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DARE

Developing Alternative Routes Expertise for SfH

Developing Alternative Routes to School Headship:
Evaluation of the University DARE 2 Programme, 2009-10

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1. Introduction

The DARE alternative route pilot was proposed as a response to an invitation by the Scottish Government to the existing SQH consortia to submit proposals for funding in 2007-8 for an alternative route HEI pilot, since it was perceived that there was merit in harnessing the best of SQH provision while making it more flexible and responsive to individual needs. The University of Edinburgh was the only HEI awarded a grant to pilot an alternative route. Additionally, as a result of this widely perceived need for flexible alternative routes, two other pilot programmes were developed and put in place in 2007/8. One of those was run, and funded locally, by the Western SQH Consortium. Another was the Flexible Routes to Headship (FRH) pilot run by the Scottish Government through the National CPD Team in association with five Local Authorities in southern Scotland: Fife Council, South Lanarkshire, East Lothian, Midlothian and Scottish Borders.

Coaching is an integral feature of the DARE model. In the original DARE pilot involving nine participants which began in April 2007, both the additional tutoring and coaching were provided by the same person, namely the programme director. From experience of supporting that pilot group and from the outcomes of the formal evaluation of DARE 1, conducted by O'Brien and Sharp (2008), it was thought that although the evaluation was very positive, the alternative route model could be further developed and evaluated. The second DARE pilot involving five participants, which began in April 2009, sought to separate the roles of tutor and coach. Whilst additional tutoring continued to be provided by the programme director, the coaching element was provided by experienced headteachers who had undergone training in coaching at Local Authority level. Tutoring related to aspects such as advice on course related matters and the preparation of assignments. In contrast, coaching provided the 'space' within which each participant was able to explore aspects of his/her own professional development and professional practice, or to discuss matters of personal concern or interest.

A high degree of importance was attributed to the choice of the coaches to be involved in DARE 2. The recruitment of the coaches for the new DARE 2 participants was guided by key principles. Each coach was required to be an experienced headteacher, to have knowledge of the SQH, and to have coaching training and experience. The Local Authority concerned had a number of experienced headteachers who were SQH graduates or SQH coordinators and had themselves undergone training in coaching. Those headteachers were felt to be ideal as they had enough of the background knowledge to know what SQH was about and what it set out to achieve with participants. They also brought with them experience from the headteacher role and knew what meeting the Standard for Headship looked like in practice and, they had knowledge, understanding and experience of coaching. Indeed, as a Local Authority, Fife had given prominence to the development of coaching expertise over a number of years which in various ways, each of those coaches had participated in. Of the three coaches chosen, two were experienced headteachers who were also SQH graduates, the third was an experienced headteacher who was also the SQH Coordinator for the local authority and who took up the role of coach for two of the DARE 2 participants.

Prior to embarking on DARE 2, the CPD coordinator who had had a key role in the coaching of the national FRH candidates met with the coaches to share her experience and to explore a 'Do's/ and Don'ts' approach to coaching. The DARE 2 coach who was also the Local Authority SQH Coordinator took the lead on the recruitment of the other coaches and

initial discussions about the expectations of the role. Thereafter, the LA and University shared the overseeing role of the coaching element. As a group, coaches met regularly with the tutor (who was also the programme director). The initial meeting was essentially about a clarification of roles rather than a 'top-up' on coaching.

The role of tutor was conducted by the programme director. The exception to this separation of roles, pertained to the participant who transferred between the two DARE cohorts and maintained the coach tutor relationship with the programme director. This was to ensure continuity in what had been for that participant a relatively disjointed professional and DARE experience to that point. Arguably, in retrospect, that participant could have gained as much if not more from a separate coaching experience.

As reported within the evaluation of the first DARE pilot, the individual and personal nature of the coaching process inevitably means that there are limitations on how far its evaluation can be generalized. It should also be noted that only four of the five DARE 2 participants were interviewed, those who had successfully completed the progamme at the time of the evaluation. The case of the fifth student raised a number of important issues, particularly in relation to recruitment and allocation to specific routes towards SQH discussion of which is returned to later in the report.

2. Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the DARE 2 pilot. The evaluation was undertaken during the latter part of 2010, utilizing Scottish Government funding from the DARE pilot. Essentially, the terms of the evaluation were to document the perspectives of the participants, coaches and tutor through digitally recorded semi-structured interviews. The evaluation had particular interest in the effectiveness of the programme structure, the quality of provision, the complementary roles of coach and tutor, the coaching experience, the tutoring experience, and the impact on participants and their practice that participation in the programme had led to.

The authors regard the DARE 2 model as offering a quality programme for the future development of Scottish headteachers. On the basis of the insights gathered, several key recommendations are made. Those recommendations are intended to strengthen the model, should it be further developed. The unique feature of the DARE 2 model was the coaching provided to aspiring head teachers by a dedicated group of coaches. A balance was sought between the coaching and additional tutoring elements intended to complement each other well. The tutoring provided structured support whilst the coaching provided flexibility.

It is hoped that insights from this evaluation will help to inform provision for headteacher preparation both within the University of Edinburgh and at national level.

3. Key Recommendations

This section provides a cumulative list of the recommendations arising from the evaluation. The numbers of the pages on which discussion of each recommendation appears in the text have been included in brackets.

Recommendation 1 That consideration be given to whether coaching could form a feature of the standard route. (p.7)

Recommendation 2 That the 15 month completion period for the alternative route be more flexibly applied to enable participants in less senior leadership and management positions to consider this route as an option. (p.7)

Recommendation 3 That where participants intend to complete the alternative route within 15 months, that DARE candidates are the equivalent of experienced faculty principal teachers or preferably, depute headteachers. (p.33)

Recommendation 4 That consideration be given to developing alternatives to the final assessment components of the DARE pogramme, to ensure a better balance between learning something to improve practice and producing convincing evidence that such learning and resulting impact on practice had indeed occurred (p.8)

Recommendation 5 That recognition be given to the unique set of skills and abilities required for the key role of coach. As such, that coaches are recruited on the basis of being experienced headteachers and having knowledge of the SQH. Furthermore, that they bring with them to the role, experience of coaching having previously undertaken coaching training. (p.1 and p.7)

Recommendation 6 That decisions pertaining to which specific route individual participants should follow are made after completion of the Course 1 Critical Self-evaluation and formulation of a Personal Learning Programme. In so doing, participants, University staff and Local Authority personnel could come to an informed decision as to the best way of supporting an individual participant's professional development towards headship. (p.6 and p.36)

Recommendation 7 That consideration be given to the merits of developing a DARE 3 pilot. The model of that pilot would be premised upon recommendations two and six, to enable all participants to enrol onto Course 1 and only on successful completion of Course 1 would a decision be taken as to which route, if any, a participant would follow. That model could also explore the potential of the Local Authority assuming part of the additional tutoring role. (p.6, p.36 and p.37)

Recommendation 8 That consideration be given at national level to the development of a single framework within which a range of routes could be accommodated, clearly articulated to each other to ensure parity of end points. Such a development would need to ensure adequate funding for all routes and equity in any subsidy provided. In so doing, the sole concern of participants and Local Authorities would be the route best placed to support preparation for headship. Furthermore, the sustainability of programmes could be assured to safeguard choice from alternatives available. (p.6, p.7, p.32-33, p.35-36 and p.37-38)

4. Summary Evaluation: Strengths and Weaknesses of DARE 2

Overall, the evaluation of the DARE 2 programme was very positive. This section of the report does, however, recognize that:

DARE 2 worked out pretty well, but there are always lessons to be learned. (008)

As will be discussed, although there are indeed always lessons to be learned and improvements to be made, it is perhaps worth recalling the participants' overview of the impact of the DARE 2 programme:

I was making connections, working better with staff not just about DARE but in school practice generally. My focus was very clear and I made better use of time and decision-making. (001)

I was more likely to read, be more curious and take time to reflect. I felt a lot stronger as a person. I don't jump to conclusions and take things personally. I've improved my people skills and am aware you need different skills for different situations. (002)

[It's] the only show of its kind in town. ... you emerged from DARE 2 a better thinker than you were when you went in. (003)

It was the best and most valuable development I've ever done. (004)

There was a measure of agreement regarding the most positive aspects of the DARE 2 programme. The residentials and taught days, along with the coaching and tutoring sessions, provided time to reflect out with the school environment:

You weren't alone. It was an opportunity to discuss all the things buzzing around in your head and it helped you conceptualise more easily. That was when new ideas emerged. That was what was great about the residentials and taught days. (001)

The formative and summative 360 degree analysis processes were also thought to be key strengths. Peer group support first with the Course 1 Standard Route (SR) cohort, then as a DARE 2 group was highly regarded not simply in terms of the support it offered but also in terms of how discussions with peers helped to take their own learning forward. Such networking also served to extend the DARE 2 participants' horizons.

Perhaps the principal strength of DARE 2 was the balance between the coaching and additional tutoring elements which complemented each other well. The tutoring provided structured support whilst the coaching provided flexibility. A range of different needs emerged among participants which had to be met in different ways. Coaching made a significant contribution in meeting those needs:

Its power to challenge and change mindsets, to boost self-confidence and to make people better thinkers, was considerable. (007)

The arrangements for coaching sessions quickly became informal with the agenda set by the participants themselves who determined when a session was needed and what would be explored within it. All of the time, participants knew that their coach could be contacted and would welcome such contact. In this way, the participants self-directed learning was

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enhanced. The balance between the structure provided by the programme which facilitated the academic material to inform professional learning, and the flexibility to allow individual experience to be utilised in a constructive but challenging way was clearly appreciated. There was general agreement that participants needed to have significant senior leadership and management school experience as a prerequisite for the length of the DARE 2 programme (fifteen months).

As part of the interview process, each of the participants, coaches and tutor were asked if there were any changes which might enhance the DARE 2 programme. It should be noted at the outset that the participants were not able to make comparisons between DARE and SR routes, since they had followed the former but not the latter route, although two of the DARE 2 participants had attended at least some of the taught components for Courses 2. Therefore, the interviews with participants did not include questions comparing DARE to the SR. That said, from the participants' responses, it was clear that comparison had been discussed between DARE 2 and SR participants themselves. During interview, the coaches and tutor also made comparisons and, having experience of both routes, were arguably better able to do so.

A recurring theme emerging from the participant interviews pertained to the need to determine which route to follow at application stage. A general view emerged that participants were being asked to make that decision without sufficient knowledge of which route would best meet their professional development needs, since it was only after completion of Course 1, that they gained an informed view based on completion of their Critical Self-evaluation and formulation of a Personal Learning Programme. All of the participants expressed a view that allocation of route should not be made prior to enrolment, simply on the strength of application and interview. Instead, they were supportive of the option of making initial access into SQH for Course 1 only and holding off making decisions on subsequent routes until after Course 1 had been completed.

The tutor (and programme director) expressed the view that prior to completion of Course 1, participants themselves had not yet had the opportunity to fully develop an understanding of their current stage of development in relation to the SfH. References from headteachers, therefore, should not indicate a preferred route but simply assert that the student is at the stage of readiness to be admitted to Course 1. Having completed a Critical Self-evaluation and devised a Personal Learning Programme, such an approach would enable participants, University staff and Local Authority personnel to make an informed decision on the most appropriate route to meet the professional development needs of individuals.

One participant specifically recalled that he had originally applied for both routes and was leaning towards the Standard Route, feeling that a longer and more structured route would probably better meet his needs, but was offered a place on DARE 2. When that participant asked about the SR, he was told by his Local Authority that DARE 2 was the only route being offered to him. Whilst highly appreciative of the impact that DARE 2 had on him as a person and practitioner, he did feel that he had missed out to some extent regarding the volume of learning that might have been accrued on the SR. While this situation is understandable, given Local Authority funding available for the SR and the heavy subsidy of DARE 2, it has implications for the participants themselves in terms of 'free choice' and for headship preparation programmes in terms of 'sustainability'.

Linked to the previous discussion, one coach explored the implications of the shorter time span of DARE 2 (15 months) in terms of the vetting of potential candidates which turned out to be problematic in one instance: *'we thought we had done that'*. She expressed the view that if a participant embarks on DARE 2 without most if not all of the evidence needed for compiling the claims of competence, then they should probably not be following that route. Taking this theme further, she said that she would be surprised if all students on DARE 2 didn't think it would have been beneficial to work through the whole SR that is, Courses 1-5. The tutor (and programme director) proposed that flexibility should be extended to the timeframe for completion of the alternative route so that participants who embark on DARE could do so with less senior leadership and management experience and take longer to progress their professional development. In that way, there would not be 'a charge towards delivering an assignment' (003). Rather, participants could progress work-based experiential learning in alternative but equivalent ways to SR approaches.

There was also a perception that, given how much DARE 2 participants got from it, SR participants had missed out on not having had formal coaching as part of their experience. Some DARE 2 participants explicitly expressed the view that coaching should be a feature of the SR. This was also a view expressed by some coaches. On the other hand, the view was also expressed by some participants and coaches that the DARE 2 participants had missed out on the full extent of peer support and networking which SR participants gained from remaining with one cohort whilst progressing through the programme.

Another theme raised by some DARE 2 participants and coaches was that at national, Local Authority and University levels, adequate levels of resourcing were not in place and that the success of both DARE and the SR was dependent on the good will and commitment of the staff involved. This view emerged in a range of ways. For example, the need for resources to enable coaches to have regular meetings so that they could bring issues related to their coaching sessions to the group. The funding for an alternative route model was also a concern for some respondents in terms of ensuring sufficient one-to-one coaching and additional tutoring which was recognised as being very expensive. So too, was the need to ensure the long term viability of all routes to safeguard choice. One participant presented a well-argued view that lack of support at national, Local Authority, school and University levels would diminish the quality of support that any SQH route could provide and that quality provision was dependent on all four taking an active interest in the success of the programme itself, and committing to the support required to ensure individuals' professional development through the programme.

The quality of the coaches and of the coaching was felt to be key. This has implications for the selection of coaches for a future cohort. Recruitment of good coaches was thought to be a potential issue if DARE 2 were to involve a greater number of students and would need to be thought through. Quantity of coaching was not of benefit in itself. Coaching at the right times for the right purpose on the other hand was. The tutor (and programme director) expressed the view that,

> *You have to pick your coaches very carefully. It's not an easy role at all.* (008)

Ideally, coaches would have a combination of generic coaching understanding and skill, proven experience as headteachers, with a knowledge and understanding of what the SfH looked like in practice, as well as knowledge and understanding of supporting professional development with respect to school leadership and management.

The evaluation of the original DARE pilot conducted by O'Brien and Sharp (2008) raised the concern by some DARE members regarding the need to compile tangible evidence of achievement in order to satisfy the requirements of the programme. The line of reasoning seemed to be the distinction made between learning something to improve practice, in contrast to being able to produce convincing evidence that such learning and resulting impact on practice had indeed occurred. Whilst not as prominent in the DARE 2 evaluation, this point of view was expressed by one of the participants although he recognized the need for the programme requirements. Arguably, there will always be this tension with a programme which serves the dual requirements of a postgraduate award and professional award. This does not detract from the potential of exploring other ways in which participants could demonstrate meeting the requirements of both awards.

In contrast with the views expressed by some participants in the original DARE pilot evaluation, the question about the balance between academic and professional learning within the programme was not raised by any of the DARE 2 participants. Indeed, the overall evaluation of the programme was very positive and all of the DARE 2 participants said they would recommend it to colleagues with the appropriate degree of experience already in place and the appropriate motivation to participate in a rigorous programme.

5. Background to the DARE Pilot

In 1998, the then Scottish Executive (now the Scottish Government) originally published the Scottish Standard for Headship (SfH). The University of Edinburgh was one of three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) contracted by the Scottish Government to develop and deliver programmes of study leading to the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) designed to support participants' professional development leading to demonstration of competence in relation to the SfH. One of the unique features of that development was that it was premised on each University working in collaboration with a group of Local Authority partners, forming three national consortia. Edinburgh University and its partner Local Authorities of Fife, City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and Scottish Borders formed the South Eastern Consortium. The resulting programmes were validated by each HEI concerned and accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), though the ownership of the SfH remained with the Scottish Government which had originally developed it.

One of the original principles underpinning the development of the SQH/PG Diploma programme (SQH) was that its implementation should contribute towards developing the school sector and should actively contribute to school improvement. To this end, the SQH has been internationally recognised by the OECD (2007: 38-39):

> "An impressive feature of Scottish education is the programme through which future leaders achieve the Standard for Headship. The Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) … is highly rated by graduates, their headteachers, and the directors of education in the local authorities … It is a major initiative which involves problem-based learning in the workplace, mentorship, alignment with the professional development needs in school, structured training in core management functions (Learning and Teaching: Policy, Planning, and Finance; Accountability, etc), and broad flow-on benefits in the form of staff cohesion and commitment. Of international significance, the SQH will assist Scottish schools to break the nexus between social environment and student achievement and to respond effectively to the heightened expectations on student learning in the twenty-first century."

The SQH concept was relatively unique in that, on completion, participants were awarded the professional award of the SQH by the Scottish Government, in addition to the postgraduate award of the PG Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management by the University. The combination of postgraduate and professional requirements have led to a distinctive programme providing intensive professional development, within a blended learning programme design, necessitating significantly higher levels of support than a standard postgraduate programme of study.

An evaluation of the first four years of the SQH in Scotland (two pilot years and two full implementation years) by Professor Ian Menter of the University of Paisley was published in 2003. This evaluation, together with six years of provision, informed a review of the SQH and led to the formulation of a revised programme that was accredited by the GTCS and implemented in session 2005/6. A significant difference with the second version of the programme, was that each consortia was able if they so chose, to revise its own programme instead of conforming to a national programme. The University of Edinburgh within its South Eastern Consortium elected to devise a programme displaying considerable differences to the programme then developed by the other two consortia, and subsequently developed the materials for that revised programme independently.

The publication of *Ambitious, Excellent Schools: Our Agenda for Action* by SEED in 2004 reaffirmed the acknowledgement that headteachers play a vital role in achieving the Scottish Government's aim to have a modern, world class education system, where achievement is valued and every pupil has the opportunity to attain excellence. Despite the policy discourse since TP21 (2001) of promoting collegiality within flatter management structures, within *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* (2004), acknowledgment was also given to the centrality of the post of headteacher, bearing significant accountability to multiple stakeholders and facing significant challenge from the complexity of the role. Fulfillment of the role of headteacher requires a commitment and an ability to interact with pupils, staff, parents and the wider community within the school's unique economic and social context, as well as an ability to lead the school towards a shared vision for its future state. Headteachers must also have the knowledge, understanding and skills to lead and manage schools effectively, making best use of available resources. As such, recognition was given to the need to ensure that those aspiring to be headteachers are prepared for their task. The Standard for Headship provides the basis for a professional programme of training for headship which provides such preparation and is designed to make the initial years in post more productive and fulfilling. In November 2005, SEED published a new national Standard for Headship (SfH) as part of its *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* initiative. The programme provided by the South Eastern Consortium has from 2006 reflected that new SfH.

Also within *Ambitious, Excellent Schools,* the Scottish Government (SEED, 2004: 13) made a commitment to "establish new routes to achieve the Standard for Headship, during 2006, to provide choice and alternatives to the Scottish Qualification for Headship". The intention of providing alternatives to the SQH was to make available as wide a range of development opportunities as possible to support candidates for headship in their progression towards demonstrating having met the SfH. The Scottish Government consulted on proposals for setting out more flexible approaches to meeting the SfH. In the University of Edinburgh's response to the Scottish Government consultation paper, it was argued that use should be made of the existing structure of the South Eastern Consortium's SQH programme. In mirroring the pattern that the Scottish Government initially circulated for consultation, it was argued that it was possible to balance the expressed need for rigour with the need for flexibility while ensuring a genuine developmental learning experience for those coming forward to satisfy the Standard. The University of Edinburgh was well placed to participate in such discussions as it had given consideration to developing alternative routes since 2005, when the GTCS accredited its revised SQH programme. A condition of that re-accreditation (which the University met) was that the University should offer some evidence of having considered various ways in which greater flexibility and responsiveness to the individual needs of potential participants could be offered without putting existing SQH programmes at risk. In response, the University mapped out three potential alternative routes. Given that background, the University of Edinburgh was keen to pilot an alternative route.

The standard route programme offered at the University of Edinburgh consists of five courses. Course 1 (the Standard for Headship) and the double Course 5 (Leading School Improvement) constitute the formal part of the DARE alternative routes programme. The fifteen month duration of the DARE programme contrasts with the twenty six month duration of the standard route programme. As an alternative to completing Courses 2-4, DARE participants are supported by additional tutoring and coaching.

The award status of each of the two programmes, standard route and alternative route, reflects the difference between them in formal assessment. The standard route consists of four single courses worth 20 postgraduate credit points each and one double course worth 40 credits, a total of 120 credits which equates to a postgraduate Diploma. The DARE programme covers 60 credits which equates to a postgraduate Certificate. The coaching and support aspect of the DARE programme, while very important educationally and developmentally, is not at this stage certificated by the University.

Programme /Route						National Recognition	National Award	HEI Award
Standard	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5 (double module)	SfH	SQH	PG Diploma
DARE	Course 1	Additional Tutoring and Individual Coaching			Course 5 (double module)	SfH	SQH	PG Certificate

Table 1:
SR and DARE Programme Components

A pattern similar to that used in the first pilot (O'Brien and Sharp, 2008) was used in the DARE 2 pilot which involved participants undertaking the following:

a. Completion of Course 1 (from April to August 2009) involving:
   • the critical self-evaluation (CSE) and formulation of a personal learning programme (PLP);
   • an induction day and three day residential experience;
   • coverage of key aspects, issues and concepts relating to leadership and management;
   • supported professional reading and further critical reflection;
   • familiarity and use of the Standard for Headship as a framework for critical self-evaluation;
   • a 360° formative evaluation of interpersonal abilities;
   • tutor and peer support; and
   • formal assessment of the CSE and PLP, with advice on the requirement for re-submission if necessary.

b. Participants take forward their PLP, drawing from a wide range of developmental activities and courses from school, local authority and beyond (from September 2009).

c. Within the pilot project period, participants completed the professional development opportunities of Course 5 of the SQH Programme (from September 2009):
   • coverage of key aspects relating to school effectiveness, school improvement, and educational change;
   • a two day residential and an additional two single taught days;
   • supported professional reading and further critical reflection;

- familiarity with and use of the Standard for Headship as a framework for compiling a portfolio of evidence of competence against the Standard;
- a 360° summative evaluation of interpersonal abilities;
- continuing tutor and peer support;
- formal assessment of the Portfolio of evidence and reflective Commentary, with advice on the requirement for re-submission if necessary;
- assessment by oral presentation and 'viva' on contextualised school improvement, drawing on participant knowledge and understanding of the change process from an initiative the participant has lead and managed.

d. Additional tutoring for participants provided by the University (on-going from April 2009 to June 2010).

e. Additional coaching support for participants provided by experienced headteachers at Local Authority level (on-going from April 2009 to June 2010).

Course 1 and the relevant elements of Course 5 follow the design of the current SQH programme validated by the University and accredited by the GTCS in 2004. All participants experienced the same recruitment, selection and induction processes, shared the residential experiences and taught days encompassing Courses 1 and 5 to place their experiences within the wider framework of school and service improvement through interaction with others, and to prepare for presenting their work for assessment. The supported blended learning activities, guided professional reading and critical reflection on practice necessary to successfully complete the assessment components, further widen participants' perspectives and contribute to the rigour of the progamme.

In the final stages of the programme, all participants followed the same assessment arrangements whereby they completed a 360° summative evaluation of their personal qualities and interpersonal skills. Each participant submitted a portfolio of evidence and a reflective commentary for assessment. Each participant was subsequently visited by a field assessor who checked the validity of their claims for competence through a series of interviews based on an agenda agreed with the University tutor. Each participant was then required to make a formal presentation on contextualised school improvement drawing on their knowledge and understanding of the change process from an initiative(s) they have lead and managed, answering related questions from a panel. The assessment panel consisted of an experienced headteacher, a Local Authority officer and a University programme director.

The tutor team and the field assessors used consistent assessment criteria at Masters credit level 11 to judge assignments. The assessment process was formally internally moderated and then validated by an External Examiner. Field assessors, LA coordinators and HEI tutors had quality training, using a consistent approach. In this way, rigour was assured. The whole premise behind the HEI alternative route was to address the perceived need for choice and alternatives to the standard SQH route, whilst ensuring that the alternative route be appropriately demanding of aspirant Headteachers, rigorous in its design, quality of experience and quality assurance measures.

The design of the programme along with consultation with the Scottish Government and with the GTCS ensured that successful participants would be deemed to have met the Standard for Headship and would be awarded the Scottish Qualification for Headship. In

addition, successful participants would be eligible for a University PG Certificate in Educational Leadership and Management. This was in contrast to the national flexible route from which, successful participants would only be considered as having met the Standard for Headship (with no professional SQH award or academic PG Diploma award).

The DARE 2 pilot programme began in April 2009 with the intention that the cohort would complete the programme in June 2010. This 15-month duration contrasts with the twenty six month minimum span of the standard SQH route. The DARE 2 cohort were accepted onto the programme following successful application and interview. They were then enrolled onto the programme and attended an induction day (April, 2009) before progressing through Course 1 (May to August 2009) and the double Course 5 (September 2009 to June 2010) along with the corresponding standard route (SR) cohort undertaking each course. The shorter timescale of the DARE 2 cohort meant that they "caught up" one year on the SR and hence the cohort with which they shared Course 5 had started a year earlier than that with which they shared Course 1. Relations between the DARE 2 cohort and the standard route cohorts were explored during the evaluation and are reported below.

6. Detailed Analysis of the DARE 2 Pilot

This evaluation draws on two sources of evidence. The first source consists of interviews undertaken in August and September 2010 with each of the three headteacher coaches (one of whom was also the SQH Coordinator of the Authority providing most of the DARE 2 cohort) and the tutor/programme director (who had maintained the coaching role for the DARE 2 participant who had originally enrolled with the first DARE pilot cohort). The second source consists of interviews undertaken in October 2010 with members of the DARE 2 cohort. All interviews were conducted by Iain Pritchard who had not been involved with either of the DARE pilots, prior to conducting the DARE 2 interviews. At the time of interview, four of the five DARE 2 participants had completed the programme and were due to graduate with the Certificate in Leadership and Management. This included one participant who had originally enrolled in the DARE 1 pilot and successfully completed Course 1and embarked on Course 5 before interrupting his studies due to being appointed as acting headteacher for an extended period of time. The fifth DARE 2 participant interrupted her studies, having made the decision to try to secure a depute head position which would enable her to gain greater whole school leadership and management experience, before applying to complete the programme at some point in the future though there would be resource implications both for the Local Authority and the University which would have to be addressed before this could be agreed.

6.1 The DARE 2 Participants and their Reasons for Joining the Pilot

The focus of DARE 2 differed from DARE 1. DARE 2 sought to develop further the original HEI alternative route model with a small number of participants, using funds remaining from the original DARE pilot monies. A total of four new participants were enrolled onto the DARE 2 pilot, all from one Local Authority. This compares with the nine participants who enrolled onto the original DARE pilot. Two further participants from the original DARE pilot who had interrupted their studies on appointment as acting headteachers, were invited to join the DARE 2 cohort. Both of those participants had maintained contact with the programme director who had continued informal coaching support throughout the interruption of studies period. One participant on appointment as permanent headteacher, decided to withdraw from the programme. The other, having taken the decision not to apply for the permanent headship, transferred into the DARE 2 pilot cohort.

On enrolment, of the five participants, three were depute headteachers, one was a faculty principal teacher and one was a subject principal teacher. During the course of progression through DARE, three participants experienced a period of acting headship in their own schools. As with the original DARE pilot participants, their reasons (stated retrospectively in the Autumn of 2010) for joining the pilot were, as would be expected, strongly related to the career point which they had reached at the time of making the decision. For most of the respondents, the postgraduate qualification which resulted from successful completion of the programme was not the primary objective. Rather, they were interested in developing their leadership and management capabilities generally and were seeking professional development that would better equip them for senior management positions more specifically:

> *You never really know how you are doing in school and I thought that SQH would*

address this effectively. (001)

[I was seeking] a structured and challenging form of CPD that's not on your own terms. (003)

For two of the respondents, they hoped to gain clarity with regard to career progression through participating in rigorous professional development. Both were experienced deputes, well aware of their strengths and areas for further development who had not yet decided whether they wished to remain as able deputes, or progress on to headship. Both expressed the view that for them, there was no equivalent CPD opportunity available:

[SQH is] the only show of its kind in town. (003)

All respondents acknowledged engagement with DARE as an opportunity to reflect on their experience to date, and to critically reflect on their leadership and management practice. They were well aware of the challenge which lay ahead and welcomed it, having high expectations of the depth and quality of that challenge. They sought a depth of structured learning which would inform their practice in school.

It was of interest for the evaluation to know whether the increased flexibility (and shorter timespan) of DARE compared to the SR was influential in their decision to enrol. The decision to participate in DARE was for several of the respondents informed through discussion with Local Authority personnel who recommended DARE to them as an alternative to either the SQH Standard Route or the national flexible route.

6.2 The DARE 2 Participants' Experiences

The nature of coaching from the participants' perspective
As with the first DARE pilot cohort, replies from the DARE 2 participants referred not to theoretical or conceptual frameworks but to the practicalities of learning:

> *[It] changed my planning, Meetings could be covered more quickly. I explored what I wanted to do and achieve, and how to do that. The coaching discussions made things very focused and I was able to apply the same thinking and practice to other issues. Time was also saved. ... I wouldn't have been able to find solutions so quickly. I was so much more confident by (coaching) session 6 and was solving problems in schools across a wide field. It was great. We should be applying it at all levels in school – for example, for faculty leaders, and for colleagues who are given new responsibilities for, say, projects. ... It was a powerful tool and helped me a lot. I wouldn't like to have missed the fast learning and development regarding my day-to-day work. (001)*

> *Early on, she detected that I was struggling to come to terms with what I was doing. She was seeking to understand what help I needed. She was obviously interested and keen to help. She gave me confidence to believe I could be a good HT one day. (002)*

> *Coaching shone a lot of lights into different corners. (003)*

> *Coaching was challenging, made me think about things I didn't want to think about, and problem solve. ... It compelled you to know your own mind.* (004)

As previously discussed, in the case of the participant who had transferred from the first DARE pilot cohort into the DARE 2 cohort, the roles of coach and tutor were conducted by the same person, the programme director who maintained the coaching role throughout the interruption of studies period, highlighted as having been useful. That participant identified what for him were the distinctions between coaching, tutoring and mentoring which indicated the same degree of clarity in his experience, as the other DARE 2 participants articulated in theirs. He viewed coaching, as opposed to the tutoring role, as a mirror and used it not just for SQH but also in school where it was a useful tool for reflecting and meeting challenges that arose.

Two of the DARE 2 participants interviewed had prior experience of coaching whereas the other two had not. None of the participants had any specific expectations of, or hopes for, the coaching process. As with the evaluation of the first DARE pilot, each DARE 2 participant stressed the individual nature of the coaching process and also the role of the coach as a "critical friend":

> *You've got someone opening you up and then coming back to things and digging deeper. I remember leaving a session feeling much better about myself. [The coach was] understanding me and my needs.* (002)

> [Although 'in charge' of what was to be discussed in coaching sessions] *occasionally, you need to be steered.* (003)

> *Coaching had contributed significantly to my enjoyment and professional development. ... I would come out of meetings thinking that was worthwhile, I'd achieved something and things were better, clearer. ... [By the fourth session the coach] was talking less, there was less need to wind me up and tease out things. I was going in with more answers than questions.* (004)

All the members of the DARE 2 cohort reported having a positive relationship with their coach. The nature of each relationship reported reflected the individualised character of the coaching process:

> *My learning accelerated because she always knew what she was doing. ... to help me find solutions to the challenges I was facing. If a solution could not be found, lots of avenues to explore were identified.* (001)

> *[Coach] was really good. She was doing to me what I really needed, and what I should have been doing myself. She was tuning in to what I was saying. ... It was someone really listening and me responding. I remember answering something and I thought "how did I do that"?* (002)

> *It's about me and my needs and I now have a very good relationship with [coach], and that's very important to me.* (004)

In the case of the participant who had transferred from the first DARE pilot cohort into the DARE 2 cohort, he had found the programme director's coaching astute and helpful.

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As with the evaluation of the first DARE pilot, each DARE 2 participant highlighted that the individualised nature and flexibility of the coaching was one of its strengths:

> *I loved it. It was great from the start and brought so many positives to what you do in schools. SR colleagues were envious. You find solutions much more quickly than by other means. ... It was 75% me presenting challenges.* (001)

> *I can say honestly that had I been a DHT without [coach] and [HT] and DARE 2, I might not have considered headship at all. I may not have had the strength to see my way through.* (002)

> [Coaching likened to a tool that could bring clarity regarding a sought outcome, with the latter allowing you to judge how important the coaching had been] *It worked for me.* (003)

In the case of the participant who had transferred from the first DARE pilot cohort into the DARE 2 cohort, he was clear that not only had he gained personally but that he was a better coach and thinker as a result of the DARE 2 experience.

The nature of additional tutoring from the participants' perspective
Whereas in the evaluation of the first DARE pilot (O'Brien and Sharp, 2008), participants reported that the flexibility of the combined coaching and tutoring role was one of its strengths and that for some, the distinction between tutoring and coaching was not one to which they attributed much meaning, the DARE 2 model made a clear distinction between the roles of tutor and coach.

Additional tutoring comprised four group sessions and five individual sessions. Group sessions took as their focus orientation and familiarization; planning the detail of tutoring support; gathering of baseline evidence; selecting appropriate evidence; guidance in relation to Sections B and C of the Commentary, specifically, the critical incident analysis. Three of the four group sessions were built into the induction day, Course 1 and Course 5 residentials in order to develop as cost effective a model as possible.

Each individual tutoring session had a specific focus to ensure that participants would not be disadvantaged by not having completed Courses 2-4 of the programme. The first individual tutoring session took as its focus, establishing a 'tutoring relationship', discussing experiences from the Course 1 residential, discussing a 'leadership and management competences wheel' exercise to help inform the CSE, discussing experience of school analysis and school improvement planning and whether or not the participant would like to attend the Course 2 taught days, as well as discussing the focus for a school improvement project if required, especially in relation to leading and managing learning and teaching. The second individual tutoring session took as its focus a discussion of the professional development activities contained within the PLP, as well as progressing plans for a school improvement project if appropriate and/or exploration of whole school leadership and management experience. The third individual tutoring session took as its focus a discussion of any claims for prior learning, discussion of the knowledge, understanding, experience and competence which could be drawn from in order to construct a Portfolio claim for competence in relation to one Professional Action. The

fourth individual tutoring session took as its focus a discussion of feedback on a draft Course 5 Portfolio claim for competence, discussing any claims for prior learning, discussing progress with the school improvement project if appropriate and/or exploration of whole school leadership and management experience. The fifth individual tutoring session took as its focus, a discussion of on-going progress with the PLP; discussion of progress with taking forward the next steps for development from the formative 360° analysis (in relation to results from the summative 360° analysis process); a discussion of feedback on a draft for Section B of the Commentary ('critical reflection on a key theme/issue in leading and managing school improvement'), as well as feedback on a draft part of Section C of the Commentary pertaining to a 'Critical Incident'.

The participants made clear the distinctions between support provided from coaching and tutoring. Overall, participants spoke very positively about their experience of the additional tutoring. This despite a degree of initial uncertainty and in the case of one participant, even scepticism about the additional tutoring:

> *what am I going to get from this?* (001)

There was a sense that each participant's relationship with the Tutor developed as the programme unfolded and the tutoring made its impact. Agendas were set together with agreement about areas to be focused on. It was felt to be a very collaborative and very helpful process and to have had a strong impact on the final outcome. All members of the DARE 2 cohort reported having a positive relationship with the tutor:

> *very fortunate to have worked closely with [Tutor].* (002)

As with the coaching element, the nature of that relationship inevitably differed from one participant to another. Regardless, there was a general benefit derived from the additional tutoring related to confidence boosting, enabling participants to become:

> *more confident and more capable of meeting the challenges that [Tutor] threw at me.* (004)

> *She made everything sound so easy.* (002)

Participants emphasised the individual nature of the tutoring process, within a defined agenda for each session. Indeed, the individualised nature and flexibility of the tutoring was seen as a key strengths:

> *She was well tuned in to participants. In one-to-one sessions, she understood my issues, listened and drew things out.* (002)

As with the role of coach, participants also described the role of the tutor as a "critical friend". Where the roles differed, related to the focus on and skill in supporting the learning process. This was three fold. First, participants were engaged in a process of critical reflection in and on practice, in relation to working towards an assessed outcome:

> *encouragement of critical thinking about my work, me as a person, my qualities and the focus on written aspects – what to leave in, what to leave out.* (004)

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Second, in relation to the reading, which participants referred to as the benefits accrued from engaging with the literature being enhanced by the tutor's responses as well as her suggestions regarding further reading. Third, the tutor was reported to be skilled in supporting the assessment process. One aspect of that process involved supporting participants with developing draft sections of the Portfolio and reflective Commentary, expanding on what had been formatively submitted and suggesting other options. The focus on assessment and preparation for submissions was thought to be very helpful as well as providing general confidence boosting. Feedback was felt to be constructive and encouraging:

> *always detailed and superb.* (002)

The support derived from the additional tutoring complemented the support derived from the coaching:

> *I got more from tutoring than from coaching, more than I ever thought I'd get.*
> [001]

The learning log
The learning log was little mentioned throughout the interviews with the DARE 2 participants, presumably as it had made limited contribution to their experience. Or, perhaps it had had less impact than the other aspects of the programme. Participant (003) reported that, as with the PLP, the learning log was important and useful in that he constantly referred to it as the programme unfolded. In particular, he referred to its utility in relation to the compiling of the Portfolio claims for competence, as well as reflecting on the Critical Incidents within the Commentary. It was also a source of references to the literature he had engaged with throughout the programme, enabling him to draw from and use as a source of incidental learning.

Looking Back: Perceptions of self, of others and of future career aspirations
As with the original DARE pilot evaluation, what each participant felt they had gained through participation with the programme was unique to their own experience, personality and aspirations. There was, however, a general theme that participants had gained knowledge of themselves, their abilities and their next steps for professional development:

> *I had reflected before, but it had not been focused or structured.* (001)

One participant found her early experience in DARE 2 to be*, 'frightening, challenging and a reality check'.* She reflected:

> *I learned more about myself via SQH than in any other professional development in the preceding twenty years.* (004)

In addition to the coaching and tutoring elements of the programme, the structured self-evaluation elements had contributed to that process:

> *The ongoing professional dialogue, the self-evaluation against the Standard brought a greater clarity about what I needed to do to improve and what my capacity for leadership actually was. Coaching was the thing, though.* (004)

Key learning experiences from Course 1 included an increased clarity regarding individual's strengths and weaknesses, key insights from the 360 degree process, a heightened awareness from the PLP process of how weaknesses might be addressed effectively, and a sharper focus on what the specific development needs actually were. Key learning experiences from Course 5 included the critical incident analysis which was cited as a further source that prompted learning and raised awareness.

There was also a sense conveyed that participants were learning differently and more effectively:

> *I was better able to view the management cycle in school in a different light, see the links between processes and planning and also see better how I was going to move forward.* (001)

> *learning how to put a portfolio together, learning to read and to use time effectively. Everything was deadline driven and you were structured towards getting the job done.* (003)

> *You emerged from DARE 2 a better thinker than you were when you went in.*
> (003)

As well as benefits for their own learning, there was also a percolation that benefited the school through transferable skills that could be applied in many ways. Participants articulated this in different ways. For one participant, decision-making was better, partly because of increased confidence. The impact of wider reading on shaping outlook and practice was clear:

> *What I got from reading was a revelation.* (001)

> *Reading can tell you that you are right and it's important. It also tells you why you are right and that's important too. Because it increases your understanding and confirms intuition.* (002)

> *The increase in reading makes you think and challenges your assumptions. It also makes you do things that would not otherwise have been done. … You have to justify why you think what you think because it's others who are 'doing the doing', and it's easier to deploy principle.* (003)

> *It was the best and most valuable development I've ever done. Several times over 15 months I thought "I really love this" and I got more than I ever expected to. I still read professionally. I thought before if I was reading LA documents, I was doing well.* (004)

On a more general level, one participant described being more confident about how issues should be managed and problems tackled, better aware of what actions should be avoided and putting into practice what he had learned:

> *I was making connections, working better with staff not just about DARE but in school practice generally. My focus was very clear and I made better use of time and decision-making.* (001)

Indeed, increased confidence in relation to working with others was a key outcome. One participant described how he felt he was more professional. Another articulated a greater understanding of Emotional Intelligence:

> *Understanding how other people think in different ways from you. Understanding why people are resistant to change was so important. Reading and reflection made me look beyond "what do staff think about me"? I knew I needed internal strength and was not as secure as I had been before and was now working in new ground.*
> (002)

It should be recognized that all four participants interviewed had been afforded greater whole school responsibility whilst participating with DARE. For three of those participants, this involved a period of acting headship. The fourth participant had been proactive in expanding his remit, supported by his headteacher. Such whole school responsibility had helped to develop personally and professionally, and had compelled participants to face challenges not faced before. Each participant emerged from such experience with the effects varying from having been unscathed to scarred. The coaching element of the programme had played a significant role for three of the participants in making sense of such experience, analyzing, gaining a sense of perspective and ultimately boosting confidence:

> *Through really critical self-reflection. Things were better than I had seen. I needed to be more positive.* (002)

The coaching experience had a wider impact. Participants reflected on learning from DARE the influence coaching could have on professional practice and then applying a coaching approach to their work in school:

> *Coaching was the "big thing" that helped when I saw how powerful it could be.*
> (002)

Examples of coaching approach adopted by participants included how they responded to questions from staff, through listening properly and encouraging colleagues to consider and decide what the next steps should be, finding their own solutions. Elaborating on this theme, one participant referred to the way in which her listening skills had changed as a result of her being coached. She had also been struck sharply by her reading in this area, coming to appreciate that people tend to listen with the intent to reply as opposed to really listening to what the other person is saying and being empathic towards what they are thinking and why:

> *It was a 'light bulb' moment. That's what I do! Why do I do it?* (002)

As a result, those participants reported feeling more confident in relation to a senior management position and career aspirations.

Overall Reflections
Perhaps if there were any unifying concepts they were that of increased confidence along

with critical reflection in and on practice. Engagement with the reading had contributed. The two 360 analyses had made significant contributions to the developmental process. Sharing of experiences and perceptions with peers, tutor and coach had also significantly contributed. Coaching had been instrumental.

Each of the participants was able to reflect on the significant benefit derived from participating in the DARE programme. For one, who had the most senior management experience, this was not as considerable as for the others. He described a frustration related to the final assessment leading to the professional award which he saw as:

> A *yawning abyss between what you read and study and what you do on the ground. That divide is not yet covered by any of the [SQH] routes, with DARE 2 a charge towards delivering an assignment – evidence gathering rather than evidence creating'.* (003)

He conceded, however, that *'it has to be that way'*. Notwithstanding the preceding remarks, he was quite clear that he had benefited from participating in the programme.

All participants had raised the point at various points of the programme that while the three courses omitted from the DARE model would be covering what was largely old ground for experienced school leaders and managers, there was also new learning that was missed. Overall, this did not detract from the quality of the DARE programme:

> *I came through a good quality experience.* (004)

Asked to consider out of 10, how close her expectations of DARE 2 had come to being fulfilled, one participant said *'10',* elaborating:
> *I was more likely to read, be more curious and take time to reflect. I felt a lot stronger as a person. I don't jump to conclusions and take things personally. I've improved my people skills and am aware you need different skills for different situations. I watch [HT], I read and see her in practice – she's doing it.* (002)

6.3 The Coaches' and Tutor's Experiences

The tutoring and coaching arrangements for DARE 2 were felt by each of the coaches and tutor to be very positive. They all knew each other in a professional capacity and had high regard for each other's work. As a consequence, the ground was fertile for a very strong working relationship and this proved to be the case. Through the individual interviews, the coaches reported being clear about the coaching role, clear about its boundaries and clear about where coaching stopped and became tutoring or mentoring. They also highlighted in particular the openness of all meetings where everyone was comfortable in the knowledge that any issues of concern, suggestions, and questions could be raised freely and discussed without any tension arising. Feedback to inform current and future DARE development was welcomed. At one meeting between the coaches and tutor, for example, it was decided that greater focus should be placed on progress with taking forward participants' professional development in relation to the PLPs and that this should be taken forward through the coaching conversations.

The nature of coaching from the coaches' perspective

The first meeting between each participant and their coach was thought to be instrumental in setting up the coaching relationship. It was very much focused on building relationships. The coaches referred to the process of getting to know their participant(s) – what they were like, what their backgrounds were, what they thought and so on. Where relevant, time was spent on exchanging experiences relating to primary and secondary sectors. Time was also spent agreeing the rules of the coaching session in relation to aspects such as confidentiality and openness. Establishing the agenda for the coaching sessions, based on the participants' priorities for personal and professional development was key. An overriding concern was for the creation of mutual trust and confidence. The coaches felt they had achieved that aim through good listening and effective coaching skills.

Each of the coaches came to the role with previous experience of coaching, an understanding of and a belief in the process:

> *It's simply about people understanding how effective it can be and how it can help you in your job.* (006)

> *Its power to challenge, change mindsets, to build self-confidence and to make people better thinkers is considerable.* (007)

Perhaps then, it is understandable that each of the coaches described a sense of being alert to the impact of the coaching on the participants. For two of the coaches, such impact was perceived to be significant. For the third, she questioned the extent of impact the coaching had had. There appeared to be consensus on the need for each participant to be willing and able to engage in the coaching process. Participants are required to be receptive to coaching in order for discussion and investigation go beyond the superficial. Participants are also required to put what they had learned about themselves and their practice into action between coaching sessions to derive the most benefit. A concomitant to good coaching requires a willingness to go deeper than the surface layers of critical reflection:

> *People have to want to be coached for coaching to work.* (006)

This insight raised some interesting thoughts in the mind of one coach in particular who at times questioned her own ability as a coach: Was it because of anything she was doing or not doing that discussions never ventured below the surface? Should the participant have been challenged at an earlier stage of DARE 2 than she was? Was DARE 2 an appropriate route for all participants? Did the selection process for DARE 2 require further reflection and or revised criteria?

There was a general appreciation of the more protracted Standard Route (SR) that afforded opportunities for academic learning and remained very suitable for many candidates. Two of the coaches made direct comparisons between the SR and DARE route. Acknowledgement was given to coaching conversations which SR participants had with tutors, as well as to one of the strengths of the SR being the time available for reflection, reading and study, beneficial to SR participants' development.

The coaching relationship and experience was highly individualised. So too was the frequency, duration and the venue for the coaching conversations. The agenda was personalized according to each participant's current development needs. Occasionally,

coaches would put coaching aside and simply offer a little advice. Given that each coach was an experienced headteacher, this could be construed as adopting a mentoring role.

One coach felt quite strongly that the key issues her participant needed to address, and which were important for headship, were not going to be met by academic learning and/or tutoring alone. They were more personal and better met by being confronted through skilled coaching, centered more on mindset, self- perception and awareness, as well as emotional intelligence. In this way, unresolved issues could be addressed in a way that allowed the participant to move on, gaining better awareness of self, better perception of how to manage, encourage, develop and support others, along with more insight into how others like to be treated and supported. Another coach explained how she gradually reduced the number of coaching questions she was asking thus compelling the participant to take more initiative, to sharpen his own thinking and self-evaluation. As the coaching relationship grew gradually stronger over time, there was a shift of mindset by the participant away from what had appeared to be a fairly narrow outlook during their first meeting. This led to:

> *building of capacity and the development of a professional confidence.* (007)

The perceived merits of coaching were not in any way meant as a lack of appreciation of the importance of academic learning and indeed, the coaches were mindful of its potential impact in terms of supporting change and development. Coaches supported participants' growing appreciation that reading could be compelling to inform critical reflection on and in practice:

> *a major development, brought about largely by skilled coaching and [participant's] reading.* (007)

The focus of the coaches was on a consideration of what each participant needed at a particular point in their career, each situation being unique. Moreover, it was the combination of coaching and academic learning which was perceived as a strength.

The nature of additional tutoring from the tutor's perspective
The additional one-to-one and group tutoring programme was born out of experience from the first DARE pilot. It was drawn up and led by the DARE 2 tutor who was also the programme director, and approved by the Local Authority coordinator before DARE 2 commenced. That programme was designed to ensure that DARE participants were not disadvantaged by not progressing through Courses 2, 3 and 4. As previously reported, the tutoring programme was intentionally specific so as to ensure that key elements which standard route participants undertook would be covered by alternative route participants and in so doing, that the DARE 2 participants would be equally able to complete Course 5. The programme for additional tutoring included a specific agenda for each session and also made clear the boundaries of the tutor role which also served to ensure that it did not stray into the coaching role. That programme was distributed to participants and coaches at the start of DARE 2 with the pattern of broad dates for individual and group tutoring identified.

The detail of the group and one-to-one tutoring sessions can be found on pages 20 and 21 of this report. The additional tutoring support provided was felt to have been welcomed by participants, with the one-to-one tutorials being perceived as particularly helpful. Perhaps the support offered had been on the generous side and it could be argued that the tutoring

allocation could not be sustained at that level in future as the costs would likely be prohibitive. The compromise would be to maintain the number of sessions but to reduce the time allocation for each from two hours to one hour. It might also be possible to explore within any future DARE pilot, the potential for the Local Authority to assume part of the additional tutoring role.

The structured programme for additional tutoring was in stark contrast to the open agenda for the coaching support. From the outset, it was discussed between coaches and tutor that the agenda for coaching sessions would be drawn up between each pair of coach and participant, to be an 'open space' for discovery. The programme director described having had, *"a wee coaching conversation"* with herself in order to resist the temptation to organise the coaches and participants in this regard.

6.4 The Taught Elements

As previously discussed, Courses 1 and 5 are common to the DARE and the SR programmes. This part of the report draws mainly from the interviews with each of the four DARE 2 participants who completed the programme. It also includes reflections from the programme director who provided the additional tutoring component.

6.4.1 Course 1
The induction day and three-day residential

Following on from the induction day in April 2009 to which participants' headteacher supporters were also invited, the three-day residential held in May 2009 constituted the main teaching component for Course 1. Over the duration of the three-day residential, a balance was sought between interactive workshop sessions, theory input and contributions from outside speakers including experienced headteacher practitioners. The design of both the induction day and residential followed the pattern of pre-course material and activities which informed some of the workshop activities, within a blended teaching approach. One key strength highlighted was the input from external speakers, including a Director of Education and a practicing headteacher, described as:

> *worth their weight in gold (003)*

All respondents were positive about the Course 1 teaching and learning experiences. They were fulsome in their reflections on the residential experience using words such as 'great' and 'fantastic' to describe the experience which had afforded a 'getting to know' opportunity in relation to other participants, course leaders and general networking. They reflected on how well organized the residential experience had been and how they had felt well prepared for what followed:

> *[It was] the start of the journey, the start of looking deep down inside. (002)*

They had certainly been challenged and felt a degree of 'mild trepidation' as to what lay ahead which was then replaced by renewed confidence and was generally taken to be part of the process of returning to study:

> *I went home scared. ... After panic, planning set in. I moved from the mindset of "Can I do this?" to "I think I can." ... it would be good to get the cogs working*

again. (001)

[convinced I] had done the right thing, was ready for this and could do it. (004)

The participants were also appreciative of the support mechanisms in place which were felt to be impressive and encouraging. They felt well prepared and resourced for the assignment process.

The 360 degree analysis
360 degree feedback is a technique used by many organisations to gather information from a variety of stakeholders about the performance of a manager. The technique is called '360 degree' because information is gathered from all quarters in an organisation in order to provide a rounded picture of the person's performance. In the SQH programme, 360 degree feedback is used to support the development and assessment of participants' personal qualities and interpersonal skills. It is an opportunity for them to gain feedback from those they work with, particularly people involved in working closely with them in school. The feedback is gathered by means of a questionnaire based on Essential Element 4.3 of The Standard for Headship, personal qualities and interpersonal skills. The 360 degree feedback process is undertaken formatively in Course 1 and summatively in Course 5. The comparison of the two offers participants a way of analysing and discussing the development in their interpersonal abilities which has occurred over the course of the programme. Such discussion forms part of the assignment for both courses. The 360 analysis which formed part of Course 5 is discussed in section 5 below. Here, discussion relates to the 360 analysis which formed part of Course 1.

Few of the DARE 2 participants had previous experience of the 360 degree process. Each of the participants elaborated on what they perceived as the significant impact the 360 degree process had had on them. It was viewed as a valuable tool for critical self reflection to inform professional development. Generally, the initial reaction to the collated 360 degree responses was fear ('initially scary' and 'nerve wracking'), followed by relief. Responses were carefully pored over. There then followed a realisation that the process was constructive in so far as all comments were potentially useful for development, either as corroboration of existing good practice, affirmation of readiness for senior positions/headship, or as indicators for professional development:

There was nothing that hurt me. (002)

Each participant gained confidence from the positive feedback on their personal qualities and interpersonal skills. For one participant who found herself in an acting headship shortly after embarking on the programme, such confirmation only came after the new headteacher was appointed and was able to restore a sense of perspective over what the participant had achieved. On the whole, what emerged from the 360 degree process was deeply personal and directly related to each participant's professional practice:

While it might seem daft, it appeared that I was better at managing others than managing myself. I now realised this. But I had to manage myself better, especially if I wanted to get into senior management. ... I wanted to be a transformational leader but couldn't if I didn't address the detail as well as I addressed other things. (001)

> *[I asked] "what kind of leader do I want to become"? … someone who can bring out the best in colleagues, who can inspire others who want to improve, and someone who can take criticism.* (002)

> *[It provided] a very clear overview of my areas for development and they are still in my PLP. ... These kind of issues would not have come up without 360 degree evaluation. (004)*

The 360 degree process brought a rigour to the self-evaluation process:

> *good, hard data from other people. You don't control it - the questions and the people who respond to them are not selected by you. ... [The process] made you look harder at yourself, at what you do and how you do it.' (003)*

The Critical Self-Evaluation and Personal Learning Programme

As explained in O'Brien and Sharp (2008: 12), Course 1 comprises a focus on Critical Self-Evaluation (CSE) against the Standard for Headship and articulation of a programme for personal learning (PLP). It is designed to:

- introduce participants to the Standard for Headship and what is required to demonstrate competence;
- introduce participants to the key purpose of headship and what it entails in relation to leadership for learning;
- introduce participants to the methods of work and learning which will be used during the SQH Programme;
- ensure that participants have an understanding of key principles of evidence-based self evaluation and critical self-reflection to make possible the formulation of a PLP in relation to the Standard for Headship; and
- ensure that participants are familiar with the specific assessment requirements of Course 1 and of the overall SQH Programme.

There was general agreement amongst the DARE 2 cohort that the guidance provided for writing the Critical Self-Evaluation (CSE) was clear and comprehensive. The Course 1 assignment was perceived as a developmental experience:

> *I had a road map, I had a plan and that made it less scary. I knew myself much better, was aware of the need to improve but confident about my abilities to do so. The 360° evaluation and colleagues had reinforced that confidence. It felt good – I had a clear focus and direction and felt I was getting there. (001)*

The Personal Learning Programme (PLP) was considered to be key in the participants' professional development:

> *the importance of committing yourself to paper. (002)*

> *It helped me structure where I needed to go next and suggested a pathway. (004)*

Unlike the original DARE pilot evaluation, the PLP was considered to be a live, working document by the DARE 2 participants. Perhaps due to lessons learned from the original DARE pilot which informed the development of DARE 2 and the role of the coaches which

included greater emphasis on the review of progress with the PLP. In addition, the utility of the PLP was accredited to the work-based developmental opportunities which came about as a result of the structured activities contained within it:

> *I got as much from this as from managing a whole school project. … it improved me so much. (001)*

That said, at one of their meetings the DARE 2 coaches and tutor had discussed the nature of the PLP. It was decided that greater focus should be placed on progressing participants' professional development in relation to the PLP and that this should be taken forward through the coaching conversations. In retrospect, ownership of the PLPs and their importance could have been given a higher profile at an earlier stage and more specifically, could have featured in the coaching element from the outset. As it was, the PLPs were often task focused and constructed almost on the basis of how quickly students could get beyond them or outgrow them. This point had been discussed at national level, as it had been a concern of all routes in terms of how PLPs can be constructed prior to participants developing a real understanding of leadership and management processes. The consequence of this for DARE 2, was that the PLPs did not form a continuous working document that was integral to the learning process and to the coaching conversations.

6.4.2 Course 5
The two-day residential and two single taught days
As with Course 1, over the duration of the two-day residential held in September 2009 and subsequent two single taught days held in January and April 2010, a balance was sought between interactive workshop sessions, theory input and contributions from outside speakers. Again, the design of both the residential and taught days followed the pattern of pre-course material and activities which informed some of the workshop activities, within a blended teaching approach.

Participants reported that the second residential and subsequent taught days were helpful, very important and really worthwhile. The input of guest speakers was appreciated. Questions that were raised by participants were answered immediately. If anything, the taught days and residential were considered too short, although it was understood why they could not be extended. The level of input and quality of teaching was considered to be very positive. There was a general feeling about being more confident entering Course 5 than Course 1. As one participant put it, she was conscious that she was now speaking up more and was comfortable with challenging what others were saying when she thought that necessary:

> *I couldn't have done that before'.* (003)

The Course 5 residential held in September 2009 was well received. One participant reflected that it was 'absolutely crucial'**,** citing in particular the:

> *direct contact it brought with people outwith schools.* (003)

Another participant reflected that the residential was critical to counteract the:

> *lonely experience of DARE in school where it was difficult to talk to colleagues about*

it because they had no experience of it themselves. Getting together with colleagues was great. We were all on the same boat and the same journey. (001)

The residential also provided reassurance regarding what was needed for completing the claims for competence and the subsequent individual tutoring also helped here. There was a feeling that the programme director and DARE tutor's input seemed to make things less overwhelming and the information provided by each of the course leaders was of good quality and very helpful:

Spot on. It was invaluable and I knew exactly where the focus had to be. (001)

The taught day in January and the taught day in April were also well received:

I loved the taught days and going to Moray House – really enjoyed all of it ... all super. (004)

One topic which arose in a number of the interviews in the original DARE pilot evaluation and again in two of the DARE 2 evaluations concerned the relationships between the DARE cohort and the two SR cohorts with whom they came into contact in Courses 1 and 5 (particularly the latter). As before, most DARE members reported relationships to be cordial if less friendly, though inevitably there were closer networks within the DARE and the SR groups than there were between them. However there were references to a degree of tension between the two groups: One participant summed this up thus:

I enjoyed the residential less than in Course 1, feeling a little uncomfortable with the change of cohort ... while welcoming, there was also a hint of suspicion. (004)

Whilst another reflected on questions posed by SR to DARE participants regarding why DARE participants were getting the opportunity to undertake such a route and why SR participants were we not being coached. This concern was also raised in the evaluation of the original DARE pilot by O'Brien and Sharp (2008: 20) who concluded,

In the longer term and in the context of a widening of the choice of approaches to SQH, this inequality of opportunity would presumably not happen. The point which does remain however is that if mutual esteem between groups following different routes is to be assured, there must be equality of choice over time, a rationale underpinning and providing coherence across the various routes and informing how each member is following a route tailored to his or her circumstances.

All DARE 2 participants highlighted the fact that one of the key strengths of the support available for progressing though Course 5 was the peer support generated by the DARE 2 participants themselves who formed a cohesive peer group. Whilst the formation of a peer group was not a compulsory part of the programme, the participants reported that it had been encouraged by the course leaders along with a 'prod' from the DARE programme director.

This was felt to be very important to each of the participants and counteracted at least some of the reduced peer support from the SR participants. Very quickly everyone in the DARE 2 group became a driver. The group became close professional colleagues throughout the programme and indeed, this appears still to be the case. Some of the benefits arising included gaining an overview and a professional understanding of leadership in other

schools, sectors and Local Authorities. One participant summed up the benefits derived from the DARE 2 peer groups as:

> *great. It was mutually supportive, exchanging presentations and discussing sample papers from previous participants and they were really nice people. ... But I'd like to have been part of a larger cohort. (002)*

Meetings were not chaired and did not have set agendas which was felt to be refreshing. The mutual support arising was important, and went beyond a focus on Course 5 itself, providing moral support when things were difficult:

> *trying to be a mum, an acting HT and a student. (004)*

The Local Authority Tutorials
The focus for the Local Authority tutorials was in the main on advice related to preparation of formative and summative assessment submissions. The agenda for tutorials was essentially led by the University, with the course leaders happy to deal with questions or issues raised from the floor.

Although acknowledged as important for the preparation of submissions, the Local Authority tutorials were less well received. This seemed in part due to a change in the SR cohort the DARE participants joined as previously discussed. And, to the mixed nature of the DARE 2 and SR cohorts which required generic rather than specific guidance. On occasion, guidance could be repetitious with duplication of information that some participants already possessed. One participant thought that the group was large and disparate, drawn as it was from a range of different sectors and levels of experience. Perhaps the style of delivery or the twilight timing also contributed. While finding elements of the Local Authority Tutorials helpful, DARE 2 participants regarded them less positively than the other elements of the programme.

The Assessment of Course 5
Assessment arrangements for Course 5 were deemed to have been effective. The participants highlighted the support available if and when required, as well as the quality of feedback provided on draft sections of the assignment. However, the Portfolio and Commentary assignment was highlighted by one participant as the least satisfying part of the process. He referred to the volumes of time and energy devoted to gathering a monumental body of retrospective evidence, as opposed to evidence creation and likened the compilation of the Portfolio to:

> *weighing the pig without fattening it*. (003)

The extent of this input seemed excessive, perhaps even arguably unnecessary given that it contained very little new learning for him. Perhaps this is always a danger for DARE participants. It was indeed a concern of the previously nationally offered Accelerated Route.

The validating Field Visit did not appear to have been a cause of anxiety to DARE 2 participants. Neither did the Oral Presentation and *Viva.* The 360 degree analysis, was

highlighted as a key strength in terms of the way in which it could be used to inform self-evaluation and critical reflection on leadership and management practice. As two participants reflected, without it:

You would not know how others felt. Comments are rooted in anonymity. (002)

I wouldn't have had the same level of understanding, or anything like the feedback that the 360 had given me. (004)

Whereas the 360 degree analysis which featured in Course 1 was formative, the analysis which featured in Course 5 was summative. Although prepared for the process this time, and indeed having the confidence to engage constructively regardless of the nature of the feedback, participants reflected that the Course 5 360 degree analysis process was no less forbidding. In some respects, the stakes were even higher:

What if the scores are worse? (001)

What if I don't improve, what if I'm worse than the first one? (004)

However, participants were more aware of how the outcomes from the 360 degree analysis could be utilized for critical self-reflection and to inform the Course 5 Portfolio and Commentary assessment. One participant commented that he felt:

less paralysis by analysis and it was quite different from the past. My confidence had increased. (001)

Participants were also encouraged by feedback from colleagues which confirmed that during their engagement with the programme, they had developed in their personal qualities and interpersonal skills:

[I appeared] better at articulating views about high standards and professional values, adopting a coaching approach with which colleagues appeared to be more comfortable. (004)

6.5 Governance and Regulatory Matters

As the University of Edinburgh regulatory issues pertaining to DARE 2 matched those of the original DARE pilot, the first part of this section is lifted from the evaluation report of the initial DARE pilot, conducted by O'Brien and Sharp (2008: 27-28). It draws upon interviews held with the then Director of Postgraduate Studies of the Moray House School of Education, the DARE Programme Director and the SQH Coordinator of the City of Edinburgh Council at the time the DARE programme was implemented. The second part of this section goes on to address specifics of the organization and management of the DARE 2 pilot.

University of Edinburgh Regulatory Issues
"The DARE pilot was validated by the University of Edinburgh not as a separate programme of study but as an alternative way of delivering the Certificate in Educational Leadership and Management which had already been validated. The process was 'light

touch' since the learning outcomes were not being altered and support for the development of alternative routes was forthcoming from the GTCS. One progression issue which could have been problematic was the requirement in the SR for all of courses 1 to 4 to have been successfully completed before embarking on course 5 but the relaxation of this requirement for DARE did not appear to have been the subject of comment in committee. An additional facilitating factor was that the previously validated SQH programme had an 'accelerated' version for participants with greater amounts of school management experience and the addition of DARE to SR, with a similar rationale, seemed a natural development. With course 1 being worth 20 postgraduate credit points and course 5 worth 40, the requirements for a postgraduate Certificate are fulfilled and this aspect of the validation was a formality. In general there is no obstacle to the existence of alternative routes to any University award but there would need to be a rationale for their equivalence. In the present case, this would probably mean explaining and justifying the relationship of other routes to SR which would act as the 'benchmark' route.

The two other points related to the future of alternative routes development in this area are (i) credit accumulation and transfer and (ii) economic viability. For the former, the position as regards the Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL), whereby credit gained at another HEI is credited by Edinburgh University for the purposes of an award, is that at least 50% of the credit points for any qualification must have been obtained by studying at the University of Edinburgh if the University is to validate the award. While there is no indication that any change to this is under consideration, various developments in higher education are making its application in practice rather more flexible. Under the Bologna Process for example joint awards between HEIs, especially where they are located in different countries, are currently under active consideration. There is no reason in principle why different SQH consortia should not cooperate to offer joint awards if there were operational advantages in this.

A further area of flexibility lies in the incorporation of mechanisms for the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) whereby learning gained as part of professional experience is credited by Edinburgh University for the purposes of an award. It is therefore possible that a future development would be an award for CPD delivered by the University, or jointly by the University and a Local Authority partner. In this case however the prospect is probably a much more distant one since, although the University is becoming more receptive to alternative forms of credit accumulation and transfer, the diversity of types of experience in school management and leadership would pose formidable quality assurance issues which would have to be overcome before APEL could become a significant feature of the SQH programme.

The position as regards economic viability is somewhat delicate. SQH programmes have to charge economic fees but also incur higher costs (even after the higher fees have been allowed for) as compared to other postgraduate provision in the University. This is primarily due to the higher staff-to-participant ratios currently provided for intensive programmes of professional development such as SQH and the costs of such staff who need to have academic and professional credibility with aspirant headteachers. Viability depends to some extent on the crossover with other programmes (ie. the extent to which students on other programmes take SQH courses). At present this is at a low level and if anything has dropped since the 2005 revalidation, though the intention at the time of revalidation was that if anything the opposite should be encouraged. Be that as it may, the introduction of an alternative route which "undercuts" SR would certainly jeopardize the latter's future and so

the quasi-commercial aspects of alternative routes to SfH would be an important aspect in determining the economic viability of any one of them."

The Organisation and Management of the Pilot
Aside from the coaching support discussed below, Fife Local Authority's contribution to the DARE 2 pilot consisted primarily of identifying the four new recruits. As with the original DARE pilot, reported by O'Brien and Sharp (2008) this was not without its complications, given that the rationale for the DARE 2 pilot was that candidates required extensive experience of leadership and management at whole school level which would be called upon to enable them to demonstrate having met the SfH in a shorter period of time than that for SR candidates. Recruitment was therefore limited to experienced school managers. In hindsight, it would seem desirable if not necessary for DARE candidates to be at least experienced faculty PTs and preferably, DHTs.

The recruitment of Field Assessors (FAs) was more straightforward, following the same criteria for DARE as for the SR. FAs were experienced HTs and preferably SQH graduates themselves. They were experienced FAs and as such, had previously undertaken one day's training before their first participation in Field Assessment. The Local Authority was also satisfied with the quality of administration of the DARE 2 pilot. An overview of progress with the pilot was maintained throughout, by the programme director ensuring it was a regular agenda item at meetings of the Tutors Education Authority Coordinators (TEAC) advisory committee comprising representatives from both the University and partner Local Authorities.

From the University's perspective, preparation for DARE 2 was unproblematic, the original DARE pilot had paved the way in terms of procedural aspects. The DARE model had not constituted a new programme in that the existing SR infrastructure and expertise was drawn from including the regulatory framework, programme and course co-ordination, as well as tutoring arrangements. One area of development which was necessary, however, was the development of the coaching role. With the original DARE pilot, that responsibility was assumed by the programme director who, in addition to some coaching experience obtained through working on the SR, attended some of the national FRH coaching training. With DARE 2, a key development was to make distinct the roles of coach and tutor. This was not in response to any criticism of the quality of the coaching for the original DARE pilot which was perceived by the participants as having been very effectiveness but rather, to develop a model which was capable of being replicated on a wider scale. Recognition was also given to the desirability of separating the tutor and coach roles in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest in a national role out. At local authority, SQH consortia and nation levels, much had been learned about coaching and its potential impact from the running of the national FRH, the Western Consortium funded flexible route pilot and from the first DARE pilot. That understanding served to inform the design of DARE 2.

During their regular meetings, the coach and tutor team monitored progress, clarified aspects of the coaching element and provided a supportive group which all could draw from. Through those meetings, coaches were afforded quality time and space to reflect and explore how the coaching was going. Coaches and tutor maintained a self-discipline regarding observing the distinctive and complementary nature of their roles. That said, there was recognition that in practice, common sense prevailed when exceptional occasions

arose where a quick piece of advice or support was offered and appreciated regardless of whether it fell within coaching, tutoring or mentoring:

There were blurry edges but that was probably inevitable. (006)

Coaches reported being appreciative of the confidence placed in them to respond on an individualised basis to the coaching needs of their participant(s). This was felt to be very helpful particularly in that all three coaches had to pitch their style of coaching in the light of the concerns, needs and dispositions of individual participants. Relationships between coaches and tutor were consistently positive and healthy. The meetings were also found to be very useful in discussing any relevant issues that arose during the coaching sessions. On interview, the tutor (who was also the programme director) described each of the DARE 2 coaches as *'first class'* and recognised that their understanding of the coaching role and their commitment to the role had been *'tremendous'* (008).

The report on the original DARE pilot conducted by O'Brien and Sharp (2008: 29) explores financing which is equally applicable for DARE 2. As highlighted in that report, "the total budget for the DARE pilot was set at £100,000 and this was adequate for the size of the cohort because it was not necessary to create any new infrastructure to support the programme. Economies were made by using the existing SR infrastructure to run the DARE pilot. Had the DARE pilot not been able to call upon this, the resources made available for the pilot would have been severely stretched if the quality of learning and professional development had been maintained at a level which the cohort members and their employing Authorities would expect. This point has obvious implications for a national extension of alternative routes provision…". The main difference between the funding for DARE and DARE 2 was that the University and main Local Authority involved shared the costs incurred. The University used left over monies from the DARE funds to cover aspects such as course fees, residential and catering costs, course materials and additional tutoring. The Local Authority for the new DARE 2 participants met the costs of aspects   such   as   the   coaching   and   the   field   assessment   process.

7   Flexible Routes to the SQH: Towards a Single Framework

As with the evaluation of the original DARE pilot, the overall evaluation of the DARE 2 pilot was very positive. Lessons learned from the original pilot served to inform DARE 2. As a consequence, it was an even stronger model for supporting the development needs of aspiring headteachers. The main and final recommendation arising from the DARE 2 evaluation reinforced that of the original DARE pilot evaluation. As such, the parts of this section of the evaluation which are equally relevant to those reported in the evaluation report of the initial DARE pilot, conducted by O'Brien and Sharp (2008: 30-32), are indicated with quotation marks. Where the DARE 2 evaluation goes further, key considerations are discussed at the end of this section.

The table below builds upon that on page 14 of this report, adding a final row to show the relationship between SR, DARE and the national FRH. Although it assumes the programme organization as delivered by the University of Edinburgh it could be amended to fit any other organization.

Programme /Route						National Recognition	National Award	HEI Award
Standard	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5 (double module)	SfH	SQH	PG Diploma
DARE	Course 1	Additional Tutoring and Individual Coaching			Course 5 (double module)	SfH	SQH	PG Certificate
FRH	Coaching and Support							None

Table 2:
SR and DARE Programme Components and associated University Awards

"Clearly, DARE represents an intermediate position between the structured course-based approach represented by SR and the heavily coaching-oriented approach of FRH. DARE aimed to combine these by retaining the start and end points of SR - Course 1 ('The Standard for Headship') and Course 5 ('Leading School Improvement') – and by exploiting the flexibility of the coaching approach to draw on prior experience to demonstrate fulfillment of all parts of the Standard for Headship. The three programmes therefore represent three points on a continuum of decreasing reliance on course-based professional development and increasing emphasis on individual coaching and support.

The premise on which this section of the evaluation is based is that the best approach is to think not of multiple routes but of a single framework within which a diversity of routes can be accommodated but which will provide a way of relating them to each other and of ensuring the parity of endpoints. It can be summed up as an equation:

Learning based on prior experience + further learning on SQH programme = SfH

Since learning based on prior experience varies greatly from one person to another, further

learning on the SQH programme must also vary so as to lead to a consistent endpoint as embodied in the Standard for Headship. To cater for the diversity of prior experiences which a general scheme would be faced, there would for each potential programme member have to be an initial assessment of that prior experience, which would by implication also be an assessment of the learning and development necessary on the SQH programme. Arguably this was not necessary for the FRH pilot since the cohort in that case was selected on the basis of their extensive prior experience and so the selection process itself served, in an informal way, the assessment purpose. The same point could be made to some extent in respect of the DARE cohort. It could not be made in general however and an assessment mechanism would have to be incorporated into the programme design.

Following the initial assessment, a series of decisions would have to be taken for each potential participant about which elements of the SfH have already been achieved, which could best be achieved by coaching and support and which could best be achieved by course-based study. The precise nature of the initial assessment could vary from one SQH programme to another but it would probably be broadly similar to course 1 in the scheme above in which the SfH is introduced and each participant evaluates his/her prior learning and experience against it.

On this basis a personalized learning programme could be negotiated and agreed to allow the participant to make the transition to SfH. Each element of the SfH would be categorized as already achieved and requiring only recognition, achievable by coaching and support but not formal assessment, and requiring course-based study. Diagrammatically, this could be represented as in *Table 3* below.

Table 3:

			Essential element of SfH	Already achieved	Coaching and support	Course based study
	Critical Self		1	X		
The	Evaluation		2		X	
Standard	and					
for $\rightarrow$	Personalised $\rightarrow$		3	X		
Headship	Learning		4			X
	Programme		-		X	
			-	X		

From the point of view of academic certification, the HEI would provide an award (or not, as the case may be) on the basis of the credit gained through course-based study on the basis of the regulations for postgraduate qualifications which are operated for other courses. It seems unlikely at the present time that HEIs would involve themselves in accrediting APEL (ie the non-course based learning). It is outwith the remit of this report to speculate on the identity of the agency or agencies with responsibility for awarding SQH and with ownership of SfH. From the point of view of professional certification however, it would be a precondition that this agency or agencies should have confidence in the two elements on the left of the diagram below since they represent the mechanism whereby the SfH is

maintained across participants and across HEIs.

The above scheme has advantages. It provides a visible rationale through which prior experience is related to future learning to reach a consistent standard. The need for such a rationale can be seen in the comments reported above about the perceptions of some SR participants of the DARE pilot. Partly the concern revolved around inequality of opportunity (ie the non-availability of the DARE option at the appropriate time), an issue which would not arise for generally available CPD opportunities. Part of the tension however stemmed from the fact that the DARE option had fewer course requirements and shorter duration than SR while still meeting the SfH. It was seen as an *easier option* to the same destination. From the point of view of the economic viability of programmes, it may not matter whether these perceptions are valid. The fact that they are held could well be enough to 'undercut' SR and jeopardize its future availability.

The scheme also has disadvantages of course. It assumes that the course-based provision offered by the HEI can be matched to the SfH in such a way as to allow the 'pick-and-mix' personal programmes envisaged to be constructed. The timing of the delivery of the course-based components would probably depend on the accumulation of a sufficiently large group to make it viable to run the course and for some participants this could lead to unevenness of study while the participant waits for the next running of a particular course. It depends on the availability of the necessary coaching expertise."

Whereas with the original DARE pilot, coaching expertise was supplied by the University, for DARE 2, coaching expertise was provided by experienced headteachers within the Local Authority. As previously discussed, significant importance was placed on the choice of coaches to be involved in DARE 2, guided by three key principles. Each coach was required to be an experienced headteacher, to have knowledge of the SQH, and to have coaching training and experience. Each of those prerequisites was thought to have contributed to the success of DARE 2. This carries with it implications for any national roll out of the programme, given that across the 32 Scottish Local Authorities, there is disparity in terms of a history of engagement with SQH and numbers of headteacher SQH graduates, as well as disparity in terms of a history of engagement with coaching CPD and the use of coaching for leadership development. It was the quality of coaching, focused on supporting each participant's professional development towards demonstrating competence in relation to the SfH that was key.

A third DARE pilot could help to test a model to inform a view of whether or not it would be appropriate for the Local Authority to assume part of the tutoring role. In so doing, experienced headteachers could perform a dual role of coach and associate tutor. Training and on-going support for such a role could be provided by the University. Whether or not each of the 32 Local Authorities across Scotland would have the capability to support such involvement could be debated.

Adequate funding for an HEI alternative route programme would need to be assured. Appreciation would be required for the levels of one-to-one tutoring which the DARE 2 (and indeed, the original DARE) participants benefit from. Equally, appreciation would be required with regards to just how costly such provision is. It is estimated that DARE 2, if rolled out, would cost at least as much as the SR programme. In addition, any Local Authority involved would be required to provide the coaching element. As such, in real terms, the DARE model would most likely be more expensive that the SR model. Lack of

sufficient levels of funding at either HEI or Local Authority levels would not ensure a sustainable programme since success of that programme would be dependent on the goodwill of coach and tutor roles.

Fundamentally, a national review of all routes to headship would seem prudent to ensure a cohesive framework of support which encompassed choice, flexibility and rigour. In so doing, decisions about which route would be best to serve an individual participant's developmental needs could be made after the participant had undertaken a critical self-evaluation of their leadership and management experience, and capabilities. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of all routes, they could be integrated into one umbrella progamme. Although within the national consultation process recognition was given to the need to ensure that existing SQH programmes should not be put at risk because of 'alternative routes', the decision of the governing body of the national FRH to include in their pilot all but one of the five Local Authorities of the South Eastern Consortium, immediately impacted on recruitment numbers to the standard route offered by Edinburgh University. Indeed, at a national level, there has not been an increase in numbers of participants being awarded the SfH which would indicate that the existing SQH programmes have indeed been put at risk. The long term viability of University programmes was predicated on sustainable funding. Such funding should ensure equality of access to provision across the 32 Local Authorities which is currently not in place.

Perhaps the final word should be given to the DARE 2 participants, one of whom in calling for a national review, appealed for the development of consensus in relation to:

> *what qualities and skills they wanted headteachers to develop, and build their capacity to do so with appropriate support. (003)*

In summary then, the DARE pilot must be judged to have been a success albeit with a small number of participants. As with the original pilot (O'Brien and Sharp, 2008: 32) it was successful, "in exploring, and showing the potential contribution of, a model of CPD which goes far towards bridging the course-based approach of SR with the coaching-based approach of FRH." The coaching model drawn from in DARE 2 was even more successful than that used in the original DARE pilot. We have learned much in Scotland since 1998 about innovative programmes designed to meet the needs of aspirant headteachers. In the past five years, we have learned a considerable amount about different models of headteacher preparation programmes. What we can be certain about is that this area is filled with complexity and that there are no easy answers. The challenge still facing programme designers and partner employers is to develop a continuum of viable and cohesive CPD provision which provides choice, flexibility and rigour to meet the needs and aspirations of Scotland's educational leaders for the future.

Methodological Appendix: Interview Schedules

This evaluation is based on eight interviews held with four of the five members of the DARE 2 cohort, the Programme Director and Tutor to the participants of the DARE 2 pilot, the three headteacher coaches which included the SQH Co-ordinator of Fife Local Authority.

All eight interviews were conducted by Iain Pritchard to ensure objectivity, as Iain had had no involvement with either of the DARE pilots, previous to conducting the DARE 2 interviews. Although now retired, Iain was previously CPD Coordinator for Fife as well as an SQH Tutor. He is therefore highly regarded in the Local Authority in which four of the five DARE 2 participants and three coaches work. The semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted and digitally recorded. The sound files stored on hard drive at the Centre for Educational Leadership. Interviews were not transcribed but each of the interviewees was provided with a copy of a summary overview of responses which included quotations which were to be used in the report. Permission was given for all responses and quotations used in this report. No undertaking was given to provide copies of the final report to those contributing to it though BERA ethical guidelines state that this is desirable where there are no reasons against it. As such, a copy of the report will be sent to each person interviewed.

Ethical permission for this research was sought and obtained through the usual channels for research at Moray House School of Education. Each quotation contained within the report has been allocated a code in brackets, corresponding to an individual respondent, added by the authors of this report to aid clarity and to economize reporting.

Evaluation of DARE 2 Pilot

Questions for Participants

Self-evaluation Pre-DARE. How would you evaluate your professional experience at the time you decided to undertake the DARE programme? For example, in terms of your 'readiness to participate in DARE [e.g. where you were, how far you'd come, what you had achieved, where you were going, how you saw yourself as a practitioner, a person and a colleague to others?] Had you experience of 360º evaluation pre-Dare?

Deciding to undertake DARE. What were the key factors behind this decision? Was it a decision you made independently, or were you encouraged to make it? If so by whom?
Describe the key aspirations you had at this stage about what participation would achieve for you.

Participating in DARE. Dealing first with Course 1 and then with Course 5, highlight the key learning experiences i.e. how you learned as well as what you learned; what learning you were able to apply at work; how others benefited from your learning?

Review of Courses 1 and 5

Course 1:

How helpful and important was the Course 1 Residential to the way you approached the CSE and PLP?

What do you think was the most significant learning that emerged from the first 360º Evaluation?

How did this impact on your compilation of your Critical Self-Evaluation?

On a 1 – 10 scale, how important would you say the Personal Learning Programme and Learning Log were? Did they support your professional development. If so, in what ways?

Course 5:

How helpful and important were the Course 5 Residential and taught days to the way you managed the Portfolio and Reflective Commentary?

What, if anything, did the second 360º evaluation contribute to your learning and self-awareness? Was there any clear evidence of development linked directly to comments made in the preceding 360º in Course 1?

What do you think the difference would have been had there not been any 360º evaluation in Course 1 and 5?

The Coaching Experience

Did you have previous experience of coaching prior to undertaking the DARE programme?

Were you comfortable and assured when you were briefed regarding what coaching would involve?

What would you say were the most important learning experiences that emerged from being coached?

Would you say that your coach fulfilled the expectations outlined in the Coaching Agreement? In what ways?

How would you describe the relationship which developed between yourself and your coach?

Do you think that the coaching you experienced contributed helpfully to your professional development in relation to the SfH? If so, in what way?

How did you find the frequency of the coaching element of DARE? Who determined how often you met with your coach? Who determined the focus for the coaching sessions?

The Tutoring Experience

Were you always clear about the distinction between coaching and tutoring?

How would you describe the relationship which developed between yourself and your tutor?

What would you say were the most important learning experiences that emerged from being tutored?

Do you think the additional 1:1 tutoring sessions were helpful and necessary? If so, in what ways?

Do you think the additional group tutoring sessions were helpful and necessary? If so, in what ways?

Do you think that the tutoring you experienced contributed helpfully to your professional development in relation to demonstrating having met the SfH? If so, in what way?

How did you find the frequency of the tutoring element of DARE? Who determined how often you met with your tutor? Who determined the focus for the tutoring sessions?

The Peer Group Experience

What was your experience of the peer networking in Course 1?

What was your experience of the peer networking in Course 5?

What was your experience of the peer networking within the DARE group of participants themselves?

Reflections and Conclusions

How have you changed as a result of DARE?

Personally: What did you get from the experience personally? What was the most important learning experience / revelation or aspect of the course? Any *'light-switching on'* experiences?

Professionally: What did you get from the experience professionally? What was the impact, if any, on your school? On pupils? On colleagues? On staff as a whole and in particular? On others?

Advice to others: What advice would you give (a) to a colleague about to undertake the same course of study whom you thought was a trifle lazy, and (b) to a colleague who was able but lacking self-confidence and swithering?

Hindsight: In the light of your own experience, are there any changes you would like to see implemented to DARE? For example, aspects of the course you would delete; something you would insert; something you would change.

Evaluation of DARE 2 Pilot

Questions for Coaches

Training and Preparation for Coaching

What form of training for coaching did you experience prior to your involvement in DARE?

Was the DARE experience of coaching the first time you practised coaching in a sustained way with others?

What specific support about coaching was offered by colleagues responsible for DARE? How helpful was such help and advice?

Was there a relationship maintained between tutor and coaches? If so, what was the nature of that? Why was this deemed to be important? How was the relationship maintained?

How clear were you about the role you were to play as a coach? Were you offered specific advice about the expectations of coaching, what to do and not do? Were you clear and comfortable about the differences between, for example, coaching and mentoring, coaching and tutoring?

The Coaching Experience

Describe in outline how you approached / planned your first meeting with the participant you were to coach. What was your plan – if any – for the meeting in relation to such things as the balance of talk, the leading of discussion, ensuring the participant was comfortable, building a relationship and so on.

Was this first meeting a success from your point of view? What do you think was the most important to emerge from this meeting?

Describe how you think the coaching process developed as DARE unfolded – for example, such things as growing confidence on each side, significant breakthroughs, changes in self-perception by participant, in attitude, in working relationships, in emotional intelligence?
How did you find the frequency of the coaching element of DARE? Who determined how often you met with your participant(s)? Who determined the focus for the coaching sessions?

How would you describe the relationship which developed between yourself and the participant(s) you were coaching?

What, if anything, do you feel the coaching element contributed to participants' development that traditional SQH tutoring would not have achieved? What do you think has been the overall impact of the coaching?

It could be argued that an inordinate, perhaps unrealistic degree of weight has been placed on the potential or capacity of coaching as a medium for effective learning for potential headteachers. What do you feel about the view expressed above? What do you think it is that coaching achieves that couldn't be met by other means?

It could also be argued that there is a significant imbalance between the in-depth academic learning to be derived from the traditional route through SQH (i.e. progression through Courses 1-5) as opposed to the coaching and evidence driven nature of the DARE route through SQH (i.e. progression through Course 1 then Course 5). How do you feel about the view expressed above?

Reflections and Conclusions

In hind sight, what impact did the experience of coaching have on you as a practitioner – what did you learn, what did you become better at, what did you realise you could have done differently? What would you change about your approach if you were doing it again?

What advice would you offer to a colleague embarking on a DARE coaching role for the first time?

What advice would you offer to a participant considering which SQH route to take?

Hindsight: In the light of your own experience, are there any changes you would like to see implemented to DARE? For example, in terms of the preparation for coaches or the coaching role itself.

Evaluation of DARE 2 Pilot

Questions for Programme Director and DARE 2 Tutor

In what ways did the tutoring role differ between the DARE 1 and DARE 2 models?

Why was it deemed necessary to make a clear distinction between the roles of tutor and coach in the DARE 2 model?

Do you think that in practice, that distinction was maintained? If so, was such a distinction beneficial?

Was there a relationship maintained between tutor and coaches? If so, what was the nature of that? Why was this deemed to be important? How was the relationship maintained?

What was the nature of the additional tutoring for the additional 1:1 sessions? What was the nature of the additional tutoring for the additional DARE group sessions? How did participants appear to respond to this tutoring?

How effective do you think the DARE 2 model has been in supporting the professional development of aspiring headteachers?

Hindsight: In the light of your own experience, are there any changes you would like to see implemented to DARE? For example, in terms of the preparation for coaches or the coaching role itself; in the relationship between the roles of coach and tutor; in the structure of the DARE programme; or in the additional tutoring element.