them to teacher education have been variously addressed, to date (at least prior to the commencement of the empirical strand of the *Becoming a Teacher* study) there appears to have been rather less research (except in very general terms) on student teachers' conceptions at the time their ITP starts, of the form their chosen route will take, the different activities and learning experiences in which they will participate, and how these different components may combine to facilitate their effective learning of teaching skill. Such starting points are important: they

may 'block' or distort some elements of the ITP programme, or lead to disappointment or dissatisfaction if other expected elements are not provided.

There is a need here for further research, and in particular for studies that span the threshold between two identities: accepted candidate for ITP, and student teacher. The experiences of student teachers themselves are considered in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3: Student teachers' experiences of Initial Teacher Preparation**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The experiences of those undertaking ITP take many forms, and may be discussed in correspondingly different ways, all of which play some part in the change from hopeful trainee to newly qualified teacher. This chapter considers the impact on participants of three very different aspects of this process: the organisational, the conceptual, and the personal.

Few research studies in this country have sought to compare student teachers' experiences across different ITP routes, so we begin by offering a brief overview of some of the research evidence in this area from both the UK and elsewhere. Next we examine some aspects of how student teachers view their programmes: their perceptions of 'theory' and 'practice', and their developing concerns. Finally we consider the impact of affective issues on individual trainees' experience, including their perspectives on school-based mentoring.

### **3.2 Links between HEI-based training routes and student teachers' experiences and outcomes**

Where training pathway has been taken into account in research on student and beginning teachers' experiences, such studies have tended to be small scale, and often restricted to a single provider; most of these have compared PGCE and undergraduate routes. For example, a study by Cains and Brown (1996) found that, in their early teaching careers, primary BEd students felt better prepared, more competent and less stressed than their PGCE counterparts. While they also felt less well prepared to deal with record keeping, the authors suggest that this may be because the longer and more detailed BEd training had given them a greater awareness of what was involved. O'Hara and Cameron-Jones (1997) report survey findings combined with an analysis of final grades received by graduating PGCE and BEd primary students, and suggest that the two programmes produced teachers with different strengths, with PGCE NQTs being relatively stronger on assessment and subject content, and BEd NQTs on the classroom skills of communication and management. In another (Scottish) study of the experiences of NQTs trained on BEd and PGCE routes, Draper *et al.* (1991) found many similarities between the two cohorts. Both groups identified class organisation and management as the outstanding problem that they faced initially, but this was subsequently replaced by time management. Whilst PGCE-trained teachers were slower to experience this transition, by the end of the second year's teaching there were no clear distinctions between the views of teachers from the two training routes in terms of the areas causing problems.

A study by Fraser and Taylor (1999) of Scottish head teachers' views on routes into primary teaching throws an interesting sidelight on the situation in Scotland, where at the time of writing a quota was applied at the intake point of training to ensure a balance on exit of 55 per cent BEd- to 45 per cent PCGE-trained teachers. The prevailing view of the head teachers consulted was that teachers trained by these two routes were not distinguishable in terms of quality, and that other factors such as personality and individual skills were more significant. However, alongside this majority view was a contradictory one that BEd graduates were better equipped to teach, with a third of the 280 participating head teachers expressing a preference for teachers who had trained via the BEd route. The authors note that all but one of these head teachers had themselves trained through BEd or similar courses, and question the extent to which their perception was governed by objective professional judgement. Although the 'pro-BEd' group consistently took a more sceptical view of the competence of PGCE graduates, considerably fewer perceived the PGCE-trained as needing specific additional support; in addition, the authors found nothing in the probationer reports they studied to confirm the entrenched views of the minority group. They

concluded that at the time the study took place there was some evidence for an element of 'like by like' in the selection of new teachers, and that this could well blur any debate on how best to train a primary teacher.

It is important to acknowledge that comparisons between the different ITP routes can be problematic for a range of reasons, including the fact that the characteristics of trainees taking different routes can vary in a number of different ways. In Draper *et al.*'s (1997) study of Scottish BEd and PGCE-trained teachers, for example, the authors note a number of gender differences, and discuss the possibility that these may help to determine the characteristics of the BEd group, which is more predominantly female. Kuzmic (1994), on the other hand, also considering the relative merits of PGCE and Scottish BEd students, suggests that the greater maturity, range of life experiences and prior experience of alternative employment among those following the BEd may mean that they are more able to understand the dynamics of the organisation in which they work, and so are better prepared to cope in a school. Different effects can also result from the range of selection procedures employed by different providers within and across routes (Draper and Sharp, 1999). Legitimate comparisons would need to take account of variations in ITP provision, across providers, and within the same route. Comparisons are especially problematic in relation to SCITT, GTP and RTP programmes, where trainees must have approved individualised training plans.

Reviewing the research evidence in this area, Chan and Lai (2002) comment that many contributions to the debate on undergraduate versus postgraduate teacher training programmes consist of logical arguments based on the proponents' personal views on the intrinsic merits of the two forms of provision. They also warn against giving too much credence to claims that relate the merit of either route to its ability to attract or retain students: they point out that the number of places available will always be subject to the influence of socio-economic factors, government policy and other external factors. Thus, Chan and Lai (2002) conclude that the research findings studied offer no conclusive evidence to support the phasing out or exclusive adoption of either (undergraduate or postgraduate) route, and suggest instead that there is a valid place for both within overall training provision. In particular, if the two routes appeal - and are more suited - to different candidates, there could be a value in keeping both.

Chan and Lai's (2002) reservations about the potential influence of subjective views in the debate on teacher preparation are implicitly echoed by Boyd *et al.* (2006) in their comment that "although policy debates about the relative value of teacher education and the benefits of different pathways into teaching are replete with opinion, they are lean on data" (p156). In contrast to the studies discussed above, most of which rely largely on the self-reported experiences and/or views of participants, Boyd *et al.* (2006) describe an attempt to investigate a range of pathways into teaching and assess how far they relate to a variety of outcomes: "where teachers teach, how long they remain in the classroom, and student achievement ... as measured by value-added analyses" (p155). Although their work is grounded in New York City it has far wider relevance, especially since the authors freely discuss the conceptualisation and overall design of the research and explore some of its methodological challenges.

With the increasing availability of employment based-routes, research is also beginning to consider the somewhat different circumstances encountered by the growing number of trainees who have taken this path. These are addressed in the next section, before we move on to examine some major themes that seem common to the experiences of would-be teachers, whichever route they choose to follow.

### 3.3 The experiences of trainees following employment-based routes

Ofsted's (2005) first report in its three-year programme of inspecting DRBs largely reflects its primary purpose of supporting the assessment process leading to the accreditation of individual DRBs as providers of ITP. However, in doing so it also provides an overview of the training offered to participants in the GTP, and this is amplified and developed in the report for the following year. Although by then Ofsted identified signs of improvements in practice and partnership management, they still found that "while DRBs attracted good candidates into teaching, the outcomes they achieved at the end of their training indicated that they did not always fulfil their potential" (Ofsted, 2006: 1).

Ofsted identified a range of weaknesses in the scheme's implementation, including a lack of clarity in identifying and meeting trainees' needs: although the number of detailed and individual training plans had increased, most trainees still appeared to be working with generic plans that focused on specific activities rather than on what they needed to learn. Support for subject knowledge was perceived as inadequate, and too dependent on the self-identification of needs; similarly, in the previous year, Ofsted reported that "audits for secondary ICT trainees...concentrate on software applications and neglect ICT concepts and processes" (Ofsted, 2005: 7). Moreover, some DRBs were said to be failing in their duty to secure adequate training time for salaried trainees.

Of particular concern were signs of trainees using 'survival techniques' that could inhibit their future development as teachers once the training period had ended: while GTP trainees appeared to be generally more confident in their use of class- and behaviour management strategies than were their PGCE counterparts, the GTP group were also found to "demonstrate a narrower repertoire of teaching strategies which often did not extend beyond the models that predominated in their main school. GTP trainees' planning was also weaker" (Ofsted, 2006: 3). Moreover, "in contrast to trainees following other ITP routes, few GTP trainees read recent classroom research or educational publications. This hampered their ability to evaluate their teaching and pupils' learning. It also restricted the range of teaching strategies they could call upon" (Ofsted, 2006: 14). Few took assessment into account when planning lessons, or made effective use of a plenary session to evaluate learning.

Many of these comments are echoed in Dowrick's (1997) paper comparing Articled Teachers<sup>9</sup> on a heavily school-based course with more traditionally-trained PGCE students. Although the findings provided evidence that both groups did reflect on their teaching, the reports of the Articled Teachers suggested that they were engaging in less constructive reflection than the PGCE students. They made fewer forward-looking comments, gave narrower answers to analytical questions about their teaching, and talked less about their own learning. One reason that has been suggested for this is that the longer period spent immersed in a school ethos has the effect of discouraging reflection. The author, however, finds evidence for an alternative cause in contrasts within the students' accounts of their own learning and the help received from others. The Articled Teachers reported receiving mainly organisational and emotional support: this leads to the conclusion that their mentors and class teachers may have focused on supporting and managing their school experience at the expense of educating them, whereas the PGCE students' tutors and class teachers had concentrated more on their educative and pastoral roles. In effect, he argues, these Articled Teachers may not have been taught to reflect.

Dowrick (1997) argues that while this may have been a temporary effect associated with the introduction of school-based courses, it will cease to be a problem only if it is recognised and addressed by teacher educators. A similar caveat could be attached to the initial

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<sup>9</sup> The Articled Teacher Scheme was a two year postgraduate route into teaching in England, sometimes referred to as an 'enhanced PGCE', which was introduced in 1989 and ran until 1994. The programme was organised and co-ordinated through HEIs but its defining characteristic was that trainees spent 80 per cent of their programmes in schools.

shortcomings of the GTP route. In 2005, GTP trainees were characterised by Ofsted as highly motivated, hard-working and with strong professional values, notably their commitment to inclusion and raising pupil achievement. But while almost all satisfactorily achieved the Standards by the end of their training, only around half were found to have done so at a good level, compared with around three-quarters of PGCE trainees. Similarly, while the proportions of GTP trainees judged to be teaching 'satisfactory' or 'good' lessons were similar to those trained on other ITP routes, fewer were said to have taught 'very good' lessons. This could have implications for their long-term success as teachers: "despite GTP trainees' high levels of commitment, not one of the trainees taught well when they had received weak training" (Ofsted, 2006: 14).

One reason for this could be that the greater maturity of many GTP trainees compared with their PGCE or BEd counterparts leads to an appearance of coping that has the effect of reducing the support on offer. Most GTP participants in Smith and McLay's (2007) small-scale study of trainees' experiences recalled starting out with high expectations of 'professional support', but almost a third identified a lack of support from their schools as a negative factor in their training. Moreover, while some trainees were enthusiastically appreciative of the university-led component of their training, among others "there was a strong sense that the university should have provided more which was relevant to their needs" (p.50). In some cases the dissatisfaction reported was with subject support, but a more general concern appears to have been the level of preparation for classroom management, as in one trainee's complaint that "there has been some training on class teaching but it appears to be working with model children. Nobody really seems to give the answers to the important issue *before we take the class*" (p.50).

Whilst respondents to the Teach First evaluation (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006) gave high praise to the subject studies element of the preparatory Summer Institute<sup>10</sup>, some of their comments on the 'professional studies' sessions sound remarkably similar to those of the GTP trainee cited above:

"[W]e do need to talk about issues, but sometimes we go into them far too much and you don't feel you ever achieve anything and we talk about differentiation quite a lot and its kind of, well how do we differentiate? ... How do I prepare a work sheet for someone who doesn't speak English? And there is that practical side which I felt is lacking" (p.29).

Many repeatedly expressed the view that "it would have been better to have less of what they refer to as 'theory', and more practical advice and information to enable them to survive" (p.29). These two issues, the theory / practice dichotomy and concerns about survival, will be addressed across the whole spectrum of entry routes into teaching in the sections that follow.

### **3.4 Student teachers' accounts of 'theory' versus 'practice'**

Much of the literature discussing student teachers' accounts of their experiences during ITP has focused on their differential evaluations of various components within their training programmes. Studies conducted before the statutory requirement for partnership working between HEIs and schools was introduced, tended to suggest that trainees placed high value on the practical and school-based components of their programmes while holding negative attitudes towards higher education-based components, particularly the study of the academic 'foundation disciplines' of history, psychology and sociology of education (e.g. Williams, 1963; Taylor, 1969; Lomax, 1973; HMI, 1979). This dichotomy of views is not limited to teacher preparation in the UK: in Switzerland for example Hascher *et al.* (2004) found that many of the student teachers they studied differentiated between theory (considered as

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<sup>10</sup> The Summer Institute was a residential summer school, lasting six weeks, which Teach First participants attended prior to being accepted as trainee teachers by the training provider.

'useless knowledge') and the learning experiences of their practicum, to an extent that could be summed up by the title of their article, 'Forget about theory, practice is all'.

In the TTA's 2003 survey of NQTs, respondents were asked to consider the links between the practical, school-experience parts of their training, and the more 'theoretical' (generally HEI-based) components. Sixty-three per cent of the NQTs who responded rated the links between these different components of their training as good or very good. To what extent such 'theoretical' components of their training have informed these beginner teachers' teaching is not clear; it is, however, important to recognise that some forms of experience may impact upon teachers' thoughts and actions without their conscious awareness of this, via what is referred to as implicit learning (Claxton, 1997; Tomlinson, 1999a; Atkinson and Claxton, 2000; Eraut, 2007).

Smagorinsky *et al.* (2003) offer an extensive exploration of the relationship between theory and practice by proposing a construct based on Vygotsky's (1978) notion of concepts, which distinguishes between *spontaneous concepts*, learned through cultural practice and tied to specific contexts, and *scientific* (or, in an alternative translation, *academic*) *concepts*, learned through formal instruction, grounded in general principles and readily applicable to new situations. According to this distinction, instruction in scientific concepts is sterile unless the abstract knowledge taught is confirmed and given life by direct experience, through empirical demonstration, observation or activity. It is the interplay between formal knowledge and knowledge gained through activity that enables people to consider issues beyond their direct experience.

This construct of concepts given life by experience suggests a scenario in which exposure to theory is followed by some personal experience of the theory in action. However, the possibility of an alternative sequence is implicit in a question posed in the course of Hutchings *et al.*'s (2006) evaluation of the Teach First scheme: "at what point in teacher training and professional development are trainees and teachers most receptive to theoretical insights about, for example, the nature of teaching and learning? How could teacher training courses best enable such ideas to have a maximum impact?" (p.87). This question arises naturally from Hutchings *et al.*'s own findings that "while in the early stages, the trainees see little value in 'theory' ... at a later stage when they have had substantial experience, many of them begin to look for and appreciate theoretical insights" (p.30). One element contributing to this greater appetite for theory is the fading, to some extent at least, of a very natural focus on the need to 'survive' in the classroom; another is the accumulation of direct personal experience on which to reflect, and a corresponding need for some external input into this reflection.

It has been suggested (Goodlad, 1990; Smagorinsky *et al.*, 2003) that student teachers' failure to see the relevance of theory is due in part to the 'fragmentation' resulting from the conflicting perspectives inherent in most teacher education programmes. Trainees will take as their starting point what Raffo and Hall describe as "their own predispositions and forms of cultural capital" (2006: 64), which will then be reinforced, challenged or modified in the course of their teacher preparation. However, since schools are unlikely to reinforce the same concepts as were offered during ITP, the latter in turn will almost certainly "recede or be reformulated" (Smagorinsky *et al.*, 2003: 1410) in the new setting of the workplace. Central to these authors' argument is the idea that the development of concepts will also involve growing into a culture's values and practices. Smagorinsky *et al.* see practice as a social activity, based in the everyday world and constrained by social norms. However, the motives and goals of different "communities of practice" (p.1410) - universities, schools, professional organisations - may vary and even be mutually exclusive, producing "a great point of disjuncture" (p.1407) for student teachers. Moreover, if as unsupported NQTs these former students come under pressure to conform to different norms in their new environment, they may well find it hard to maintain their 'ideological loyalty' to concepts inculcated during ITP. Raffo and Hall (2006), however, see these tensions as offering an opportunity for teacher trainers to explore with their trainees "the productive interplay between the school as

a site of practice and the university where meaning and insights about that practice can be developed” (p.65).

Since the introduction in England of partnership arrangements, research has reported a wider range of attitudes towards the different components of ITP programmes. While some studies (Blake *et al.*, 1995; Asher and Malet, 1999; Foster 1999; Hobson, 2003) have suggested that student teachers are still often sceptical of the more ‘theoretical’ (and HEI-based) aspects of their training, other research (Holligan, 1997; Furlong *et al.*, 2000) suggests that many of them now take a more positive view. For example, Williams and Soares (2000) offer evidence of high levels of student teacher satisfaction with HEI-based work, and high levels of support amongst them for “training that examines the principles behind the practice of teaching” and “learning about how children learn” (Williams and Soares, 2000: 15-19). What such findings do not tell us, however, is *why* respondents thought such aspects were important or whether they felt that it was important to use such knowledge to inform or reflect upon their teaching. In a small scale study of four secondary-phase, postgraduate programmes, Hobson (2003) found that whilst most trainees expressed support for such ‘theoretical’ aspects of their training, only a minority of these saw this ‘theoretical knowledge’ as informing their practical work in schools or assisting them to develop their practical teaching capability. The majority viewed it as separate from their practice but of intrinsic value in that it served as a source of ‘background’ information, or (in a few cases) needed only for such extrinsic reasons as association with professional status.

It is also possible that trainees’ continuing perceptions of a dichotomy between theory and practice may be unconsciously reinforced by the teachers tasked with their support. In a study of four postgraduate training programmes, Evans and Abbott (1997) found that many mentors perceived ‘theory’ in terms of professional studies and subject / methods studies, as distinct from classroom-based practice, and appeared to lack the confidence to incorporate such elements into their work with trainees. As Hascher *et al.* (2004) point out, reflective teaching also needs to be learned, and it is the mentor’s duty to support this, as it is to promote attitudes that foster lifelong learning:

“As long as mentors and student teachers focus exclusively on experience, essential learning aspects are lost during practicum and the gap between theory and practice persists or even deepens” (p.13).

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) strongly advocate that the core of beginning teachers’ professional learning should be located in schools (though closely integrated with a supporting HEI curriculum), arguing that “learning that is primarily work-based has an enormous ... advantage in that it need not incorporate problematic distinctions between theory and practice” (p.46). However, findings from the initial studies of these authors’ action research project on structured observation established that “experienced teachers take for granted the expertise and thinking embedded in their day-to-day teaching, do not easily ... recognise its complexity and importance, and often find it difficult to unpick in any detail” (p.86). Nevertheless, Hagger and McIntyre suggest that the true potential of the school-based element in ITP will not be realised until student teachers are enabled to gain access to the craft-based knowledge of experienced teachers, the “knowledge in use” (p.35) that is “largely tacit and embedded in practice” (p.37), and thus only to be understood “in a way that takes account of the particularity of practice” (p.33). This recalls Tomlinson’s (1999a) comment that:

“Teaching is purposeful and therefore, to be useful, exemplification of teaching probably also needs to give access not only to the external events of classroom process and strategy, including the formative and summative evaluation of pupil learning, but also to the teacher’s internal perspective, including their conscious thoughts, decisions and reflections in the course of action, situated within the context of their longer-term planning, evaluation / assessment and reflective analysis” (p.541).



In both cases, what is important is that trainees are enabled to experience through observation not just the modelling of behaviour, but the workings in real time of theory-in-practice; and that, to be fully effective, this process should be supported by a clearly defined focus and subsequent follow-up (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006), or intensified through frequent and regular repetition and some form of interactive support (Tomlinson, 1999a).

### 3.5 The role of reflection in initial teacher preparation

Reflecting on some of the tensions between 'theory' and 'practice' discussed in the previous section, Totterdell and Lambert (1998) urged the need for a reconceptualisation of ITP programmes that takes a more organic approach to the integration of theory and practice. The authors argue that theory should be conceived less as informing or driving practice, and more as a way of educating practitioners who are attempting to study and manage their own practice. This would appear to be another manifestation of theory-in-practice, but dependent on reflection for its realisation.

However, as LaBoskey (1993) concluded from her researches when attempting to arrive at a definition of reflection as it relates to teaching, "the meaning of reflection [is] not consistent among the theoreticians, researchers, or teacher educators who employed the term" (p.23). Her own initial attempt to construct a conceptual framework on the basis of an extensive literature review leads her to conclude that at the beginning of their ITP, students occupy a range of locations along "a continuum that extends from 'Common-sense thinkers' at one end to finished 'Pedagogical thinkers' at the other" (p.24). LaBoskey suggests that "perhaps only those who begin closer to the pedagogical end of the continuum" (whom she identifies by the term 'Alert Novices'), can benefit from a reflective education program' (p.24), though 'Common-sense Thinkers', when provided with very powerful reflective experiences that directly challenge misconceptions, may develop the capacity for pedagogical thinking" (p.25). An empirical application of this framework to student teachers enabled her to further refine her projected categorisation:

"The two groups could also be differentiated by the nature of the questions they asked: Alert Novices tended to ask 'why?' questions – 'Why am I doing what I am doing?' whereas the Common-sense Thinkers tended to ask 'how to' or 'what works' questions. In addition, results seemed to indicate that half of the Common-sense Thinkers were unreflective because of a cognitive inability and the other half because of an emotional interference. Thus, both ability and aptitude appear to be necessary for reflective thinking" (p.30).

LaBoskey finds that her study lends support to the view expressed by Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) that the "reflective process is a complex one in which both feelings and cognition are closely related and interactive" (p.11). She suggests that without the internal motivation to reflect, 'Common-sense Thinkers' may need to rely on the external stimulus of a specific assignment if they are to engage in reflection at all, but will also need help in developing internal spurs to reflection such as learning to ask 'why' questions: "An implication of this research is that structural aids to reflection matter" (p.33).

The work of Totterdell and Lambert (1998) also extends the concept of the reflective practitioner, this time by emphasising the importance to beginning teachers of reflecting both individually *and* within a communal context. Such deliberation can include "both strategies that can be learned" (such as how to identify both emergent ideas and problems) and "sensibilities that can be developed" (p.359), for example honing appropriate listening and talking skills and developing an ethical stance. Course features to promote this "thinking that... works through and on... lived experience" (p.360) could include profile tasks; pair work to plan, implement and evaluate a context-sensitive curriculum package; and tutor- or mentor-guided frameworks for reflection. An advantage of the communal element in this process is its power to widen the available frame of reference. As Hagger *et al.* (2008) point

out, “[t]here are limits ... to what beginning teachers with little accumulation of practice can learn from simply looking back on what they have done”. As a result, their future ability to learn “in new and diverse contexts” will be hampered unless they have also “learned how to go on learning” (p.174). One prerequisite for such an approach, however, is that trainees should be equipped with appropriate language for dealing with the concept of professional experience and communicating it to others, a proviso that Tomlinson (1999a) also extends to those teaching them.

Interestingly, Lunenberg and Willemse (2006) found that their work with teacher educators on forms of self-study research encouraged participants to become more self-aware, because (in their words) “it gave us a chance to reflect in the same way we always encourage our students to do” (p.88). As a result, as one participant explained, some became “more conscious about the differences between my frame of reference and those of my students” (p.88). This new understanding led them to identify a range of approaches to promote student-directed learning: the systematic use of strategies to develop reflection skills in their student teachers; greater clarity in how student teachers are asked to demonstrate the use of knowledge (for example, by stating a principle, translating a principle into practice, or testing a theory); more precise assessment of the level of support needed by student teachers in learning to learn, especially in learning to connect practice with theory; and more frequent discussions with student teachers on pedagogical choices.

Such functions are also exercised (and perhaps more crucially so) by the school-based mentors who support HEI-prepared trainees during their placement experience and play a critical role in the training on offer to those who opt for employment-based routes. We shall discuss the role of mentors more specifically in a later section, after first considering the range and impact of student teachers’ concerns throughout the course of their ITP.

### **3.6 Student teachers’ concerns**

In addition to their conscious or unconscious attitudes towards different elements of ITP provision, the literature suggests that student teachers tend to share a number of differing concerns, which vary depending on the stage they have reached in their training or personal development. Research has moved on since Fuller’s (1969) linear concerns-based model of pre-service teacher development, in which student teachers were seen to move sequentially through concerns about self to concerns about situation and task, and then to concerns about the students they teach and the impact of teaching. Nevertheless, the elements themselves remain key features in subsequent research findings, both at home and abroad. Kagan (1992) reviewed 40 research studies on professional growth among trainees and newly qualified teachers, and found that, in general, most trainees appear to be intensely concerned with the image of self-as-teacher at the outset of their training, but that, as their most urgent self-related concerns are resolved, their attention tends to shift towards concerns about situation and task, and the impact of their teaching on students (see also Nias, 1989; Burn *et al.*, 2000; Conway and Clark, 2003).

Berry and Loughran (2002) note that trainee teachers are often concerned most, at least in the *early* stages, with front-of-class ‘delivery’, and argue that one of the roles of teacher educators is to assist trainees to move beyond such concerns. However, Kagan’s (1992) review warns that the initial focus on self appears to be a necessary element in the process of teacher development, and that any attempts to shorten or abort it may be *counterproductive*.

As well as the concerns which arise during ITP, research suggests that once student teachers have completed their training their concerns shift again, drawing attention to issues which they feel ill-prepared to address in specific teaching contexts. For example, the TTA’s annual survey of NQTs (2003) which asked respondents about their experiences of ITP, suggested that many felt that they had not been well prepared to work with children with English as an additional language (EAL) or to teach pupils from minority ethnic groups. Other

surveys have revealed different concerns, such as a lack of confidence when dealing with pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties (Garner, 1996), or teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools (Hill, 1997).

Capel (2001) surveyed trainees at different stages of a secondary PGCE programme and found that at the beginning of their programme, they were most concerned with 'maintaining the appropriate degree of class control' whilst, over time, there was a rise in the incidence and importance of other concerns, such as 'meeting the needs of different kinds of students'. However, throughout their training, 'getting a favourable evaluation of my teaching' and 'doing well when a supervisor is present' were all ranked amongst trainees' top six concerns. Capel concludes that students do not pass through a sequence of concerns as previous research (e.g. by Fuller) has proposed, but only become concerned about the actual process of their teaching and its impact once they have addressed concerns about their 'self-survival' in the classroom. Following McIntyre *et al.* (1994), who noted that the concerns of individual trainees may well differ from those identified for the group as a whole, Capel also stresses the importance of seeking to identify the unique causes of concern for individual students, and to assist them in addressing these.

In a major study commissioned by the DfES on the effects on teachers' careers of age, disability, gender and sexual orientation, Powney *et al.* (2003) identify a range of specific concerns that apply mainly to minority groups within the wider student population. These range from the impact of inflexible logistics through insensitivity to discrimination. Despite married women students being accepted for teacher training for over 50 years, one informant commented that colleges still "don't manage women with children very well" (p.69), whilst many respondents with disabilities reported that ITP providers "put more emphasis on 'How are you going to cope?' than on identifying how to meet reasonably [their] special needs" (p.30). Basit *et al.* (2006) examine in more depth the specific challenges faced by minority ethnic trainees. Just under a quarter of those respondents to their survey who belonged to a minority ethnic group reported deliberate racial harassment in their placement schools; those responsible included not only pupils but in some cases other staff, at all levels from a head teacher down to fellow trainees. However, as Basit *et al.* point out, this is not the only form of racism encountered: "racism... can be overt or covert... deliberate or inadvertent; individual or institutional... a consequence of malice, jealousy, frustration, ignorance... or merely apathy" (p.407). These comments could be applied equally to discrimination against other individuals who differ in some way from the generality of students, such as the disabled.

One way in which both the particular and the general concerns of students can be addressed is through peer group discussion, which can enrich and extend the learning process by promoting its affective and emotional aspects (Hawkey, 1995), can provide the "opportunity to reframe situations and confront one's own assumptions" (Berry and Loughran, 2002; cited in Loughran and Russell (Eds.), 2002: 22), and can lead on to mutual support and the recognition of shared problems (Youn, 2000). Another important source of individual support is via the input of a school-based mentor, which is discussed below.

### **3.7 Student teachers' experiences of school-based mentoring**

Research has found that the school-based mentor or teacher tutor is one of the most powerful sources of influence on student teachers undergoing pre-service training (e.g. Su, 1992). Nettle (1998) identified evidence of an association between changes in trainees' beliefs and the beliefs held by their supervising teachers, whilst Hobson (2002) found that trainees perceive school-based mentoring to be a, if not *the*, key element of the ITP experience. His study indicated that trainees most value supportive, reassuring mentors who are prepared and able to make time for them, to offer practical advice and ideas relating to their teaching, and to provide constructive feedback on their teaching attempts (cf. Foster, 1999). In Martin and Rippon's (2003) exploration of student teachers' views as they looked forward to induction, 'approachability' was the characteristic most frequently mentioned (by 86 per cent of respondents) as desirable within the mentoring relationship.

While Koskela and Ganser (1998; cited in Simpson *et al.*, 2007: 489), typify school-based student teacher mentors (in Australia termed 'co-operating teachers') as either 'role models', 'guides' or 'facilitators', Feiman-Nemser (2001) identifies a range of mentor styles which could impede the learning of mentees. These included 'imposing styles', where the mentor forces his or her style on the mentee; and the 'laissez-faire' style, in which the mentee is not given sufficient support or guidance. The ideal mentor, for Feiman-Nemser, is the 'co-thinker', who scaffolds the mentee into self-awareness and deeper levels of thinking. For many student teachers, the perceived value of their school experience is affected by the degree to which they feel able to act independently, as teachers, in the classroom. McNally *et al.* (1997) found that trainees felt a need to be in charge, and suggested that they found it difficult to take control of a class in the presence of a teacher, and hard to accept a situation in which the transfer of control from the supervising teacher is partial, such as where the teacher stays in the room. The worst kind of experience, from the trainees' point of view, was when the teacher actively intervened during the lesson. Trainees preferred teachers to allow them a period of solo teaching to settle in before being observed, were concerned about being over-observed, and indicated that they preferred more informal modes of observation such as 'dropping in' (even unannounced) rather than formal observation (especially where the latter involved note taking).

In a study of student teachers' perceptions of school-based mentoring, Hobson (2002) notes that the quality of mentoring they experienced appeared to be variable, and some mentors did not appear to provide 'safe' and supportive environments within which the trainees they were mentoring could learn. Reflecting on these findings, Hobson and Malderez (2002) make a case for:

- more effective *selection* of teachers who are potentially good mentors
- providing teacher-mentors with *more time* to work with student teachers and to prepare for such work
- providing *training*, or more effective training, for teachers who are or who wish to become mentors
- *careful matching* of mentors and student teachers to avoid potential clashes of personality or approach.

Evans and Abbott (1997), in another study of four postgraduate training programmes in England, found that one of the difficulties with mentoring in ITP was that mentors often took a role which resembled a traditional supervisory role (cf. Hargreaves, 1994). This, together with evidence from elsewhere of a lack of reflectiveness on the part of some teachers (Desforges, 1995; Klaassen, 2002; Korthagen, 2004), has important implications for the issue, highlighted in Section 3.4 above, that trainees sometimes fail to appreciate the connections and inter-relationships between 'theoretical' knowledge and practical teaching. Evans and Abbott (1997) contend that school-based mentors need to go beyond their traditional role as mere supervisors and engage more fully in the professional development of their trainees, while HEIs need to provide mentors with support, and direct them towards appropriate research that will underpin their mentoring activities. The same authors suggest that mentors may have differing levels of commitment according to the training route in which they are involved. In their study, mentors in HEI-administered programmes of ITP appeared more likely to have reservations about the demands of mentoring in addition to their teaching role, whereas mentors on SCITT programmes tended to demonstrate a greater investment in helping trainees to develop as teachers. Both commitment and availability are important factors in the success of the mentoring relationship.

In general it appears that the role of the school-based mentor, and the relationship between mentor and trainee, do much to shape trainees' school-based experiences. In a study of 43 student teachers associated with both undergraduate and postgraduate routes in one HEI-school partnership, Hayes (2000) found that the skill with which student teachers learn to adjust to the placement school's culture will have a significant impact on their success, and

that good quality mentoring is a prime factor both in giving them confidence and in facilitating their 'rite of passage' into the profession. Other studies, however, suggest that the lack of social and psychological support experienced by some trainee and early career teachers who had been led to expect it has been a contributory factor in their decisions to withdraw from their ITP courses or leave the profession, whilst the restricted range of practices employed by some mentors impedes the learning and development of their mentees (Hobson *et al.*, in press). In addition, some studies have suggested that the present arrangements for school- and employment-based initial teacher preparation bring their own (perhaps inevitable) limitations. This caveat applies also to the induction year, when as Jones (2001) has suggested, the nature of school-based training and of the NQT / mentor relationship itself may be determined largely by the demands of outcomes-, competency- or Standards-based assessment.

This 'competency model' (Maynard and Furlong, 2003; cited in Vozzo *et al.*, 2004: 336) is among the models of mentoring discussed by Vozzo *et al.* (2004) in their comprehensive overview of the relevant literature. In another, classified by Maynard and Furlong as 'the reflective model', mentors themselves pass through a series of stages as their trainees develop the techniques and habit of reflection. Beginning in the role of guide, they later become instructors and finally "establish themselves as co-inquirers, with the aim of promoting critical reflection on teaching" (Maynard and Furlong, 1993: 82; cited in Vozzo *et al.*, 2004). Similarly, Feiman-Nemser (2001) classifies mentors first as 'local guides', then as 'educational companions', and finally as 'agents of change' (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; cited in Vozzo *et al.*, 2004: 336) whose role is to promote reflective practice and challenge pre-existing images of teaching. However, as Vozzo *et al.* (2004) comment, "progressing to this last stage can be problematic, as it requires a lessening of control" (p.336); indeed, Feiman-Nemser (2001) found that few mentors saw their function as actively to promote reflective practice. Rather than this sequential model, Vozzo *et al.* prefer the analogy put forward by Fairbanks *et al.* (2000) that mentoring is like a dance, with the mentor leading and the student following, or Orland's (2001) image of mentoring as being "like reading a text interactively" (p.79). Vozzo *et al.* (2004) go on to discuss the alternative concept of a 'web' of mentoring, as described in some of the literature, which is based on the premise that more than one individual is needed in order to fulfil adequately the different stages and mentoring roles discussed above.

In the current context of ITP in England and Wales, the separation of the assessment function of mentors from others, such as the support, educator and coaching functions may be particularly apt, especially given some of the findings reported above and in the previous chapter (e.g. Edwards and Ogden, 1998). There is some evidence that the performance of the assessment role can impede the effective performance of the others, and in doing so may impede the development of the student teacher's learning, the very object of the assessment. However, the research on this point, and also as it applies to the induction of NQTs, is not conclusive (see, for example, Foster, 1999; Heilbronn *et al.*, 2002; Martin and Rippon, 2003; Yusko and Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

Hascher *et al.* (2004) argue that the quality of student-mentor relationships is crucially important because student learning is in part dependent on "the socio-emotional climate during practicum, which is mainly influenced by the mentors" (p.634). This suggests that in discussing mentoring, we are moving into the area of affective issues as they impact on student teachers' experiences, and these will be considered in the section that follows. However, we shall also revisit the topic of mentoring in Chapter 5, in the context of the role of the Induction Tutor, and its impact on new teachers' experiences during the induction year.

### 3.8 The role and impact of trainees' emotions in ITP

In a study of student teachers' experiences during their final school placement, McNally *et al.* (1994) placed stress on "their developing sense of 'belonging' to the teaching community in their schools", and commented that "recognition by teachers as a colleague and confirmation of teacher status by pupils were major dimensions of this feeling" (p219). The importance of such experiences helps to explain the strength and variety of emotions revealed by participants in this and other similar studies. Indeed, respondents to one study of school placements (Hayes, 2000) overtly linked the quality and warmth of their welcome to their resulting confidence to teach. Another qualitative study of the same period of training, also by Hayes (2003) identified a mix of anticipatory emotions combining eagerness, excitement and 'stage fright'. Hayes comments that although anticipation could act as a motivator, it could also be enervating if fears about coping were stronger than the trainee's motivation to teach: in a minority of cases, the anxious emotions that naturally precede a new experience had intensified into a deep and inhibiting state of fear. Of all the student teachers who reported such fears, none made specific reference to any help or reassurance gained through talking to their tutors; indeed, their accounts suggest that tutors were unaware of the extent to which some of their trainees were in need of support.

The period chosen as a focus for this research, the trainees' final teaching placement, can at times appear to constitute a 'break point' in the career intentions of trainees, though around half of the participants in Hayes' study said they were strongly influenced as they approached their final teaching practice by the success or otherwise of earlier placements. Trainees who had experienced positive previous placements were more likely to approach their new situation with 'affirming emotions', confident and confirmed in their sense of vocation; but where memories of placement were largely negative, many were haunted by expectations of failure intensified by a sense that this was their last chance to prove themselves. In some ways the pressure on employment-based trainees is greater, since they may feel themselves in a 'make-or-break' situation. Many of these at least have the advantage of greater maturity, but for Teach First recruits straight from university, their first year in school, relatively untrained but with the same teaching workload as an NQT, could prove "a mix of highs and 'valleys of death'" (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006: 84).

The impact of emotional peaks of this sort may be intensified if the trainees are in an ongoing state of stress. Head *et al.* (1996) attribute the high stress levels generated during the post-graduate year to the culture shock of becoming a teacher, the high workload, concerns about finding employment, and financial worries (over a third of men and half the women PGCE trainees in their study reported concern about their finances). While the symptoms were evenly spread between physical and mental, the most commonly reported were sleep disturbance and mood changes, both of which have the potential to impinge directly on the efficacy of a trainee's performance. A suggestion by Goddard *et al.* (2006) that some beginning teachers and even trainees are subject to a specific 'burnout syndrome' will be discussed in Chapter 5 in the context of the induction year.

The dramatic language used by trainee teachers to describe their feelings is often echoed by researchers striving to convey the tensions and strong emotions experienced at various stages during initial teacher preparation, and identified in the course of qualitative fieldwork. Trainees are variously described as 'lost at sea' (Kauffman *et al.*, 2002) or stranded in a high-wire act (Malderez, 2003): in each case the implication being that ITP does not always provide the lifeboat / safety net needed.

A particular source of emotional conflict during both school placements and the induction phase occurs where the pedagogic approach and priorities of the placement class teacher, or the culture of the school itself, are at odds with those instilled at other stages of the ITP programme (Schluk and Segal, 2002; cited in Loughran and Russell (Eds.), 2002; Hayes, 2003; Smagorinsky *et al.*, 2003). This can be exacerbated by an unwelcoming or

uncooperative approach on the part of existing staff. Bathmaker and Avis (2005) describe a sense of alienation amongst trainee FE lecturers so strong that they felt marginalized from the communities of practice encountered during their placements, and reduced to a form of 'unwilling compliance' (Shain and Gleeson, 1999; cited in Bathmaker and Avis, 2005: 60). More common in schools is a form of 'strategic compliance' (Bathmaker and Avis, 2005: 59), in which trainees defer to the class teacher's approach but without in any way giving it their intellectual assent. Where this leaves the trainee feeling that the children are losing out, compromise may be accompanied by feelings of guilt.

Most student teachers appear in any case to tend towards a low opinion of their performance, another source of negative emotions. Burn *et al.* (2000) in the course of the Developing Expertise of Beginning Teachers (DEBT) project found that in trainees' evaluations of their own teaching, around 60 per cent of the evaluations relating to pupils were positive, compared with only about one third of the comments about their own actions or planning. New teachers too were found to lack confidence about their ability to be objective about their own performance, with many mentioning the tendency to be overcritical especially at this early stage in their careers (Martin and Rippon, 2003).

McNally *et al.* (1994) argue that initial teacher education (ITE) needs to take more account of the dominant emotional needs of student teachers, while Hayes (2003) calls for far more attention to be paid to their emotional welfare, especially during their preparation for school placement, a time when they have little control over the unknown professional and social contexts that they are entering. As Haritos (2004) observes:

"Teacher candidates, who are guided by naïve, idealistic, and unrealistic teaching beliefs, resistant to change, have been found to feel overwhelmed, shocked and disillusioned by the realities of the classroom" (p.15).

Conversely, novice teachers will be far better equipped to experience "easy beginnings" (Huberman 1989: 42) if they leave their ITP programme equipped with "a clear and well-developed set of expectations about the day-to-day realities of teaching and schools, student behaviour, and the time demands [they] would face" (Hebert and Worthy, 2001: 903). Preparation for such realities should include a degree of cultural competency if students are to avoid the difficulties experienced by novices in the United States resulting from "inadequate preparation to relate to or work effectively with students whose experiences and values are different from their own" (Whisnant *et al.*, 2005: 23).

Hayes (2003) urges that trainees should be helped to identify and deal with specific areas of concern (including any resulting from previous placements) in such a way that this becomes a constructive part of their experience, part of the "necessary groundwork" (p.168) that prepares them for the stresses of teaching itself. This is the kind of 'realistic approach' recommended by Korthagen (2002), one that is grounded in concrete problems and trainees' own experiences and concerns, and seeks to address the affective as well as cognitive aspects of the student teacher's learning process: an approach in which attention must be paid to less rational forms of information processing, to the influence of role models, and to the function of reflection. Korthagen advocates a cyclical process of learning that starts from student teachers' own experiences, and in which action alternates with reflection, both promoting it and promoted by it: an interaction between theory and practice that requires frequent alternation of school-based experience with interventions by both teacher educators and mentors.

### 3.9 The importance of relationships during ITP

Running alongside the many references to the emotional experiences and needs of student teachers, and often intertwined with them, is an emphasis on the importance of relationships; this has already been touched on during the discussion on mentoring in Section 3.5 above. As McNally *et al.* (1997) comment,

“The paradoxical nature of the [teaching] experience is perhaps best appreciated as a dynamic kind of equilibrium, controlled unequally by the individual student and others, the balance shifting between solitary reflection and practice, and a strongly felt need for the support of others” (p.497).

Such support can be “social as well as professional, intended or accidental, spoken or felt, close or distant” (McNally *et al.*, 1997: 497), and can include positive relationships with pupils as an important element. Younger *et al.* (2004) found that new recruits to ITP perceived ‘good teachers’ as having a good rapport with, and respect for, pupils, whilst ‘bad teachers’ had poor relationships with them and treated them without respect. Hayes (2003) identified poor relationships with the class teacher or mentor, and / or unwelcoming staff in the host school, as major factors in the ‘failure’ of school placements. In addition, as de Lima (2003) observes, departmental cultures may well have “a strong impact on the way their student teachers [are] socialised into teaching” (p.213): where student teachers “professionally speaking ... virtually live in a world apart” (p.204) from the permanent members of their host department, this will reinforce a concept of teaching as “an individualistic process”, however much they may have been trained for collaboration.

A different kind of negative effect created by some of the recruitment publicity for the fast-track employment-based Teach First scheme led to participants seeing themselves as “saviours or fire fighters going in there to kind of save these classes that are used to having crappy teachers who aren’t interested” (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006: 79), with an implied corollary that receiving schools and their teachers were of low quality, and sometimes (as the authors report) a correspondingly negative effect on relationships with the placement school.

On the positive side, Oberski *et al.* (1999) suggest that NQTs should be alerted to the potential benefit of supportive relationships, and that a greater emphasis should be placed on interpersonal skills. Referring to Scotland, where newly qualified teachers must serve a one-year probationary training placement, Martin and Rippon (2003) recommend that NQTs should be better prepared to deal with criticism during this period; and that this could be done by engaging them during ITP in a dialogue on progress and development, in which they are treated as “equal partners whose views are valid and valued” (p.155). Hoy and Spero (2005) go further by recommending that teacher education should prepare student teachers to seek and create support for themselves. An account of this process in action is given in the study by Hebert and Worthy (2001) of the positive performance of one new teacher, offered by them as ‘a case study of success’. A degree of emotional literacy is an essential prerequisite for a proactive approach of this kind: if this can be fostered during the teacher preparation period, it is likely to enable trainees to make a more successful transition to the role of NQT.

### 3.10 Conclusions

An emphasis on the needs and experiences of the individual has been a common strand running through much of this chapter, from the choice of training route via expectations and preconceptions to the variation in individual concerns. Hawkey (1995) argues that reflective practice is more likely to be promoted by approaches that acknowledge the individual’s social or emotional context, whilst Korthagen (2002) urges teacher educators to address the affective as well as cognitive aspects of the learning process through an approach grounded in concrete problems and trainees’ own experiences and concerns. As adjuncts to such an approach trainees will need to be exposed to contexts and methodologies that support individual reflection, but they will also need support in acquiring appropriate language in



which to discuss their experiences (Totterdell and Lambert, 1998). Finally, and most importantly, trainees will need to develop interpersonal skills, for these will enable them to assert their rights to the reasonable satisfaction of their individual needs. Such skills should also prepare them to interact successfully with their peers, with teacher colleagues and mentors in their placement schools (Hardy, 1999; Martin and Rippon, 2003), and subsequently with professional colleagues and parents (Davies and Ferguson, 1997). Thus equipped, they will be better placed to move forward into their first year as qualified teachers.

The next chapter considers recruitment into the first teaching post, an important step which grows out of, and in one sense is the culmination of, the teacher preparation experience.

## Chapter 4: Recruitment to the first teaching post

### 4.1 Introduction

Few studies of initial teacher preparation have directed attention towards the recruitment process as it affects first-time teachers, though rather more information is available on general recruitment issues as they affect LAs and schools. The brief chapter that follows will explore the (currently rather limited) evidence on the wider picture as it impacts on NQT recruitment, and attempt to identify elements within the recruitment process that (according to some research) seem likely to have a beneficial effect on new teacher retention.

### 4.2 Regional disparities in teacher recruitment

One key area addressed by recent research on teacher recruitment is the distribution of teachers by region. Menter *et al.* (2002) argue that there have been problems with the ways in which ITP places are distributed:

“The system under which this process operates has been directly related to the quality of provision as reflected by inspection grades. The insensitivity of this system to local and regional need is but one of the features giving rise to the major gap between demand and supply. There is a strong tendency for teachers to seek employment only in close proximity to the location of their initial teacher training. Thus, even if there appeared to be sufficient teachers nationally, they would not necessarily be in the right places, nor with the appropriate qualifications” (p.2).

In order to improve their supply of new recruits many LAs have appointed Recruitment Strategy Managers (RSMs) to attempt to counter the regional disparities in vacancy rates. Given the scale of the shortages in London, this area has received particular attention from the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB). However, whilst there is literature on the extent of such schemes, as yet there appears to be little evaluation of their long term impact (Birks, 2000). In order to be successful, regional strategies would need to draw recruits from those areas where there was a surplus of teachers; however, as suggested above, the evidence shows that many teachers tend to remain in the areas in which they originate or train (Hutchings *et al.*, 2000). The tendency for teachers to show geographical inflexibility is also found in the US where, in many states, most teachers still teach in schools near where they grew up or went to college (Sykes and Darling-Hammond, 2003). Older teachers are even less likely to move than members of the profession with a younger age profile. This has particular implications for employment-based routes, but also suggests that current patterns in the regional distribution of teachers may possibly change in future, in line with the changing demographic profile of those entering teaching.

### 4.3 Student teachers and the appointment process

To look at teacher supply only in terms of geographical need could lead to short-term results at the expense of long-term stability, since some research findings (notably those discussed by Johnson, 2004) suggest that the degree to which new teachers make a successful 'match' with their first school may have a direct bearing on their long-term continuation in the profession. In the words of Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) “the experience of early success and satisfaction in a teacher's first appointment is crucial for retention” (p.262). We shall return to this issue in more detail in Chapter 8, when we come to consider teacher attrition during the early years of service.

If appropriate first-job placement is equally to the benefit of individuals and institutions, it is important that student teachers approaching their first career decisions should be able both to evaluate their own aptitudes and priorities, and to assess the information provided by the would-be host school. It is also important that selection should be seen to be fair and open on both sides. Draper *et al.* (1997) found in their study of Scottish NQTs that those in 'broken' employment patterns expressed considerable dissatisfaction with selection procedures, citing such factors as the narrowness of the evidence base used by schools, and the extent to which selectors had the necessary information on which to base their choice. The availability and adequacy of information feature also in the responses of some 'movers' to Smithers and Robinson's (2005) survey on teacher turnover, who reported that a feeling of being misled during the recruitment process had contributed to their decision to move on. The authors suggest that head teachers may achieve more successful and lasting NQT recruitment if they present a realistic picture to applicants in order to screen out any who might not cope. Other recent studies such as those discussed by Bush (2005) tend to reinforce the message that in the long run the targeted and truthful marketing of vacancies - what Johnson (2004) calls an 'information-rich' process - may serve schools better than a pragmatic attempt to fill a gap at all costs.

It could also be helpful to offer at the ITP stage some form of guidance on choice that will dissuade student teachers from accepting a job offer at all costs, even the first job that offers, because they are afraid of being left without employment at the start of the next academic year. Personal factors are important here, since different individuals will use different criteria to determine the kind of school in which they want to work, and different ways of finding it. Respondents to the survey conducted by Powney *et al.* (2003) mentioned a range of factors which they considered influential in helping them to secure their first (or first permanent) post that included successful school placements (both in general, and, more specifically, in the school offering employment), supply teaching, networks of friends (especially teachers), and "being in the right place at the right time" (p.30). While some of these factors suggest an approach to job-hunting that may rely too much on serendipity, the mention of placement schools and supply teaching exemplifies the attraction of the familiar. This is a familiar theme from other research: the successful NQT in Hebert and Worthy's (2001) case study, for example, attributed the positive experiences of her first year partly to her securing a post at a school with which she was familiar from a student placement. Such familiarity can also prove an advantage to would-be employers: one factor apparently associated with successful NQT recruitment and good staff retention in the case studies conducted by Smithers and Robinson (2005) was the participation of schools in ITP in order to secure a reservoir of future applicants.

Respondents to Powney *et al.* (2003) also pointed out that "being made to feel physically different from other staff increased their own awareness of their gender, disability, ethnicity and age" (p.25); even where the 'difference' was not extreme, this could lead men to want to work where there were other men, for example, or minority ethnic teachers to feel 'more comfortable' in culturally diverse schools. More specifically, for reasons of cultural acceptability, some Asian or Muslim women might choose to work in girls' schools or the predominantly female environment of primary education.

For other job applicants it is their perceptions of the more general ethos of the school and the intrinsic nature of the teaching there, whether academic or otherwise, that will most influence their choice. Heafford and Jennison's (1998) report on a Cambridge PGCE cohort found that the factors most frequently identified by respondents as influencing their acceptance of their first teaching post were (in rank order) the positive atmosphere of the school, the possibility of teaching post-16 pupils, and the subject timetable offered. For rather different schools, Bush (2005) advocates the specific targeting of trainee teachers motivated to work with challenging or disadvantaged pupils, and cites an American example which had impressed the Education and Skills Select Committee:

“Challenging schools have particular problems with retention and recruitment. We believe that one of the best ways to help them retain teachers is to seek out those trainees who are keen to work in challenging schools and to provide them with specially tailored training and a network of post-qualification support. We were impressed by the work of Center X at UCLA, which trains and supports teachers in this way, and we recommend that similar programmes are developed here” (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004, cited in Bush, 2005: 36).

The Teach First scheme in this country appears to reflect these aims, partially at least, by stressing the altruistic aspects of work in a challenging school. This initiative, which has already been discussed in Chapter One, was introduced in 2003 with the explicit aim of attracting high achieving graduates to challenging schools in London. While in 2005 Bush reported of ‘Teach First’ that ‘this approach has had considerable success, with well over 1,000 applicants for around 200 places in each of its first three years’ (p.40), she also commented that the long-term success of the scheme remained to be seen, especially in terms of how many of the ‘high flier’ graduates involved would remain in the profession. However, Hutchings *et al.*’s (2006) evaluation of the scheme for the TDA found that “the opportunity to work in challenging schools has been the key to the recruitment of ‘top’ graduates” (p.77), and identified as key successes of the programme:

“the recruitment into teaching of substantial numbers of graduates, who would not otherwise have become teachers, and who have good degrees from elite universities and generally outstanding personal qualities; and

the short-term and long-term contribution to the staffing of challenging schools in disadvantaged areas, particularly in shortage subjects.” (p.77).

Whilst Hutchings *et al.* (2006) report that only one third of the first cohort recruited had been retained as teachers in their placement schools after the two years to which they had committed themselves, they also found that an additional nine per cent were teaching elsewhere in the UK, sometimes in other challenging schools.

#### **4.4 School approaches to engaging NQTs**

The differing approaches of schools in England to recruiting and retaining new teachers are clearly demonstrated in some of the illustrative case studies featured in Smithers and Robinson’s (2005) report. One secondary school in a challenging inner city area actively offered placements to trainee teachers as part of its recruitment policy, with a view to retaining them as members of staff. Whilst its promotional literature for applicants was targeted on teachers who would ‘make a difference’, this was accompanied by a clear intention to foster the personal advancement of NQT recruits. Newly appointed teachers were supported by a life coach, did not have to undertake cover duties, and received out-of-hours payment; and it was made clear from the outset that within the school hierarchy, internal promotion to head of department posts was the norm. (Interestingly, early promotion is one of the factors identified by Barton (2004) as characterising the most contented of the recently qualified teachers who participated in her study). In this school, staff turnover was low and pupil numbers rising.

In contrast to the high level of commitment to first time teachers in the school discussed above, the head teacher in a ‘paired’ school with a high staff turnover recruited three or four NQTs each year, but placed new staff on a temporary contract to see how they settled. Another high-turnover school in a commuter town south of London (but outside the London allowance area) attributed its turnover in part to the need for young recruits to move on after two or three years in post because of the high price of housing: much time was said to have been spent in recruiting and marketing, and on ‘nurturing’ those that remained (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

## 4.5 Conclusions

Smithers and Robinson comment that their case studies taken as a whole show differences in retention to result from the interplay of many factors, both within and outside the control of the individual school. Nevertheless, they identify three main themes:

- the head teacher's influence in setting the tone of the school;
- the support given to staff; and
- the use of a positive recruitment strategy so that the teachers appointed are appropriate to, and comfortable with, the school's needs.

Each of these factors is as relevant to first-time teachers as to their more experienced colleagues, with the added importance that the misjudged offer - or acceptance - of an NQT appointment could well result in the loss of another teacher to the profession.

In her study on new teacher attrition in the US, Johnson (2004) argues that an information-rich hiring process which calls for active involvement from both the individual and the school in order to ensure a good match is one way to improve new teachers' in-school experiences. These experiences, in what is currently termed in England the induction year, will be the focus of the next chapter.

## Chapter 5: New teachers' experiences during the induction year

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores issues relating to the experiences of beginning teachers as they move from initial teacher preparation into their role as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). Research to date suggests that this is a significant period of transition, with the initial period of teaching (post-ITP) famously referred to as 'reality shock' (Gaede, 1978; Veenman, 1984), an experience vividly described by Huberman in his seminal study on teachers' lives (Huberman, 1989) and still widely discussed in the literature (e.g. Indoshi, 2003; Stokking *et al.*, 2003). It has been argued that "beginning teachers actually learn how to teach when they enter the classroom in their first year" (Wideen *et al.*, 1998: 158), rather than during their ITP. Other studies, for example, Hargreaves and Jacka (1995), have highlighted an incongruity between trainees' experiences on ITP programmes and the experiences of NQTs in their first teaching posts.

In recent years a number of initiatives have been introduced in this country to address issues relating to transfer between the ITP and NQT years. Most notably, a statutory induction year for NQTs has been introduced (Teaching and Higher Education Act, 1998), which places the onus on schools to ensure adequate levels of support for new teachers.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, some localised initiatives have also been developed, either by individual schools, or by LAs. Thus, as with their ITP, novices' experiences can differ markedly depending on the arrangements made by individual schools. In addition, first-time teachers might be expected to bring different experiences depending upon the ITP route they followed.

This chapter will discuss the following key areas:

- experiences related to the transition from student teacher to NQT;
- ideal and actual models of induction;
- statutory induction requirements for NQTs in England and Wales;
- the impact of induction arrangements on NQTs' experiences;
- positive and negative experiences during the first year's teaching.

### 5.2 The transition from student teacher to NQT

In December 1995 Capel (1998) set out to explore the perceptions of secondary NQTs who had recently completed a secondary PGCE course at a single HEI. Asked about what they did, or did not, feel well prepared for when they embarked on teaching, 45 per cent of the 49 participants (who comprised about a quarter of the cohort) said they had felt 'well prepared' for planning and preparation, but the equivalent response for classroom management was only 27 per cent. Specific areas where some had felt less well prepared included teaching KS4 / GCSE (31%), and dealing with behaviour problems (24%); and when participants were invited to list any concerns they had felt when they were about to embark on teaching, 29 per cent listed discipline issues and the prospect of facing difficult classes. Asked to identify separately their concerns at the end of the first term's teaching, some NQTs reported that they had coped better than they had expected, and overall the level of concerns was lower; but some were evidently still learning to cope, and admitted that their initial perceptions of readiness had failed to match up to reality.

Although this study predates important changes in statutory provision for NQTs, almost half of respondents had been allotted a mentor, the form of support most frequently mentioned. Also important to them, however, was the support that came from meetings of first-time teachers (either in-school or across a group of schools) and from informal sources. Again,

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<sup>11</sup> The statutory requirements for NQTs are discussed further in Section 5.3 below.

when they were asked about ways of coping during their first year's teaching, these NQTs identified informal sources, such as talking to colleagues, friends, partners, or other people. Amongst other coping strategies mentioned were regular physical exercise, drinking alcohol, and crying.

These details drawn from a small qualitative study exemplify the strand of individual personal experience which runs parallel in the research to more general studies of policy and academic theory. In the words of the McCrone report (Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED), 2000; cited in McNally, 2002: 161):

“No amount of pre-service training can fully prepare newly qualified entrants for the challenges they will face when they become teachers, and the tumultuous emotional journey undertaken by many NQTs is a theme common to research (especially qualitative research) across Europe and beyond”.

Although most of the Portuguese NQTs studied by Flores (2004) enthusiastically welcomed the freedom and challenge of 'being on their own', they also found their new status daunting. Most arrived at their new schools still unprepared both intellectually and emotionally to deal with increased workload and distance from home. Uncertain and isolated in a new environment, and often without any support or guidance from colleagues, many became unsure of their own ability to cope with and juggle the wide range of roles they were expected to fulfil. In Israel, too, Friedman (2000) identified links between teacher burnout and what he describes as “shattered dreams of impeccable professional performance”, caused by “professional efficacy discrepancy” (p.597): the gap between expected (albeit unrealistic) and actual levels of performance (Friedman, 2000). We have here examples of what Huberman (1989:42) terms 'painful beginnings': “role overload and anxiety, difficult pupils, heavy time investment, close monitoring by teacher education staff, and isolation inside the school”. Fully a third of the 160 secondary teachers in his study looked back across years of experience and recalled, at times with “nightmarish emotion” (Huberman, 1993: 195), how they began their professional lives in this way. The author notes that such experiences followed rather than preceded the formal programme of teacher preparation, and compares their comments to similar ones made by medical interns.

Sometimes the idea of 'performance' is used more literally by participants in Huberman's study: “The notion of role appears distinctly, in allusions to theatre: 'enter into the skin of a teacher, have the butterflies, play a role', right down to the clothes worn” (Huberman, 1993: 196). But while stage fright can be the prelude to - indeed is sometimes seen by professional actors as a vital component in - successful performance, when experienced at the onset of teaching 'for real' it can also be deeply inhibiting: “I experienced it like an actor going on stage to meet his audience... I had butterflies, the students intimidated me” (*op. cit.*: 196).

Another difficulty awaiting the novice on her / his transition from student teacher to NQT lies in assuming an appropriate role in the staff-room, and this of course depends in part on the rest of the cast. In her study of rising attrition rates among new teachers in the USA, Johnson (2004) distinguishes between three forms of professional culture encountered by the 50 new teachers whose experiences featured in the qualitative strand of her research: 'veteran-oriented cultures', 'novice-oriented cultures' and 'integrated cultures'.

In a 'veteran-oriented' culture, experienced teachers value their independence and privacy and pay little attention to the needs or talents of the few novice teachers in their school. As a result the “newness” of new teachers goes unrecognised (p.146) and they are expected to assume a full teaching load and other responsibilities from the start; mentoring is limited, observation tends to be evaluative rather than supportive, and the new teachers suffer from professional isolation.

'Novice-oriented' cultures occur most frequently in Charter Schools<sup>12</sup>, reconstituted or redesigned schools, and low-performing schools where the teacher turnover is high. Here the school ethos and modes of work tend to be determined by the high proportion of young teachers. With a shortage of experienced colleagues, mentoring, observation and feedback are at best limited, and advice based on practical experience can be hard to come by. 'Integrated' professional cultures, however, offer new teachers "an environment of inclusion and support" through structures that "facilitate interaction and reinforce interdependence" (p.159). These include formal one-to-one mentoring, direct help with classroom instruction, and opportunities to be observed teaching and to observe others.

Johnson comments that these inclusive cultures benefit both new teachers and their experienced colleagues. Although many of the contextual circumstances differ from the English educational system, the experiences portrayed in this study powerfully bring home the challenges that confront first-time teachers, and especially the difficulties that can accompany their integration into the culture of their new school.

For the NQTs studied by Johnson the fatigue attendant on operating a full timetable from the start while still learning how their new school functioned was often an exacerbating factor in the distress they felt. However, the interviews cited also provide evidence that empowerment, support and a positive relationship with pupils could offset stress and fatigue and encourage them to persevere. Similarly Flores (2004), in her study of new teachers in Portugal, reported that while some found their motivation sapped by stress, constant fatigue and loneliness, others were buoyed up by positive relationships with their students. This is part of "the other side of the ledger", as Huberman terms it "the initial enthusiasm of having one's own pupils; one's own classroom, materials, and yearly program[me]; and of feeling oneself a colleague among peers" (Huberman 1989: 33), though he notes that not all studies suggest that the survival and discovery dimensions co-exist, and that the latter allows the novice teacher to tolerate the former.

Writing before the implementation of statutory induction provision, Hardy (1999) warns that his own findings, strongly supported by the literature, suggest that the imperative to 'survive' their first year and a limited range of opportunities for development within a school context over which they have little influence, may lead new teachers to narrow the range of instructional strategies that they actually employ. Smethem and Adey (2005:192) found that all of the NQTs in their small-scale study "initially felt less competent in some of their teaching than they had done as PGCE students, and focused on 'survival'. Coping with the sheer volume of work, much of it new, prevented further experimentation in their teaching". Some authors characterise this as a form of regression: Flores (2004:133) concluded that the shock resulting from NQTs' encounter with the reality of teaching may not only challenge their personal beliefs and idealistic expectations, but also lead them to 'unlearn' what appear to be the 'unreal' theories acquired at university and replace them by pragmatic survival techniques, even where these go against their deeper instincts. The remedy, she suggests, is to provide more opportunities to voice and reflect on personal values and beliefs at the training stage, in order to support the formation of individual teacher identity and so enhance the strength of NQTs to cope with this transitional experience.

Smagorinsky *et al.* (2003) also found that when new teachers became subject to the norms and prevailing ethos of their first school, their practice could shift accordingly. Where the school's pedagogic approach was directly at variance with that advocated at the university, the NQT might react with acquiescence, grudging accommodation, or resistance, but in each case these feelings were accompanied by frustration. A similar process was reported by Schluck and Segal (2002): these teacher trainers felt that they had been influential in reframing their students' views of mathematics and science teaching, but once in school as NQTs, some became uncertain of how to implement the philosophies developed during ITP.

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<sup>12</sup> In the US, Charter Schools are publicly-funded but autonomous schools which have the freedom to decide their own structure and curriculum.



The resulting tension between school realities and first-time teacher ideals created feelings of frustration, exacerbated in some cases by a lack of resources, the appropriation of resources by colleagues, and the requirement to teach from another teacher's programme. The authors' findings led them to realise that their students needed help to develop strategies for working within school constraints without having to abandon their ideals, and that they as teacher trainers needed to take far more account of the school context in their subject presentation.

In addition to better preparation for transition at the ITP stage, research suggests that some at least of its associated challenges can best be addressed through the provision of good quality induction. We now discuss briefly some ideal and actual models of induction reported in the literature, before outlining the present statutory requirements for induction in England and Wales, and drawing on a range of studies to discuss the role of the induction tutor and the experiences of newly qualified teachers.

### 5.3 Some models of Induction

In the course of their review of American literature on beginning teacher induction, Whisnant *et al.* (2005) discuss criteria for establishing comprehensive induction programmes, and present a table (p.5) of appropriate components and their corresponding functions, based largely on papers by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) and Fideler and Haselkorn (1999). This is reproduced as Table 1 below.

The recommendations on which this table is based are drawn from a selection of state, district and partnership-sponsored programmes functioning across the US, but Whisnant *et al.* (2005: 6) also draw attention to other research identifying characteristics perceived by the authors as less frequently to be found in the US: "a high degree of structure, a focus on professional learning, and an emphasis on collaboration".

**Table 1: Models of Induction**

COMPONENT	FUNCTIONS/STRUCTURE
Orientation Programme	* Address building and district norms. * Identify available resources.
Quality, Structured Mentoring	* Select mentors according to rigorous criteria. * Establish provisions for time, support and stipends. * Assure that mentor / mentee matches have a common instructional focus.
Common Planning Time	* Focus on lesson design and curriculum. * Use student assessment data to guide planning. * Promote collaboration.
Intensive and Ongoing Professional Development	* Identify the teaching needs of the beginning teacher and the mentor. * Expand content knowledge. * Address diversity in learning and culture.
External Network of Teachers	* Enable mentors and novices to gather in like groups. * Encourage reflective dialogue.
Standards-Based Evaluation	* Match established standards to practices. * Support demonstrations of performance. * Encourage peer review.

Source: A Review of Literature on beginning teacher induction by E Whisnant, K Elliott & S Pynchon, prepared for the Center for Strengthening the Teacher Profession, July 2005.

In Scotland the two-year probationary period that had been established for 35 years was replaced in 2002 by a set of statutory procedures by which new teachers would progress, over the course of one year, to the Standard for Full Registration (SFR). The Scottish Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS), launched in 2002, introduced mandatory one-year government-funded training placements with the aim of creating a nationally consistent experience for new teachers. Each new teacher - known as a 'probationer teacher' - was to be placed with one or two schools to undertake seven-tenths of a normal timetable, either by filling an existing vacancy or as an additional member of staff, but in neither case with the guarantee of a permanent post after the placement.

The new arrangements included the appointment of 'induction supporters' to both work with and assess probationer teachers, and funding was allocated to provide protected time in which this support mechanism could function. Martin and Rippon (2003) criticised this new induction scheme's agenda ahead of its implementation on the grounds that "it concentrated on the easily measured and recorded aspects of induction, rather than the quality of the mentoring relationships conducive to effective professional development for teachers" (p.144). They foresaw that "The dual role of supporter and assessor may prove problematic for both supporter and probationer and so this relationship will need careful handling" (p.148). A subsequent paper by the same authors (Rippon and Martin, 2006) explores the experiences of a small group of volunteers experiencing the new arrangements in the first year of the scheme's implementation. Participants saw their very public status as probationers, and the temporary nature of their appointments, as a barrier to their full participation in the life of the placement school; indeed, "for some new teachers their positive identity upon completion of their pre-service training was undermined by their interactions during the induction placement" (p.320). These Scottish teachers felt that although the TIS system was created to support them, it also resulted in their being very publicly labelled as new teachers and so "undermined their attempts to establish themselves as real teachers within the school" (p.321), with results that were both distressing and demoralising.

Part of the problem reported here appears to be that the individuals concerned - and perhaps also their colleagues and pupils - cannot fully regard such novices as 'real teachers' while the probationer label is so publicly attached and their appointment only temporary. Rippon and Martin (2006: 321) comment that while the Teacher Induction Scheme was based on "models of good practice where teachers work together collaboratively to support one another in continuing professional development" (CPD), in many schools the prevailing culture is individualistic rather than collegiate, encouraging conformism and inhibiting the acquisition by probationers of their own teacher identity. They argue that systematic use of the 'probationer' label can restrict novices' opportunities to work with colleagues on an equal footing, and call for "the emotional need to fit in" (p.322) to be recognised as much as new teachers' development needs, and supported by such measures as increasing allocated responsibilities as the placement progresses, where the new teacher is competent to fulfil them.

Although the circumstances of probationers in England are very different, in some respects these comments echo Totterdell *et al.*'s (2002) evaluation of the impact of the 1999 statutory regulations on the induction of NQTs in England, which found that "NQTs would welcome a greater emphasis on collegiality" (p.141) and called for "a shift in culture throughout the teaching profession which focuses more on sharing and teamwork". The introduction and impact of statutory induction requirements in this country will be discussed in the section that follows.

## 5.4 Statutory Induction Requirements for NQTs in England and Wales

To help ease trainees' transition to the status of employed professional teachers, Circular 5/99 (DfEE, 1999) sought to regulate the nature of the teaching posts to which NQTs were appointed. This set out a number of requirements aimed to ensure that: (i) schools did not make unreasonable demands of NQTs; and (ii) NQTs were entitled to professional development activities. These included:

- regular teaching of the same classes;
- similar planning, teaching and assessment processes to those in which qualified teachers working in substantive posts in the same school are engaged; and
- a 10 per cent reduced timetable to allow for professional development activities such as observing other teachers.

The (then) DfEE also stipulated that NQTs should *not* be presented with:

- classes of pupils presenting mainly very challenging behaviour;
- additional non-teaching responsibilities without the provision of appropriate preparation and support; or
- teaching outside the range and subject(s) for which they had been trained.

These requirements were consolidated in Circular 90/2000, which described the general aims of statutory induction as to provide:

- “all newly qualified teachers with a bridge from initial teacher education to effective professional practice;
- a foundation for long-term continuing professional development; and
- well-targeted support... which in turn helps them to... make a real and sustained contribution to school improvement.” (DfEE, 2000, para1)

These general requirements raise a number of issues. For example, do NQTs from different ITP routes require different ‘bridges’? Does the intention to target support so as to make a ‘real and sustained contribution to school improvement’ presuppose certain forms of support and professional development?

Although as reported above the induction aims of Circular 90/2000 might appear to focus on the needs of the school, the statutory induction of NQTs also includes specific provision for professional development relating to individual needs. The foundations for this are laid in the ITP period, at the end of which trainees must complete a Career Entry Development Profile (CEDP).<sup>13</sup> Developing a CEDP requires trainees at the end of their ITP programme to identify their strengths and weaknesses together with opportunities for development, and to take part in collaborative discussion about their professional development needs. To address the areas identified in their CEDP, on taking up their first post, NQTs need to work with their Induction Tutor to develop an individualised learning plan. This should be revised at the end of the induction year to identify goals for early professional development (EPD). The new ‘Induction Standards’, established by the then TTA in 2003, are integral to this process of developing an individualised learning plan for the NQT year. These Induction Standards follow on from the Standards for QTS which trainees must meet at the end of their ITP year.

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<sup>13</sup> The CEDP was introduced in 2003, and superseded the Career Entry Profile (CEP). The latter was intended largely as a statement of new teachers' capabilities on entering the profession, whereas the CEDP is presented more formatively in terms of identifying professional development needs.

The Induction Standards are intended both to consolidate and to build upon the Standards for QTS, and in doing so, present NQTs with a number of targets for development. For example, in relation to 'Professional Values and Practice', the Induction Standards put a greater emphasis upon the ability to liaise effectively with parents or carers on pupils' progress than do the Standards for QTS. Such changes in emphasis reflect the change in professional role undergone by new teachers as they move from working with a class as a trainee, to becoming a class teacher, and developing the personal qualities "which will enable them to manage the emotional investment that successful teaching necessitates" (Smethem and Adey, 2005: 199).

## 5.5 The role of the Induction Tutor

One effect of the CEDP and the need to meet Induction Standards is to prescribe the role of induction tutors much more explicitly than ever before. Induction tutors, defined here as the mentors who have responsibility for working with NQTs, now have, in addition to their monitoring and facilitating role, an assessment role in determining whether or not NQTs meet the Induction Standards. As Circular 582/2001 (DfEE, 2001: 26) states:

"The induction tutor should be fully aware of the requirements of the induction period... In particular, the induction tutor should be able to make rigorous and fair judgements about the NQT's performance in relation to the requirements for satisfactory completion of the induction period and to provide or co-ordinate guidance and effective support for the NQT's professional development."

In addition to this, the DfEE stipulated that NQTs must be observed teaching at least once per half term.

Thus, in some ways, the role of the induction tutor can be considered similar to the role of mentors working with trainees on school-centred and employment-based training routes, who are largely responsible for ensuring trainees' professional development in relation to the Standards for QTS, assessing them against the Standards, and acting as an advocate for the trainee within the school.

However, as Barrington (2000) points out, "It does need to be recognised that the NQT may feel the need for reassurance, particularly in the early stages. This could potentially create a tension for the induction tutor in managing the balance between being supportive and being challenging, as a critical friend" (p.19). Furthermore, Heilbronn *et al.* (2002) acknowledge the tension for induction tutors in implementing a *process-based* support methodology simultaneously with an *outcomes-based* assessment expressed in terms of induction standards. They question how comfortably the need for accountability and a 'once for all' pass or fail programme can sit alongside the professional development approach that underpins the process of review and setting of objectives. At present the tutor needs to reconcile the role of mentor in the widest sense with that of critical assessor at the end of the programme. As characterised by Colley (2002), this is "a dual role that clearly poses conflicts of interest and disruption to the mentor-mentee bond", since "mentors are cast not only as the devoted supporter of the student teacher, but also as gatekeepers to the profession" (p.263). Similarly, in the context of new teacher mentoring in the USA, Marable and Raimondi (2007) urge the importance to the relationship of confidentiality, and of the mentor *not* serving any supervisory role.

However, Yusko and Feiman-Nemser (2008) argue that "it is not only possible to combine assistance and assessment, but it is impossible to separate them and still take new teachers seriously as learners" (p.2), since only the evidence-based analysis of teaching and learning has the power to move mentoring conversations "beyond self report and personal opinion to a new level of analysis and objectivity" (p.11). Their qualitative study uses contrasting induction programmes to exemplify the two approaches. In Cincinnati, mentors tasked with combining assistance and summative assessment tended to focus on the mechanics of

behaviour management and lesson structure (perhaps, as the authors suggest, as a response to the 'high stakes nature' of the process), whilst a team of 'advisors' observed in Santa Cruz appeared more able to "get inside the intellectual and practical challenges of teaching" (Yusko and Feiman-Nemser, p.10) because they were operating on the basis of relationships based on trust. However, the authors also observed that at times the desire amongst the Santa Cruz mentors to build such trust appeared to inhibit them from giving advice to mentees, or to make them unwilling to confront unacceptable practice.

Nevertheless, as Smethem and Adey (2005) warn, "[u]nless an atmosphere of trust and openness is engendered as part of a collaborative culture... NQTs will remain highly vulnerable, positioned between the conflicting issues of assessment, monitoring and support inherent in statutory induction" (p.196). This focus on the mentoring relationship is echoed by Martin and Rippon's (2003) comments on induction provision in Scotland, that "the dilemma facing probationers and supporters... would be less problematic if both were skilled in handling feedback, and setting a context where criticism is welcomed and sought out, rather than something to be feared" (p.150), since "[t]he likelihood that the probationer will hear, understand and accept and act upon valid criticism... is related to the context within which it is given" (p.152). As well as the training of induction supporters in the techniques required for effective feedback (including appropriate non-verbal communication), they advocate staff development opportunities that are developmental and interactive, and that include role-play.

Heilbronn *et al.* (2002) stress the need for induction tutors to be adequately supported in terms of preparation, resources and dedicated professional time; if they are not, as Colley (2002) suggests, the result is "a situation in which resentment might understandably arise and rebound" (p.258) on those in their care. Even without such extreme results, if the duties of induction tutors become too onerous, there is a risk that they will meet their statutory obligations at the expense of less mandatory input. In common with school-based mentors during ITP, they have an important role to play in supporting the socialisation of new teachers into the culture of the host school, as well as their professional development; and it is perhaps even more critical that they encourage them to take up a collegial approach, since habits formed now may be hard to change. Writing in the US, Fletcher and Barrett (2004: 322) cite findings by Kardos (2003) that while 65 per cent of a sample of new teachers believed they should collaborate with colleagues, "48 per cent of novices agreed that 'I usually plan and teach alone', and only 50 per cent agreed that 'I usually discuss teaching strategies with another teacher or teachers' ". However, a majority of the 70 Californian novices studied by Fletcher and Barrett, who were receiving weekly mentoring input, agreed that overall 'my mentor has helped me to effectively work collaboratively with other teachers at my school' (71%); 'my mentor helped me to effectively get additional help from my principal for challenging situations' (77%); and 'my mentor has helped me to effectively network... with other beginning teachers at seminars' (81%). (Fletcher and Barrett 2004: 322). Mentors were also said to have helped to promote positive relationships between their mentees and all levels of the school hierarchy.

Another mentor function reported in Fletcher and Barrett's (2004) study as valued by over 95 per cent of respondents, was to help them "to effectively work with students of diverse linguistic, cultural and economic backgrounds", an important aspect of school culture in the challenging circumstances of the district from which the sample was drawn. This has particular relevance to the UK given research findings on trainees' and NQTs' concerns about meeting the needs of different kinds of students, especially children with English as an additional language or from minority ethnic groups (Capel, 2001; TTA, 2003; TDA, 2008). Since both 'collegiality and effective teamwork' have been identified by head teachers as major factors in retaining high quality teaching staff in challenging schools (Bush, 2005), the role of the induction tutor in assisting new teachers to interact with colleagues, and to understand the social and cultural needs of their students, is potentially of central rather than peripheral importance in reducing teacher attrition.

Whisnant *et al.* (2005: 7) comment that much of the literature on the subject has moved on from focusing on the mentor's function in supporting "the practical, short-term and often emotional needs of the beginning teacher" to exploring "the potential of mentoring to serve as a tool to strengthen teachers' capacity throughout their careers" and to advance agendas for educational reform (echoing the DfEE's aim to provide NQTs with "well-targeted support... which in turn helps them to... make a real and sustained contribution to school improvement", DfEE, 2000, para 1). More recently still, some authors have warned of the potential damage to be done by mentors who subscribe to poor and / or outdated models of practice, and some have questioned whether veteran teachers will have the necessary knowledge and communication skills to move on the education debate. Proposals for the professional development of mentors are the natural outcome of such research, based on the premise that "mentors need the same kind of 'supported induction and opportunities for ongoing learning' that new teachers do" (Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, 2004; cited in Whisnant *et al.*, 2005: 8). Such induction, it is suggested, should feature the same three important components as mentoring: professional development, a learning community, and peer coaching.<sup>14</sup>

## 5.6 The impact of induction arrangements on NQTs' experiences

Whilst, as we shall see, some writers have expressed reservations about the introduction of statutory induction, in general research suggests that the changes have prompted improvements in induction provision. Some of the findings from early studies suggest a need for the new arrangements to bed down, indeed some appear to demonstrate this process in action. Barrington (2000), investigating the perspectives of NQTs and their induction tutors in one LEA during the first year of the new statutory requirements, found the induction tutors more apprehensive about the induction year than the NQTs, and suggests that this could possibly be because tutors had been appointed only recently, whereas NQTs were likely to have received information about induction during ITP. Whilst over the first half term both groups became more confident, the NQTs remained more confident overall than their induction tutors. However, whilst the majority of induction tutors found the (then) CEP itself useful in putting together an induction programme, on the grounds that it offered a starting point for development and setting initial targets, the vast majority of NQTs perceived it as less useful, usually because their needs had changed once they had entered the profession. Similarly, Barton (2004) found that the majority of new teachers participating in her qualitative study did not consider the CEP to have played an important role in their induction. One teacher out of the cohort of 53 appeared to have experienced exemplary use of her CEP:

"We set individual targets and they were reviewed with your line manager. I had targets that were subject-related as well as general ones. In the autumn term and the spring term they were checked and signed off by me, the induction tutor and my head of department. Some of the courses fed into the targets. It was really well monitored" (p.25).

In contrast, however:

"A number of teachers referred to the Profile either being filled in briefly, in a tokenistic fashion, or at the end of the year. One teacher claimed never to have seen it... When faced with the reality of a full timetable, a form group and cover – as many new teachers seemingly are – the CEP is regarded merely as a necessary '*formality*'" (p.25).

Harrison (2002) explored the induction provision made for two cohorts of NQTs – one completing their induction in the year prior to Circular 5/99 taking effect, and one in the academic year 1999/2000. Overall, Harrison noted positive shifts in induction procedures in connection with the introduction of statutory requirements for induction. An increase in non-

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<sup>14</sup> See also the programme reported by Good and Bennett (2005), discussed in Section 5.7 below.

contact time for NQTs appeared to be the most common benefit arising from this. Aspects of mentoring support were also considered to have improved for the majority of NQTs, largely through increased provision for the observation of NQTs' teaching, and weekly review meetings between NQTs and established staff. Harrison (2002) has suggested that the requirements laid down in Circular 5/99 have helped to spread what was already becoming 'good practice'. She found that where NQTs had positive induction experiences prior to Circular 5/99, they had been working in schools which showed concern for professional development and provided programmes of regular observation and feedback.

One of the more recent and comprehensive studies of induction arrangements in schools and of NQTs' experiences of induction, is that conducted by Totterdell *et al.* (2002). This involved a large scale survey and additional case study work to examine the extent to which the requirements of Circulars 5/99 and 90/2000 (DfEE) (set out above) were being met in schools. Totterdell *et al.* reported that "some respondents had an excessive workload and unreasonable demands made on them" (p.89). Of the NQTs studied:

- 75 per cent reported that they had been given some non-teaching responsibility
- 50 per cent thought they had taught classes with challenging behaviour
- 37 per cent of secondary NQTs stated that they had taught outside their subject
- 20 per cent felt they had not been given a reduced timetable
- 10 per cent said they had taught pupils outside the age range for which they had been trained.

Whilst the data collected by Totterdell *et al.* suggest that in a number of instances some of the statutory induction requirements were not being met, they also highlighted those induction activities which NQTs found particularly helpful, notably having their teaching observed and receiving feedback, meeting with induction tutors and observing other teachers. In their national evaluation of statutory induction Heilbronn *et al.* (2002) also report, more specifically, that the activity rated most highly by all respondents was lesson observation (both of and by the NQT) that included a dissection of the processes and practices observed in conjunction with an experienced mentor. NQTs also valued being set individual objectives that arose from such formative lesson observation, and were then followed up in regular mentoring sessions. Interestingly, induction tutors also rated this as the most cost effective induction activity, whilst the NQTs studied by Smethem and Adey (2005), who had experienced statutory induction, reported that not only did they benefit from feedback after they were observed teaching, but in addition their confidence received a welcome boost when they observed other teachers sharing some of the challenges that they encountered themselves in class.

About two-thirds of the NQTs studied by Totterdell *et al.* (2002) reported that the process of setting objectives and action plans relating to their CEPs had been useful (15%) or very useful (48%), while a similar number categorised these action plans and objectives as challenging. However, despite a statutory requirement to review the learning objectives identified in their CEP on a half-termly basis, over the course of a year the numbers of NQTs doing so decreased. Some reported that the objectives set were too easy, while others argued that the CEP represented "unnecessary extra paperwork" (p.90).

Across their (24) case-study schools, Totterdell *et al.* (2002) found that the 'vast majority' of head teachers and induction tutors believed that induction provision had been improved and that the induction process was easing the transition between the ITP and NQT years, as well as providing a foundation for subsequent professional development. The authors also suggest that alongside improving schools' provision for NQTs, statutory induction may also have brought about benefits for the whole school. For example, becoming involved in the induction process was seen by some to have encouraged staff to reflect upon their own practice and to keep up-to-date with policy matters. However, they also report that: "NQTs were less positive than induction tutors and head teachers about whether the induction process had eased the transition between training and the rest of their career and

professional development" (p.100). This attitude is exemplified by the comment of a respondent to Totterdell *et al.*'s (2002) study that "I do think my teaching has developed hugely throughout my first years, but I don't think that this had any relation to the induction process. You learn as you teach and make mistakes" (p.86). The authors' recommendation that in induction "the emphasis should be on arrangements that are self-directed rather than imposed" (p.143) offers a possible means of countering this sense of detachment.

Some criticism of statutory arrangements for induction has related to the amount of funding made available to schools to support NQTs, and to the perceived increasingly bureaucratic nature of induction arrangements. Tickle (2001) has argued that while CEPs (and more recently CEDPs) are based on the identification of needs and review of professional development, they are assessment-led. Tickle suggests that this leaves little room for professional development other than that which explicitly builds upon the Standards for QTS - or in the light of more recent legislation, addresses the Induction Standards. Research by Williams (2003), which looked at NQTs' experiences post Circulars 5/99 and 90/2000, may lend some support to Tickle's argument. Williams found that those NQTs who were most widely involved in 'the life of the school' tended also to express the highest levels of personal satisfaction and commitment to professional growth. She argues that further improvements in induction quality are more likely to be achieved through the promotion of non-formal learning of a nature that is not amenable to legislation but rather relates to school ethos. Accordingly, she proposes that the time gained by the NQTs' ten per cent reduction in teaching need not be limited to formal deliberative learning such as planned purposeful reading and explicit CPD activities, but could be spent equally valuably in tasks such as catching up with preparation, marking, and report writing. Williams suggests that by thus helping NQTs to manage their workloads, the provision of non-contact time could also free-up time for them to engage in reflective thinking about their practice. In addition, she emphasises the value of spontaneous meeting and 'chat' as support mechanisms.

Totterdell *et al.* (2002) also found that in general NQTs deemed what one described as "the support and encouragement" aspect of their induction (p.98) more important than assessment and professional development courses. Similarly, Hardy (1999) warns that if teacher attrition is to be reduced, induction programmes must have the flexibility to address both the problems common to many first-time teachers and the specific and emerging needs of individuals; and must also assist in developing the "positive perceptions of self" (p121) that underpin successful classroom practice. Moreover, as the 'ecology' of any one school will impact on the development of the new teacher, support must also enable them to see their initial experiences in perspective, and progress beyond merely learning to cope. Any induction programme must operate both at a personal level, by addressing the specific needs of the NQT, and at a general level, by providing an environment "where thinking and talking about teaching will become central" (p.116) and by presenting teaching as a satisfying and worthwhile career. Skills learned during the first year need to be clarified and analysed so that induction becomes one stage in the professional training continuum. Its purpose should not be to help new teachers to settle in and adjust to the immediate demands of teaching, but rather to extend them professionally. This can be of long-term importance: in her study of new teacher retention in priority subjects, Barton (2004) comments that cross-tabulating responses to the questionnaire items 'If you are continuing to teach, how long do you think you will remain in teaching?' and 'I had a good induction programme' "suggests that the quality of the induction programme may play a significant role in determining the longevity of new teachers' careers" (p.25).

Some LAs are beginning to offer their own provision to supplement induction in supporting NQTs during and beyond their first year. One optional accredited programme designed jointly by four LAs and their University partners in the West Midlands was taken up by a quarter of all NQTs across the four authorities. An evaluation by Rhodes *et al.* (2005) found that it had achieved its main objective of promoting critical reflective practice amongst the new teachers who participated. Analysis of the data suggested that of the 58 NQTs who returned questionnaires (a response rate of 45%), the vast majority indicated that they were motivated



to participate in the programme by a desire to develop reflective practice, alongside the aims of furthering their career progression and gaining postgraduate credits; 'access to helpful information' and helping to meet induction standards were also important to around two-thirds. Interestingly, the face-to-face support provided by university tutors was found to be more helpful than their online support, and paper-based materials considered easier to follow than online materials, while the programme's website was not considered to have been particularly useful.

Rhodes *et al.*'s (2005) evaluation focused in part on the management and administration facets of the programme, and found indications that in some cases the level of support received from induction tutors and head teachers was limited, due partly to doubts about the programme and partly to time factors and concerns about workload. The EPPI review (2004) of literature (Totterdell *et al.*, 2004: 1) sought to "shed light on the impact of induction programmes" on new teachers in relation to enhancing teaching expertise, professional development, job satisfaction and retention rates. The authors report a number of findings which include, for example, the need for good induction practice to include effective training and professional support for all role-groups, notably new teachers, mentors and principals. They conclude that in addition to a reduced work-load and support in planning goal-setting and review, appropriate induction should be seen to comprehend such measures as mentor selection, provision for preparation and release-time, and incentives for induction tutors. Similarly, Barrington's (2000) study of the parallel perspectives of Primary NQTs and their induction tutors leads him to recommend clearer guidance on the evidence required to show that NQTs are meeting induction standards, which would help to reduce the workload for tutors and NQTs alike.

As early as the late 1990's Hardy (1999) called for training in the skills required to collaborate and communicate with colleagues, not only for the teachers supporting NQTs, but for new teachers themselves. This emphasis on the need to support and promote dialogue between new teachers and their supporters is echoed by Martin and Rippon in their studies of the hopes and expectations of Scottish student teachers nearing the end of their training, and of the experience of teacher induction. Although Scotland has its own form of provision for new teachers, their findings have wider relevance, especially in their stress on the more personal aspects of the induction process. These authors highlight the importance of "help[ing] both probationers and their supporters to be aware of and understand the importance of the quality of the relationship, the attitudes and behaviour of those involved, and the interpersonal skills required" (Martin and Rippon (2003: 160), and call for "less concentration on the mechanics of induction and more on the process itself", including "specific guidance in giving feedback" (Martin and Rippon 2005: 542).

Another Scottish study by Draper *et al.* (1997), of 193 teachers who had just completed their two-year probation, found that teachers' experiences of early professional development during this period appeared to have improved considerably when compared with the findings from a previous study carried out in 1988-1991. The authors argue that this improvement was a result of initiatives and resources introduced by the General Teaching Council for Scotland with the aim of improving probation and emphasising its developmental role. However, their more recent survey also uncovered inequalities in satisfaction between teachers with different employment patterns: respondents experiencing interrupted periods of work reported lower levels of satisfaction with their induction than those in continuous employment. Since the period referred to in this study extends beyond the first year's teaching, these findings will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, in the context of teachers' early professional development.

## 5.7 Positive and negative experiences during the first year's teaching

The range of support outlined in the section above may well be needed throughout the induction year. A wide range of studies confirm a picture of the first year's teaching as both physically exhausting and emotionally draining, and where this is exacerbated by isolation the effects may be particularly severe. Many of the Portuguese NQTs surveyed by Flores (2004) described their first year as qualified teachers as a largely negative experience, and for some this led to feelings of powerlessness and thoughts of giving up. Similarly, a second-year teacher participating in the NFER study of early professional development (EPD) (Moor *et al.*, 2005: 29) commented that "The previous year was very, very difficult. And I was feeling quite disillusioned and a little bit worried about the future"; and when asked "Is EPD making a difference to your desire to stay in or leave the teaching profession?" replied "It has in that it has boosted me up. It's reassured me about my own skills and my own values as a teacher, so yes", once again suggesting a negative link between a 'bad' first year's teaching and retention in the profession.

The need for reassurance on the part of new teachers is a recurrent feature in qualitative studies of the induction year. In the words of another NQT cited in Moor *et al.* "At the beginning you don't have that much confidence that you're doing it right" (p.30). Hoy and Spero (2005), in a study of changes in teacher efficacy (defined as a future-oriented judgement that has to do with an individual's *perception* of competence rather than its actual level), cite Bandura (1997), who argues that it is self-assurance in the face of difficulty that determines the good or poor use of ability, while self-doubt can negate skill. Since he suggests that self-perceived efficacy may be most easily influenced early in the learning process, the first years of teaching could be critical for its development in the longer term. Research shows strongly emotional experiences both positive and negative (already discussed above and in the context of ITP) as continuing to impact on many beginning teachers throughout the induction year. This may be particularly important if, as Day *et al.* (2006: 143) argue, "emotions play a key role in the construction of identity", and "there is an unavoidable link between professional and personal, cognitive and emotional identities, if only because the overwhelming evidence is that teaching demands significant personal investment of these".

Evidence from the teachers who participated in Day *et al.*'s study of efficacy "identified a close association between their sense of positive, stable identity and their self-efficacy and agency - their belief that they could 'make a difference' to the learning and achievement of their pupils" (Day *et al.*, 2006: 248). Mulholland and Wallace (2001) also argue that experiences during student teaching and the induction year can be among the most powerful influences on the development of teachers' sense of efficacy, while a study of first-year teachers interviewed in Israel (Friedman, 2000) identified a range of sources of stress which were also threats to self-perceived efficacy: criticism by colleagues, isolation, work overload, lack of recognition or reward, and inappropriate training.

Work overload is a factor frequently mentioned in qualitative studies of teaching, and the induction year is no exception. However, as Barton (2004: 4) comments,

"While some of the negative factors identified by the research may be seen as common to all teachers, it is suggested that new staff may be more vulnerable than more experienced staff. Their low status in the school may encourage their line managers and senior managers to impose short-term deadlines on them and to give them unreasonable timetables. New teachers are clearly aware of the vulnerability of their position; they are ostensibly reluctant to confide in senior colleagues when they experience difficulties."

As an example of this reluctance she cites the comment of one teacher that “you don’t want to appear like you’re struggling [be]cause you don’t want them to think you’re not capable of doing it. I absolutely sank in the first year” (p.26). In addition, as Smethem and Adey (2005) point out, while induction has brought about some improvements in the experiences of NQTs, “it is the workload which is the primary cause of attrition” (p.198); in some ways this has worsened since the introduction of the statutory induction programme, through the growth of a climate of ‘accountability’ which can foster anxiety and burnout.

Such burnout is characterised by Goddard *et al.* (2006: 287) as “a chronic state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that arises in personnel from the cumulative demands of their work”, and may be present from a very early stage in a teacher’s career. The authors note that Fimian and Blanton (1987) had found burnout rates for less experienced and trainee groups at almost identical levels to those reported by the more experienced. Goddard *et al.*’s (2006) own findings from a longitudinal survey conducted in Australia also suggest that the syndrome may well begin to develop during ITP, since “the mean levels of burnout reported after only six weeks’ employment were much higher than expected” (p.869), even though the researchers took care to distinguish what they describe as early career burnout from the “initial overwhelm, reality shock and need for support” (p.859) experienced by many NQTs.

In contrast to the burnout described by Goddard *et al.*, Day *et al.* (2006) in their study of variations in teachers’ work, lives and effectiveness place great stress on the concept of resilience, which they define as ‘the ability of an individual to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions related to self-efficacy’ (p.50). While their study covers the entire trajectory of teachers’ professional lives, resilience could have particular importance during the first few years of teaching when a sense of efficacy in the classroom is still developing.

Oberski *et al.* (1999) offered an overview of the first-year experiences of 42 NQTs as part of their evaluation of a two-year university course for beginning teachers. Participants were asked to identify their major achievements and concerns after their first month’s teaching, and to assess these again at the end of the first year. Broadly similar opinions were voiced by primary and secondary teachers, and the range of concerns remained similar over the year, with discipline featuring most strongly, followed by assessment, differentiation and workload. After a year slightly fewer expressed concern about marking and classroom management. Interviews included some indirect references to concerns about problematic relationships with colleagues. In the initial survey the achievements most frequently identified related to relationships with pupils (50%) or colleagues (60%); these still featured after a year but had been joined and largely overtaken by enjoying teaching, meeting the demands of the job, classroom management and, most of all, by the sense of survival. Evidence from the interviews confirmed that establishing good relationships with pupils and colleagues had fed into ‘achievements’ identified at a later stage, especially enjoying teaching. Such factors may remain influential throughout a teacher’s working life: Day *et al.* (2006) found that positive relationships with pupils were central to teachers’ perceptions of their own effectiveness, and also report a correlation between teachers with ‘positive, stable identities’ and supportive colleagues.

While most of the 24 participants in Oberski *et al.*’s (1999) study who responded to a questionnaire survey had received mentoring during their first year, their perceptions of its success varied considerably. Some reported disenchantment, and none of the 24 identified mentoring as the *most* useful form of support received. Again, some felt inhibited by the requirement to be open with senior members of staff “about what might be perceived as shortcomings” (p.145). In primary schools, where the mentor was usually the head teacher or deputy, more teachers reported dissatisfaction, often with the inconsistency of support received, or for reasons suggested in the comment of one NQT that “[t]he mentorship programme didn’t work here because my mentor is the head teacher. He was very amenable but not very available... it’s quite hard, I think... to tell things to senior management” (p.145).

This could suggest that NQTs may be more inhibited and more reluctant to open up about any difficulties when their mentors have a more exalted status within the school.

Another important issue in mentor identity is that some common factor should link the teaching experiences of mentor and NQT: Johnson *et al.* (2005; cited in Whisnant *et al.*, 2005) found that, in the U.S.A, mentoring appeared most effective when new teachers taught the same subject as their mentor. By contrast, Whisnant *et al.* (2005) also draw attention to disquieting variations in American mentoring arrangements reported by Johnson *et al.* (2004), who found evidence of what these authors term 'a support gap' between the provision made by schools serving high- and low-income students: for example, "61 per cent of teachers in high-income schools were matched with mentors at the same grade level as compared with only 28 per cent in low-income schools" (Whisnant *et al.*, 2005: 21). As a result, Johnson *et al.* (2004) suggest that "new teachers working in schools with large numbers of low-income students often do not receive the support needed to do their jobs well" (Whisnant *et al.*, 2005: 22). Since Johnson *et al.* (2005) identify a link between mentoring and increased new teacher satisfaction and retention, it could be desirable for British research to investigate whether such a support gap exists in this country, and what measures might help to alleviate or prevent it. That it does exist in some measure is suggested by Hutchings *et al.*'s (2006) finding that the quality of school support received by Teach First recruits varied widely, especially in terms of subject mentors (who were often unwilling recruits with no timetable allocation for the responsibility), and their related suggestion that the challenging schools participating in the programme may have found it more difficult than others to provide adequate mentoring for their trainees, who even in their first, unqualified year were undertaking the same teaching workload as an NQT.

Another study reported in Whisnant *et al.*'s literature review describes a programme that sought to cultivate both mentor / mentor and novice / novice communities (Good and Bennett, 2005). It brought new teachers from different environments together in the neutral setting of a university in-service centre. As a result they "recognized the commonality of their concerns and felt less isolated and better understood" (Whisnant *et al.*, 2005: 8). The informal needs assessment led by veteran mentors at the end of each session enabled novice teacher participants to make known their needs, which were incorporated into the next month's programme (not only adapting the programme to their needs, but also giving them a sense of empowerment). In addition, topics raised and needs expressed were fed back both formally and informally to the university, together with their possible implications for the pre-service curriculum.

Oberski *et al.* (1999), cited Whisnant *et al.* (2005: 8) also found that new teachers valued the opportunity to 'recognize the commonality of their concerns': LA support (usually via the advisory service) was valued most by the NQTs in their study for the opportunities it provided to be away from the school setting, and, especially, to make contact with other new teachers to share 'war stories'. Similarly, most of the first-time teachers studied by Barton (2004) favoured the idea of meeting together with other NQTs to share ideas and experiences, especially since much of their support in school was derived from the presence of others new to the profession. This would, it was claimed by one teacher, help to combat the 'isolation' of the induction year, obviously more of a problem when there are very few, if any, other NQTs in the school (see also Mitchell *et al.*, 2007). One interesting element within the Teach First approach was the deliberate placing of at least four trainees in the same school in order to add peer group support to the other forms of support provided. Participants responding to Hutchings *et al.*'s (2006) evaluation of the scheme gave high ratings to the support they received from other Teach First trainees, with 56 per cent of the second cohort finding this 'very effective' (p.44).

Oberski *et al.* (1999) conclude that new teachers are best able to establish good and potentially useful relationships with new colleagues and others who can offer support where they are free to identify and form their own links. Over half of participants in their study expressed their appreciation of the informal support received from colleagues, and this was

borne out in the interviews. Such support was valued for its immediacy, for the interest shown and the professional advice it could unlock. Those who had to work in more unsupportive settings greatly regretted the lack of it.

## 5.8 Conclusions

What research has yet to consider is whether NQTs coming from different ITP routes tend to have different needs during their induction year or whether the induction arrangements meet the needs of these different cohorts to the same extent. Koestsier and Wubbels (1995), in a study of ITP provision in the Netherlands, suggested that those programmes which allowed “the student teacher [to] operate independently in a situation closely approximating that of a beginning teacher” (p.343) were most positive in helping student teachers to make the transition to beginning teacher status, and, moreover, aided retention during the first years of a teaching career. This, in turn, raises the question of whether trainees in England pursuing school-centred or employment-based training routes will be better able to adjust to their role as newly qualified teachers than those following HEI-based routes, and more able to pursue CPD opportunities proactively. Conversely, could it be the case that some NQTs from school-centred and employment-based routes will lose out on induction provision because they are considered to be more familiar with a full-time teaching role? Much of the existing research on NQT experience focuses on young teachers, indeed assumes that NQTs will almost by definition be young; but do older entrants to the profession share the same problems and challenges, or do they bring different ‘baggage’ with them as they enter the profession, and encounter other sources of stress – or, indeed, of satisfaction?

The answers to such questions will be of particular interest in relation to those beginner teachers (who are most likely to come from employment-based routes) who take up an NQT post in the school that trained them. As we pointed out in Section 3.2, there has also been little research into, and no conclusive evidence of, possible relationships between training route followed and the teaching capability of beginning teachers.

Experiences of the induction year are dependent on many factors, including the induction arrangements made by schools, individual induction tutor-NQT relationships, and how NQTs draw on their ITP to interpret their experiences as beginning teachers. The literature indicates that where schools make arrangements for regular observation of trainees, ‘feedback’ sessions, sufficient non-contact time; where schools have an ethos which encourages professional growth; and where they provide conditions for induction tutors to both pursue their own professional development for the role as well as carry out the role, then they can aid NQT retention and provide bridges both from ITP to the NQT years, and from induction to early professional development. Such positive outcomes, where achieved, may well enhance teacher retention and motivation in the longer term.

## **Chapter 6: Experiences of teaching and early professional development during the post-induction years**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The end of the induction year sees also the end of statutory formal provision for new teachers: from now on most will be reliant for their future support and development on their individual schools, on their local authorities, and on themselves as learners (perhaps via other organisations such as universities, where beginning teachers may choose to undertake additional qualifications). The resulting variety of experience may help to explain why relatively few studies have focused on the second and subsequent early years of teaching, though much may be gleaned from research with a wider remit. One complicating factor is the broad age range of beginning teachers: it is often impossible to identify research data relating to the recently qualified unless findings have been broken down specifically to provide this information, since neither age nor years in teaching can serve as a reliable proxy.

For the purposes of the *Becoming a Teacher* research we have taken the 'early professional development' (EPD) time-span to cover the period from induction to the end of teachers' fourth year in post, the period covered in our primary data generation. However, we recognise that research publications on teachers' early professional development may well limit their field of reference to the second and third years in post, or extend it to include the induction year, whilst other work draws no distinction between EPD and continuing professional development (CPD). As a result, the body of available evidence that relates specifically to this phase of beginning teachers' experience is unusually limited. Fortunately, however, those publications that do focus on the early years of teaching form a complementary group, in which the findings of a relatively limited number of large-scale studies are illuminated by rich detail from a range of smaller qualitative investigations. In combination they provide a useful base of broad but contextualised evidence on the professional development of recently qualified teachers in the post-induction years.

### **6.2 The post-induction experiences of beginning teachers**

In a study of sixteen New Zealand teachers at the end of their second year in the profession, Grudnoff and Tuck (2002) explore the idea of becoming a teacher as a process of acculturation. While participants' responses in this and an earlier related survey suggested that a significant component of learning in the first year was focused on coming to understand the culture of the school, the second-year teachers said they could now comprehend the nature and function of school policies and systems. They also reported using time more effectively and being better able to prioritise, and perceived themselves as having more realistic expectations, as being more responsive to pupils' learning needs, and more flexible. Supporting evidence for their development in both school- and classroom-related areas was provided by their 'supervising teachers' (or mentors), who praised the second-year teachers for their collaboration with colleagues and their classroom organisation.

The sense of personal improvement reported here is echoed in a small scale qualitative study by Smethem and Adey (2005) comparing the experiences of novice teachers who had, and had not, received statutory induction.

“By the end of year 2 with the focus of attention now firmly aligned on the pupils and their learning and development, post-induction NQTs strongly felt improvements in methodology and practice; the result of continued self-analysis and trial and error, reflection ... their own reading and the impact of INSET. [One participant] acknowledged the ‘conscious effort’ to implement changes, to avoid ploughing a familiar furrow” (p.193).

The authors comment that only participating NQTs who had experienced statutory induction made such comments on the process of reflection, complementing the findings of Totterdell *et al.* (2002) that “nearly two thirds of induction tutors thought that induction had substantially improved continuity and progression into Continuing Professional Development” and “a higher number of NQTs than induction tutors (75%) thought that induction had provided a ‘bridge’ into early professional development” (Totterdell *et al.*, 2002: 105).

A similar awareness of progress (though not in this case linked to induction) is reported by Hammond and Cartwright (2003) in their paper on the third-year experiences of a small cohort of ICT teachers, interviewed as part of a larger longitudinal study. All nine interviewees identified areas of improvement in their teaching during their third year, though this was less marked than the year before and three felt they were ‘hitting a plateau’ (p.214). Participants reported a greater sense of authority in class: they felt that they had become increasingly skilled and confident, thanks to their having learned from previous mistakes, and that they had built up a ‘mental store’ of knowledge supported by an accumulated bank of resources and an increased ability to improvise. The authors see this as the result of a virtuous cycle of experience, with the teachers reflecting and amending their approach in order to communicate more effectively with their students. Similarly, their sense of increased confidence resulted from another virtuous cycle leading to more confidence and greater acceptance by pupils. As a result of these changes, “the job feels easier” to teachers in their third year (p.222), releasing the time and energy for them to take on new roles, and promoting a wider view of the school along with greater awareness of personal career progression. However, some also reported a sense of impending boredom or stagnation, to which their eventual reaction would probably be to change in some way, either by moving schools, redefining their current position, or taking on new responsibilities. Hammond and Cartwright (2003) comment that those who have received support and encouragement are more likely to feel optimistic about the future, and to expect to take on new challenges. Conversely, others may still derive satisfaction from classroom work but yet begin to feel dissatisfied with teaching as a career, sometimes because of discontent with senior management.

Barton’s (2004) study for the then TTA on the retention of priority subject teachers during their first three years of service also highlighted the satisfaction obtained from contact with pupils. In responses to the questionnaire statement ‘I enjoy(ed) spending time with children in the classroom’, 20 respondents (43% of those who answered this question) agreed strongly, and a further 19 (40%) agreed. Barton also found that a significant proportion of new teachers clearly enjoyed forming relationships with children in a pastoral capacity, a factor often raised in interviews:

“It’s the relationships that make teaching appealing as well as the actual subject knowledge. Sometimes I see that actually I wish I didn’t teach languages and I wish I taught something else. But the pastoral aspect really makes up for that. Becoming a form tutor made a real difference” (p.13).

### 6.3 Early Professional Development

Although it is quite common for authors on the first year of teaching to call for closer attention to be paid to the training offered to recently qualified teachers in the years immediately succeeding induction, to date there has been relatively little research dealing specifically with post-induction early professional development (EPD). Moreover, as well as continuing to learn as beginning teachers, most of the recently qualified will also be participating in professional development activities alongside more experienced colleagues. For both of these reasons it is useful to look at wider studies on teachers' professional development to supplement the available literature on EPD.

However, where research on teachers' views is reported solely in terms of age rather than years of service it can be very difficult to identify findings relating to beginning teachers as a discrete group, especially within accounts of large-scale research. The report by Hustler *et al.* (2003) on teachers' perceptions of continuing professional development (CPD) offers an example of this problem. The quantitative component of the study draws on the responses of a large sample of teachers, 657 of whom (27% of the total) were in their first five years of service: a group, then, that included both teachers in their induction year and some with considerably more experience. Whilst at times the subset of NQTs is singled out for comment, at others the under-25s are considered as a group; but since almost a quarter of participating teachers with five years' experience or less were aged 35 and over, the two subsets cannot be equated.

Nevertheless this report does offer some interesting observations on the views of many beginning teachers. While Hustler *et al.* (2003) point out that the culture of CPD can vary both between and within schools, and also between individual teachers, they do identify some conclusions that apply particularly to young teachers and NQTs. In general younger teachers appeared to take a more positive attitude towards continuing professional development; while both younger teachers and NQTs broadly accepted 'systemic CPD needs' as reasonable, they also called for more prioritisation of their own needs, and were active in seeking out more personally relevant opportunities. This proactive approach contrasts favourably with Purdon's (2001) finding that most participants in her study of 50 recently qualified Scottish teachers appeared to hold "a deficit model of CPD...where the primary purpose is to compensate for a lack of knowledge or skills...as opposed to expanding existing horizons or developing new ones for the good of the individual teacher, the institution and the profession as a whole" (p.114).

However, some recent research on EPD in England suggests that in the move to follow the DfES (2005) guidance on designing CPD around targeted pupil / student outcomes, and with an increasing emphasis on collegiate and cross-school rather than departmental teams (see, for example, Cordingley (CUREE) (2008), there is a risk that some generic or specific needs of recently qualified teachers could be overlooked. Many respondents to Hustler *et al.*'s (2003) study of teachers' perceptions of CPD saw school development needs as taking precedence over those of the individual professional, or complained of a 'one size fits all' approach. As Purdon (2001: 110) points out, "[n]ew teachers, by the very nature of their 'newness', are less likely to have their voices heard than other more established groups".

In the detailed case studies that feature in the (2008) report by the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE), there are just two brief references to individual NQTs and one to a 'young teacher', though this is perhaps neither surprising nor significant given that the investigative framework used to structure the research makes no mention of beginning or recently qualified teachers. The authors found that in those schools studied that took a strategic approach to CPD planning, "needs identification processes were focused around student learning and related teacher learning, irrespective of teacher characteristics" (Cordingley, 2008: 28). However, alongside this, and arising out of teachers' own expressed concerns for professional development opportunities related to their subject



or specialism, the study found “a growing appreciation of the need to address teachers’ professional identity and ... expertise through the personalisation of CPD” (Cordingley, 2008: 28).

Hustler *et al.* (2003) recommend that the government should ring-fence more resources for personal or individual CPD, and activities where school and individual needs are interrelated: this could have particular relevance for mature entrants to the profession, where a failure to identify and take into account the skills and experience they bring with them could lead to missed opportunities for customised early professional development. This emphasis on the value of ‘customised’ EPD is echoed by Oberski *et al.* (1999) when they point out the potential for EPD courses to use personal achievements identified by the beginning teachers participating as a ‘springboard’ for further developing their success while keeping the focus rooted in their own experience.

Hustler *et al.* (2003) also note that for all except late career stage teachers, positive feelings about CPD were quite often associated with an awareness of career progression opportunities to which CPD had been and could be linked. However, the authors suggest that many who have been teaching for around four to six years may feel a lack of direction, and so need particular support in identifying how individual professional development can relate to their future career paths in the profession.

In a discussion of current theories on teaching and learning, Kwakman (2003) draws attention to a mismatch between these and the traditional approach that she sees as continuing to dominate teachers’ own professional development. She argues that learning is now viewed as a collaborative and context-bound activity through which “students learn best when they have the opportunity to actively construct their own knowledge” (McLaughlin, 1997; cited in Kwakman, 2003: 149), and which calls for a pedagogical approach in which the teacher’s role is to create a stimulating learning environment and to facilitate student learning. However, Kwakman endorses the view of Bransford *et al.* (1999) that “much of what constitutes the typical approaches to formal teacher professional development [is] antithetical to what research findings indicate as promoting effective learning” (Bransford *et al.*, 1999; cited in Kwakman, 2003: 150). She points out that from the cognitive psychological perspective, if teachers themselves are to learn new ways of teaching, they too need “to construct their own knowledge and direct their own learning” (Kwakman, 2003: 150), and this must be facilitated by creating favourable environments in which they can take charge of their own learning.

Kwakman identifies from her review of the literature a series of principles relating to teacher learning:

- learning takes place when teachers participate in activities within the school context;
- learning can be either individual (though this is not necessarily equated with self-directed learning) or social in nature (as in collaborative learning);
- collaboration with others can stimulate feedback and the exchange of new ideas; and
- learning is necessary if teachers are to develop professionally: they may learn individually through reading, experimenting, and reflecting, and jointly through collaboration.

As part of the literature review reported here, Kwakman (2003) explores factors that promote or inhibit teachers’ professional learning activity, and calls on adult learning theory and the social psychology theory of work stress to offer additional perspectives. Adult learning theory suggests that teacher learning will be influenced by the individual’s professional attitude, and by the extent to which activities are viewed as feasible and meaningful. Work stress theory assumes a mutual relationship between stress and learning, and Dutch research suggests that emotional exhaustion and what is sometimes described as loss of personal accomplishment may both play a part in determining teachers’ learning outcomes. The social psychology theory of work stress (the job demand control model) suggests that both stress

and learning result from the interaction between the demands of a task and the discretion allowed to the worker in meeting them (the degree of job control). While high job demands are presumed to be a prerequisite for work-based learning, some degree of control is a crucial factor if resulting work stress is to be avoided. Kwakman cites findings from her own earlier work <sup>15</sup> suggesting that factors related to job demands and job control do have a bearing on teachers' participation in professional learning activities. Job demands may take different forms, and are influenced by the pressure of work, its emotional demands and its diversity; control will depend partly on the extent to which the individual has both autonomy, and opportunities to influence the working environment and engage in decision-making.

Stress can be minimised by a supportive work environment, and according to Kwakman the literature emphasises the importance in this respect of both social support (from management and colleagues) and cultural support (through an environment that appreciates and promotes participation in professional learning). The particular relevance to beginning teachers of a social element within EPD is underlined in Day *et al.*'s (2006) report on their 'Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness' (VITAE) project, where although the authors comment that "CPD was shown to be a consistently positive influence on teachers" (p.121), they also note that "teachers who were at the beginning of their professional lives were the most positive about the time and opportunity they had for self-reflection and a sharing of practice with their colleagues" (p.127). Similar appreciation of opportunities to share and extend their practice was expressed by participants in the University of Cambridge EPD programme for science teachers (Mitchell *et al.*, 2007).

Kwakman's application of adult learning theory to the school as a workplace is echoed in its use as the framework for a study by Sandholtz (2002) of teachers' professional development opportunities in the U.S.A. Although she does not identify the length of service of participating teachers, some of her comments resonate with ideas already discussed above in the context of teacher preparation and induction, notably her conclusion that:

"A primary focus of professional development activities should be teachers teaching teachers. Teachers hold fellow teachers' expertise in high regard - more so than outside experts whom they often see removed from the day-to-day realities of classroom teaching. Veteran teachers are the key in preparing new teachers and helping with classroom discipline and management. Simply having time to collaborate with colleagues in one's school is an important form of professional growth" (p.827).

In common with Kwakman, Sandholtz also emphasises how much teachers value the opportunity to select professional development activities that fit their current needs and teaching circumstances, and to change these when their situations change.

Kwakman's emphasis on the importance of some degree of autonomy for successful participation in professional development activities also finds an interesting echo in the report by Moor *et al.* (2005) on their evaluation of a pilot scheme for a proposed EPD initiative in England. The authors identify a range of specific features as pivotal to the beneficial impact of the scheme, foremost among which was teacher autonomy: the greater the level of teachers' involvement in selecting their EPD opportunities, the greater the outcomes they derived. Moreover, where EPD that had taken place was reported to have had little impact, the most common reason given was its failure to meet teachers' own personal needs for professional development. The influence of autonomy was particularly strong in terms of enhancing subject knowledge, pupils' learning and actual teaching practice; it was not found to be detrimental to schools, since the teachers involved tended to be mindful of school needs and focus on activities equally beneficial to the school.

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<sup>15</sup> The original work referred to here is accessible only in Dutch.

The evaluation reported by Moor *et al.* (2005) was originally designed as a three-year longitudinal survey of schools in twelve local authorities (including 36 case study schools), which was able to draw on the experiences of 620 second-, and later third-year teachers and with their mentors. When it was decided not to proceed with the proposed initiative beyond the pilot, the purpose of the third year's research was altered, resulting in a change in case study criteria and the replacement of more than two-thirds of the case-study schools. Although the result was some loss of continuity, these adjustments did result in a stronger focus on identifying lessons from the EPD experience which would be valid in a wider context.

In the original pilot scheme, funding was made available to participating LAs to support the professional development of second- and third-year teachers in order to foster a firm base for career-long professional development. While there was some variation in the range of implementation models adopted, overall these were characterised by two elements: the involvement of individual teachers (supported by their schools) in decisions on how the funding should be used to address their needs, and a commitment to mentoring. The wide range of activities undertaken as a result of the emphasis on individual choice included attendance on courses (either specifically targeted at EPD needs or open to all teachers), professional networking, and in-school activities such as lesson observation and team teaching. In addition, some participants used the available funding to enable them to engage in research or study for a qualification, to visit other schools, or to purchase resources. More generally, funding was also valued for its ability to free up additional non-contact time through the provision of supply cover.

In each year of the pilot the responses of the primary teachers involved were slightly more positive than those of their secondary peers, and they also reported having greater autonomy in selecting their EPD. In terms of participants' routes into teaching, however, there appeared to be no significant variation in impact between the major groups represented: those (around two-thirds) who had entered teaching via a PGCE course, those holding BA / BSc with QTS (around 20%), and the smaller group (around 10%) with a BEd. Over the three years of the pilot the levels of reported effectiveness increased and its benefits became more widespread throughout the teacher sample: while 61 per cent of participant responses in year 1 suggested a considerable impact, this rose to 74 per cent in year 2 and 77 per cent in year 3. Some, especially in the first year, saw the provision of EPD itself as an 'impact', but their emphasis often moved over time to outcomes related to their thinking, practices and careers.

Mentor support appeared to be particularly influential for second year teachers, especially in terms of improving practice (notably behaviour management) and career development. Although the relationship appeared less important overall for teachers in their third year, teachers involved in the EPD pilot reported that mentors still influenced their commitment, morale and desire for professional development. Teachers were found to benefit most if they were involved in selecting their mentor, perhaps another indication of the importance of a degree of teacher autonomy for the successful functioning of EPD.

A different approach to the provision of EPD was introduced in Northern Ireland in 1998, since when all graduates completing the initial phase of ITE have had to develop a Career Entry Profile (CEP) which should inform the planning of both their induction year and two years of EPD. During the EPD phase they must undertake a focused Professional Development Activity (PDA) from each of three categories: classroom / school management, curriculum and ICT (two if ICT is integrated in one of the others). A framework of competences provides the basis for planning learning and evaluating progress at all three phases of teacher preparation. Findings from the limited sample of recently qualified teachers involved in research by Kearns (2001) in Northern Ireland suggested that many were behind schedule in completing their PDAs as expected, chiefly because of their teaching workload. Half of the participating teachers indicated that the main reason for choosing a PDA topic was school priority, whilst other choices were driven by what the teachers themselves had identified as the needs of their class. The teachers' own personal interests accounted for considerably less than a third

of the total; not one of their choices was attributed to either the Career Entry Profile (CEP), or their own competence needs. Kearns suggests that teacher attitudes towards this form of EPD might have influenced their choice of PDA: some seemed to consider the activities as an obstacle to be overcome by drawing upon their strengths and interests (rather than needs), while others apparently felt obliged to select activities they perceived as challenging.

Kearns argues that the results of his study raise interesting questions about the competence base of the EPD programme. Many of the PDAs undertaken by teachers appeared to focus not on acquiring teaching competences identified as targets in their career entry profiles, but on demonstrating curriculum developments that responded to Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) strategic priorities (e.g. teaching using ICT) or the needs of the school or class. He expresses concern at the apparent effects of compulsion upon a potentially creative process (over half of respondents thought the activities 'of limited value'), and strongly advocates the development of in-service teacher networks. On the basis of the literature Kearns argues that these should be characterised by a commitment to innovation, information sharing and psychological support; they should be provided with an effective facilitator, and participation should be voluntary. The activities of such networks should be directed by teachers themselves, promoting greater control, a sense of ownership and commitment to the profession.

A wider perspective on such issues is offered by Kennedy (2005) in her suggested typology of the differing modes of continuing professional development (CPD). Her proposed framework, founded on the available literature, "explores the extent to which CPD is perceived and promoted either as an individual endeavour related to accountability, or as a collaborative endeavour that supports transformative practice" Kennedy 2005: 235). The nine models proposed range from the 'training model', "generally 'delivered' to the teacher by an 'expert', with the agenda determined by the deliverer, and the participant placed in a passive role" (p.237), to what Kennedy terms the 'transformative model', which combines a range of practices and conditions to support collective development towards a transformative agenda. At almost a central point on this continuum lies the 'coaching or mentoring model', which:

"depending on the matching of those involved in the... relationship... can support either a transmission view of professional development, where teachers are initiated into the status quo by their more experienced colleagues or a transformative view where the relationship provides a supportive, but challenging forum for both intellectual and affective interrogation of practice" (p.243).

In either case, Kennedy (2005) argues that "regardless of the fundamental purpose of the coaching / mentoring model... the quality of interpersonal relationships is crucial" (p.243).

Moor *et al.* (2005) comment that teachers in the schools that scored highest in their evaluation of the EPD pilot "described an environment in which they were expected to take responsibility for their professional learning and felt supported and encouraged to do so" (p.94), an approach that suggests at least an element of Kennedy's 'transformative' view of mentoring. Indeed, school support proved to be one of the strongest predictors of positive outcomes derived from the EPD pilot, and the findings of Moor *et al.* (2005) show the benefits to be far from one-way, since they also found evidence to suggest that the early professional development of teachers had enabled them to participate more effectively in their school communities. Not only did three-quarters of the teachers responding to the final year survey report that EPD had considerably affected their ability to contribute to their colleagues and the school, but this was confirmed by the mentors, of whom 78 per cent registered a belief that EPD considerably affected their mentees' contribution to school life. In a study of EPD activities undertaken by second- and third-year teachers not involved in the EPD pilot, Ofsted (2003) too concluded that effective professional development for individual teachers appeared to bring with it a contribution to the development of colleagues and, to a lesser extent, the whole school.

A study conducted by Draper *et al.* (1997) throws an interesting sidelight on issues of early professional development in Scotland through the analysis of the questionnaire responses of a cohort of novice teachers who had just completed their two-year probationary period. When the authors examined those data in the light of respondents' employment patterns over the first two years of teaching, they found marked differences in satisfaction levels. Recently qualified teachers whose employment had been interrupted rather than continuous reported lower levels of satisfaction with their induction than those in continuous employment, and appeared more uncertain about the criteria and methods used in assessment. However, when invited to rate how developed they now felt as teachers, about 66 per cent of those in continuous employment believed that they were well developed while 34 per cent felt there was scope for further development; in contrast, 80 per cent of those with broken employment patterns believed they had developed as teachers against only 20 per cent who saw room for further development. Reflecting on this result, the authors argue that many beginning teachers in broken employment may see themselves as well developed because they have become "very skilled at surviving, at managing a new class and 'getting the show on the road'" (p.292); by contrast, those in continuous employment may feel less well developed because they have been more deeply involved in their work, and hence are more aware of areas in which they need to develop further.

Draper *et al.* (1997) argue that recently qualified teachers who experience discontinuity in their employment miss out on learning to manage the job in the long-term, and as a result, fail to experience an important dimension of teaching as a professional task; as a result, they may be evaluating their needs for development against a restricted view of the job. Respondents to this study had been teaching for two years (albeit, under the Scottish system, as probationers): there seems a real risk that both their low opinion of EPD and their sense of their own needs could be difficult to modify later in their teaching careers.

#### **6.4 Moving beyond the early years of teaching: issues and challenges**

Moor *et al.* (2005) cite the findings of Ofsted (2003) that in around half of the non-pilot scheme schools studied the EPD activities provided had directly strengthened commitment to a career in teaching; but in addition they draw attention to a contrast in findings on retention issues between those involved in the EPD pilot programme and those recently qualified teachers in their own comparative sample (p.63). One of the largest increases in the pilot's reported impact over time was in participants' commitment to the teaching profession, which rose by 16 percentage points between the first and final (third) year. In addition, when asked '*How likely is it that you will be working in teaching in five years' time?*', 70 per cent of participating teachers registered '*a strong likelihood*' compared with 59 per cent of the comparative sample. Moreover, the expected probability of remaining in the profession was consistently higher for the EPD participants irrespective of phase, year of teaching, or type of LA. Moor *et al.* (2005) suggest that "the positive effect of EPD extends to a greatly enhanced perception of the teaching profession and less dissatisfaction on the part of teachers... in comparison with others at a similar stage in their careers" (p.63).

One of the long-term aims of the Cambridge EPD programme for science teachers "has been to influence retention amongst teachers at the start of their career" (Mitchell *et al.*, 2007: 14). As well as the benefits in terms of improved classroom practice that resulted from training days, the evaluation of this programme identified other gains such as increased confidence, a reduction in stress, and an enhanced awareness of career possibilities (Mitchell *et al.*, 2007). Such conclusions, together with those of Moor *et al.* (2005) discussed above, reinforce other findings (e.g. from the U.S.) that underline the potential of personally tailored and well-supported EPD as a powerful component in the drive to reduce new teacher attrition, especially as part of a continuum of provision:

“The effects of strong initial preparation are likely to be enhanced by equally strong induction and mentoring in the early teaching years. These young teachers not only stay in the profession at higher rates, but they also become competent more quickly than those who learn by trial and error” (Sykes and Darling-Hammond, 2003: 25).

Other research suggests that developments in new teachers’ attitudes during their early years may carry within them the seeds of later resignation from the profession.

Looking back on the three years of their longitudinal study which tracked a small cohort of teachers of ICT from their initial training into their third year of teaching, Hammond and Cartwright (2003) note changes in participants’ sources of dissatisfaction from students’ behaviour and attitudes in the first year to dealing with coursework in the second. Also in the second year, however, factors beyond the classroom began to feature as causes of discontent, notably insensitivity and lack of trust on the part of senior colleagues. The authors comment that over time the negative factors have apparently extended gradually beyond the classroom. Since only three of the nine interviewees were embarking on their first career, it would be dangerous to take their reactions as typical; but the issues raised here could have important messages for the long-term retention of new teachers in the profession. While those managers described as effective were perceived as supportive, approachable and appreciative, teachers experiencing difficulties with senior management reported “a system that did not support, and, in many instances, worked against their personal and professional needs” (p.218).

Powney *et al.* (2003) offer an example of such a system when they report informants’ comments that organising INSET after school hours could disadvantage part-timers (mostly women) and teachers with children. Areas of particular discontent cited by Hammond and Cartwright (2003) included appraisal, promotion and pressure to put in additional hours. While the head teacher’s role was pivotal, heads of department could also have a strongly positive or negative impact on a teacher’s working life. Two interviewees with previous experience of industry made particularly scathing comments on the poor quality of ‘man-management’ in teaching (p.219). It would be interesting to know whether studies of industry or business reveal the same growing discontent with management as new recruits become established and assimilated into an organisation, or whether this phenomenon is specific to teaching; but in any case, the increasing number of mature entrants to the profession is likely to bring with it a more conscious (and potentially vocal) appraisal of working conditions and leadership and management practices, once the initial induction period is over.

## 6.5 Conclusions

Early professional development can be seen as part of a continuum that begins with the work of the school-based mentor during ITP, supports newly qualified teachers through the induction process, and extends beyond the first few years of teaching in the form of continuing professional development. The literature suggests that in each case it will be most effective where it combines professional development activities with attention to the culture and ethos of the school: this both benefits individual teachers and promotes the formation of a learning community. Research tells us that learning is necessary if teachers are to continue to develop professionally, and that where EPD offers an element of individual choice, novices are more likely to feel empowered to pursue their own needs and develop further their individual teacher identities.

There is also some evidence to suggest that support for career development allied to a collegiate ethos and a positive relationship with management, will often result in an additional dividend for schools in the form of long-term retention. Conversely, a lack of attention to some of these factors may well have a negative impact on the decisions of NQTs to remain in the profession beyond the first few years. Before discussing beginning teacher retention, however, we first consider what research has to tell us on issues affecting the retention of student teachers.

## Chapter 7: Issues relating to the retention of trainee teachers

### 7.1 Introduction

“In England, about 40 per cent of those who embark on a training course never become teachers, and of those who become teachers, about 40 per cent are no longer teaching five years later” (Kyriacou *et al.*, 2003: 256). This chapter will look at the profiles of those who leave ITP, and attempt to explore the issue of trainees who finish their course but fail to proceed into employment as a teacher. The following chapter will then go on to examine the research evidence on teacher retention during the early years of service.

### 7.2 Attrition from ITP

Though recruitment into ITP is improving, withdrawal rates are high: 13-14 per cent of trainees leave training before completion. When Chambers and Roper (2002) conducted research into why student teachers withdrew from the University of Leeds secondary PGCE course, they found that the key factors were workload, stress, low morale and ‘general unhappiness’. The authors conclude that while some trainees withdrew from their course because of personal difficulties (including finance), most reasons given related to ‘the job of teaching’, its challenges, and the possible mismatch between expectations and reality. Such findings raise issues concerning trainees’ commitment to ITP, their prior expectations and recruitment procedures.

Although Reid and Cauldwell (1997: 47) found that the “vast majority of PGCE students had positive and professionally sound rather than negative and questionable reasons for wanting to teach”, Chambers and Roper (2002) argue that of those leaving teacher training only a quarter had identified teaching as a prior goal. Among course completers, however, there was an even split between those who had entered ITP with a clear commitment to teacher training and those who felt it was something to try or an alternative to unemployment. Lewis (2002) found a similar split among men who completed a primary PGCE course, with half knowing previously that they wanted to teach and the others deciding while at university.

In terms of retention on ITP programmes, one study of trainees who withdrew very early on in their PGCE course found that the main reasons given were that they had decided teaching would not suit them, they had received an offer of alternative employment, or they were leaving for financial reasons (Baumfield and Taverner, 1997; cited in Edmonds *et al.*, 2002: 42). In addition to asking ITP students why they withdrew from their course, Chambers and Roper (2000) sent questionnaires to school co-ordinators and the teacher-tutors of withdrawn students. Reasons for withdrawal given by the schools included an inability or disinclination to cope with aspects of the teacher’s role such as imposing discipline or preparing lessons, lack of confidence in front of a class, and a lack of commitment. The obvious disparity between these two banks of ‘reasons’ is troubling, but perhaps understandable if we consider the potential for latent bias in self-reporting: neither group of respondents is likely to report inadequacy, either of performance (in the case of the trainees) or of support.

Student teachers are also most likely to withdraw from ITP during or immediately after ‘block teaching’ placements (Sands, 1993; Chambers and Roper, 2002; Basit *et al.*, 2006). It is during this period that trainees often appear to realise that they are not suited to teaching; as in the induction period for NQTs, there can be an element of ‘reality shock’. The experience of the reality of teaching can also be compounded by the individual school experience. Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) suggest that the decisions of student teachers to stay in or leave the profession are strongly influenced by the schools they train in. A bad placement-school experience increases the likelihood of withdrawal from ITP. This has implications for school-centred and employment-based training routes, where trainees spend the vast majority of their time in school, and most of this in a single school. As Hutchings *et al.* (2006: 50) comment on the Teach First scheme, “the key element is the support from staff in the school;

when this fails, the situation can seem very dire". While the provision of peer support is an important part of the Teach First programme, GTP trainees generally have less of an opportunity to compare notes with fellow trainees, as Smith and McLay (2007) point out (p.47); their resulting isolation can only exacerbate any lack of support from more experienced colleagues.

Some research has identified the interview process as a key area where those who may have unrealistic expectations or a lack of commitment to ITP or teaching could be discouraged from entering the profession. Chambers and Roper (2002) warn of the potentially negative effects of pressure on interview and admissions procedures from stringent recruitment targets; they also note that concern about equal opportunities issues could inhibit some questioning or probing at interview. While concluding that on the whole the interview system itself should not be blamed for the recruitment of unsuitable candidates, Chambers and Roper recommend that:

- interviews should be rigorous in assessing candidates' motivation and commitment;
- interviewers should probe the accuracy of candidates' image of the reality of teaching, and be on the look-out for any doubts;
- some candidates would benefit from a period of school observation before they finally decide to apply for ITP.

Chambers and Roper (2002) also argue that the term 'wastage' is possibly misleading and that an ITP course itself could be seen as a test of suitability for teaching as a profession. Thirty-one per cent of those students who eventually withdrew were judged likely to have failed had they continued. This issue of 'failure' is also important in exploring individual experiences of withdrawing from ITP courses. For example, in Basit *et al.*'s (2006) study focusing on withdrawal by minority ethnic trainees (but with a large 'majority' comparison group) the main reason given by tutors for withdrawal was "the realisation that teaching is not for them" (p.395); but some trainees whose performance was consistently weak had been encouraged to withdraw, because "it was felt that not all withdrawals should be counselled in rather than counselled out" (p.396). If many students are advised to withdraw rather than 'fail' their teaching practice, then this, perhaps involuntary withdrawal, needs more attention.<sup>16</sup>

### **7.3 Differential factors in withdrawal from ITP: are there specific 'at risk' groups?**

A range of studies suggest that trainees with different characteristics appear to have a different likelihood of withdrawal, and give different reasons for leaving. Sands (1993) found that males and older students were more likely to withdraw. There was also a higher drop-out rate from those studying to teach shortage subjects, which some research suggests may be linked to a 'vicious circle' in which poor quality teaching in shortage subjects leads to a poor quality in-school experience for trainees (see, for example, Adams, 2002); but it has also been suggested that those from shortage subjects have greater job and higher salary opportunities outside of teaching than those from non-shortage subjects.

Coles (2001) studied the withdrawal of mature students from secondary PGCE courses at the University of Leeds. Areas of concern for these trainees were: a lack of knowledge surrounding the reality of schools (some gave as a reason unexpected changes that had occurred in education since their own school days, others regretted that less had changed than they expected); difficulties in working alongside much younger colleagues; and difficulties in returning to academic study. In contrast they appeared to have encountered fewer difficulties than many younger students in maintaining classroom discipline. This study found that withdrawal was usually caused by a combination of problems, notably workload exacerbated by family responsibilities and problems with childcare, while financial burdens,

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<sup>16</sup> Schmidt and Knowles' (1995) examination of the experience of 'failure' by four female novice teachers is one attempt to explore such issues.



the strain on personal relationships and poor relationships with staff and mentors / teacher tutors in their placement schools could also be influential. The difficulties experienced by those with family responsibilities faced by geographically inconvenient placements are also highlighted by Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant (2003) and Basit *et al.* (2006).

As stated above, men's withdrawal rates from ITP have been found to be higher than those of women. There is evidence for this in both the secondary (Sands, 1993) and primary (Lewis, 2002) phases. However, given the low numbers of male primary school teachers, more attention has been given in the literature on ITP to male primary trainees' experiences of training. One area which has been addressed is that of isolation. If men are needed as primary teachers in order to provide role models to boys, then who will act as a role model to them? Lewis (2002) argues that male trainees participating in her study found it more important to have other males in their HEI tutor group than in their placement schools. Participants in Thornton's (1999) study, too, were very aware of being part of a minority group in a female-dominated profession and student cohort. Thornton also reveals a reluctance among male trainees to recognise or to expose weaknesses, and thus a tendency to keep to themselves any problems they were experiencing. In addition, she identified four key areas indicating an increased likelihood of withdrawal from the course. Three of these applied to male trainees in general: low levels of pre-course experience of working with children and within a variety of contexts; poor school atmosphere and relationships between trainees and their mentors or class teachers; and fundamental concerns regarding classroom management compared to others who were more worried about factors such as assessment. Thornton also observed that the tendency to experience problems appeared to be associated with lower qualifications on entrance to ITP, and younger trainees (Thornton, 1999). Some tutors responding to Basit *et al.*'s (2006) survey identified younger men as the most likely to leave, suggesting that they were unable or unwilling to cope with the workload, while another "commented that males needed to be told when they were unsuited to teaching, whereas female trainees raised the issue themselves" (p.396).

Although all of the course leaders participating in the Basit *et al.* (2006) study felt that the reasons why majority and minority ethnic trainees withdrew were largely the same, the authors also found that "disproportionate numbers of minority ethnic trainees noted experiencing various forms of racism", and conclude that "it is clear that while racism was not the main reason why these trainees withdrew... it doubtless strengthened their resolve to leave" (Basit *et al.*, 2006: 401). Deliberate racial harassment in placement schools was reported by 21 per cent of the minority ethnic 'withdrawers' responding to their survey, and by 25 per cent of minority ethnic 'completers', while 18 per cent of the minority group believed they were the victims of deliberate racial harassment in their ITP institution. Of the five who said they had reported this, only two said that action had been taken to address it (Basit *et al.*, 2006: 401).

#### **7.4 Supporting trainees at risk of withdrawal**

Basit *et al.* (2006) also point out that while in general there is considerable consistency between course leaders' perceptions of reasons for withdrawal and those given by trainees, there are discrepancies between the views of the two groups on the support (or lack of support) provided by mentors. This was seen by many trainees as a major factor in their withdrawal, but was not mentioned by course leaders. Similarly, "institutions... report that very few, if any, trainees withdrew without being interviewed by at least their course tutor and that HEIs undertake a significant amount of counselling work with potential withdrawers, whereas none of the trainees mentioned such services" (p.407).

Such findings suggest that more could be done to support trainees at risk of withdrawal, especially since, as Basit *et al.* (2006) stress, "we need to recognise that withdrawal is not a one-off event; it is a process" (p.406). Over a quarter of individual respondents to their study from both majority and minority ethnic groups felt that their withdrawal could have been

prevented by better preparation for placement, a change of mentor, or better support and more awareness of the nature of ITP in their placement schools.

Before trainees at risk can be supported, they must be identified, especially since there is evidence to suggest that trainees experiencing excessive stress will not necessarily turn to their tutors for support (Hayes, 2003), or even (in at least some cases) to their peers, because “they felt they could not tell [them] how difficult they were finding it when everyone else seemed to be coping” (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006: 50). In their literature review on recruitment to, and retention in, ITP, Edmonds *et al.* (2002) summarise the evidence on early warning signs provided by ITP admissions staff, school coordinators and teacher tutors as:

“lack of commitment to the course (e.g. failure to provide registration information) and lack of suitability for teaching, especially during teaching practice. Such indicators include lateness / poor timekeeping, difficulties with classroom management and a lack of commitment to the school” (p.46).

However, the literature based on trainees’ own accounts of their experiences suggests a rather different range of factors which, if not addressed, may contribute to withdrawal: these include problems in dealing with family responsibilities, poor relationships with mentors, shortcomings in subject knowledge and difficulties with discipline. The two accounts are not necessarily unrelated: childcare problems exacerbated by a distant placement could well lead to poor timekeeping and a perceived lack of commitment, while inadequate attention to concerns about discipline during ITP could easily result in difficulties with classroom management during school placement.

The importance of attempting to address some of these issues has already been dealt with in Chapter 2 above in the context of student teachers’ needs: relevant work (though much of this does not explicitly address the issue of withdrawal) includes Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant (2003) on childcare issues, especially during school placement; Hobson and Malderez (2002) and Hayes (2003) on trainee-mentor relationships; Prentice (1997) and Ofsted (2005; 2006) on subject knowledge; and Haritos (2004) among others on discipline issues.

Other supporting evidence takes the form of the direct words of former trainees cited in Basit *et al.*’s (2006) study, which included a survey sent out by participating institutions to majority and minority ethnic trainees who had dropped out over a period of three years. Relevant comments on their reasons for withdrawal (in the same order of issues) include: “My tutors were unsupportive of my childcare commitments – training sessions finished after 5.00 p.m. - too late to collect my child from school” (p.400); “My mentor had so many commitments that she was little help or support” (p.400); “My subject knowledge at A-level was in my opinion inadequate to the task” (p.399); and “It was daunting when you were unfamiliar with the environment and a small group of students ganged up against you when you should be in control of them” (p.400).

In order to address some of these issues and improve trainee retention, Basit *et al.* (2006) recommend a range of strategies; among other suggestions they urge that:

- both HEIs and schools should adopt early intervention strategies and recognise that some who entered training with lower grades may need additional and targeted support;
- trainees should be made aware of where they can turn for advice and guidance;
- trainees should receive training in classroom management and how to deal with behaviour problems before they are sent into school;
- trainees not confident in their subject knowledge should be encouraged to enrol on subject knowledge booster courses;
- institutions should avoid sending trainees to schools in special measures; and
- placement decisions should be made in full awareness of geographical distance, ethnic mix, and trainees’ preferences.

In addition, Basit *et al.* (2006) strongly urge that the government should provide affordable childcare for teacher trainees, preferably attached to ITP institutions; reappraise the training bursary, extending it to include BEd trainees in their final year and additional funding to trainees on a low income and with families; and offer ITP institutions incentives for retaining trainees until completion, linked to funding for improved retention strategies.

In the context of withdrawals in which racial issues were a factor, the authors argue that it should be seen as the responsibility of ITP tutors and placement teachers to work towards widening participation and social inclusion as a major aim of ITP.

“It is pointless to waste valuable resources on specialist advisers, coordinators and race officers, when the money can be more productively spent on training ITT tutors and school mentors to increase their knowledge and sensitivity to issues of race” (Basit *et al.*, 2006: 407).

Such work could have wider benefits. It is interesting in this context that respondents to the TTA's (2003) Newly Qualified Teacher Survey gave their lowest satisfaction ratings to related areas of their training: their preparation to work with children with English as an Additional Language (EAL), and to teach pupils from minority ethnic groups (TTA, 2003). Although by 2008 NQTs gave their ITP providers significantly higher ratings on both questions (e.g. 41% of secondary phase NQTs stated that their providers had been 'good' or 'very good' in preparing them to teach learners from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 32% in 2003), the ratings remained lower than for other questions (TDA, 2008).

More generally, over half of the 184 'withdrawer' respondents to Basit *et al.*'s questionnaire (64 per cent of minority former trainees and 43 per cent of the majority group) said that they would consider a future return to ITP. The authors argue that an individual's reasons for withdrawal are not necessarily everlasting, and that:

“trainees who withdraw should be encouraged to seek readmission to ITT courses as their circumstances and views might have changed in the months and years since leaving the course. This should be done through national advertising and on the Web” (Basit *et al.*, 2006: 408).

Such prospective entrants to the profession, if they reapply, are likely to do so in the fuller knowledge of the realities of teaching.

This section has focused on a very small number of studies. “People who withdraw are an elusive group to research” (Edmonds *et al.*, 2002: 47), and in some cases small sample sizes make it difficult to generalise. Another major limitation is that reasons for withdrawal tend to be collected retrospectively (up to four years after the event in one study). Edmonds *et al.* suggest that:

“Future research could perhaps adopt the strategy of administering a questionnaire to students at the point of their withdrawal from the course, or inviting them to an 'exit' interview. Ideally, data should be collected from the entire cohort of students so that valid comparisons could be made between students who withdraw and those that remained on the course, particularly students who experienced difficulties but successfully completed the course” (p.47).

## 7.5 The take-up of NQT posts from ITP

The take up of NQT posts from the ITP phase is low. It has been calculated that 30 per cent of those qualified over the last ten years had not entered teaching by the March following their course completion, although many did enter at a later stage (STRB, 2003). Barton (2004) queries these figures on the basis of her own findings, but her study is limited to teachers of specific subjects within a single cohort. However, the evidence she cites suggests that some NQTs may engage in supply teaching or additional training before finally deciding whether and if so what subject, they intend to teach; this could be interpreted as a positive rather than a negative step.

In general there appears to be a shortage of research evidence on the identity and motivation of trainees who fall at this hurdle - or decide not to take the fence at all. One obvious reason for this is the difficulty of collecting data on final career outcomes in large enough numbers to support a quantitative study, and even more of accessing a representative sample of suitable participants. Smithers and Robinson (2003; 2005) discuss the difficulty of arriving at definitions of turnover and wastage, and of contacting individual teachers via the schools they have left or are about to leave. Of the questionnaires sent out to 'movers', they comment that: "a return of this order (36.3%) is acceptable for considering correlations and differences within the group, but not for projecting quantities for the population... to some extent the sample of movers was self-selected" (Smithers and Robinson, 2005: 47).

## 7.6 Conclusions

One challenge in considering attrition both from ITP and during the period of transition between ITP and induction is that data relating to individual trainees / NQTs may be recorded by different agencies at different stages, and in a variety of ways. Unravelling the factors contributing to individual decisions not to proceed (in the cases where a decision as such has actually been made) is further complicated by the question of how - or indeed whether such decisions are recorded, and the difficulty of identifying those who do not enter teaching, and of contacting them via a 'last known address'. If employed across a range of ITP providers, some such strategy as Edmonds *et al.*'s (2002) proposal for exit interviews (outlined above at the end of Section 7.4), would provide a valuable means of exploring the identities and motivation of 'non-joiners' to set against what is known of the 'non-completers'.

Of the 41 questionnaire respondents to Barton's (2004) study who were currently teaching, well over a third said they planned to leave the profession within the next two to five years. The next chapter goes on to consider the circumstances attendant on new, and relatively new, teacher attrition.

## Chapter 8: Issues relating to the retention of beginning teachers

### 8.1 Introduction

We have already cited Kyriacou *et al.*'s (2003) finding that "of those who become teachers [in England] about 40 per cent are no longer teaching five years later" (p.256). This is seen by some commentators as a worrying state of affairs, yet the factors involved can be hard to track since many research studies differentiate between different groups of teachers by age rather than by years of service. With the range of training routes now available and the increase in 'second career' recruits to the profession, age alone has ceased to be a reliable indicator of NQT status. This chapter will attempt to tease out information latent in more general studies to augment the findings of more specific research on teacher retention in the early years.

### 8.2 Issues related to beginning teacher attrition

Smithers and Robinson (2003) have presented the most recent large-scale report on retention in the teaching profession, a study of teachers leaving maintained schools in England during 2002. This study identified five main factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession: workload, new challenge, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances. Of these, workload was by far the most important, and salary the least. These findings are supported by Purcell *et al.* (2005), who studied the early career paths of 984, 1999 UK graduates who had qualified to teach by a range of routes, and 541 similarly qualified teachers who graduated in 1995, and found that 'workload and working hours' were the factors cited most frequently by those choosing to leave the teaching profession.

Over 40 per cent of the leavers in Smithers and Robinson's study said that nothing would have induced them to stay; the main changes that would have made a difference to the others were a reduced workload, more support from the school and a higher salary. Only 13 per cent of the leavers thought it 'very likely' that they would return to teaching full-time, fewer still part-time, but nearly a quarter were contemplating supply teaching. All but two per cent of the leavers followed up after one or two terms were sure they had done the right thing, though about a third had changed their plans. Ten per cent had, in fact, taken new contracts in schools, usually part-time, so on some definitions wastage was lower than originally estimated (Smithers and Robinson, 2003).

The authors found that around a quarter of these leavers were under 30, and even more had been teaching for five years or less. Young leavers were more likely than others to cite personal reasons for leaving (including travel), and this and workload were for them the most common factors. However, about half of leavers under 30 (especially those planning to travel or teach abroad) indicated that they were 'very likely' to return to full time teaching. Salary was more likely to be cited as a motive for resigning by young leavers than by older, and by recent entrants to the profession than by longer-serving teachers; and in general it appeared to be a more important factor in the London area. An improved salary was also mentioned by a quarter of all respondents as a likely inducement to stay (Smithers and Robinson, 2003).

A subsequent report by the same authors (Smithers and Robinson, 2005) investigates teacher turnover in terms of the distinction between '*wastage*' (the number of teachers leaving but not moving to a full-time post in another school) and what they term '*moveage*', defined as full-time teachers moving to full-time posts in other maintained schools. Their findings suggest that while wastage in the secondary phase in England had remained constant at around 7.2 per cent from 2002-4, in primary schools it had risen from 9.3 per cent in 2002 and 9.2 per cent in 2003, to 10 per cent in 2004. Unlike these authors' earlier 2003 study, their 2005 report does not offer a breakdown of these findings by age or years in teaching. However, Smithers and Robinson note that around a quarter of the data for

wastage appeared to be associated with a rise in early retirement (especially among head teachers), which was unlikely to be associated with recent recruits to the profession.

When Smithers and Robinson examined this wastage by region, they found that in both phases it appeared to be highest in the south and east of the country, including the East Midlands, and especially high in Inner London (and in Outer London in the primary phase). Wastage levels did not always correlate with those for movers, and indeed were considerably higher in the South West of England. Smithers and Robinson cite a report of the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2004) on teacher retention and recruitment into secondary education which concludes that while the Committee found no evidence of endemic problems with retention and recruitment, it did discover a number of specific problems affecting some individual schools, and a range of specific concerns. Among these was new teacher wastage: fewer than half of those who began teacher training were teaching after five years.

However, the same House of Commons report also found that the retention rate for new teachers was considerably higher among those who had trained through employment-based routes, and similarly differential rates of retention among teachers as a whole have been identified by Guarino *et al.* (2006) in the USA, though the authors warn that the range of empirical studies dealing with this topic is limited. One possible reason for such discrepancies in England is the finding by Foster (2000; cited in Foster, 2001) that the Graduate Teachers working in the 130 schools he investigated were mostly experienced educators rather than genuine novices: some were overseas-trained teachers, some had substantial teaching experience in FE, whilst others had been peripatetic teachers of music or drama.

Overall though, retention in England among new recruits is disappointing. A similar situation is found in the US, with more than 30 per cent leaving within five years (Sykes and Darling-Hammond, 2003). Of these, many do not remain in the profession beyond the first year of teaching: Smith and Ingersoll (2004) report that of the first-time teachers surveyed by the National Center for Educational Statistics in 1999-2000, 14 per cent left teaching altogether, while a further 15 per cent changed school. The effect of age on the likelihood of moving was small and not statistically significant, but new teachers who started their career in full-time contracted employment were less likely either to leave or to move than those whose work was part-time, split between different schools or as long-term cover. A similar finding based on US national statistics was reported in 1999 by Boe *et al.* who also comment that “only 15.3 per cent of teachers who actually left teaching voluntarily reported less than six months earlier that was their intention... there is not a close correspondence between a teacher’s plans to move to a different school or to leave teaching, and what they actually do” (p.8), which is corroborated by Luekens *et al.* (2004): “Many public and private school leavers did not plan to leave the teaching profession when asked during the 2000-01 school year” (p.4). Although this comment applies to teachers of all ages and length of service, once again the second largest proportion of those leaving (after the group encompassing those of retirement age) was amongst respondents who had taught full-time for not more than three years. While commenting that not all early teacher turnover is undesirable, even in terms of those who leave the profession, Smith and Ingersoll (2004: 686) point out that it is costly, and a major contributor to teacher shortage. Moreover, it may be accompanied by hidden costs that are not easy to quantify, such as “the decline of organizational stability, coherence and morale” that often results:

“High rates of teacher turnover can inhibit the development and maintenance of a learning community; in turn, lack of community in a school may have a negative impact on teacher retention, thus creating a vicious cycle”.

Boyd *et al.* (2007) agree that high teacher turnover can cause harmful instability, but qualify this by also commenting that “turnover can reduce student learning if more effective teachers are the ones more likely to leave” (p.2). In a complex and detailed study of possible relationships between beginning teacher attrition and student achievement in New York State, they conclude that:

- teachers of low-performing students are more likely to leave their current schools during their first two years in post than are those teaching high-performing students; but also that
- (except in the case of middle school English teachers) teachers who are less effective in raising achievement are more likely to leave their current school than are more effective teachers.

Boyd *et al.* observe that “the achievement scores of many students will likely increase as a result of the attrition of some teachers”, and these authors even reach the blunt conclusion that “eliminating first-year student attrition could actually be detrimental to student achievement” (*op. cit.*, p.22). However, their study also reveals what they describe as ‘sorting’: a tendency for relatively effective new teachers to move from schools with lower-performing students to others where student performance is higher, thus exacerbating achievement gaps. As a result, they urge that:

“If schools with lower-performing students were as appealing to teach in as those with higher-scoring students, such sorting could be alleviated. Improving working conditions in traditionally difficult-to-staff schools is central to addressing the sorting of more effective teachers” (p.23).

Although the main focus of Johnson’s (2004) study of rising attrition rates amongst first and second year teachers in the US is on school structures and their provision for novice teacher support, the extracts from interviews provided offer detail-rich evidence of the emotional journeys of the teachers studied, and suggest a range of factors that can influence their decision to leave or stay in teaching, or to move to a different school. These include a sense of powerlessness to help pupils, often due to a lack of support (p.87); a sense of isolation, often caused by the distant attitude of older teachers used to a tradition of functioning independently behind the closed door of the classroom (p.92ff); and a sense of being unvalued, sometimes associated with concerns about social status and relatively low pay (p.64). The feeling of helplessness experienced by beginner teachers in Johnson’s study is echoed in Smethem’s (2007) finding that struggling NQTs could feel “powerless to improve matters ... highlighting the vulnerability of [those] whose experienced colleagues fulfil both roles of support and of monitoring and assessment” (p.473).

In addition to this range of specific and school-related factors, findings based on research conducted in Australia by Goddard *et al.* (2006), whose comments on burnout have already been discussed in Chapter 5, suggest the possibility that a discrete and specific “high burnout cohort of beginning teachers may be overly represented in the significant early career turnover statistics observed in the profession” (p.858).

Other studies suggest that some new teacher attrition may relate to the level of preparation received. Writing in the US, Sykes and Darling-Hammond (2003: 5) indicate the importance for retention of thorough preparation:

“Those who enter teaching without preparation in key areas such as instructional methods, child development and learning theory also leave at rates at least double those who have had such training. Teacher effectiveness rises sharply after the first few years in the classroom... accumulating evidence indicates that better-prepared teachers stay longer... new recruits who had training in such areas of teaching as selecting instructional materials, child psychology and learning theory... left the profession at rates half as great as those who did not have such preparation.”

A study by MORI (2001) suggests that these comments may also have some relevance for the UK situation. They found that 'never, barely or rarely' teachers (those who did not enter teaching after qualifying or did not stay very long) appeared to have less confidence than others in the adequacy of their training in classroom management skills or pastoral responsibilities. Conversely, Hoy and Spero (2005), surveying the research literature on efficacy, comment on evidence suggesting a correlation between a high sense of efficacy among novices, a positive view of the preparation and support they have received, and a lower experience of stress: "confident new teachers gave higher ratings to the adequacy of support they had received than those who ended the year with a shakier sense of their own competence" (p.346). Such individuals find greater satisfaction in teaching and are more likely to expect to remain in the profession than novices with a lower sense of efficacy (Hoy and Spero, 2005). For others, induction can prove an arduous experience even where it supports professional development, with some NQTs in Smethem's (2007) study reporting the negative influence on their self-esteem of what one participant called '*death by observation*' (p473).

MORI (2001) also cited low levels of pupil discipline and the low morale experienced by NQTs amongst their more experienced colleagues as major factors in their decisions not to continue teaching. In a report to the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2004; cited in Bush, 2005: 48), the Secondary Heads Association argued that "there have always been challenging pupils in schools, but the very poor behaviour of a minority is widely felt to be more burdensome on teachers... than ever before", and expressed concern that dealing with bad behaviour should be addressed more fully during ITP, since it was currently the aspect of teaching that new teachers found most difficult. Bush (2005: 48) comments that "at the moment new teachers still have to learn all their strategies for avoiding, containing and reducing bad behaviour during their first years of teaching, and many of the younger teachers in our research felt ill-equipped to deal with some of the most problematic behaviour". Harrison (2003; cited in Bush, 2005) also argued at a TTA event that there is a significant need for dedicated material on behaviour management for use both by trainees and NQTs, and by their trainers and mentors.

Another factor in the links between pupil behaviour and teacher attrition is the impact of school ethos, and in particular the role of senior managers in supporting, or failing to support, relatively new teachers. Day *et al.* (2006) note that behaviour management was a predominant concern of beginning teachers, who saw the support of senior managers or department heads crucial to their success.

Barton's (2004) study found that poor discipline was often mentioned by respondents in the context of more effective or stronger sanctions for rude or disruptive pupils, and stricter and more consistent policies within schools:

"While discipline has frequently been highlighted in research on the retention of teachers, the role of the Senior Management Team in creating a disciplined ethos in school has not. This factor clearly underpins new teachers' views about discipline in schools and appears so significant that it may be the deciding factor in whether teachers stay in teaching, or in their school, or not. Repeatedly, the interviewees told stories of how their perception of teaching had been largely informed by how supportive the SMT were in supporting staff with classroom management. One female ML teacher effectively summarised the general feeling about the key role played by the SMT: '*The school is only as good as the Headteacher*' " (p.17).

A study by Barmby (2006) of beginning teachers' views on recruitment and retention suggests a still more complex interplay between the factors potentially contributing to attrition, seen by participants as comprising a range of disparate elements such as bureaucracy, stress and a perceived lack of support. He illustrates this with examples of how



dissatisfaction about pay is linked directly in some responses to negative comments on discipline and workload: "I work harder now for half the money that I used to earn, with more hassle, more paperwork, more workload than I did when I was in private industry, and it consumes my evenings, my weekends, my supposed free time" (p.263). Barmby (2006) comments that "[i]f we wish to impact on teacher numbers, then these two issues should be seen to be tackled from the perspectives of the teachers" (p.261). However, it is also clear from other sources that a legacy of student debt may have a strongly negative impact on the lifestyle of many NQTs: a recent survey by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL, 2007) found that 40 per cent of NQT respondents had qualified with debts in excess of £10,000, while over a quarter felt heavily burdened by debt. As the survey report comments, these figures help to explain why over half of new teachers still live with their parents or are in rented accommodation.

The problems of finding somewhere congenial to live will be most acute in areas of high housing costs, which may help to explain why (as already noted above) Smithers and Robinson (2003) found salary a more important factor in resignations in the London area than elsewhere, and why London-based respondents to Barmby and Coe's (2004) questionnaire rated 'better salary' as the most important suggestion for improving retention, whereas those living outside London saw 'support on pupil discipline' as the most important.

One home counties-based respondent to the ATL survey whose debts had led her to consider leaving teaching explained her situation in words that strikingly recall Barmby's (2006) comment cited above on the interplay of factors leading to NQT attrition:

"The debt is a great burden to me as it feels like I'm going to be paying it off for years to come. I've got friends in administration jobs earning more money than me and working less hours with a lot less stress! I'm only here because I love teaching" (ATL, 2007: 1)

However, Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) suggest that one reason why beginning teachers may leave the profession within their first few years is that the reality of teaching may not match up with the expectations which motivated them to pursue a teaching career in the first instance. Purcell *et al.* (2005) also comment that the relationship they found between early-career decisions to leave the profession, and the leavers' original motivations to become teachers, suggests to them "the importance of having a realistic perception of the job of teacher prior to entering the occupation" (p.3), while Haritos (2004: 15) characterises the beliefs of some would-be teachers as "naive ... and unrealistic". However, Kyriacou *et al.* (2003: 260) stress the need to consider the relative importance that individuals attach to particular expectations:

"We need to distinguish between expectations which are important for their career choice and for their decision to remain in the profession, and those expectations which are not important... A crucial question... is to ask student teachers and new teachers to indicate which expectations, if not met by the reality of the job, would lead them to think seriously about leaving teaching as a career".

It is important to remember that there may also be different reasons why different cohorts of NQTs decide to leave the profession. For example, older NQTs may be perceived as needing less support and as being more ready for responsibility than they actually do / are, leading to a job which makes unreasonable demands (Lang, 2002), while career-changers may be more prepared than other teachers to move back out of teaching (MORI, 2001). Writing of the situation in the US, Johnson (2004) draws attention to the increasing proportion of mid-career entrants to teaching, whose prior experience will affect their expectations of workplace facilities, support and training, but also argues that 'traditional' entrants - new graduates from teacher education programmes - now have different experiences, expectations and career plans from those of the previous generation of teachers. Both policy-makers and current practitioners need to recognise this new situation,

and work together to create the conditions that will both encourage recruitment and motivate new recruits to stay in the profession.

In this country, while policies leading to workload reform and increased classroom support have already been implemented, a number of complex problems remain in relation to these issues, and in particular to staff shortages. For example,

- staff turnover is higher in schools serving disadvantaged communities;
- many secondary schools have difficulties recruiting specialist teachers and the resulting shortages may affect the quality of education provided;
- the increasing use of supply teaching may be having detrimental effects on pupils' education, with Ofsted reporting a higher rate of 'unsatisfactory lessons' than among other teachers (Ofsted, 2003).

The pressures placed on schools due to staff shortages may, in turn, have an adverse effect on retention (Smithers and Robinson, 2003). It is interesting to note, in this context, that the Curriculum and Staffing Survey) found that, in England, the proportion of lessons taught by teachers without a degree or other specialist qualification in the subject was almost 20 per cent (DfES, 2003; cited in School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), 2003: 13).

The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee report (2004) distinguishes between endemic problems with retention and recruitment (for which it found little evidence) and a number of specific problems affecting individual schools. Indeed, Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) suggest that there is an issue of whether teachers who leave the profession are not suited to teaching in general, or merely not suited to the school in which they were teaching. Given that many teachers who drop out are likely to have worked full-time only in one school, these authors suggest that "the experience of early success and satisfaction in a teachers' first appointment is crucial for retention" (p.262).

Smithers and Robinson (2005) concur with this finding, and call for a balance in teacher supply to be struck at individual school level as well as nationally, since the problems appear to be specific (to individual schools and subjects) rather than endemic. They reiterate the conclusion they reached in 2003 that teachers tend to move away from more challenged schools towards others with better examination performance and fewer disadvantaged children; and repeat with additional urgency their earlier recommendation that further consideration should be given to the question of how to attract and retain good teachers in schools which face persistent difficulty in retaining a full complement of staff. The question of how best to identify and train good school leaders is a related issue, since relationships with management are often cited among the reasons for leaving.

Movement away from more challenged schools is a finding that is also reported in other studies. Johnson (2004), for example, in a study on rising attrition rates among first- and second-year teachers in the US, reports that without exception those teachers in the study who stayed in teaching but changed their schools, moved to sites serving families with higher incomes (p.269). Though this might be seen as a move away from low-performing schools serving high-poverty students, the associated case study interviews suggested that the main motivation for change was not the pupils' social class or ethnicity, but a dysfunctional school that failed to offer these beginning teachers the support they needed. In this respect the influence of the principal could be critical (Johnson, 2004: 98). Hoy and Spero (2005) also recommend that US schools serving low-income students should make special efforts to support new teachers.

### **8.3 Factors promoting beginning teacher retention**

One question addressed by Barmby and Coe in their (2004) study of financial incentives to enter teaching is what role such incentives may also play in promoting retention in the profession. In terms of the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme, the conclusion they

reach is that though over a third of respondents saw its potential influence as 'very' or 'quite' important, the proportion of responding teachers it had actually persuaded to stay in teaching (and who might otherwise have left) was ten per cent. Many other respondents cited qualitative reasons for the scheme's lack of importance for them, including their love of teaching. In their study of variations in teachers' professional lives, Day *et al.* (2006) argue that "research on teacher retention tends to focus on factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession. Instead what is required is a better understanding of the factors that have enabled the majority of teachers to sustain their motivation, commitment and effectiveness" (p50).

One such factor could be exemplified in the "environment of inclusion and support" offered to first- and second-year teachers in the 'Integrated professional cultures' described by Johnson (2004: 159), which appears not only to benefit both novice teachers and their more experienced colleagues, but also to lead to greater staff retention. Of the initial sample of 50 recently qualified teachers in this study, seventeen began their careers in schools whose professional cultures could be described as 'integrated' according to Johnson's classification. Of these, 82 per cent remained at the same school after the first year of the study, compared with 57 per cent in 'veteran-oriented' and 67 per cent in 'novice-oriented' cultures.

Individual school factors identified by Smithers and Robinson (2005) as associated with successful NQT recruitment and good staff retention include:

- participating in ITP as placement schools so as to secure a reservoir of future applicants;
- grooming junior staff for internal promotion;
- presenting a realistic picture of the school to applicants in order to screen out any who might not cope; and
- valuing teachers and offering them good working conditions (for example no cover duties).

Even the simplest measures can help to promote NQT retention: Huberman with Marti (1993) particularly stress the value of a welcoming environment in offering the best possible start to a nervous novice : "the initial reception in the school building, on the part of more experienced colleagues, is so important that it can offset initial difficulties" (p.200). Day *et al.* (2006) comment that during the first three years of teachers' professional lives "the impact of combined support from the school/departmental leadership and colleagues can be highly significant in helping to build their confidence and self-efficacy" (p.91). Leadership is especially important here because schools with supportive colleagues tended to have leaders who had put in place "structures and cultures where the means of accessing internal and external support were known and valued" (*op. cit.* p.255).

Another important element in NQT retention is the provision of appropriate EPD. Moor *et al.* (2005) found that one of the largest increases in the reported impact over time of the EPD pilot scheme in England was in participants' commitment to the teaching profession, which rose by 16 percentage points between the first and final (third) year of the pilot. In addition, when asked 'How likely is it that you will be working in teaching in five years' time?', 70 per cent of participating teachers registered 'a strong likelihood' compared with 59 per cent of the comparative sample. The probability of remaining in the profession was consistently higher for the EPD participants irrespective of phase, year of teaching, or type of LA. Factors contributing to that likelihood are reflected in some of the comments made by case-study teachers:

"When you're feeling down just because of the job, going to the courses and having the EPD means that you aren't going 'Oh, when am I going to leave teaching?' You might be saying 'Oh, where am I going to go? Where's the next job?' But it stays in teaching. I do think its [EPD] influenced that." (Moor *et al.*, 2005: 29).

The authors comment that:

“the flow of outcomes was sometimes multi-directional: improved teaching practice leading to heightened confidence, or heightened confidence leading to improved teaching practice. Regardless of the direction of the chain of outcomes, they culminated in teachers feeling they would remain in the profession for some time to come.” (p.30)

A useful synthesis of many of the issues raised above is offered in the conclusion and recommendations of Barton’s (2004) study of beginning teacher retention for the TDA. She suggests that a retention strategy could usefully incorporate such measures as:

- giving new teachers more non-contact time;
- ensuring that new teachers receive equality of treatment from their line managers;
- a reduction in paperwork;
- ensuring appropriate opportunities for continuing professional development; and
- providing a worthwhile and well-structured induction programme.

Barton also singles out two other factors for particular attention: a supportive and approachable Senior Management Team, who ensure sound discipline in the school; and early promotion. These, she comments,

“seem to characterise the experiences of those teachers who appear happiest in their profession, and may, therefore, be most likely to stay on” (p.27).

## 8.4 Conclusions

Research suggests that in the long-term the challenge of recruiting and retaining more teachers may be best addressed by more discriminating selection, more appropriate support, and a better initial match between teacher and school. There are also indications that some young leavers may consider taking up teaching again at a later stage, perhaps after a period of travel or teaching abroad (Smithers and Robinson, 2003) and active attempts to recruit such ‘returners’ could prove fruitful.

As Kyriacou *et al.* (2003) and Purcell *et al.* (2005) among others have suggested one way to reduce the rate of attrition might be to ensure that those selected for ITP, and subsequently for NQT posts, have a realistic perception of what the job of a teacher entails. Those initiatives at policy and provider level which encourage potential entrants to spend more time in school prior to applying for ITP may therefore bear fruit in the longer term.

The literature also suggests that retaining beginning teachers within the profession may depend in part on the provision of continuing support appropriate to the individual, and thus driven by personal need and choice rather than imposed top-down. Finally, it is also important to achieve a positive match between the host school and the NQT or recently qualified teacher. This is complicated by the fact that as Brighouse points out in his foreword to Bush (2005: viii), “individual school governing bodies (and the head teachers they alone appoint) determine who is hired”. Different teachers are suited to different schools, and perhaps there is a potential role for ITP in promoting the concept of more conscious choice among job applicants. Ultimately, school ethos is likely to determine how heavily the common grounds for teacher discontent (workload, paperwork, behaviour issues) bear down on ‘junior’ staff, and to what extent new and recently qualified teachers are supported by individual relationships, by a sense of progression in their teaching careers, and by their consciousness of their own ongoing development as professional practitioners.

## Chapter 9: General themes and conclusions

In conducting this review of literature we have found that whilst, as we noted in the introduction, most research studies are small scale, there is nevertheless a relatively firm base of literature relating to initial teacher preparation, new teacher induction, and (to a lesser extent) early professional development and beginner teacher retention. The fact that many such studies have produced similar or confirmatory findings across different contexts suggests that, in relation to some issues at least, the evidence base is quite strong. A number of general themes can thus be identified in the literature, and these suggest a need for ITP, induction and early professional development programmes to take into account (where they do not already), or perhaps to take greater account of, *individual*:

- needs;
- concerns;
- contexts (including those of the school); and
- teacher identities.

A number of sources also suggest that teachers of teachers should attempt to encourage and foster - when their learners are ready (when, for example, they have advanced beyond their initial concerns) - individual choice and autonomy. There is a sense in which, beyond their initial choices about which initial teacher preparation route to follow and which providers to apply to, many beginning teachers find themselves in situations where they appear to be 'done to' rather than actively and proactively 'doing'. Research findings suggest that elements of individual choice relating to teachers' initial, early and continuing professional development can lead to ownership and empowerment; to beginner teachers consciously assessing, and to some extent taking control of, their own future career paths. It could also therefore enhance teacher retention, and some of the literature suggests this.

It is important to recognise, of course, that choice needs to be informed choice, and a range of studies already suggests a need for ITP providers and teacher educators in schools to support trainee and beginning teachers in:

- assessing their own skills and characteristics;
- recognising their own individual teacher identity;
- discussing their personal concerns and needs; and
- taking a proactive approach to in-school relationships.

In keeping with the objectives of undertaking this review of literature, which we outlined in the Introduction, our increased familiarity with the wealth of studies reported in Chapters 1-8 has enabled the *Becoming a Teacher (BaT)* research team to become sensitised to a broad range of issues actually or potentially associated with beginning teachers' experiences, and to develop a growing awareness of the 'right questions' to ask of our research participants and data in order that we are able to advance knowledge in this field. It has been helpful, for example, to have been able to follow up some of the findings emerging from small-scale and single-institution studies in relation to a large sample of student teachers throughout England.

Early findings from the empirical strand of the BaT study support and strengthen some of the findings of earlier studies reported here and reinforce some of the recommendations for policy and practice that have already emerged from these. For example, findings from Phases One to Four of the study confirmed that - regardless of ITP route - the process of becoming a teacher is a highly emotional journey for many or even most trainee and beginner teachers, and that relationships with significant others, notably teacher mentors, other colleagues and pupils in their placement schools, and partners at home, can make,

break or save them (Hobson and Malderez, 2005; Hobson *et al.*, 2006b; Hobson *et al.*, 2007; Malderez *et al.*, 2007; Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Tracey *et al.*, 2008).

Together with previous studies, early findings from the empirical strand of the *BaT* research thus suggest a need for teacher educators associated with ITP, induction and EPD provision to:

- be aware of and take into account trainees' and beginning teachers' *initial* concerns and expectations;
- address the specific needs of individual trainees / teachers;
- ground 'theory' in trainees' and beginning teachers' practical experiences and relate it to their personal experience;
- pay attention to student teachers' emotional states, assess their personal reactions to their experiences, and respond appropriately, for example by providing support if they are under stress; and
- model in their own teaching the approaches they are advocating.

In reviewing the literature we have also identified - or confirmed the existence of - a number of gaps in the evidence base, gaps which we hope, and in some cases have begun, to at least partially close. For example, in Chapter 1 above we have shown that previous research has produced some interesting and valuable findings on the factors influencing recruitment to ITP and teaching, and some literature has shown how such factors can vary according to the gender, age and ethnicity of the individual entrant, yet we have found little or no evidence on whether such factors might vary between those choosing different routes into the teaching profession, or indeed on what motivated different individuals to choose one ITP route rather than another. The first phase of the *Becoming a Teacher* research provided answers to these questions (Hobson *et al.*, 2004; Hobson and Malderez, 2005). We believe that it also provided a fuller account of student teachers' preconceptions and expectations of ITP and teaching - and how these too can vary according to the ITP route followed - than any previous study of initial teacher preparation had done. As we, and others, have argued above and before, it is through their existing network of knowledge, experience and beliefs that beginning teachers view and interpret new information and experiences (Huberman, 1993; Desforges, 1995; Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997), and it is crucial for teacher educators to understand beginning teachers' starting points in order that they can place their 'stepping stones', their planned opportunities for their learners' conceptual and skill development, in the appropriate places (Claxton, 1990; Hobson *et al.*, 2006a). Other findings from the empirical strand of the *BaT* project which are available at the time of writing can be found in the sources listed in Appendix II.

What the *BaT* and other research suggests is that the experience of becoming a teacher is not a succession of discrete episodes but an open-ended continuum. While the remit of the *BaT* project is to consider the period spanning the initial recruitment, preparation, induction and early professional development of would-be and beginning teachers, the implications of its findings, and those of much of the research cited above, are likely to extend beyond these early years of triumph and disaster, towards the fully realised identity of the professional teacher.

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## Appendix I: Critical Summary Template

<b>Full bibliographic reference</b> <i>Author (surname, initials), date of publication, title of book / article etc.            Place of publication: publisher.</i>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<i>i.e. purpose of article / book - e.g. was it reporting the findings of a research study?</i>
<b>Country/area</b>	<i>i.e. where data were generated (if appropriate) or country / area to which the book / article / paper refers or is relevant.</i>
<b>Research Design / methods employed</b>	<i>(if appropriate)</i>
<b>Sample characteristics</b>	<i>(including total sample size and response rates for different methods - if appropriate)</i>
<b>Date(s) data collected</b>	<i>(if appropriate)</i>
<b>Key findings</b>	<i>Any findings which relate to one or more aims of the BaT study.</i>
<b>Authors' conclusions &amp; recommendations</b>	<i>(if appropriate)</i>
<b>Reviewer's comments</b>	<i>Comments on the article / book - including the apparent quality of the research (if appropriate), whether the conclusions follow from the data/findings etc.</i>
<b>Annotated bibliography - other relevant literature</b>	<i>Provide details of other potentially relevant literature identified in this book/article.</i>

## Appendix II: Becoming a Teacher Research Findings

(Publications available to date)

### **Published research reports**

HOBSON, A.J., TRACEY, L., KERR, K., MALDEREZ, A., PELL, G., SIMM, C. and JOHNSON, F. (2004) *Why people choose to become teachers and the factors influencing their choice of ITT route: early findings from the Becoming a Teacher (BaT) Project*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (Research Brief). Available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RBX08-04.pdf>

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., TRACEY, L., KERR, K. and PELL, G. (2005) *Student Teachers' preconceptions and early experiences in school*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (Research Brief). Available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RB673.pdf>

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A. (Eds.), KERR, K., TRACEY, L., PELL, G., TOMLINSON, P. and ROPER, T. (2005) *Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Motives and preconceptions, and Early School-based Experiences during Initial Teacher Training (ITT)*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR673.pdf>

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HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., TRACEY, L., HOMER, M., MITCHELL, N., BIDDULPH, M., GIANNAKAKI, M.S., ROSE, A., PELL, R.G., CHAMBERS, G.N., ROPER, T. and TOMLINSON, P.D. (2007) *Newly Qualified Teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching: Findings from Phase III of the Becoming a Teacher project*. Nottingham: Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR008%20v2.pdf>

TRACEY L., HOMER, M., MITCHELL, N. HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., BIDDULPH, M., PELL, G. & ASHBY, P. (2008). *Beginner Teachers' Experiences of their Second Year of Teaching: Findings from Phase IV of the Becoming a Teacher project*. Nottingham: Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Available at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR041.pdf>

### **Refereed journal articles**

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., TRACEY, L., and KERR, K. (2005) 'Teachers' experiences of initial teacher preparation, induction and early professional development in England – does route matter?' *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 31, 2, 133-135.

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., TRACEY, L. and PELL, G. (2006) 'Pathways and stepping stones: student teachers' preconceptions and concerns about initial teacher preparation in England', *Scottish Educational Review*, Vol. 37 (Special Issue on Teacher Education and Development), 59-78.

MALDEREZ, A., HOBSON, A.J., TRACEY, L. and KERR, K. (2007), 'Becoming a student teacher: core features of the experience', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 30, 3, 225-248.

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### **Book**

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A. & TRACEY, L., (2009/in press) *Navigating Initial Teacher Training: Becoming a Teacher*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

### **Full conference papers**

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., TRACEY, L., KERR, K. and PELL, G. (2004) Choosing an initial teacher training (ITT) pathway: early findings from the Becoming a Teacher Project. Paper delivered at the Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association (BERA), UMIST, 16 September 2004.

MALDEREZ, A., HOBSON, A.J., KERR, K., TRACEY, L. and PELL, G. (2004) Why Train to Teach? Comparing the motives of trainees following six different routes into teaching in England: early findings in the Becoming a Teacher Project. Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), University of Crete, 22-25 September 2004.

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MALDEREZ, A., HOBSON, A.J., TRACEY, L. and PELL, G. (2007) Choosing initial teacher preparation (ITP) in England: why student teachers undertake ITP and why they choose particular ITP pathways (2007). Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Chicago, 9-13 April 2007.

HOBSON, A.J., MALDEREZ, A., CHAMBERS, G.N., and TRACEY, L. (2007) Student teachers' experiences of undertaking and withdrawing from initial teacher preparation in England. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Chicago, 9-13 April 2007.



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