Becoming a Teacher: Student Teachers' Motives and Preconceptions, and Early School-based Experiences During Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

Hobson & Malderez (Eds.), Kerr, Tracey, Pell, Tomlinson & Roper

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Contents

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report presents findings from the first year of the 'Becoming a Teacher' (BaT) research project, a six-year (2003-2009) longitudinal study of teachers' experiences of initial teacher training (ITT) and early professional development in England. One of the key objectives of the research is to examine the extent to which the experiences of people entering the teaching profession via different ITT pathways may vary, and the extent to which such experiences might also be shaped by other factors, including teachers' prior conceptions and expectations of teaching and teacher training.[1]

The findings presented in this report deal with:

(1) why people decide to become teachers and whether this varies between (for example) those who follow different training routes, and those who choose to teach in primary as opposed to secondary schools;

(2) student teachers'[2] decisions to follow different kinds of ITT routes;

(3) trainees' prior beliefs and expectations about teaching and ITT, including their perceptions of what trainees need to learn from ITT, their expectations of the utility of different elements of ITT programmes, and their prior concerns about teaching and ITT;

(4) trainees' initial conceptions and early experiences of 'theory' in ITT; and

(5) their early experiences in school as trainee teachers.

We also identify a number of general themes which cut across many or all of the issues outlined above and appear to be central to the experience of becoming a teacher, regardless of ITT route chosen / followed.

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[1] The initial teacher training (ITT) routes studied in this project are: the university-administered Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE); the Flexible PGCE; the Bachelor of Education (BEd); the Bachelor of Arts/Science with Qualified Teacher Status (BA/BSc QTS); School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programmes; and Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes (GRTP). Further details about the different training routes are provided in Appendix A.

[2] We use the terms 'student teacher', 'trainee' and 'trainee teacher' interchangeably, to refer to those following different kinds of ITT programme. The term 'students' is sometimes used to refer to those following BEd and / or BA/BSc QTS courses.

Research Design

Data were generated via a self-completion questionnaire and in-depth interviews administered to student teachers who in 2003 were beginning one-year ITT programmes, or were beginning the final year of two, three or four year programmes.

The sampling strategy underlying the questionnaire survey was informed by two main concerns. First, we sought to generate a representative sample of student teachers (in England) for each of the ITT routes being studied. Second, we aimed to ensure that a sufficient number of trainees were recruited from among the routes with the fewest training places, in order to enable viable statistical analysis by route up to the end of the project in 2009 (allowing for attrition over a five year period). ITT providers were stratified by route and a random sample of providers within each route was selected. A small number of providers were then purposively selected to boost the numbers of trainees following the smaller routes. A total of 110 providers were approached to participate in the survey, of which 74 took part. Questionnaires were completed by 4,790 trainees. The breakdown by respondents' ITT route is as follows:

- 1,756 university-administered Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
- 1,385 Bachelor of Arts (BA)/Science (BSc) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- 707 Graduate and Registered Training Programme (GRTP) (including SCITT-based GRTP)
- 413 Bachelor of Education (BEd)
- 342 School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) consortia (excluding GRTP)
- 187 Flexible-based PGCE.

As a result of the sampling strategy described above, notably the over-sampling (relative to the proportions in the country at large) of trainees from some of the smaller ITT routes, it should be noted that those findings which report aggregated data (i.e. those relating to *all* trainees in the survey sample) may not be representative of the total population of trainees in England.

Eighty-five case study participants across all ITT routes being studied were recruited from those trainees who indicated, in their questionnaire responses, that they were willing to take part in face-to-face interviews. A breakdown of the case study sample by ITT route and phase (i.e. whether trainees were seeking to teach in primary or secondary schools) is provided below:

Route	No. of primary phase trainees	No. of secondary phase trainees	Total no. of trainees per route
PGCE	7	9	16
Flexible PGCE	7	7	14
BEd	7	2	9
BA/BSc QTS	6	8*	14
SCITT	6	8	14
GTP	6	8	14
RTP	2	2	4
Total by phase	41	44*	85

*This figure includes four trainees following a Key Stage 2/3 ITT programme.

Case study participants were drawn from a total of 19 providers.

Summary of Findings

What attracted trainees to initial teacher training (ITT)?

Survey findings suggest that the three most influential sets of reasons which attracted survey respondents to ITT were related to: (1) being a teacher in today's society (e.g. '*the challenging nature of the job*'); (2) the perceived benefits of teaching and training (e.g. '*long holidays*'); and (3) altruistic motives (e.g. '*helping young people to learn*').

The single item which was said to have '*strongly attracted*' the highest number of survey respondents in our sample (78% of all respondents) was '*helping young people to learn*'.

For some of the considerations which were reported as attracting people into ITT, survey data show that there were significant differences between the responses of: trainees following different training routes; those seeking to teach in primary and

secondary schools; males and females; trainees in different age groups; and those (secondary trainees) following different subject specialisms.[3]

Case study data illustrate clearly how, for many case study participants, the nature of their life experiences, past and present, were influential in making the initial decision to investigate the possibility of training to become teachers.

Some trainees referred both to 'push-factors' (relating to discontent with their previous occupations and circumstances) and a 'self-efficacy-factor', a belief in their ability to be an effective teacher.

Case study data illustrate the complex, personal and situated nature of the reasoning behind trainees' decisions to embark on ITT.

What reservations did trainees have about teaching as a career choice?
Case study and survey data suggest that prior to beginning their ITT programmes trainees were concerned about a range of issues, notably w*orkload, pupil behaviour and behaviour management,* and *teachers' salary*.

Awareness of different ITT routes
Survey respondents were most aware, at the point of application, of the (more traditional) university-administered PGCE and BEd routes

Trainees' awareness of different routes was differentiated by age, and higher proportions of those in particular age groups were aware of those routes which may be considered to be more appropriate for them. For example, higher proportions of those aged 25 or over reported being aware of the employment-based (SCITT and GRTP) and Flexible routes, whilst those under the age of 25 were more likely to indicate that they were aware of the BEd and BA/BSc with QTS routes.

Admittance onto first choice route
Ninety per cent of survey respondents indicated that they were following their preferred ITT route.

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[3] It should be noted that there may be a degree of overlap between these variables.

Influences on trainees' choices of ITT route and provider

For individual trainees a complex interplay of issues impacted on choices of ITT route and provider.

The main considerations influencing trainees' choices of ITT route and provider were: the balance of in-school and out-of-school training; geographical availability; financial viability; the length / duration of the programme; and the reputation of particular ITT providers.

In general, trainees following different ITT routes tended to cite different reasons for their choice of those routes. For example, 81 per cent of GRTP respondents (for whom GRTP was their first choice ITT route) indicated that they chose this route because, amongst other things, they considered it to be '*the best option financially*' (only 50% of PGCE students and 14% of BEd students, for example, gave this response); 66 per cent of SCITT respondents (compared, for example, to 31% of PGCE trainees and 25% of BA/BSc QTS students) said that their choice of route was influenced by a desire '*to be trained by qualified teachers in schools*'; whilst the consideration which was said to have influenced the highest number of university-administered PGCE students was the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training*', with 54 per cent of PGCE survey respondents stating that this influenced their choice of ITT route.

Aspects of ITT trainees were most looking forward to

Trainees indicated that, before starting their ITT programmes, the main things they were looking forward to were: (1) being in classrooms and interacting with pupils (mentioned by 84% of survey respondents); (2) developing an understanding of teaching and learning (73%); and (3) learning to teach their specialist subjects (60%).

Aspects of teacher training survey respondents anticipated would be most important to learn

When asked about a range of different kinds of knowledge and skill that they might learn on ITT programmes, over 70 per cent of survey respondents stated that it was '*very important*' that trainees develop: the ability to bring about pupil learning (91%); the '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (86%); '*knowledge about their*

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teaching subjects' (74%); '*knowledge / understanding of pupil motivation and behaviour*' (73%); and '*knowledge / understanding of how pupils learn*' (71%).

Fewer respondents had considered that it was '*very important*' for them to develop (for example): the '*ability to deal with pastoral issues*' (35%); or '*an awareness of research findings about effective teaching methods*' (23%).

In general, a higher proportion of trainees following employment or school-based ITT routes than those following other training routes indicated that they had a classroom-oriented perspective. For example, 92 per cent of GRTP respondents stated that they thought it was very important to develop an '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*', compared with 84 per cent of those following BEd and BA/BSc QTS programmes.

Trainees' preconceptions about different learning strategies in ITT
Survey respondents indicated that, before beginning their ITT, they expected that the most important strategies in their learning to become teachers would be: '*being observed and given feedback by experienced teachers*' (75% of respondents stated that it was very important that an ITT programme include this); '*watching other teachers teach*' (74%); '*getting assistance with lesson planning*' (71%); and '*being given specific strategies for teaching specific topics*' (66%).

There were some significant differences between trainees following different ITT routes, regarding their preconceptions about the value of different learning strategies in ITT. For example, a higher proportion (59%) of those following the BEd route than those following other routes indicated that they had thought it was very important to '*study ideas about how pupils learn*'.

The extent to which trainees were confident that their chosen route would equip them to be effective teachers
Overall, survey respondents reported high levels of confidence, prior to beginning their ITT, that their chosen route would equip them to be effective teachers. (25% stated that they were very confident and 67% that they were fairly confident). Some route differences were noted when looking at the highest level of reported confidence

(very confident). Notably a higher proportion of trainees following GRTP (38%) and SCITT (31%) programmes than other ITT routes indicated that they were very confident that these programmes would prepare them to become effective teachers. The BEd route had the lowest proportion (17%) of trainees who indicated that they were very confident their route would prepare them to be effective teachers.

Aspects of teacher training causing concern prior to starting training
Both survey and case study data show that the main concerns that trainees reported, about their forthcoming training, were similar to those reservations, reported above, about deciding on teaching as a career. These were: (1) teacher workload; (2) pupil behaviour and classroom management; and (3) whether they would manage financially.

A substantial number of questionnaire respondents also indicated that they had concerns about whether they '*would get sufficient help for teaching*', with GRTP trainees more likely than those on other routes to report this concern.

Case study data suggest that some of the concerns that trainees hold about undertaking teacher training relate to their previous occupational backgrounds. For example, those entering ITT straight from A-level courses, undergraduate courses, or with little break in between to pursue alternative careers, were more likely to report concerns relating to the transition to a professional lifestyle and the responsibilities associated with this.

Meanings attributed by trainees to 'theory'
Case study data reveal that many trainees conceptualise ITT course content in terms of 'theory' and 'practice'.

In general, trainees use the term 'theory' to refer to a broad range of knowledge ranging from the work of child psychologists to knowledge of the national curriculum and guidelines on lesson planning and assessment.

Individual trainees conceptualise 'theory' in different ways, from broad general notions ('if it isn't "practice", it is "theory"'), to more specific references to, for example, research findings about how pupils learn.

No systematic differences in case study participants' conceptions of 'theory' were found between trainees following different ITT routes, or trainees with varying amounts of prior experience in schools.

Identifiable differences in trainees' views related largely to trainees' perceptions of the utility or value of the 'theory' encountered on their ITT programmes.

In general, the extent to which trainees perceived 'theory' to be of value was related to the extent to which they perceived it to have direct links with and implications for classroom (teaching) practice.

Among those trainees who saw 'theory' as useful and relevant to their (classroom) practice, some had *entered* ITT with the belief that 'theory' would help them to understand and develop their in-school experiences, while others had come to see connections between 'theory' and 'practice' *after* they had begun their ITT programmes, notably after gaining some practical experience in schools.

Data suggest that people with more experience in schools as adults (i.e. in addition to that gained as pupils), whether prior to or during their training, were more likely to perceive 'theory' as useful and relevant to and connected with the practice of teaching.

Trainees' early introduction to schools and teaching
Case study data suggest that trainees from different routes experienced broadly similar early introductions to teaching in their teaching placement schools.

When asked about activities they had undertaken during their early in-school experiences, the activities referred to, unprompted, by the highest numbers of case study trainees included: (1) observation (of experienced teachers teaching and of pupils working); (2) working with class teachers to plan and deliver parts of lessons; and (3) being introduced to the school environment and community – e.g. talking to subject co-ordinators, SEN teachers, reading school policies.

Whilst the activities undertaken during early training were similar across ITT routes, data suggest that trainees following different routes tended to have different attitudes towards such activities. For example, trainees on employment-based routes were more likely to report that they had benefited from a gradual lead in to teaching, whilst more trainees from HEI-administered programmes stated that they found a gradual lead in to teaching in the classroom to be monotonous and / or frustrating.

Trainees' early coping strategies

Case study trainees report having adopted a number of 'coping strategies' to help them respond to in-school situations. These relate to: (1) the adoption of a perceived 'appropriate teacher persona' to help them establish effective classroom management; (2) rationalising when things went wrong; (3) an early reliance on plans and paper.

Support from school staff

In-school mentors and the attitudes of staff within their teaching placement schools more generally, were highlighted by our case study trainees as important factors shaping their early experiences. For example, 39 trainees spoke (without prompting) about how their relationships with their in-school mentors had had a positive impact on their early experiences in schools.

Data suggest that mentors who were considered helpful in these early experiences provided a range of forms of assistance including: (1) provision of ideas and techniques for teaching; (2) providing encouragement and boosting trainees' confidence; (3) direct intervention in trainees' relationships with pupils; (4) 'being there'; and (5) allowing trainees to have an input into the kinds of early activities they would be involved in.

A minority of case study trainees (n=13) reported that relations with their mentors and / or other school staff had a negative impact on their early experiences in schools.

Placement schools

Case study data reveal that some trainees (n=9) drew attention (without prompting) to the benefits of undertaking their initial in-school training in schools which are experienced in working with trainee teachers.

Some case study participants reported close links between placement schools and their 'partner' HEIs, and regarded this as beneficial; whilst other trainees reported that they found themselves having to liaise between their placement schools and HEIs, or that HEI support was difficult to access.

Fifteen case study trainees indicated that they felt unwelcome in their placement schools.

Some case study trainees coming from non education related career backgrounds reported difficulties in making the transition into their teaching role, with a minority of trainees making reference to specific features of their teaching placement schools which seemed to compare unfavourably with previous working environments. For example, some suggested that their placement schools had a more hierarchical structure and / or a less collegial ethos than they had experienced in their previous working environments.

General themes and conclusions
Across all of the data and the range of issues discussed above, four key (inter-related) themes appear to be central to the experience of becoming a teacher, regardless of training route followed. These are: *identity, relationships, relevance,* and *emotion.*

Given the necessity of a role-shift from being a non-teacher to being a teacher for the trainees, it is perhaps unsurprising that much of the data reveal tensions and concerns relating to trainees' potential or actual development of a *teacher identity*. For some research participants, becoming a teacher seems to mean actualising an already identified potential, whilst other trainees appear to perceive a necessity, at least initially, to undergo a transformation of self in the endeavour to become, or *change into,* a teacher.

Data show that past, potential or actual *relationships* with a range of people – including children and young people, their (trainees') own teachers (past and present), their peers (fellow trainees), and teacher colleagues in their placement schools – are also central to the becoming a teacher experience. Relationships with (or as) children

or young people, for example, were reported to have had an important influence on many trainees' decisions to become a teacher; potential relationships with pupils represented a cause for concern for many trainees prior to beginning their ITT; and actual relationships with pupils in their placement schools provided the basis for many of the 'highs' and 'lows' experienced by trainees during the early stages of their ITT, as did their relationships with mentors and other teachers.

A third theme which is apparent in much of the data on trainees' prior conceptions and early experiences of ITT concerns the perceived *relevance* of elements of course provision. Many trainees are sceptical of the value of some elements of ITT programmes because they do not recognise their relevance to or implications for their work as teachers. Whilst it does not necessarily follow that such elements do not, in fact, impact on trainees' decision-making, or on their subsequent experience as teachers (since they may do so without trainees' / teachers' conscious awareness), this has implications for the sequencing of ITT course content and the pedagogies used to enable trainees to see the connections between their studies and their life and work as a teacher.

Finally, data indicate that the process of becoming a teacher is a highly *emotional* experience for most trainees. Many trainees use highly emotive language, such as 'excitement', 'love', 'panic', 'shock' and 'overwhelmed', to describe aspects of their early experiences as trainees, and many trainees refer to experiences which have boosted their confidence on the one hand, and undermined their confidence on the other. Implications of these data include the need to continue efforts to provide effective support which helps trainees navigate these emotionally-charged stages. Programme personnel will need to take emotional states into account when assessing trainee needs, and to have devised appropriate strategies for responding to these, not least in working out ways in which trainees' confidence and self-efficacy can be maintained, both for reasons of retention and because confidence supports both conviction and enthusiasm which are necessary for effective teaching (cf. Hay McBer, 2000).

Possible implications of our findings are discussed in the 'Summary and implications' sections of each findings chapter (3-7), and in the 'General Themes and Conclusions'

(Chapter 8). The next stages of the research will explore how some of the issues identified above (and detailed more fully in the following chapters) may relate to and interact with trainees' / teachers' subsequent experiences as trainees and teachers, and with their subsequent decisions about teaching, including whether or not to remain in the profession.

1 Introduction

The last 10-15 years in England have witnessed a number of government-driven changes to initial teacher training (ITT) and the early professional development (EPD) of teachers. One important development is that potential entrants to the profession are being offered an increasingly diverse range of training routes and programmes for achieving Qualified Teacher Status. In addition, other initiatives, such as the introduction of the Career Entry and Development Profile, have sought to encourage closer integration between initial teacher training and the school based induction of newly qualified teachers. Responding to these issues, the Becoming a Teacher (BaT) research project (2003-2009) explores how the experiences of teachers following different routes into the profession compare,[4] how well integrated teachers' ITT, induction and early professional development programmes appear to be in the experiences of beginner teachers, and the extent to which such experiences may be related to retention and early career development.

The design of the Becoming a Teacher project acknowledges that learners view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of knowledge, experience and beliefs (Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997) and that trainees' preconceptions about teaching and teacher training can impact on their experience of ITT, induction and early professional development (Feiman-Nemser *et al*., 1987; Korthagen, 1988; Wubbels, 1992). The study also recognises the changing demographic profile of those entering the teaching profession, with the age of those entering teaching rising (Smithers & Robinson, 2004). Thus, in addition to investigating the extent to which beginner teachers' experiences vary according to the training route followed, and according to whether they are seeking to teach / teaching in primary or secondary schools, the research also explores the extent to which age, gender and the experiences and beliefs people have prior to entering teacher training

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[4] ITT routes studied in this project are: university-administered Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Flexible PGCE, Bachelor of Education (BEd), Bachelor of Arts/Science with Qualified Teacher Status (BA/BSc QTS) programmes; School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) and Graduate and Registered Teacher (GRTP) programmes. Further details about the different training routes are provided in Appendix A.

may shape their subsequent experiences of ITT, induction and early professional development.

Presenting data generated via survey and interview work with trainee teachers early during their final or only year of initial teacher training, this report addresses the following issues:

- why people decide to become teachers and whether this varies between those who follow different training routes (Chapter 3);
- why trainee teachers chose to follow one kind of ITT programme rather than another (Chapter 4);
- trainees' prior expectations of teaching and ITT, including their perceptions of what trainees should learn from ITT and how valuable different aspects of ITT programmes might be, and any concerns that they had prior to beginning their teacher training (Chapter 5);
- trainees' initial conceptions and early experiences of 'theory' in ITT (Chapter 6); and
- trainee teachers' early in-school experiences (Chapter 7).

In addition, in the final chapter we highlight a number of general and recurrent themes which we have found to be central to the experiences of those seeking to embark upon a teaching career.

Before presenting our findings, we first (in Chapter 2) outline the data generation, sampling and analysis techniques employed in the study.

2 Research Design

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter we briefly set out how data were generated and analysed. Below we comment on the:

- research instruments
- sampling strategies
- the characteristics of those trainees taking part in the study
- methods of data analysis.

2.2 Research instruments

The data presented in this report were generated via a self completion questionnaire and in-depth interviews administered to student teachers / trainees who were beginning one-year ITT programmes, or beginning the final year of two, three or four year programmes, in the 2003 academic year. The questionnaire focused on various issues associated with trainees' perceptions of teaching and ITT *prior to starting their training programmes,* and allowed for demographic details about the research participants to be collected. For a sub-sample of questionnaire respondents in-depth face-to-face interviews, employing open-ended questions, were conducted to explore trainees' initial perceptions of teaching and ITT in greater detail. The interviewer sought to elicit, for example: why trainees decided to enter ITT and pursue a teaching career; why they chose to follow certain training routes; and their early experiences of teacher training. Research instruments were informed by a systematic review of the literature in ITT, and administered during the academic year 2003-4 as closely as possible to the beginning of trainees' final or sole year of ITT.

2.3 Sampling strategies and sample characteristics

2.3.1 Questionnaire survey

The sampling strategy underlying the questionnaire survey was informed by two main concerns. Firstly, we sought to generate a representative sample of student teachers

(in England) for each of the ITT routes being studied – namely PGCE, Flexible PGCE, BEd, BA/BSc with QTS, SCITT, and GTP and RTP (GRTP).[5] Secondly, it was hoped to ensure that a sufficient number of trainees were recruited from among the routes with the least training places, in order to enable viable statistical analysis by route up to the end of the project in 2009 (allowing for attrition over a five year period). For this reason, it was necessary to group the employment based GTP and RTP routes together (GRTP) as the small number of RTP trainees nationally meant that a statistically viable sample could not have been generated.

ITT providers were then stratified by route and a random sample of providers within each route was selected. In addition, a small number of providers were purposively selected to boost the numbers of certain types of trainees among the smaller routes. A total of 110 providers were approached to participate in the survey, of which 74 took part. Where possible the self-complete questionnaire was administered face-to-face by a project fieldworker. In some cases, notably in very small ITT providers it was necessary for the survey to be administered postally.

The findings from 4,790 questionnaire responses are reported here. The breakdown of respondents by ITT route, can be found in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Questionnaire respondents' by ITT route

ITT route	Achieved sample	Percentage (%) of achieved sample†
University-administered Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	1,756	37
Bachelor of Arts (BA)/Science (BSc) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	1,385	29
Bachelor of Education (BEd)	413	9
Graduate and Registered Training Programme (GRTP) (including SCITT-based GRTP)	707	16
School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) consortia (excluding GRTP)	342	7
Flexible-based PGCE.	187	4

† Due to rounding totals may not sum to 100.

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[5] For further details about the different routes *see* Appendix A.

As a result of the sampling strategy outlined above, in particular the over-representation of trainees from some of the smaller routes, it should be noted that reporting of aggregated data (for trainees across all routes) is not necessarily representative of the total population of trainees in England. However, comparison with the profile data currently available (i.e. TTA Performance Profile data for 2003) suggests that the achieved sample is representative of trainees by gender and ethnicity within university-administered undergraduate and postgraduate ITT programmes and employment-based routes.

A breakdown of the achieved sample by a number of variables employed in statistical analyses conducted to date (gender, age, phase and subject specialism) and reported in Chapters 3-7, is provided in Tables 2.2-2.5.

Table 2.2 Questionnaire respondents' route and gender

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	Total†
Male	12	15	30	26	30	29	24
Female	89	85	70	74	70	71	76
N=	396	1382	1744	187	340	705	4754

†Totals vary because those who did not indicate their gender were excluded.

Table 2.3 Respondents' ages (at last birthday)

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	Total†
20-24	74	75	50	23	39	11	51
25-29	10	8	25	18	25	32	20
30-34	5	6	9	22	12	19	10
35-39	6	5	7	16	12	13	8
40-44	4	4	6	16	7	15	7
45 or over	2	2	4	6	5	10	4
N=	392	1355	1734	187	340	703	4711

†Totals vary because those who did not indicate their age were excluded.

Table 2.4 The phase[6] of education in which respondents are seeking to teach

| | Per cent (%) | | | | | | |
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	Total†
Primary	97	82	25	56	52	38	53
Secondary	3	18	75	44	49	62	47
N=	384	1291	1656	174	326	661	4492

†Totals vary because those who did not indicate the phase they were seeking to teach were excluded.

Table 2.5 Respondents' subject specialism[7]

Subject	Per cent (%)	N
Arts	12	137
English	10	115
Humanities	15	173
Maths	12	142
MFL	12	146
PE	13	154
Science	13	159
Technology	14	170

N=1,196. Subject is based on the responses of those who indicated they were seeking to teach in secondary schools and who indicated a subject area / specialism.

2.3.2 Case studies

Eighty-five case study participants across all ITT routes being studied were recruited from those trainees who indicated, in their questionnaire responses, both that they

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[6] 'Primary' trainees (N=2,365) include those who expressed in their questionnaire responses that they would prefer to work with primary *or* nursery/foundation children; whilst 'secondary' respondents (N=2,127) include those who indicated a preference for working with secondary *or* sixth form/further education students. Those who stated that they preferred to work with middle school pupils and special school pupils, or who had no preference, were not included in this aspect of the data analysis.

[7] Subject specialisms were grouped into the following: Science (science, biology, chemistry, physics); Arts (art, drama, music, dance); Humanities (classics, geography, history, pastoral, social and health education (PSHE), RE and social sciences (including business studies, economics, sociology, politics and psychology); Technology (Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Design & Technology (D&T)); English; Maths; Modern Foreign Languages (MFL); and Physical Education (PE).

would be willing to take part in face-to-face interviews, and (in order to minimise attrition over the life time of the project) were likely to go into teaching and still be in teaching in five years' time.[8]

Table 2.6 provides a breakdown of the case study sample by ITT route and phase (i.e. whether trainees were seeking to teach in primary or secondary schools). That there is variation in the number of trainees recruited per route reflects, to some degree, the characteristics of the populations following different routes. Most notably, there are very few secondary phase BEd programmes in England, and similarly, very few RTP providers.

<u>Table 2.6</u> Case study participants by phase and route

Route	No. of primary phase trainees	No. of secondary phase trainees	Total no. of trainees per route
PGCE	7	9	16
Flexible PGCE	7	7	14
BEd	7	2	9
BA/BSc QTS	6	8*	14
SCITT	6	8	14
GTP	6	8	14
RTP	2	2	4
Total by phase	41	44*	85

*This figure includes four trainees following a Key Stage 2/3 ITT programme.

The research team sought to recruit trainees from a minimum of two providers for each route / phase combination, in order to take account of variations in ITT provision, across providers, within the same route, when comparing trainees' experiences. This was achieved with the exception of those trainees following RTP and secondary BEd programmes. Case study participants are thus drawn from 19 providers in total. Within this, we also sought to recruit a range of male and female trainees from a variety of age groups and subject specialisms. Further details of the case study sample are provided below in Tables 2.7 – 2.9.

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[8] In order to ensure a minimum number of case study participants for each route, four case study participants were recruited from outside of the survey sample, notably after initial leads from the survey data had been exhausted for the Flexible PGCE route.

Table 2.7 Case study participants by age and route

	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GTP	RTP	Total
20-24	3	10	6	1	7	2	-	29
25-29	1	1	7	3	1	2	1	16
30-34	3	-	-	3	2	3	1	12
35-39	2	2	-	2	-	2	1	9
40-44	-	-	3	3	2	5	-	13
45 or over	-	1	-	2	2	-	1	6
Total	9	14	16	14	14	14	4	85

Table 2.8 Case study participants by gender and route

	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	RTP	Total
Male	2	5	3	1	6	3	0	20
Female	7	9	13	13	8	11	4	65
Total	9	14	16	14	14	14	4	85

Table 2.9 Case study participants by subject

Subject	Number of respondents*
Arts	3
English	4
Humanities	9
Maths	2
MFL	4
PE	4
Science	5
Technology	13

* N = 44. This is the total number of secondary phase case study trainees.

2.4 Data analysis

2.4.1 Questionnaire survey

Questionnaire data were analysed using *SPSS 11.5* and (in the case of the cluster analysis work referred to below) *ClustanGraphics 6.1* software.

Categorical data have been analysed using the standard test of *chi-square* to test for significant differences between different sets of responses, using a probability value of less than or equal to 0.05 to indicate statistical significance (this denoting a 5 per cent chance, or less, of occurring randomly).

Attitudinal data, or data derived from those questions employing a Likert scale, were also analysed using a *General Linear Model*, and *Multivariate Factor Analysis*. The General Linear Model is a variation of the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) technique which permits the significance of multiple factors (both fixed and covariate) to be analysed simultaneously.

Factor analysis allows us to identify whether there are any statistically significant groups of items or single issues, which denote aspects of a common, broader, underlying issue – i.e. a 'factor' which encompasses a range of related individual items. If there are, it suggests that the way a participant responds to one item in the group is highly likely to suggest the way they respond to others in the group, and therefore we can say there is a broad underlying issue.

Some survey data have also been analysed using *Cluster Analysis* and *Discriminant Analysis* techniques. *Cluster analysis* comprises a family of techniques designed to analyse and describe the extent to which sub-sets of individuals in a sample may fall into homogenous groupings with respect to their profiles on a particular set of question responses. Through examining the patterns of responses to a particular set of items, *discriminant analysis* allows us to estimate how accurately we can predict which sub-groups respondents will belong to. (By 'subgroups' here we mean gender, age, ITT route or whether they are seeking to teach in primary or secondary schools.)

Where simple comparisons of data means are required, t tests have been used, subject to the usual parametric test assumptions.

Finally, although our data are non-parametric / ordinal, and some of the statistical techniques referred to above are normally deemed more appropriate for parametric (interval and ratio) data, the size of our sample and the distributions within this make the methods of analysis employed robust. The findings from the parametric tests have

been validated by comparing them with the appropriate, simpler non-parametric tests, and given the nature of the data and techniques used, care has been taken with attributing significance to items with probabilities close to the critical value of 0.05. Graphical representations of the data have been visually inspected to identify common patterns across question items.

2.4.2 Case study analysis

The case study data were initially subjected to a grounded / inductive analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Findings from this informed a subsequent thematic analysis of the data. All transcripts were coded using NVivo software which facilitated comparison between different groups or 'categories' of trainees, including those undertaking different ITT routes. Whether trainees talked about particular issues spontaneously, or as a result of specific prompts from the interviewer, was taken into account during the coding process. In addition, the development of individual 'cases' as a method of analysis has started to take place, particularly with respect to certain themes where the complex interplay of issues was seen to be important (e.g. reasons for deciding to train as a teacher).

During the process of grounded analysis, some interesting contrasts between the views of different case study participants emerged, which appeared to relate, in part, to the occupation / status participants held prior to entering ITT. To investigate this further, we developed three broad categories which reflected the range of previous occupations held by our case study trainees (including that of full-time student), and used these categories as a basis for comparison, in addition to other variables. The three categories are set out below:

1. School support staff. This group includes trainees who have previously worked in schools / nurseries as Teaching Assistants (TAs), Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), nursery nurses, unqualified teachers, and technicians in science and design technology (D&T) subjects. It also includes trainees who have been regular 'parent helpers'.

2. Career changers. This group is made up of trainees who have pursued established careers outside education, for example in industrial, financial and commercial settings.

3. Students / recent graduates. This group includes trainees who have entered ITT from A-levels, or immediately after undergraduate studies, and those who have little alternative career experience as graduates, generally in a range of temporary posts.

A breakdown of the case study sample by route and previous occupation is provided below (Table 2.10)

Table 2.10 Case study trainees' previous occupations by route

Route	School support staff	Career changers	Students
PGCE	3	6	7
Flexible PGCE	4	9	1
BA/BSc QTS	-	4	10
BEd	1	5	3
SCITT	4	5	5
GTP	4	6	4
RTP	4	-	-
N= 85	20	35	30

We now proceed, in Chapters 3-7, to present the main findings which have emerged from our analyses of the questionnaire and case study data. Implications of some of these findings are suggested at the end of each of these chapters.

3 Issues affecting trainees' decisions to undertake initial teacher training and pursue a career in teaching

Hobson, Tracey, Kerr, Malderez & Pell

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores those considerations which influenced student teachers' decisions to undertake ITT. We consider issues which attracted trainees to ITT, as well as those considerations which are said to have acted as deterrents. We explore the extent to which trainees who are following different ITT routes were attracted to training to teach by similar or different considerations. We also explore relationships between trainees' demographic characteristics and the issues they highlight as having affected their decisions to embark upon teacher training.

In the first section of this chapter, questionnaire data are used to:

- provide a broad overview of the issues which have either attracted trainees to, or deterred them from, undertaking ITT

- explore whether trainees following different ITT routes, or with different demographic characteristics, appear to be more attracted to or deterred by different considerations.

In the second section, case study data are then used to:

- present a fuller picture of why individuals have chosen to become teachers

- give some indication of the complex interactions between the different considerations affecting trainees' decisions to enter ITT and teaching

- explore how trainees' experiences of previous occupations may relate to their decisions to become teachers.

The third section, which draws on both survey and case study data, discusses those issues which research participants (who nevertheless chose to enter ITT) considered to be deterrents to undertaking teacher training and highlighted as drawbacks to beginning a career in teaching.

3.2 Issues influencing trainees' decisions to undertake a teacher training programme.

3.2.1 Survey data

The 4,790 survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which a range of items (26 in total), such as '*long holidays*', '*job security*' and '*salary*', may have been influential in attracting them to or deterring them from undertaking a teacher training programme. For each item, respondents were asked to state whether they had been:

- strongly attracted
- moderately attracted
- neither attracted nor deterred
- moderately deterred, or
- strongly deterred,

when weighing up whether or not to undertake a teacher training programme. (Trainees were also able to respond 'don't know' [DK] or 'not applicable' [N/A] to each item.)

The results are listed in Table 3.1, in order of those items which strongly attracted the highest proportions of respondents (across all ITT routes).[9] We see from this that the two items which were cited by the highest percentages of questionnaire respondents were a desire to '*help young people to learn*' and to '*work with children or young people*'. Further analysis of the questionnaire data suggests that these two items also attracted the highest numbers of trainees (and in the same order) for trainees following each of the six ITT routes, for male and for female trainees, and for those seeking to teach in primary schools and those seeking to teach in secondary schools.

It is worth noting that in Table 3.1 the ten items cited by the highest numbers of questionnaire respondents as 'strongly attractive' can all be considered to relate to the nature of teaching and the benefits trainees may see as associated with this – both in terms of teaching providing a stimulating career and opportunities to act altruistically, and in terms of long holidays, job security, and the professional status of teaching.

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[9] Aggregate figures such as these may not be representative of the total trainee population in England due to the relative over-representation, in our sample, of trainees following programmes on the smaller ITT routes (*see* Chapter 2).

Table 3.1 In weighing up whether or not to undertake a teacher training programme, how much, if at all, did the following factors attract or deter you?

	Per cent (%)							
	Str Attr	Mod Attr	Neither	Mod Det	Str Det	DK	N/A	N†
Helping young people to learn	78	20	2	0*	0	0	0	4701
Working with children or young people	59	33	7	1	0	0	1	4694
Being inspired by a good teacher	48	36	12	1	0	1	2	4686
Giving something back to the community	33	46	19	1	0	1	2	4682
The challenging nature of the job	29	48	14	7	1	1	1	4686
Long holidays	26	42	28	1	0	0	3	4686
Staying involved with a subject specialism	25	32	30	2	1	1	10	4670
Job security	24	45	26	2	0	1	3	4681
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience	22	35	31	1	1	2	9	4672
The professional status of teaching	19	44	29	4	1	1	2	4680
Opportunities for career development	19	44	29	2	0	1	4	4675
Fit with family or other commitments	18	24	32	2	1	1	13	4676
Speaking to teachers about the profession	14	42	24	11	3	1	6	4680
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching	11	46	36	1	0	2	4	4656
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	11	32	31	6	4	1	17	4662
One or more of friends is/was a teacher	9	26	19	3	1	0	42	4672
Spending more time in higher education	9	24	42	10	3	1	11	4664
One or both parents is/was a teacher	7	8	9	2	1	0	73	4663
Salary	6	35	35	15	5	1	3	4678
How the public perceives teachers/teaching	6	20	53	12	3	2	4	4667
Media campaigns (e.g. "*Those who can, teach*")	5	27	52	3	2	2	9	4663
Benefits package (e.g. Occupational pension)	5	24	45	3	2	4	19	4664
Teachers' morale	5	22	44	17	5	3	4	4668
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions	3	23	52	1	1	5	16	4623
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession	3	5	14	2	3	1	73	4650
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. *Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory*)	2	6	56	7	4	4	24	4663

† Totals vary as those who did not respond to an individual item have been excluded.
* The figure '0' denotes less than or equal to 0.4 per cent.
A series of single response items. Due to rounding totals may not sum to 100.

It is also interesting to draw attention specifically to the item '*one or both parents is / was a teacher*'. Although this item was applicable to only 27 per cent of those responding to the questionnaire survey, over half of these trainees (56%) reported this as (moderately or strongly) attractive.

A slightly different perspective on these data is provided by the results of a factor analysis. These tests identify whether there are any statistically significant groups of items or 'factors'. Seven main factors were generated and these are listed, together with the individual items that they encompass, in Table 3.2 below. Underlying dimensions are not always found when undertaking factor analysis, and therefore the fact that the analysis of these data revealed seven factors which can be conceptualised is important. These seven factors or underlying dimensions account for over half (54.8%) of the systematic variation in survey participants' responses to the question seeking to elicit motives for entering ITT. In other words just over half of individual differences can be accounted for by seven common attitudinal dimensions.

Whilst the analysis of individual questionnaire items showed that '*helping young people learn*' and '*working with children or young people*' were cited by the highest numbers of respondents as strongly attracting them to ITT, factor analysis suggests that considerations associated with what we have called '*Being a teacher in today's society*' (including the items '*the challenging nature of the job*' and '*the professional status of teaching*') may have been a prime factor underpinning trainees' decisions to undertake teacher training, followed by various benefits associated both with teaching (including '*long holidays*' and '*job security*') and ITT (notably '*financial incentives attached to teacher training*'). 'Factor 5' (in Table 3.2) suggests that some respondents, who had been unable to pursue a course relating to a preferred profession, may nevertheless have possessed a sufficiently attractive model of teachers / teaching to motivate them to embark on an ITT programme, and that such a model may have been influenced by *wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience, media campaigns* and *TV drama programmes depicting the profession*.

Table 3.2 Factor analysis for the entire cohort[*]

Factor	Components	Eigen-value[†]	Percentage of total variance (rotated)[‡]
Factor 1: Being a teacher in today's society	The challenging nature of the job The professional status of teaching How the public perceives teachers/teaching' Teachers morale	4.86	9.9
Factor 2: Benefits of teaching and training	Long holidays Job security Fit with family or other commitments Financial incentives attached to teacher Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach") Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)	2.54	9.7
Factor 3: Altruistic motives	Helping young people to learn Working with children or young people Being inspired by a good teacher Giving something back to the community	1.70	8.9
Factor 4: Financial and future benefits	Opportunities for career development Financial incentives attached to teacher training Salary	1.51	6.9
Factor 5: Models of teachers/teaching	Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach") Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)	1.37	6.8
Factor 6: Other people	One or more of friends is/was a teacher One or both parents is/was a teacher	1.24	6.5
Factor 7: Education-related	Staying involved with a subject specialism Spending more time in higher education	1.04	6.1

* Principle component analysis and Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation rotation method revealed 7 factors with Eigen-values greater than 1. These accounted for 54.8% of the total variance in the data.
† The sum of all the Eigen-values is equal to the sum of all the items, in this case 26. For there to be a meaningful combination of items the Eigen-value must be greater than 1.
‡ 'Rotated' here refers to a procedure by which the axes are rotated orthogonally in order to maximise the differences between items which are or are not significant in any one factor, and thus clarify and check groupings. This will not affect the total variance for factors with an Eigen-value greater than 1, but will reduce the percentage difference between factors, such that the percentage for Factor 1 becomes slightly lower, and for Factor 7 slightly higher than if the axes were not rotated.

What attracted people to teacher training: comparisons by respondents' ITT route, gender, age, phase, and subject specialism

For some of the items which were said to attract people to ITT courses, there were significant differences between the responses of:

- trainees following different training routes

- males and females

- those in different age groups

- those seeking to teach in primary and secondary schools, and

- those (secondary trainees) following different subject specialisms.

It is important to point out that, given the nature of ITT programmes in this country and the demographic profiles of trainees following different routes (e.g. BA/BSc QTS and BEd undergraduate routes largely train people to teach in primary schools, and are populated by higher proportions of younger and female trainees), there is inevitably a good deal of interplay between these variables. This is explored further in the following sections.

Variation by respondents' ITT route

For the twelve items which strongly attracted the highest numbers of respondents in our survey sample, Table 3.3 (below) shows the proportion of respondents from each training route who indicated that they were strongly attracted by each consideration. Variations in the responses of trainees following different ITT routes were most apparent in relation to the following four items:

- '*Wanting to work with children or young people*' – 74 per cent of BEd respondents and 68 per cent of BA/BSc QTS respondents indicated that this consideration strongly attracted them to undertaking ITT, compared to a relatively low 51 per cent of university-administered PGCE trainees and 51 per cent of Flexible PGCE trainees

- '*Staying involved with a subject specialism*' – 35 per cent of university-administered PGCE students stated they were strongly attracted by this item, compared to 14 per cent of BEd and 16 per cent of BA/BSc QTS respondents

- '*Opportunities for career development*' – this was strongly attractive to 24 per cent of university-administered PGCE trainees and GRTP trainees but a relatively low 11 per cent of BEd trainees and 13 per cent of those following

17

BA/BSc QTS and Flexible route programmes

- '*Giving something back to the community*' – 40 per cent of GRTP respondents and 39 per cent of respondents from Flexible route programmes state they were strongly attracted by this consideration, compared to 23 per cent of BA/BSc QTS and BEd students. [10]

Table 3.3 The top 12 items strongly attracting survey respondents following different ITT routes

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	N†
Helping young people to learn	81	77	78	76	79	79	4701
Working with children or young people	74	68	51	51	61	54	4694
Being inspired by a good teacher	45	54	48	35	43	43	4686
Giving something back to the community	23	23	38	39	34	40	4682
The challenging nature of the job	25	27	31	27	28	31	4686
Long holidays	18	24	29	22	25	29	4686
Staying involved with a subject specialism	14	16	35	19	22	26	4670
Job security	17	22	29	19	24	24	4681
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience	28	23	23	20	21	19	4672
The professional status of teaching	19	21	20	13	20	17	4680
Opportunities for career development	11	13	24	13	21	24	4675
Fit with family or other commitments	8	12	17	33	20	30	4676

†Totals vary as those who did not respond to an individual item have been excluded.
Series of single response items. Totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Factor analyses were also conducted on the questionnaire responses of trainees following each of the six training routes. The results of these analyses also suggest that quite different factors influenced trainees following different routes in making their decisions to undertake ITT, and account for up to 95 per cent of the total variation in responses. For example, Factor 1 (that accounting for the greatest proportion of systemic variation in responses) for PGCE trainees was related to

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[10] The differences between the responses of those following different ITT routes proved to be statistically significant (Chi square: $p < 0.01$) in all four cases. In short, statistical analysis suggests that the observed differences between the responses of trainees following different ITT routes were extremely unlikely to have occurred by chance.

'Finance & other benefits' Data from SCITT trainees reveal a Factor 1 encompassing 'altruistic' items such as '*working with children or young people*' and '*wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience*', while for GRTP trainees, the most influential factor encompasses items relating to others' opinions and the status of teaching. Further details of these analyses can be found in Appendix B.

Variation by gender

In examining the items which were said to attract people to or deter them from undertaking ITT, there were a number of (statistically significant) differences between the responses of male and female respondents. In particular, '*helping young people to learn*' and '*working with children or young people*' were relatively more attractive to women than to men:

- eighty-one per cent of female respondents indicated that they were strongly attracted by the idea of '*helping young people to learn*', compared with 69 per cent of men; whilst
- sixty-six per cent of women were strongly attracted to '*working with children or young people*', compared with 38 per cent of men.

On the other hand, a higher proportion of male trainees were attracted by:

- the '*financial incentives attached to teacher training*' (52% stated that they were strongly or moderately attracted by this, compared to 49% of women); and
- the '*benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)*' (36% of male respondents said they were strongly or moderately attracted by this, compared to 26% of women).

Variation by age

'*Helping young people to learn*' followed by '*working with children and young people*' were cited by the highest proportions of respondents in each age category as strongly attracting them to teaching. There were, however, some notable variations in response between different age categories:

- those aged 35-39 and 40-44 were proportionally more likely than any other age group to report that they were strongly attracted to teacher training as it

would '*fit with family or other commitments*' (41% and 35% respectively, compared, for example, with nine per cent of those in the 20-24 age group).[11]

- those in the age range 25-29 were more likely than those in other age groups to state that they were strongly attracted by '*financial incentives attached to teacher training*' (16%. compared, for example, with nine per cent of those in the 20-24 and 40-44 age groups).[12]

Variation by phase of education (primary or secondary)

Some differences in responses were again found between those seeking to teach in the primary phase and those training to teach secondary phase pupils, when indicating which questionnaire items had strongly attracted them to enter ITT. Whilst '*helping young people to learn*' and '*working with children or young people*' were the two considerations which strongly attracted the highest proportions of primary and secondary phase trainees, there were some statistically significant differences in their responses to the following items:

- eighty-two per cent of primary respondents indicated that they were strongly attracted by '*helping young people to learn*', compared to 74 per cent of those seeking to teach in secondary schools
- seventy-two per cent of primary phase trainees stated that they were strongly attracted to '*working with children or young people*', compared to 45 per cent of secondary trainees.

In contrast, higher proportions of secondary than primary trainees were strongly attracted by the '*opportunities for career development*' (23% compared to 15% of primary trainees) and (perhaps unsurprisingly) by '*staying involved with a subject specialism*' (41% compared to 10% of primary trainees).

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[11] The differences between the responses were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

[12] The differences between the responses were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

Variation by subject specialism

The responses of those training to teach secondary phase pupils, were further analysed according to trainees' subject specialism.[13] Across all subject groupings, '*helping young people to learn*' remained the item cited by the highest numbers of trainees as having attracted them to enter ITT. In addition, (statistically significant) differences between those training to teach different subjects were found, as follows:[14]

- higher proportions of respondents training to teach arts subjects cited being strongly attracted to '*staying involved with a subject specialism*' (71%) than those following other disciplines. For example, only 25 per cent of maths trainees stated that this was strongly attractive

- thirty-one per cent of maths respondents reported '*fits with family and other commitments*' as strongly attractive, compared to 10 per cent of PE trainees

- '*collegiality / teamwork aspects of teaching*' was cited as strongly attractive by 25 per cent of MFL respondents, but only 10 per cent of those training to teach secondary science subjects.

Interactions of variables

As suggested above, there is a good deal of interplay between the different variables (including ITT route, gender, age, and phase) that have been shown to relate to trainees' patterns of responses on the question of those issues attracting them to (or deterring them from) ITT. A multivariate analysis was carried out in order to examine which of the different variables appeared to account for the greatest variation in trainees' responses, and to assess the ways in which the different variables interacted. The results are summarised in Table 3.4, which shows, for example, that between route, gender and phase, route had a significant differential effect across the greatest number of items (18/26 as opposed to 11/26 for both gender and phase). In other words trainees' views are more segmented by route than by gender or phase. Age was also found to account for significant levels of systematic variance in 18 of the 26 items. The most common interaction is that between route and phase, which is significant for nine items.

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[13] It should be noted, however, that not all institutions offer the same subject specialisms.
[14] The differences between the responses for each of the listed items were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square: $p \leq 0.001$).

Table 3.4 Multivariate analysis, by route, gender, phase and age

	Main effects			Covariate†		Interaction		
	Route	Gender	Phase	Age	Phase & gender	Gender & route	Phase & route	Phase & gender & route
Helping young people to learn	NS*	0.000	0.000	NS	0.003	NS	NS	0.030
Working with children or young people	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.000	NS	0.041	0.033
Being inspired by a good teacher	0.000	NS	0.021	0.000	NS	NS	0.002	NS
Giving something back to the community	0.000	NS	NS	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
The challenging nature of the job	NS	0.009	NS	0.000	NS	NS	0.022	NS
Long holidays	NS	0.022	0.000	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
Staying involved with a subject specialism	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.001	NS	NS	0.001	NS
Job security	NS	0.007	0.003	0.000	NS	0.028	NS	NS
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience	0.001	NS	NS	0.009	NS	NS	NS	NS
The professional status of teaching	0.001	NS	NS	0.000	NS	NS	0.018	NS
Opportunities for career development	0.000	NS	NS	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
Fit with family or other commitments	0.000	0.004	NS	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
Speaking to teachers about the profession	0.030	NS	NS	0.002	NS	NS	NS	0.023
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching	0.000	NS	0.000	0.036	NS	NS	0.034	0.002
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	0.000	NS	0.000	0.000	NS	NS	0.049	NS

(Continued)

Table 3.4 Multivariate analysis, by route, gender, phase and age (continued)

	Main effects			Covariate		Interaction		
	Route	Gender	Phase	Age	Phase & gender	Gender & route	Phase & route	Phase & gender & route
One of more of friends is/was a teacher	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Spending more time in higher education	0.000	0.000	NS	NS	0.025	0.031	0.010	NS
One or both parents is/was a teacher	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.016	NS	NS	NS
Salary	0.000	NS	0.000	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
How the public perceives teachers/teaching	NS	0.010	NS	0.001	NS	NS	0.045	NS
Media campaigns (e.g. "*Those who can, teach*")	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.021	NS	NS
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)	0.000	0.039	0.001	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Teachers' morale	0.009	0.016	NS	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.029
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. *Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory*)	0.042	NS	0.001	0.000	NS	NS	NS	NS

† Because 'age' is interval data rather than categorical data (such as 'route') this was entered in the analysis as a co-variate in order to maximise sensitivity.
* Not significant i.e. in this case, any apparent differences, between the responses to this item, of trainees following different ITT routes were not found to be statistically significant.

A consideration of individual items reveals that only two of these – '*not being able to get onto a course for a preferred profession*' and '*one or more friends is / was a teacher*' – did not seem to vary significantly according to route, gender, phase or age. Three items, on the other hand, varied significantly across all four variables, route, gender, phase and age: '*working with young people*', '*staying involved with a subject specialism*', and '*benefits package*'.

Attitudes relating to sources of information are particularly significant by route, with adverts, media campaigns, dramas and talking to other teachers all being sources of significant systematic variance. In addition, items relating to the terms and conditions of teaching as a profession differ significantly by route, phase and gender. Finally, attitudes relating to items on the nature of the profession (teachers' morale and public perceptions of teaching) seem significantly different across the genders. These again seem important findings for those involved in advertising and recruitment.

Results of this general linear model analysis also suggest that on many items there are differences between the responses of males and females, and between those of trainees following primary and secondary programmes, *within* ITT routes. This in turn suggests that whilst there is some interaction between the variables, each variable does contribute something to our understanding in its own right. This is further elaborated in Appendix C.

3.2.2 Case study data

In presenting case study data, we now provide a more detailed picture of trainees' reasons for wanting to enter ITT and pursue a teaching career. This will complement and provide further holistic insights into the questionnaire data reported in the first part of this chapter.

Using case study data we explore:
 (i) general reasons why trainees have decided to enter ITT and pursue a teaching career
 (ii) reasons relating to trainees' 'life stages'

(iii)   reasons relating to trainees' previous occupational backgrounds (as set out in the research design chapter).

(i) General reasons for wanting to enter ITT and pursue a teaching career

- **Personal characteristics**

Case study data show us that when making the decision to train as teachers, one of the issues trainees considered was how far they saw themselves as having personal characteristics and skills which made them suited to teaching. This, in turn, reveals much about what trainees prior to embarking on ITT saw as the features of a good teacher. Over half of our case study trainees (n=46) talked about having what they perceived to be 'appropriate' personal characteristics and skills. For example, one SCITT trainee said he thought he was suited to teaching because:

> ... as a person I'm quite outgoing, I'm quite a confident person and I think my communication skills are one of my strengths as are my facilitation and group working skills, and so really, yeah, I thought from quite an early age that I'd be... a candidate who would make a successful teacher. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT secondary, drama)*

Another trainee presented herself as 'suitable teacher material' having been brought up to speak Hindi, Arabic, Urdu and Farsi, in addition to English:

> I have fantastic communication skills. Because I speak different languages I can see things from a different perspective sometimes. Certain people might think that a child doesn't do that properly, but I sometimes see what they're doing because I can see it from here and from here and I can put that across... so I knew I could bring certain things into the teaching profession. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

- **Trainees' own experiences of education**

Trainees' own experiences of education also appeared to do much to influence their decisions to enter teaching. The survey data show that '*wanting to teach pupils better than in my own experience*' was an item that (strongly or moderately) attracted 57 per cent of trainees when deciding to become teachers. The case study data give us some indication of how trainees thought they would be able to offer a better experience, with this relating to the personality traits they identified as making them suited to

teaching. For example, a GTP trainee who described one of his strengths going into teaching as being 'a big kid at heart' explained that if he became a teacher, he would:

> ... try really hard to do things that are entertaining because I know how boring it can be. I hated school. I was expelled from school twice. That might be another reason that I went into teaching, the idea of going back and doing it better. *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

Similarly, the SCITT trainee cited above who spoke several languages, recalled:

> My secondary education was very much 'you will listen to the teacher and you will learn from the teacher'. I don't think that's the case. I think children learn from each other. I'm a facilitator rather than a person who's going to stand up in front of the blackboard six hours a day. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

Conversely, other trainees, who had been inspired by good teachers (n=10), were keen that they should be able to offer pupils similar experiences, and identified aspects of their personalities which would help them to achieve this. For example, a trainee who said she would make a good teacher because 'I've got the ability to be enthusiastic about things', talked about the impact that being inspired by her own teachers had had on her decision to enter ITT:

> It's nice to be part of people's growing up. I look back at my teachers and I still remember the ones that I loved at primary school. I remember the impact they made on my life... I'd like to be able to give that to children, that sort of enjoyment and the amount of pleasure I got out of it... I'd love to think that fifteen years down the line somebody would say that about me. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

- **Prior experience in schools**

In addition to their experience as pupils, some trainees cited prior (work) experience in schools as something which had encouraged them to pursue a teaching career (n=44):

> I did work experience in a school, voluntary, I went in half a day a week and I just loved it so I knew it was the right thing for me really. *(Female, 20-24, BEd, primary)*

I've done lots of voluntary work with children and when I was doing my degree I did a lot of work with children and I did really enjoy it. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

- **Desire to act altruistically**

A further consideration seen strongly in the case study data, was the trainees' desire to act altruistically, and by entering teaching, to '*give something back to the community*' (n=44). Again, trainees' own life stories were integral to this. Below, we give just a brief indication of the range of experiences trainees had had, which had led them to want to give something back to the community:

I feel very strongly, probably from being abroad, that you see children that don't have an education, you see that particularly in America where I was living at the time. The people with money have the right to certain things. The people without didn't. You had a real discrepancy between children who can read and write and those who couldn't. I felt very strongly that children should have the right to education and that if I could be part of that, it would be something very worthwhile. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

This will sound really corny, but I wanted to make a difference. Because I've got two daughters who are very clever, I could see there were children not as well off as mine intellectually and I felt this was a shame and that's why I got involved helping in schools... Initially it was more what I could do for [pupils] rather than what I felt I could give. *(Female, 45 or over, RTP, primary)*

(ii) Reasons for wanting to teach relating to trainees' life stages

When asked why they wanted to become teachers, the sentiment 'I've always wanted to be a teacher' was expressed (unprompted) by many of our case-study trainees (n=38) from across all age groups. The question we consider here is why, if trainees have always wanted to teach, they have entered teacher training at such different ages – ranging from eighteen year old undergraduates, to those who are seeking a new career aged 45 or over. And if trainees have not always wanted to teach, at what stages in their lives, and under what circumstances, have they focused their attentions on teaching as a career?

To consider these questions, firstly we look at some of the general issues relating to trainees' life stages and backgrounds which have influenced their decisions to enter ITT. In this, we are using the term 'life stage' to refer to a wide range of variable markers which may be used to define trainees' circumstances including: marital

status, number of children, whether trainees are graduates, homeowners, and so on. We then consider the views of trainees who have entered ITT from various occupational backgrounds, namely: (i) those who have come straight from A-level or undergraduate courses, and those who have tried to pursue other careers for a short time on graduating; (ii) those who have come from alternative careers outside education; and (iii) those who have held support roles in schools.

- **General issues relating to life stage**

Complementing earlier statistical analysis, case study data allow us to see *how* trainees' decisions to enter teacher training relate to their 'life stages' and the complex interplay of issues surrounding these. Here we identify some general issues including the perception of teaching as a 'family friendly' career, 'trigger causes' such as redundancy or career breaks, and family background, as having influenced trainees' decisions to enter ITT and train as teachers.

The perception of teaching as a 'family friendly' career was seen as an attraction by trainees (n=20), especially those with young families:

> I do have three small children and that did have an impact in my choice because you do sort of imagine that a career in teaching will fit in with family life more conveniently. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)*

> I have children of my own and the school year helps. I'm not going to have to think 'what am I going to do for six weeks in the summer?' I am going to be able to spend time with my own children as well. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

For some trainees there were very clear 'triggers' which had led them to act on their ambitions to teach – trainees who had entered ITT on being made redundant; or who have taken career breaks to look after young children and were now looking to return to work (usually when their children have started school), being prime examples:

> I've worked all my life. I was in banking for over 10 years, then I went into HR [Human Resources] through banking, and got made redundant twice in a year. And I just thought, OK I have always wanted to teach… seeing as I am not working anyway, I may as well go into teaching. So I applied and got accepted and here I am. *(Female, 30-34, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

I hadn't been working for five years, I had two children, twin girls, I'd been thinking about teaching for a long time... I was working at the European Commission, all different places abroad, and when I had this career break I thought right this is going to be a good time to go into teaching as it were and that was really what happened. I thought I'll go for it now. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

It is interesting that in some instances where trainees have come from similar backgrounds, for example, having parents who teach, the differing ways in which they have interpreted their personal circumstances has been a further issue in leading them to pursue a teaching career at different life stages. Of those 19 (case study) trainees who mentioned teaching as a family profession, eleven said that this had been an issue attracting them to teaching, whilst eight had initially resisted pursuing a teaching career. One trainee from the 30-34 age group recalled how having grown up in a teaching family, he had strongly resisted any encouragement to enter teaching at a younger age:

I've grown up around teachers, you know, arguments about Keith Joseph over the Christmas dinner table, that really put me off in those days, but now I've worked for ten years and I've got a different perspective on it. I swore blind I'd never do it but ten years on, your life changes. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

(iii) The views of trainees from different occupational backgrounds

- **Students**

When talking about their decisions to become teachers, those entering ITT straight from A-levels or undergraduate studies, and those who have tried to pursue other careers for a short time on graduating, commonly highlight the professional status of teachers as a key consideration. There is, however, an interesting split between those who have always wanted to teach from a very early age, and those who, having been unable to establish an alternative career on graduating, have seen teaching as a 'fallback' career. We illustrate these issues below:

- *Professional status of teaching:*

  I saw it as like teachers were in their little club and I had a feeling that being a teacher was like a respected profession. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

After getting nowhere [pursuing a career in music for a year after graduating] I was getting really stressed out that I wasn't feeling useful, not having a profession as such, you know, not being in, not belonging in any way. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

- *Early commitment to teaching:*

  Coming from the family that I come from we've got a lot of children around us so I've grown up with lots of children and being the oldest as well helped my brothers and sisters learn. So I've always been being a teacher. It's all I want to do really, just be a teacher... I knew from day one, I had applied for teaching as soon as I left school. I'd always wanted to be a teacher. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

- *Teaching as a fallback plan:*

  I thought after I finish my degree I'll apply for some jobs in advertising and didn't really get anywhere, it's a real tough graduate job so it's very hard and in the end I'd already applied for this [PGCE] as my fallback and so I did this in the end because I couldn't get a job in advertising before I came here. Sounds awful but yeah. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

- **Career Changers**

Those who had pursued alternative careers outside education prior to entering ITT, highlighted the desire to have a stimulating career as a primary reason for pursuing a teaching career (thus presenting the belief that teaching is a stimulating career). Trainees drew attention to what they saw as the benefits of a teaching career, presenting these in juxtaposition with aspects of their previous careers which they had viewed negatively. In addition, trainees identified skills they had developed in their previous careers which they felt would be transferable to a teaching role, and which would allow them to 'bring something to the profession'. We illustrate these issues in turn, and then present a quotation from one trainee, who had previously worked in the travel industry, who referred to a wide range of considerations when explaining his decision to enter ITT:

- *Teaching compared to previous careers:*

  [I visited a school] and the fact my brain was bubbling with ideas of how to cope with things said to me that it would be quite a nice job to do creatively. It would be an outlet for my creative side which IT hasn't given me. *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

I came to a point where scientific research is great but you're always working on short term contracts and there's very little opportunity for career progression so I was looking around for a new career. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)*

- *Transferable skills:*

  For some years I'd been reorganising businesses as a consultant [and when I was thinking about how this might apply to] day to day teaching, managing twenty kids and working out how to cope with classrooms, I just found myself full of ideas of how I would do things and do things differently. I think that was what made me think I would enjoy doing it. It is the human interaction. *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

  I worked abroad in French speaking countries, I speak fluent French and I saw the drive to get primary schools having foreign languages. That was something I really wanted to be a part of. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

- *Combination of issues:*

  It was really contributing rather than just making profits, which was a big factor and I've got three young children so family and work / life balance was a big issue and really that was more important than money... I'd earn a bit less but I'd get a good balance on that. And interest. I was sort of groaning about my old job. It was too easy and a bit boring and I relished the idea of getting my brain going again... So it was interests as well, and stimulation... I couldn't do with just sitting in front of a computer, I needed to be on my feet, moving around, interacting, the whole of stimulation of that really. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

- **Support staff**

There was a strong feeling among those who had held support roles in schools that they wanted to expand upon these roles, and engage with a more challenging career. In addition, more pragmatic considerations came into play, notably the possibility of securing better paid employment in schools. Trainees' family circumstances were also an issue; trainees who had worked in support roles while their own children were young, related their decisions to enter ITT, in part, to their children now being older and less dependent. We illustrate these issues below with a range of quotations:

- *Desire to expand on support roles:*

  When I started working as an assistant with children who didn't really speak English, I would tell them a story or show them pictures in a book to talk about, just to see a spark, and I thought I want the knowledge, I want

something more, I want to be able to give them more. *(Female, 25-29, RTP, primary)*

I know I'm intelligent and I feel I haven't done anything really with my life in those terms although in no way is that saying I haven't been happy with what I've done and there's no way I'd go back and not have the children I've got and so on, but you're aware that there's more inside you and you're not using it and because of [being an LSA] in school, and being very excited by the process of teaching and seeing children learn, I suppose it's a natural thing to do. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

- *Financial considerations:*

I got to the point with being a support assistant that it wasn't enough, it's not very good pay, and I was on the maximum which was £8k and you can't buy a house or get a mortgage on that. *(Female, 30-34, RTP, secondary, ICT)*

- *Family commitments:*

When my first child went to school I did voluntary work at the primary school where she was and I asked the head teacher if there were any jobs that came up would she consider me and there was one almost immediately so I became a teaching assistant and I've done that for ten years waiting really for when I could give the time to train, so I had a feeling I wanted to do it then and as the years have gone on that's been confirmed by working in school as a teaching assistant… now my children are that bit older and the youngest has started school I feel I have the time to train. *(Female, 40-44 PGCE, secondary, history)*

3.3 Deterrents to undertaking ITT programmes and perceived drawbacks to teaching as a career

Whilst all of the research participants in our study had chosen to enter teacher training and were actually embarked on ITT programmes, the survey and case study data provide some useful insights into the considerations which caused them to have some reservations about doing so. These are worth considering because, on the one hand, some of these issues might also have influenced the decisions of some of those who considered and decided against taking up ITT (though this is speculative and would require further research), and on the other hand, the extent to which such considerations were prevalent in the minds of our research participants may relate to subsequent developments relating (for example) to their motivation, retention and early career progression.

3.3.1 Survey data

Of the 26 survey items which may have attracted or deterred trainees, in '*weighing up whether or not to undertake an initial teacher training programme*', six items were each said to have been (strong or moderate) deterrents to undertaking a teacher training programme by over ten per cent of questionnaire respondents. These were:

(1) Teachers' morale (17% moderately deterred, 5% strongly deterred)

(2) Salary (15% moderately deterred, 5% strongly deterred)

(3) How the public perceives teachers / teaching (12% moderately deterred, 3% strongly deterred)

(4) Speaking to teachers about the profession (11% moderately deterred, 3% strongly deterred)

(5) Spending more time in higher education (10% moderately deterred, 3% strongly deterred)

(6) TV drama programmes depicting the profession (*e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory*) (7% moderately deterred, 4% strongly deterred).

It is important to note, however, that in the first five of the six cases listed above, more respondents state that they were attracted by these items than those who state that they were deterred. The only item which was reported to have deterred more respondents than it attracted was '*TV drama programmes depicting the profession*', which attracted a total of eight per cent of respondents (2% strongly attracted, 6% moderately attracted) and deterred a total of 11 per cent, though the majority of respondents (56%) indicated that they were neither attracted nor deterred by this.

3.3.2 Case study data

Trainees were also asked during case study interviews whether, prior to beginning their ITT programmes, they felt that teaching as a career had any drawbacks or whether there were any ways in which teaching might not suit them. The concerns mentioned by the highest number of interviewees were:

- Workload (n=32)
- Pupil behaviour and behaviour management (n=21)
- Teachers' pay (n=16)

- Public perception of teachers (n=9).

We illustrate these concerns below with quotations from trainees following various training routes:

Workload:

> All the teachers [I spoke to] were saying, 'oh dear, we were here [at school] until 7.30pm last night and we still haven't got all our work done. I kept thinking [if I teach] I'm not going to have a life. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

Pupil behaviour:

> A lot of the schools I was in when I was [an unqualified] supply teacher had pretty nasty kids where the teachers were off long term, so there were really negative interactions that you get to see… so I wasn't much interested in that, and how stroppy the kids can sometimes get… that was the main negative. *(Male, 25-29, GTP, secondary, maths)*

Teachers' pay:

> [Becoming a teacher] will effectively mean taking a pay cut for the rest of my life. *(Male, 40-44, SCITT, primary)*

> Real money is something that I know I'm never going to be earning. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

Public perception of teachers:

> I kept it a secret that I was applying to be a teacher for quite a while from my family and friends because I thought they would consider it somehow beneath me. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

> The drawbacks of teaching were always the things in the Press. Everything seemed to be negative in the Press. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, primary)*

Whilst a large proportion of our interviewees identified concerns about or drawbacks associated with teaching as a career, many of these stressed that they had no personal concerns about becoming a teacher, and that the benefits they saw in a teaching career outweighed any drawbacks:

> Actually being a teacher obviously you get the worry, the discipline worries, and the behaviour issues, you know, that's fairly prominent just because of the

stuff in the press and the legal responsibilities you've got, but I'm not worried, [it's] not been a worry for me at all, it didn't put me off in the slightest, I just fancied the challenge. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

I had a mother who was a teacher who had a nervous breakdown. My husband has just come out of teaching because of stress so I was very much aware of those sorts of drawbacks... but despite it all, I still did see teaching as being the right thing for me. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

3.4 Summary and implications
What attracted trainees to ITT

On the question of what attracted trainees to ITT, survey data suggest that the three most influential sets of reasons were related to:

(1) being a teacher in today's society (e.g. 'the challenging nature of the job')

(2) the perceived benefits of teaching and training (e.g. 'long holidays')

(3) altruistic motives (e.g. 'helping young people to learn').

The single item which was said to have 'strongly attracted' the highest number of respondents was '*helping young people to learn*'.

For some of the considerations which were reported as attracting people into ITT, survey data show that there were significant differences between the responses of:

- trainees following different training routes
- those seeking to teach in primary and secondary schools
- males and females
- trainees in different age groups
- those (secondary trainees) following different subject specialisms.

Case study data illustrate that the complex interplay of considerations largely relate to participants' past experiences and present circumstances. These findings illustrate clearly how, for many case study participants, the nature of their experiences, past and present, were influential in making the initial decision to investigate the possibility of training to become teachers. Some trainees thus referred both to 'push-factors' (relating to discontent with their previous occupations and circumstances) and a 'self-efficacy-factor', a belief in an ability to be able to do the job (based on previous

experiences of various kinds), as illustrated by the case of 'Corinne', which was elaborated in an earlier paper (Malderez *et al.*, 2004: 6-11, 19).

The findings suggest that the planned provision of relevant and hopefully positive 'experiences' might be helpful in recruiting applicants. This suggestion is supported by the case study data reported here in which younger participants highlight the positive influence of 'work experience' in schools, undertaken during their own schooling, in making their decision to train as teachers, and some older participants report the positive impact of (for example) being a teaching assistant or parent helper.

Whilst individual survey items and case study data codes reported here provide a range of insights into specific issues, data also illustrate the complex, personal and situated nature of the reasoning behind trainees' decisions to embark on ITT. It is, therefore, the detail in these data which is potentially most useful to those advertising and recruiting to different ITT routes, as well as to those charged with planning the location and nature of ITT provision across the country. ITT programme personnel could also usefully take into account information relevant to their particular route provided in this chapter.

What reservations trainees had about deciding to train as teachers

Findings suggest that prior to beginning their ITT programmes trainees were concerned about a range of issues, including:

- *workload*
- *pupil behaviour and behaviour management*
- *teachers' pay*.

Some of these issues have been / are being addressed in current government initiatives, for example, the signing of *Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement*, in January, 2003.

All of the research participants in our study had chosen to enter teacher training and were actually embarked on ITT programmes, and any reservations they may have had were outweighed by the perceived benefits of entering teaching and teacher training.

It remains to be seen, however, whether any of the reservations that trainees had in mind as they started their training will relate in any way to aspects of their future experiences.

These findings could also interest those seeking to attract more people into the profession as some of these aspects of the profession which were potential deterrents might also have influenced the decisions of potential applicants who considered but decided against taking up ITT (though this is speculative and would require further research).

Finally, course providers might find these findings also useful in informing the implementation and focus of provision.

Having discussed the considerations influential in trainees' decisions to undertake teacher training, we now turn, in Chapter 4, to examine the issues influencing their choice of particular ITT routes.

4 Considerations influencing trainees' choices of initial teacher training route and provider

Tracey, Kerr, Hobson, Malderez, Pell & Roper

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at why respondents chose to undertake a teacher training programme. In this chapter, questionnaire and case study data are used to explore the issues trainees considered when deciding which ITT route and programme of training to undertake. The first part of the chapter presents findings from the self completion questionnaire, and the second part presents findings from face-to-face interviews with case study trainees. Using questionnaire data, we explore:

- the extent to which survey participants were aware of the major routes into teaching
- the extent to which survey participants were following the ITT route that they wanted to follow
- the reasons why some respondents were not following their preferred choice of training route
- the issues trainees reported to have influenced their decision(s) to choose a particular ITT route and a particular ITT provider.

Within this we highlight differences in the responses of trainees, according to a range of variables, including the ITT route being followed, age, gender and the phase of education (primary or secondary) for which trainees are preparing to teach.

Using case-study data, we then:

- provide an overview of the considerations affecting trainees' choices of ITT route
- consider the issues affecting trainees' decisions to follow particular teacher training routes, exploring these on a route by route basis.

4.2 Survey data

4.2.1 Awareness of route

Questionnaire data suggest that, at the time that they first applied to initial teacher training, people were, in general, more aware of some routes than others. Questionnaire respondents were asked which of the six main ITT routes they were aware of when they first applied to train as a teacher. The results are summarised in Table 4.1, which gives the percentage awareness of each training route of all respondents except those following that particular route – thus indicating whether trainees had been aware of other ITT pathways apart from the ones that they were following.

Table 4.1 There are several different routes to becoming a teacher in England. Which, if any, of the following routes into teacher training were you aware of WHEN YOU FIRST APPLIED to train as a teacher?

	Per cent (%)	N*
University-based PGCE	75	3034
BEd	61	4377
BA or BSc with QTS	39	3405
Flexible, university-based PGCE	34	4603
School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)-based Programme	28	4448
Graduate and Registered Training Programme (GRTP)	25	4083

*These totals exclude those trainees who were actually following the specified route.
More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

The data above show that respondents were most aware, at the point of application, of the university-administered PGCE and BEd routes, whilst only around one in four trainees who were not following SCITT or GRTP routes had been aware of these newer, school-centred and employment-based routes. Responses to this question were further analysed by respondents' ages.

Table 4.2 Awareness of routes into ITT, by age

	Age (%)						
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45 or over	N*
BEd	62	59	62	60	65	59	4319
BA/BSc with QTS	43	35	34	37	40	38	3356
University-based PGCE	71	83	77	75	79	76	2977
Flexible university-based PGCE	27	42	41	40	44	44	4524
SCITT	19	34	43	38	39	39	4371
GRTP	14	38	40	39	45	49	4008

*These totals exclude those trainees who were actually following the specified route.
More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

Table 4.2 shows that those aged 25 or over were significantly more likely to report being aware of the employment-based (SCITT and GRTP) and Flexible routes than those under the age of 25, who were more likely to indicate that they were aware of the BEd and BA/BSc with QTS routes.[15] This suggests that trainees were most aware of the options which may be deemed suitable to their circumstances.

Further analyses were undertaken to examine whether there were any significant differences, in relation to trainees' awareness of ITT routes, between males and females and between those seeking to teach in primary and secondary schools. The most notable findings were that:

- Women were more likely to report awareness of the BEd route ($p<0.001$ across all respondents who were not actually following BEd programmes).[16]

- Primary phase trainees were significantly more aware of the BA/BSc with QTS route[17] and secondary phase trainees significantly more aware of the GRTP and Flexible PGCE routes ($p\leq0.002$).[18]

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[15] Statistical analysis shows that for every ITT route except BEd, there are statistically significant differences between the responses of trainees from different age groups (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

[16] It is worth noting that a higher proportion of females than males reported being aware of the BEd route *within* each of the age groups reported in Table 4.2 above, although the differences between the responses of males and females were only statistically significant for those in the 25-29 age group.

[17] This was true for both genders although the differences in the responses of primary and secondary trainees were only statistically significant for the female cohort.

[18] Again, such differences were apparent for both the male and female cohorts.

4.2.2 Sources of information in deciding ITT route and institution

The questionnaire survey asked respondents to identify which of nine sources of information they had used when they were applying for a place on an ITT programme. The responses are summarised in Table 4.3, which shows (for example) that over half of respondents were influenced by discussions with people who were following or who had followed the trainees' preferred programmes, in deciding on their choice of ITT route and institution.

Table 4.3 Which of the following sources of information, if any, did you use when you were deciding on your choice of teacher training route(s) and institutions(s)?

	Per cent (%)
Discussions with people who were doing/had done the programme(s) I was considering	53
UCAS website/directory	46
University/college or other provider prospectuses	45
TTA website	41
Discussions with tutors/teachers working on the programme(s) I was considering	30
University/college or other provider "open days"	29
University/college or other provider websites	25
TTA information line	21
Other course directories or course guides	13

A total of 4,706 respondents indicated that they had consulted at least one of the sources of information listed above. More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

When the data are analysed by route (Table 4.4), however, we see that those following the Flexible PGCE, SCITT and GRTP routes were more likely to indicate that they used the TTA website as a source of information, whilst those on BA/BSc with QTS and BEd programmes were most likely to indicate that they had consulted the UCAS website / directory.

Table 4.4 Sources of information in choosing ITT route and institution, by route

	Bed	BA/BSc with QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP
			Per cent (%)			
Discussions with people who were doing/had done the programme(s) I was considering	48	44	63	41	53	50
UCAS website/directory	68	68	41	35	33	10
University/college or other provider prospectuses	17	19	35	36	25	16
TTA website	9	10	58	56	60	67
Discussions with tutors/teachers working on the programme(s) I was considering	28	27	26	24	31	47
University/college or other provider "open days"	60	55	14	13	12	12
University/college or other provider websites	62	63	42	47	29	15
TTA information line	6	6	26	35	27	42
Other course directories or course guides	15	14	14	14	16	8
N =	394	1368	1729	184	337	694

A total of 4,706 respondents indicated that they had consulted at least one of the sources of information listed above.
More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

It is interesting to see where trainees with particular demographic characteristics obtained information about training routes.[19] Table 4.5 compares the percentage responses to this question across different age categories. It shows, for example, that over half of respondents in all age categories, except those in the 20-24 age group, indicated that they had obtained information from the TTA website. The table also shows that those in the age groups of 35 years or over were more likely than younger

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[19] If certain ITT routes are marketed as being more suited to certain trainee groups (e.g. career changers), then it is useful to know where these sorts of trainees might look for information on teacher training.

respondents to indicate that they had used '*discussions with tutors / teachers working on the programme(s) I was considering*' as a source of information.[20]

Table 4.5 Sources of information in choosing ITT route and institution, by age

	Per cent (%)					
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45 or over
Discussions with people who were doing/had done the programme(s) I was considering	54	56	49	47	46	48
UCAS website/directory	60	35	33	29	23	22
University/college or other provider prospectuses	56	34	34	37	33	25
TTA website	30	57	54	52	51	54
Discussions with tutors/teachers working on the programme(s) I was considering	29	28	29	36	37	34
University/college or other provider "open days"	40	15	15	21	24	24
University/college or other provider websites	26	28	25	20	20	21
TTA information line	10	30	25	38	36	36
Other course directories or course guides	14	14	11	12	13	8
N=	2399	912	456	356	328	197

A total of 4,648 respondents indicated that they had consulted at least one of the sources of information listed above.
More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

4.2.3 Were trainees following their first choice of route?

The questionnaire survey asked trainees whether the training programme they were currently following represented their first choice of training route at the time of their initial application to ITT. Of the trainees who answered the question (N=4,771), 90 per cent stated that they were following their first choice ITT route, while ten per cent indicated that they were not doing so. However, there were (statistically) significant

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[20] The differences between the two sets of responses were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

variations in the responses of trainees following different ITT routes (p<0.001). From Table 4.6 we can see that the most marked contrasts appear between the Flexible PGCE and SCITT programmes on the one hand, and the undergraduate HEI-based programmes on the other. Ninety-five per cent of BEd and BA/BSc QTS trainees indicated that they were following their first choice route, compared with around three-quarters of those following SCITT-based programmes and Flexible PGCE courses. This might be explained, to some extent at least, by the availability of a more limited range of ITT routes for undergraduate entrants.

Table 4.6   Percentage of trainees following their first choice route, by training route

	Per cent (%)	N
BEd	95	397
BA/BSc QTS	95	1384
University-administered PGCE	92	1754
GRTP	82	187
Flexible PGCE	77	342
SCITT	76	707

A total of 4,771 respondents answered this question.

Data analysis also reveals that there were significant differences in responses to this question between trainees from different age groups (Table 4.7). Those aged 20-24 years old were most likely to state that they were following their first choice of training route, whereas those aged 40 or over were least likely to state that they were doing so.[21] This raises the question of which routes older respondents first applied for, and if these were the routes with the fewest available places? Further research might usefully discover this.

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[21] The differences between responses were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square: p < 0.001).

Table 4.7 Percentage of trainees following their first choice route, by age

	Per cent (%)	N
20-24	93	2421
25-29	87	928
30-34	86	467
35-39	88	363
40-44	83	332
45 or over	84	199

A total of 4,710 respondents indicated their age and answered this question.

Data analysis showed that responses to this question did not vary significantly according to participants' gender, or to the phase (primary or secondary) which trainees were seeking to teach.

Those questionnaire respondents who indicated that they were not following their first choice training route were asked which of eight reasons may have contributed to this. The responses are summarized in Table 4.8, which shows that just under a quarter of this group indicated that they had one or more applications to their first choice route rejected, whilst just under one-fifth stated that the programme(s) they applied to were over-subscribed.

Table 4.8 Why are you NOT doing your first choice of teacher training route?

	Per cent (%)
My application was rejected	23
The programme(s) I applied to was/were over-subscribed	19
I applied too late	14
I did not achieve the standard of qualifications required	12
It wasn't available in my local area	12
It wasn't available at the school/institution I wanted to attend	11
It wasn't financially viable	9
I could not get the funding required	4

A total of 458 respondents selected at least one of the reasons listed.
More than one response could be given so figures do not sum to 100.

4.2.4 Issues influencing trainees' choice of ITT route

Those questionnaire respondents who indicated that they *were* following their first choice ITT route were asked which of 11 issues may have contributed to their choice of route. The results are presented in Table 4.9. We can see from the final column of Table 4.9 that almost half (46%) of these respondents (across all routes) stated that the balance of in-school and out-of-school training was an influential issue in their choice of route, which is interesting given that this (differing balance) is one of the distinguishing features of the different ITT pathways. Four other considerations were each said to have been influential by over a third of respondents: financial considerations; a desire to be trained by teachers in schools; a belief that prospective employers may prefer graduates from their chosen route; and a wish to train alongside their peers or people in the same situation as themselves.

Table 4.9 Why did you choose this particular teacher training route?

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	**BA/BSc QTS**	**PGCE**	**Flexible PGCE**	**SCITT**	**GRTP**	**All trainees**
The balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me	45	44	54	28	56	37	46
I thought it was the best option financially	14	16	50	43	27	81	39
I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools	27	25	31	16	66	65	35
I thought that prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route	59	45	26	12	34	23	34
I wanted to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me	33	31	43	22	29	19	34
It was available in my local area	22	25	33	25	57	42	32
It was available at the school/institution that I wanted to attend	26	30	22	17	20	32	26
I wanted to get a broader qualification before specializing in teaching	19	16	27	9	12	5	18
It was entirely school-based rather than based in a university	1	1	2	6	38	62	12
The flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments	4	7	5	67	13	22	10
It was the only option open to me	9	11	6	10	6	10	9
N =	375	1300	1603	144	259	576	4257

A total of 4,257 respondents selected at least one item. Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

The considerations which influenced trainees' choice of ITT route tended to vary depending on the particular route that respondents were following. In fact, statistical analysis reveals that on every item listed in Table 4.9 there were statistically significant differences (p<0.01) between the responses of those following different ITT routes.[22]

The items which were mentioned by the highest numbers of survey participants within each training route are outlined below:

- The most frequently stated considerations which were said to influence *university-administered PGCE* students' choice of ITT route were the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training*' – 54 per cent of PGCE respondents (for whom this was their first choice route) indicated that this item influenced their choice of route; financial considerations (50%); and a preference for training alongside their peer group or people in the 'same situation' as themselves (43%)

- *Flexible PGCE* trainees were, perhaps unsurprisingly, most likely to state that '*the flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments*' (67%), followed by '*it was the best option financially*' (43%), and by '*the balance of in-school and out-of-school training*' (28%)

- Eighty-one per cent of *GRTP* respondents stated that they chose this route because '*it was the best option financially*', whilst 65 per cent stated that their choice was influenced by a preference for wanting '*to be trained by qualified teachers in schools*', 62 per cent by the 'school-based' rather than university-based nature of the course, and 42 per cent by the availability of a GRTP programme in their local area

- Those survey respondents following S*CITT*-based programmes were most likely to refer to a preference to be '*trained by qualified teachers in schools*'

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[22] Statistical analysis reveals that there are also significant differences in the responses to some of these questions according to gender, age and phase of education (primary/secondary), but analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that ITT route accounts for the greatest systematic variance. Whilst the use of ANOVA (designed for use with parametric data) may be justified given the size of the sample and the fact that the requirements of normality and independence have not been violated, the less sensitive non-parametric tests confirm these findings.

(66%), the availability of a programme in their local area (57%), and the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training*' (56%)

- The item cited most frequently by both *BEd* and *BA/BSc* with *QTS* trainees as a reason for choosing these types of ITT programmes was the belief that '*prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route*' (59% of BEd and 45% of BA/BSc QTS respondents). The next most frequently mentioned considerations for these respondents were '*the balance between in-school and out-of-school training*' (45% of BEd, 44% of BA/BSc with QTS) and wanting to train alongside people in their peer group or 'in the same situation' as themselves (33% BEd, 31% BA/BSc with QTS).

Data were further analysed to explore whether there were any apparent variations by gender and age and the results are given in Tables 4.10-4.11 below.

Table 4.10 Issues influencing choice of ITT route, by gender

	Per cent (%)	
	Male	**Female**
The balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me	41	48
I thought it was the best option financially	47	36
I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools	40	34
I thought that prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route	30	35
I wanted to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me	31	35
It was available in my local area	36	32
It was available at the school/institution that I wanted to attend	24	26
I wanted to get a broader qualification before specializing in teaching	16	19
It was entirely school-based rather than based in a university	14	11
The flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments	10	10
It was the only option open to me	7	9
N =	1001	3242

A total of 4,243 respondents indicated their gender and selected at least one item from the list above. Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

From Table 4.10 we can see that, in stating what issues influenced their choice of ITT route:

- Male respondents were most likely to state that '*I thought it was the best option financially*' (47%), '*the balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me*' (41%) and '*I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools*' (40%)

- A higher proportion of female respondents (48%) stated that '*the balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me*' than male trainees, whilst a lower proportion (36%) stated that '*it was the best option financially*'. The next most frequently cited items (by female respondents) were '*I thought that prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route*' and '*I wanted to train alongside people in my peer group / in the same situation as me*' (35% each item).

The biggest difference (which was also statistically significant) between the responses of male and female respondents to the items set out in Table 4.10, relates to the influence of financial considerations. This may be explained to some extent by the fact that a higher proportion of female respondents were following undergraduate routes, which do not have the same financial incentives attached to them. More generally, when male and female trainees' responses to this question are analysed within particular ITT routes, the differences between the sexes are much less marked.

From Table 4.11 we can see that there were some interesting differences in the responses to this question between trainees in different age groups. For example:

- Respondents in the 20-24 age group were more likely than those from any other age categories to state that they were influenced by the thought that '*prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route*' (41%) and by a preference to '*to train alongside people in my peer group / in the same situation as me*' (37%)

- Fifty-two percent of those aged 45 or over, and 49 per cent of those aged 40-44 indicated that the availability of a programme in their local area had

influenced their choice of ITT route, compared to just 25 per cent of 20-24 year-olds.

Table 4.11 Issues influencing trainees' choice of ITT route, by age

| | Per cent (%) | | | | | |
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45 or over
The balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me	48	47	43	41	41	46
I thought it was the best option financially	30	53	49	43	45	52
I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools	30	40	41	41	40	46
I thought that prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route	41	28	24	30	24	26
I wanted to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me	37	33	28	30	26	30
It was available in my local area	25	36	42	44	49	52
It was available at the school/institution that I wanted to attend	26	24	25	24	25	32
I wanted to get a broader qualification before specializing in teaching	24	13	12	10	12	16
It was entirely school-based rather than based in a university	5	17	20	21	22	30
The flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments	5	10	20	25	24	21
It was the only option open to me	6	10	11	13	14	13
N =	2244	803	398	316	275	168

A total of 4,204 respondents indicated their age and selected at least one item, from the list above. Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

4.2.5 Issues affecting choice of training provider

In addition to issues affecting their choice of training *route*, respondents to the questionnaire survey were also asked about their reasons for choosing their particular training *provider*. They were asked to indicate which of 12 different items (if any) had influenced their choice. The results are summarised in Table 4.12, which shows that over three-quarters (78%) of respondents cited the geographical location of the provider and three in five respondents cited the reputation of the provider.

<u>Table 4.12</u> What were your reasons for choosing this particular training provider (e.g. university, school) to undertake your teacher training programme?

	Per cent (%)
Geographical location of institution/school	78
Reputation of institution/programme	60
I live in the local area/I could stay at home	48
Good standard of schools in the local area	25
My partner lives/works/studies/trains in the area	14
I had previous experience of/in the school/institution	14
I know other people doing the programme	13
Reputation of particular trainers working on the programme	13
I know other people training at this school/institution	12
I had no other options available	9
I studied an undergraduate degree at this institution	8
I could not get onto the programme that I wanted to do	8

A total of 4,723 respondents selected at least one item from the list above.
Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

Respondents were also asked to state which of the various items listed in Table 4.12 they felt was the *single* most important consideration in their decision-making process. The results are summarised in Table 4.13, which shows that the highest number of respondents (32%) stated that the most important single consideration overall was the reputation of the institution / programme, whilst a quarter of respondents indicated that the geographical location of the institution / school was the single most important consideration.[23] From Tables 4.12 and 4.13 we can also see that almost half of respondents (48%) indicated that living 'in the local area' or having the opportunity to stay at home influenced their choice of provider, with one in five stating that this was the most important of the various considerations listed. We have seen that, for large numbers of trainees, geographical issues were influential in their choice of ITT route and training provider.

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[23] It is also interesting to note that over 22 per cent of respondents from *each ITT route* cited geographical location as the most important consideration influencing their choice of training provider, with flexible route trainees most likely to give this response (30%).

Table 4.13 Which would you say was the ONE MOST IMPORTANT reason?

	Per cent (%)
Reputation of institution/programme	32
Geographical/location of institution/school	25
I live in the local area/I could stay at home	20
I had previous experience of/in the school/institution	4
I had no other options available	4
Good standard of schools in the local area	2
My partner lives/works/studies/trains in the area	2
I studied an undergraduate degree at this institution	2
I could not get onto the programme that I wanted to do	2
I know other people doing the programme	1
Reputation of particular trainers working on the programme	1
I know other people training at this school/institution	1

N=4,472. A single response item.

Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

4.3 Case study data

In the case study interviews trainees were given the opportunity to talk freely about how they had come to be following the particular ITT route / programme that they were undertaking. In some instances, the issues they talked about as having influenced their choice of route, both support and explicate the questionnaire responses that were discussed above. For example, as well as reinforcing questionnaire data which suggested that the balance of elements within an ITT route / programme was an important consideration in trainees' decisions, case study data allow us to see what sorts of elements, and in what combinations, trainees were looking for when choosing an ITT route. In addition, trainees talked about issues which were not covered on the questionnaire. For example, case study data reveal that the length and duration of training programmes was an important consideration for many case study participants.

With these issues in mind, we firstly provide an overview of the considerations which were mentioned, without specific prompting, by the highest numbers of case study trainees, and indicate where case study and questionnaire data support each other, or show differences in response. We then move on to look at whether different ITT routes were considered to be attractive for different reasons. Within this, we consider

trainees' reasons for pursuing a certain ITT route in the context of their personal circumstances and life stages.

4.3.1 An overview of issues affecting trainees' choice of ITT route

During case study interviews, the most common reasons given by trainees for following a particular training route were:

1. The balance of elements within the programme (n=43)
2. The length / duration of the programme (n=40)
3. Financial considerations (n=34)
4. Their life stage (n=21)
5. The fit with other commitments (n=20)
6. Their prior qualifications (n=19)
7. Geographical location (n=16)

If we compare this list with our questionnaire findings, we see that the balance of elements within ITT programmes, financial considerations and the availability of ITT programmes in applicants' localities, feature strongly in both questionnaire and case study data. It is important to note that course duration, an issue questionnaire respondents were not asked about in this context, was reported to be a strong influence on case study trainees' decisions to pursue particular training routes (n=40). With regard to this, trainees offered contrasting views about how long programmes of initial teacher training should take, with this doing much to determine the range of routes they were willing to consider following:

> [I chose] PGCE because it was the easiest and quickest way to do the one year, basically a conversion degree. *(Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary)*

> I want to be as good a teacher as I [can], and as I'm doing it because I want to be a good teacher... you've got to do the four year one to do it properly. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, KS 2/3, PE)*

In addition to highlighting individual considerations, such as course duration or locality, the case study data also show the complex interplay of considerations which have helped to determine trainees' choices of route. For example, when asked how he came to be following a particular ITT programme, one trainee explained:

I wanted to go back to... where I did my degree but I couldn't afford it really so this was second best... It would have been a PGCE but I've done a SCITT because of the locality and finance [i.e. the programme is based close to the trainee's family home, allowing him to live with his parents while training]... GTP would have been my first option but I couldn't do it because of my age. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, PE)*

Having provided this broad overview of considerations, we turn now to look at the issues which have attracted trainees to particular training routes on a route by route basis, and relate these to trainees' life stages and personal circumstances.

4.3.2 Issues influencing trainees' decisions to follow particular teacher training routes

Full-time, HEI-based PGCE programmes

Of the sixteen university-administered PGCE trainees who took part in case study interviews, financial considerations and programme length / duration were each mentioned by seven trainees, with geographical location being mentioned by six trainees. When talking about why they had chosen the PGCE route, these issues were presented by trainees as strongly interrelated. For example, one trainee who had given up his job to train, linked course duration both to his age and to financial considerations:

I am not exactly super-old but I am coming up to thirty. I didn't want to be, I didn't want three years of my life studying, it would have been too long. I am used to having a wage and a life style. *(Male, 25-29, PGCE, secondary, MFL)*

PGCE trainees from different occupational backgrounds made similar links. For example, one trainee who had entered ITT on graduating from her BA degree, explained:

I was sick of being skint and I'd had enough and the main thing which made me wonder whether to do it was because I didn't want to do another year at university but in the end... I mean the £6,000 grant helps because obviously I've been skint since I was 18 and that's never nice. But that helps a little bit and I'm managing to save some for a deposit on a house out of that and I'm lucky that I'm in a position to be able to do that really [because] I could do [the PGCE] at home [living with parents]. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

The balance of elements offered by PGCE programmes was also attractive to many trainees choosing to follow this route. Trainees spoke about the perceived benefits of receiving substantial periods of HEI-based training prior to training in schools:

> Partly I chose PGCE because my subject knowledge wasn't brilliant, having missed out on English A-level, which is obviously quite key for teaching [Key Stage 3/4 English], I was concerned about that, and having sorts of gaps...I felt that I couldn't go into a secondary classroom having no experience of how to establish and maintain discipline, of classroom teaching, subject knowledge. Really, I felt that would be foolish in a way... [If I went straight] into a classroom and I was having to worry about discipline, how would I get classroom teaching and subject knowledge organised? *(Female, 25-29, PGCE, secondary, English)*

Flexible PGCE

Within the Flexible PGCE case study cohort, we can identify two groups of trainees: (i) those who have chosen to follow a flexible programme because it can be completed over a maximum of five academic years; and (ii) those who treat the Flexible PGCE programme as a full-time, one year course. The first group make up the majority (n=11), and talked about how a Flexible route fits their commitments, with these being related to considerations regarding finance, geographical location, and trainees' life stages. By contrast, a minority, all from the same institution (n=3), reported 'availability' as the central reason for choosing a Flexible PGCE programme. These trainees wanted to follow full time PGCE programmes but were not awarded places, and had reasoned that a Flexible programme, completed over the minimum time of one year, was, in effect, a full time PGCE.

Thus, while some trainees have viewed the Flexible PGCE as a substitute for a one year programme, others have chosen to pursue it precisely because it is flexible. It is interesting to note though, that both groups share some common concerns. For example, both groups sought to minimise disruption to their family lives, with some seeking to achieve this through completing training in as short a period as possible, and others through taking breaks in their training. Quotations illustrating the two stances found within the Flexible PGCE case study cohort, are set out below:

- *Trainees who see the Flexible PGCE as akin to a full time PGCE:*

  I applied to do the full-time course but they didn't have any more spaces... so [the course leader said] if I don't want to have a break or whatever, it is possible for me to finish [the flexible programme] within a year. So I thought 'okay, yes, if it's not going to make any difference, I can still finish within a year.' The possibility is there if I need time to look after my children but I don't plan to use it. *(Female, 30-34, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

  Why the flexible course? There weren't any spaces on the full time one. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

- *Trainees seeking flexibility in their training route:*

  I thought I could do [the Flexible PGCE] while I was still working and earning a living... my husband wasn't on a great wage at the time and I just thought, I'm going to have to earn some money alongside doing this course. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

  Having a daughter who does have some special needs... it is quite hard to do anything full time so I chose the Flexible PGCE. *(Female, 35-39, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

  You can take out a term and come and you can come back and finish off that particular term with another group of students. That flexibility, especially with people like me, I have got young children you know. That gives me a huge breathing space, that I don't have to restart the whole academic year, but just do one more term, so that was the big plus point actually. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

Undergraduate routes (BEd and BA/BSc with QTS)

Those following undergraduate routes were doing so in order to gain a Bachelors degree in addition to QTS. Trainees enrolled on these routes fall into two distinct groups in terms of life stage, with some trainees coming straight from completing their A-levels, while others have been out of full time education for a number of years and have pursued alternative careers. In both instances, trainees want to follow what is, effectively, a vocational degree programme which will enable them to enter teaching on graduation.

Where we do see differences in the trainees' views, is with regard to programme duration. We have already seen (in Section 4.3.1 above) the view that it is necessary to follow a four year undergraduate programme in order to 'do it properly' *(Male, 20-*

24, BA QTS, KS 2/3, PE). Other trainees had chosen to pursue undergraduate routes because, in some instances, they would allow people to qualify more quickly than is possible when following a three year degree course with an additional year's ITT. This reflects the range of undergraduate programmes now available, with some institutions offering two year programmes for candidates with HNDs or other degree-level equivalent qualifications, and others offering three or four year courses. Some excerpts from case study interviews, relating to course duration and trainees' desire to follow a vocational degree programme, are set out below:

- *Desire to follow a vocational degree programme:*

  I knew that when I came to university I wanted to do a degree where I'd have a job at the end of it, not just a general degree because I'm one of those people who I don't think would get motivated to do something after their degree. I wanted to have a degree so I'd have a job, I'd be trained in a profession at the end of it. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, KS 2/3, French)*

  Personally I would class a professional as someone who's training in their field, you know, done a degree or equivalent in their field and is an expert really in what they do, for parents to feel confident that [teachers] make informed decisions about children's education. *(Male, 35-39, BEd, primary)*

- *Course duration:*

  It was just a case of either do a normal English degree and then do a PGCE afterwards but that was an extra year on top, but that year I'd be getting about £6,000, whereas I could do this [three year BA QTS English course] and then I would be on £18,500, in the same year. So financially it was better in the long run. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, English)*

  I did the four year course... I didn't do a degree and then a PGCE because my specialism's RE and I didn't feel I wanted it wholly RE, I wanted both, and I didn't want to have to do everything in a year because I don't see, personally I don't think I would have been able to do it properly if I'd done three years of RE and then a teaching course, so I wanted to incorporate the two together. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, KS 2/3, RE)*

A further issue raised by one trainee, who used to be a salesman, was the limited availability of the RTP training route – this being the only other route which allows trainees to gain an undergraduate degree alongside QTS:

I also looked into the workplace option and all the publicity says you can do the workplace option even if you don't have a degree. In practice, everyone I spoke to, universities, head teachers, I spoke to a lot of people... they all said 'forget it... it's just not going to happen because you need to get a school to employ you' and I didn't have the experience. If I had been a classroom assistant for ten years and had been working at that level then maybe someone would take you on, but it ain't going to happen with my background. *(Male, 35-39, BEd, primary)*

RTP

Of the four RTP trainees interviewed, all highlighted the dual nature of the programme, the fact that it allowed them to complete an undergraduate degree at the same time as achieving QTS, as a primary consideration influencing their choice of route. This, in turn, was linked by the trainees to financial considerations (the need to earn while training), course duration, and the opportunities allowed by the RTP route for trainees to build on their prior professional experience in schools. Drawing together a number of these points, one RTP trainee commented:

If I'd gone in and done a BEd that would have taken me four years to do. It wasn't really practical, the practical thing for me was a school based route and because I only had the HND. If the school hadn't accepted me, then I would probably have had to do my degree in a year and then gone and done the PGCE and again it wasn't practical to do it that way so I was lucky that I got a school that accepted me for an RTP. So basically [I am doing it] for practical reasons and financial reasons. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

GTP

Financial considerations and the balance of elements offered, were the two reasons for following a GTP programme mentioned by most of the GTP case study interviewees. As with the other routes, trainees' life stages and prior experiences appear influential in their decision to follow the GTP route. In particular, trainees who had held support roles in schools presented the GTP as allowing them to build on their experiences in schools; while trainees from alternative career backgrounds highlighted the ability to maintain a professional persona as an important consideration. The possibility of being employed, on gaining QTS, by the schools in which trainees had trained, was also highlighted as a potential benefit of the GTP route. We illustrate these issues below with quotations from GTP case study trainees:

- *Financial considerations*

  I had been working as a classroom assistant and I'd always had a minimal wage because they get paid buttons, literally buttons, it's about £5 an hour which was ridiculous which was one of the things that pulled me to move on and then it was a case of ... [if] I'm on a training grant, it's more than I was earning as a classroom assistant, so I'm one of the few who got a wage rise through the GTP course. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

  Finance is a major issue for me because I already have my student loans and I didn't want to go down that route again... This is perfect really because it gives you that financial support but also you've only got a year and then hopefully you can look at getting a permanent job. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

- *Balance of elements*

  I finished my degree and then the thought of going back... wasn't really very appealing... The good thing about [the GTP was] I was looking forward to not having massive big assignments which I know you have on a PGCE. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

  Getting your hands dirty at the same time as learning that's why [I chose GTP]. I mean it's the tangible feel of actually feeling and doing at the same time. That's not to rubbish the theoretical approach but having already done some elements of the job, the teaching, albeit in a different context for seven years [as an unqualified teacher and a private music teacher] it wasn't totally new. If I hadn't have done some beforehand, I think I would have been less confident about the GTP. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, secondary, MFL)*

- *GTP as suited to career changers*

  I thought actually, at my stage in life, I don't really want to become a full time student. PGCE is not so practical. GTP is much better for a career changer like myself in that you get a small income to tide yourself through the year which I thought I could realistically subsidise for a year... Because we're in a school, I can get a lot out of that environment because I've already worked for ten years and been in a work environment and can draw from other people which I think comes from the experience of having worked already so it was just, once I'd done my research, [GTP] looked like a much better way to do it for someone like me who's coming in as a career change. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

- *Employment in schools where training was undertaken*

  I know in primary it is quite difficult to get jobs at the moment. Fingers crossed there's a few this way. You've got a network with the head teacher and it might come up in your main school, or maybe in your second school. Having to find a new job [when I finish training] and having to face the prospect of maybe uprooting the family... the whole of that would be another

huge upheaval which we don't really need having already taken this choice, so it's quite a nice security blanket for the end of it all really. It makes the choice seem better. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

SCITT

When talking about their reasons to pursue the SCITT route, case study trainees have commonly referred to course structure and the balance of elements within SCITT programmes, as attracting them to the route. Below we present quotations illustrating both of these points, and allowing an insight into how SCITT trainees see their route as comparing to both to the traditional PGCE route and to the GTP route.

- *Balance of elements*

  I looked at [other local university PGCE programmes] and they did seem... not theory driven... but less focused on getting me in a school and getting me some real experience of teaching and in this [SCITT programme] you actually get in a school and you're taught by teachers quite a lot of the time as well and you're looking at everything as it is as opposed to a uni' course which is everything from a text book as it should be. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

  I thought I don't really fancy going back to the uni', I'd done that and I don't want to go back and do the student thing again... I wanted to do something where I go straight into it really. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, D&T)*

- *Course structure*

  [GTP] was too intensive – from nothing [i.e. no experience of teaching] into that. I decided it wasn't for me. SCITT, it kind of gave you a taster of it but without fully immersing you in it. That was the main key. I really didn't think about any other options. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, secondary, ICT)*

  I like the idea of the SCITT programme... because I thought you learn all this theory at university for the first term and then you go and put it into practice for the two terms... [The SCITT programme I applied for] awards you the PGCE as well as the QTS and I think the PGCE is very important not only because it gives you the theoretical background which you work in, but also because I think it opens up a lot more doors in the future, maybe, not necessarily, in teaching. So it's a very good qualification to have generically really. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, drama)*

4.4 Summary and implications

Awareness of available routes

Findings discussed in this chapter regarding the extent to which participants were aware of the major routes into teaching included:

- survey respondents were most aware, at the point of application, of the (more traditional) university-administered PGCE and BEd routes

- sources of information were available and used appropriately.

It seems clear that many applicants were not aware of *all* the routes into teaching which were available at the time of their applications. This might suggest a need for a review of publicity and awareness-raising campaigns. However, findings also show that trainees' awareness of different routes was differentiated by age. For example, a higher proportion of younger applicants were not aware of some postgraduate routes, but a higher proportion of such applicants would not have qualified for these routes. They may thus have not sought to find out about postgraduate routes, or may have dismissed as unimportant to them any information they did receive. In addition, since data suggest that '*discussions with people who were doing / had done the programme(s) I was considering*' is one of the major sources of information to applicants, it is likely that as more graduates emerge from the newer routes and enter the profession, awareness of such routes will naturally grow.

Admittance onto first choice route

Survey data reveal that ninety per cent of respondents indicated that they were following their preferred route. These findings are encouraging, as it can be argued that, to the extent that trainees have undertaken an informed decision-making process, and if they are able to follow their preferred route, then they may be more likely to benefit from the programme. This project will be in a position to investigate this.

Reasons why respondents were not following their preferred choice of route

Findings suggest that two of the main reasons why people were not following their first choice ITT route are that:

- their 'application was rejected'

- their preferred programme was 'over-subscribed'.

The fact that some of our research participants, who were all trainees, had actually been rejected by one provider on one route, raises a number of interesting possible interpretations and issues, which would merit further research. These include:

- Do different providers *within* a route select according to different criteria? If so, are some criteria / providers more accurate at predicting 'success' and retention in the profession than others?

- Do different providers of *a* route select according to different criteria? If so, how different are these and why, and how accurate are they in predicting 'success' and retention in the profession?

Influences trainees reported on their decision(s) to choose a particular ITT route and a particular ITT provider

Findings show that considerations influencing trainees' decisions to follow particular ITT routes and providers included:

- the balance of in-school and out-of-school training

- the geographical availability of programmes

- the financial viability of following particular routes

- the reputation of particular ITT providers

- the length / duration of the programme.

Data also suggest that:

- research participants following different routes reasoned in a different way when making their decisions about route and provider

- for individual trainees there had been a complex interplay of issues considered in the decision-making process.

There is useful information in the detail of these findings for those advertising and recruiting to different routes, as well as for those charged with ITT provision across the country. For example:

- geographical location and financial considerations were cited by many trainees as prominent influences on their choice of ITT route and / or provider;

- over half of survey respondents over 40 years of age were influenced in their choice of route by geographical availability (compared with a quarter of those in the 20-24 age-range).

These findings suggest the need to continue to address the issue of the geographical availability of routes appropriate to older applicants. Understandably, younger applicants (often those more likely to follow undergraduate programmes) seem more willing and / or able to relocate in order to follow a preferred route with a preferred provider.

In Chapter 5 we now go on to explore trainees' prior expectations of ITT.

5 Trainees' prior expectations of initial teacher training

Tracey, Hobson, Kerr, Malderez, Pell & Roper

5.1 Introduction

Having explored why trainees made the decision to train to teach and why they chose particular training routes, in this chapter we explore the sorts of knowledge and skills trainees thought ITT should equip them with prior to starting their training. We also explore who trainees believed should be involved in their training, in terms of ITT personnel. This discussion is central to the Becoming a Teacher study because, as evidence on the constructive nature of learning tells us (Bransford *et al*, 2000: 10), people's experiences and evaluations of (for example) pre-service training will, in part, be shaped by their preconceptions and expectations.

In this chapter we report case study data prior to discussing trainees' questionnaire responses. This reflects the fact that, when asked about their pre-course views on what and who should be involved in ITT programmes, interviewees tended to speak in quite general, non-specific terms. Questionnaire data then allow trainees' views about specific activities, skills and knowledge to be explored. We consider:

- aspects of teacher training that trainees responding to the questionnaire indicated they were particularly looking forward to before starting their IT programme
- aspects they were most concerned about prior to starting training
- trainees' confidence in the ITT route they had chosen to follow
- the skills and knowledge trainees thought it was important (or unimportant) to develop on a teacher training programme.

5.2 Case study data: trainees' views about what ITT should involve

It is revealing that many trainees, although having thought in some detail about why they wanted to train as teachers and which ITT route to follow, were less clear about what programmes of ITT should involve. Twenty-one (a quarter of) interviewees

stated that the actual content of their training programmes was something they had not considered in detail, while 39 indicated that they had trusted that whatever programme they followed, it would equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to become a teacher:

> For me it was all brand new. The [training provider] had a system. I read through it and thought 'okay, that's what I need to learn to become a teacher. I didn't have my own kind of criteria to follow. I was looking at theirs, thinking this is what we need, this is what we have to follow. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

Another trainee explained that other issues, such as the location of training providers, had been a greater concern than course content, prior to starting her training:

> I was approaching it from the perspective of these teacher training courses are on offer [so] I assume they will equip me as a teacher with whatever is necessary… I was being more selfish [and looking at ITT] in terms of where am I going to study and for how long. *(Female, 35-39, BEd, primary)*

Where trainees talked more specifically about the sorts of skills and knowledge they anticipated developing during their ITT, the five activities mentioned by the highest numbers of trainees were:

- Learning subject knowledge (n=44)
- Developing creative / inspiring teaching styles (n=20)
- Learning behaviour management strategies (n=19)
- Learning about legal issues (n=11)
- Learning about how children learn / different learning styles (n=10)

Trainees also talked in fairly general terms about the personnel they believed should be involved in their training. Thirty trainees referred to non-specific 'university staff', and 24 mentioned 'school staff' in fairly generic terms. Some trainees were, however, more specific when talking about the potential involvement of teachers in programmes of ITT, with 18 suggesting that training programmes should involve *experienced* teachers:

> I felt at the time [i.e. prior to starting my training] that [ITT] would need to involve people who were experienced, good teachers, because they are the people who can tell you from experience, you know, that this works and this

works and you can have realistic conversations with them about how to tackle it. *(Male, 35-39, BEd, primary)*

Having set out views of case study trainees, we turn now to look at questionnaire data. In many ways this provides a more detailed insight than case study data into trainees' prior expectations of what ITT should involve. Whilst the case study data reported above present trainees' spontaneous responses, the questionnaire data allow us to explore trainees' perceptions about how beneficial they believed certain specified activities, skills and knowledge would be, in helping them to become teachers.

5.3 Survey data

5.3.1 Aspects of ITT that respondents were looking forward to

Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate which, if any, of six items they were particularly looking forward to immediately before starting their teacher training programme. The results, by route, are given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Thinking back to IMMEDIATELY BEFORE you started your teacher training programme, which of the following, if any, were you particularly looking forward to?

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA /BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	All trainees
Being in classrooms and interacting with pupils	89	87	80	75	87	85	84
Developing an understanding of teaching and learning	74	71	73	69	76	76	73
Learning to teach my subject	48	51	70	48	57	59	60
Learning from practising teachers	57	55	53	53	66	72	58
Becoming part of a school community	36	38	47	37	51	60	45
Finding out about research on teaching and learning	23	21	24	22	24	27	23
N =	395	1378	1745	186	341	704	4749

A total of 4749 respondents selected at least one item.
More than one response could be given so percentages do not add up to 100.

Overall, 84 per cent of respondents reported that they were particularly looking forward to '*being in classrooms and interacting with pupils*'. Interestingly, as many as 73 per cent of respondents stated that they were particularly looking forward to '*developing an understanding of teaching and learning*', whilst a relatively low 23 per cent indicated that they were particularly looking forward to '*finding out about research on teaching and learning.*'

If we compare the responses of trainees following different ITT routes we find that there are some notable differences. For example, 60 per cent of those following GRTP programmes and 51 per cent of SCITT respondents stated that they were particularly looking forward to '*becoming part of the school community*', compared to under 40 per cent of those following BEd, BA/BSc QTS and Flexible PGCE programmes. Higher proportions of respondents from GRTP and SCITT programmes than from the other routes also reported that they were looking forward to '*learning from practising teachers*'.

The data were further analysed by gender and phase. It was found that a higher proportion of women indicated that they were looking forward to each of the listed items except for '*becoming part of a school community*' (47% of men compared to 45% of women respondents)[24] and '*learning to teach my subject*' (67% of men compared to 57% of women).[25] Of the six items listed in Table 5.1, only '*becoming part of a school community*' and '*learning to teach my subject*' were cited by proportionately more secondary (47% and 81% respectively) than primary trainees (43% and 38%).[26]

Whilst the findings reported above provide some insights into what our participants may have been looking forward to about their ITT programmes, via other survey questions we sought to gain an understanding of what trainees thought they needed to

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[24] The difference between the two sets of responses is not statistically significant on this question.
[25] The difference between the responses of males and females to this item is statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).
[26] The differences between the responses of males and females to each these items are statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.01$).

learn in ITT, and how they might best learn these things. We deal with these issues in the next two sections.

5.3.2 Trainees' perceptions of the importance of learning different skills and knowledge in ITT

Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate how important they had thought it was (immediately prior to starting their ITT) that trainees should develop, in ITT programmes, each of 14 specified kinds of knowledge or skill. The results are summarised in Table 5.2, which shows, for example, that:

- more than nine out of ten trainees indicated that they had thought that it was very important that trainees learn the '*ability to bring about pupil learning*'

- 86 per cent had thought that it very important that trainees should learn the '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*'

- a relatively low 35 per cent of trainees had felt that it was very important for trainees to gain an '*ability to deal with pastoral issues*'

- only 31 per cent of respondents indicated that they had thought it very important that trainees gain '*knowledge / understanding of education policy*'.

The frequencies with which items were indicated to be very important were further analysed to see whether there were any discernable differences in the beliefs of those following different ITT routes regarding what trainees should learn from ITT. The results are summarised in Table 5.3. Some of the more notable findings are that:

- a higher proportion of respondents from the *GRTP* route (92%) than from other routes stated that it was very important for trainee teachers to learn '*the ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*'

- proportionately more respondents following the *university-based PGCE* route (78%) reported that it was very important for trainees to gain '*knowledge about their teaching subject*'

- higher proportions of respondents from the more traditional HEI-based routes of *BEd, BA/BSc with QTS* and *university-based PGCE* routes than from *Flexible PGCE, SCITT* and *GRTP* indicated that they had felt that it was very important for trainees to gain (i) *knowledge / understanding of education policy*'; (ii) an '*awareness of research findings about effective teaching*

68

Table 5.2 Again, thinking back to IMMEDIATELY BEFORE you started your training, how important or unimportant did you think it was that trainees should develop the following knowledge and skills from their teacher training programme?

	Per cent (%)						
	Very important	Fairly important	Neither important nor unimportant	Fairly unimportant	Very unimportant	Don't know	N†
Ability to bring about pupil learning	91	8	1	0*	0	0	4718
Ability to maintain discipline in the classroom	86	13	1	0	0	0	4718
Knowledge about their teaching subjects	74	23	2	1	0	0	4717
Knowledge/understanding of pupil motivation and behaviour	73	24	3	1	0	0	4716
Knowledge/understanding of how pupils learn	71	25	3	1	0	0	4712
Ability to use a range of teaching methods	70	26	3	1	0	0	4715
Time management skills	60	33	6	1	1	0	4709
Knowledge/understanding of the principles of assessment for learning	43	44	10	2	0	1	4708
Ability to deal with pastoral issues	35	53	8	1	0	2	4692
Staff supervision/management skills	35	46	14	3	1	1	4711
Knowledge/understanding of education policy	31	54	11	3	1	1	4715
Awareness of research findings about effective teaching methods	23	56	16	4	1	2	4713
Knowledge/understanding of the philosophy of education	10	41	33	12	3	1	4708
Knowledge/understanding of the history of education	5	38	36	16	4	1	4711

A series of single response items. Totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
†Totals vary because those who did not respond to each item were excluded.
* The figure '0' denotes less than or equal to 0.4 per cent.

Table 5.3 Knowledge / skills rated as very important, by route.

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/ BSC QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	N†
Ability to bring about pupil learning	91	90	91	89	93	91	4718
Ability to maintain discipline in the classroom	84	84	86	86	86	92	4718
Knowledge about their teaching subject(s)	70	72	78	70	74	74	4717
Knowledge/ understanding of pupil motivation and behaviour	76	72	73	64	73	73	4716
Knowledge/ understanding of how pupils learn	76	72	73	64	73	73	4712
Ability to use a range of teaching methods	73	73	69	65	68	70	4715
Time management skills	56	54	66	49	63	61	4709
Knowledge/ understanding of the principles of assessment for learning	43	45	41	35	40	46	4708
Ability to deal with pastoral issues	32	34	35	34	34	41	4692
Staff supervision/ management skills	38	38	38	18	32	27	4711
Knowledge/ understanding of education policy	39	32	32	20	26	28	4715
Awareness of research findings about effective teaching methods	23	23	25	20	20	21	4713
Knowledge/ understanding of the philosophy of education	11	12	11	4	9	8	4708
Knowledge/ understanding of the history of education	6	6	6	1	4	3	4711

A series of single response items. Totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

†Totals vary because those not responding to each item have been excluded.

- *methods*'; (iii) '*knowledge / understanding of the philosophy of education*' and (iv) '*knowledge / understanding of the history of education*'.[27]

Responses to this question were further analysed by respondents' gender, age and the phase of education in which they were seeking to teach. The most notable findings were that:

- with the exception of '*knowledge / understanding of the history of education*', a higher proportion of female respondents stated that it was very important that trainees should develop all other types of knowledge or skill on their teacher training programme

- with the exception of '*the ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*', '*knowledge about their teaching subject(s)*', '*knowledge / understanding of the history of education*' and '*time management skills*', a higher proportion of respondents seeking to teach in primary than in secondary schools indicated that they had thought it very important that trainees gain all other types of knowledge / skill

- higher proportions of 20-24 year-olds than those from any other age groups stated that they had felt that it was very important for trainees to develop (i) the '*ability to use a range of teaching methods*' (71%) and (ii) '*knowledge / understanding of education policy*' (34%) from their teacher training programmes.

5.3.3 Trainees' preconceptions about different learning strategies in ITT

Respondents were also asked to think back to immediately before they started their training, and to indicate how important or unimportant they thought it was that a teacher training programme should include each of a range of teaching and learning strategies (ten in total). The results are summarised in Table 5.4. The item that the highest proportion of respondents (*across all ITT routes*) considered to be very important was that ITT programmes included '*having school teachers / mentors observe your lessons and give feedback*' (75%), which contrasts with the 60 per cent

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[27] In all four cases the differences in the responses to these items, by ITT route, are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

of respondents who considered it very important that such programmes included '*having university / college tutors observe your lessons and give feedback*'. Whilst almost three-quarters of respondents stated that it was very important that they experience another activity firmly rooted in schools, namely '*watching schoolteachers teach*', a relatively low 48 per cent felt the same about '*studying ideas about how pupils learn*' (with 2% of respondents stating that this was fairly unimportant). Just 22 per cent of respondents thought it was very important to study '*current research on teaching methods*', with seven per cent indicating that this was (fairly or very) unimportant. Of all the considerations listed, the '*sharing of lessons with other trainee teachers*' was reported to be (fairly or very) unimportant by the most respondents.

Table 5.5 compares the proportions of respondents from each ITT route who regarded each item as 'very important'. A number of statistically significant differences between the responses of trainees following different ITT routes were found. For example:

- a higher proportion (68%) of respondents following university-administered PGCE programmes than from any other route considered it to be very important that ITT programmes should include university / college tutors observing their lessons and giving feedback (compared, for example, to 51% of GRTP trainees and 56% of BEd and BA/BSc QTS students)

- a higher proportion of BEd respondents (59%) than those from other routes considered it very important that ITT programmes include '*studying ideas about how pupils learn*' (which contrasts with just 33% of Flexible PGCE trainees who stated this)

- BA/BSc QTS trainees were most likely to report that they thought it was very important that ITT programmes included '*studying current research on teaching methods*' (32%), which contrasts with 17 per cent of respondents following Flexible PGCE programmes

Table 5.4 Thinking back to IMMEDIATELY BEFORE you started your training, how important or unimportant did you think it was that a teacher training programme should include the following?

	Per cent (%)						
	Very important	Fairly important	Neither important nor unimportant	Fairly unimportant	Very unimportant	Don't know	N†
Having school teachers/mentors observe your lessons and give feedback	75	22	2	0*	0	0	4702
Watching schoolteachers teach	74	23	2	0	0	0	4692
Getting assistance with lesson planning	71	26	3	1	0	0	4710
Being given specific strategies for teaching specific subjects/topics	66	30	3	0	0	1	4705
Sharing the teaching of lessons with experienced teachers	61	32	5	1	0	1	4691
Having university/college tutors observe your lessons and give feedback	60	32	6	1	0	1	4691
Studying ideas about how pupils learn	48	42	8	2	0	1	4697
Learning to teach by trial and error in the classroom	48	37	9	2	2	2	4690
Sharing the teaching of lessons with other trainee teachers	32	37	19	8	3	2	4698
Studying current research on teaching methods	22	50	20	6	1	1	4692

†Totals vary because those not responding to each item have been excluded
* The figure '0' denotes less than or equal to 0.4 per cent.
More than one response could be given so percentages do not sum to 100.

Table 5.5 Items regarded as very important, by route

	BEd	BA/ BSC QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	N†
			Per cent (%)				
Having school teachers/mentors observe your lessons and give feedback	68	68	79	68	83	80	4702
Watching schoolteachers teach	77	74	74	68	75	75	4692
Getting assistance with lesson planning	76	69	73	57	73	67	4710
Being given specific strategies for teaching specific subjects/topics	68	67	67	54	61	65	4705
Sharing the teaching of lessons with experienced teachers	59	58	63	52	69	62	4691
Having university/college tutors observe your lessons and give feedback	56	56	68	60	55	51	4691
Studying ideas about how pupils learn	59	47	50	33	47	43	4697
Learning to teach by trial and error in the classroom	51	46	49	46	52	50	4690
Sharing the teaching of lessons with other trainee teachers	32	33	35	24	40	24	4698
Studying current research on teaching methods	24	32	24	17	24	18	4692

†Totals vary because those not responding to each item have been excluded.
More than one response could be given so percentages do not add up to 100.

- SCITT trainees were more likely than those from other routes to report that both '*sharing the teaching of lessons with experienced teachers*' (69%) and '*sharing the teaching of lessons with other trainee teachers*' (40%) were very important.[28]

The data were further analysed by the gender and phase variables. The most notable findings were that:

- *for every teaching / learning strategy listed in Tables 5.4 and 5.5*, a higher proportion of female respondents than male chose the 'very important' option.
- a higher proportion of primary phase trainees stated that the item '*watching schoolteachers teach*' was very important (77% compared to 72% of secondary trainees) whilst a higher proportion of secondary trainees stated that the item '*having school teachers / mentors observe your lessons and give feedback*' was very important (79% compared to 72% of primary phase trainees).

Having explored trainees' perceptions about the different kinds of knowledge and skills that they felt they should develop on ITT programmes, and about the relative importance / usefulness of different teaching and learning strategies that they might encounter, we now consider how confident trainees were, prior to beginning their ITT, that the training course they were about to follow would prepare them to be effective teachers. We then conclude the chapter by examining any worries or concerns that trainees had, prior to commencing their ITT.

5.3.4 How confident were trainees that their chosen ITT routes would make them effective teachers?

Overall, 92 per cent of respondents indicated that they were (very or fairly) confident that the training route they were following would prepare them to be effective teachers, with six per cent indicating that they were 'not very confident' and one per cent that they were 'not very confident at all.' Overall, higher proportions of trainees following GRTP and SCITT programmes than those following other routes indicated that they were confident that their training route would prepare them to be effective teachers. Table 5.6 shows, for

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[28] Chi-square: p < 0.001 for each item.

example, that 38 per cent of GRTP trainees and 31 per cent of SCITT trainees reported being 'very confident' that their programmes would prepare them to become effective teachers, compared to a relatively low 17 per cent of trainees following the BEd route. [29]

Table 5.6 And IMMEDIATELY BEFORE you started this programme, how confident were you, if at all, that it would prepare you to be an effective teacher?

| | Per cent (%) | | | | | | |
	BEd	BA /BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	All trainees
Very confident	17	22	23	28	31	38	25
Fairly confident	72	68	69	62	63	57	67
Not very confident	8	7	6	7	5	3	6
Not very confident at all	1	1	1	1	0*	1	1
Don't know	2	2	1	2	1	1	2
N =	394	1374	1743	183	338	703	4735

* The figure '0' denotes less than or equal to 0.4 per cent.
A single response item. Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

When these data were further analysed by gender, phase and age, the main findings were:

- that proportionately more male respondents reported that they were 'very confident' that their training course would prepare them to be effective teachers (28%, compared to 24% of females)[30]
- that a higher proportion of secondary phase trainees (28%) stated that they felt 'very confident' that their training course would prepare them to be effective teachers compared to those training to teach the primary phase (22%)[31]
- a higher proportion of respondents aged '45 or over' (35%) than those in any other age group reported feeling 'very confident' that their ITT programme would

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[29] Statistical analysis shows that the differences between the responses, to this question, of those following different ITT routes, were statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).
[30] The difference between male and female responses is statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).
[31] The difference between primary and secondary phase trainees' responses is statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.01$).

prepare them to be effective teachers. This compares, for example, to 19 per cent of respondents in the 20-24 age group.[32]

The final section of this chapter might cast some light on the fact that some trainees indicated that they were not totally confident (and a small minority not confident at all) that their ITT programmes would prepare them to be effective teachers. Here we explore any concerns or worries that trainees had, prior to commencing their ITT.

5.3.5 Respondents' pre-ITT course concerns

Questionnaire respondents were asked to report whether they had concerns or worries, immediately prior to starting initial teacher training, about any of eleven issues, which are listed in Table 5.7.

Across all ITT routes, the issues which the highest numbers of trainees reported being concerned about were:

    (1) whether they would be able to manage the workload

    (2) whether they would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom

    (3) whether they would be able to manage financially.[33]

These concerns reflect case study trainees' statements, reported in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.2) about what they considered to be the main drawbacks to teaching as a career, namely:

- Workload (n=32)

- Pupil behaviour and behaviour management (n=21)

- Teachers' pay (n=16).

Considering possible links with the previous section – that is, whether some of the concerns expressed by trainees explain some lack of confidence about whether their ITT programme would prepare them to be an effective teacher – it seems that trainees may

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[32] The differences between the responses to this question of those in different age groups are statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).
[33] These 'concerns' data are explored further, for the entire cohort, in Appendix D, which presents some preliminary results of cluster analyses.

have been more concerned about issues which were personal to them (such as whether *they* would be able to 'maintain discipline in the classroom' or 'bring about pupil learning') or about issues associated with the teaching profession as a whole (e.g. teacher workload and salary), than about issues relating to the nature of the ITT programmes they were to follow. That said, 32 per cent of questionnaire respondents indicated that they had concerns about whether they '*would get sufficient help for teaching*', and respondents were not specifically probed (in the questionnaire or face-to-face interviews) to find out whether there was anything they were concerned about relating to aspects of their ITT programmes.

Table 5.7 presents the percentage responses, to the pre-course concerns / worries question, of respondents following different ITT routes. It shows, for instance, that a higher proportion of trainees following university-based PGCE and GRTP routes (75% and 71% respectively) cited concerns / worries about '*whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom*', compared (for example) to 55-56 per cent of BEd and BA/BSc QTS respondents and 62-63 per cent of respondents from Flexible PGCE and SCITT programmes.[34] The table also shows that GRTP trainees were more likely than those on other routes to report being concerned or worried about whether they '*would get sufficient help for teaching*', whilst higher proportions of BEd and BA/BSc QTS students expressed concerns about whether they would be able to '*cope with the academic difficulty of the programme*'.

Responses were further analysed according to respondents' gender, age, and whether they were seeking to teach primary or secondary age pupils / students.

- In terms of gender, female respondents were more likely than male respondents to express concerns about all issues except '*whether I would be able to develop rapport with the children I teach*' (29% men, 26% women) and '*whether I would be able to deal with pastoral issues*' (14% men, 12% women).

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[34] The variation in responses to this question, across respondents' ITT route, is statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

Table 5.7 Which of the following, if any, did you have concerns or worries about IMMEDIATELY BEFORE you started your teacher training programme?

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA /BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	All trainees †
Whether I would be able to manage the workload	72	70	69	63	68	68	69
Whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom	55	56	75	62	63	71	66
Whether I would manage financially	61	64	48	49	48	41	53
Whether I would be able to cope with the academic difficulty of the programme	64	63	47	33	41	27	49
Whether I would be able to bring about pupil learning	45	41	50	37	46	47	46
Whether I would enjoy the teaching/training	32	36	41	35	35	33	37
Whether I would be able to pass the skills tests	43	36	33	29	34	32	35
Whether I would get sufficient help for teaching	31	28	33	32	32	39	32
Whether I would be able to develop rapport with the children I teach	16	21	34	24	24	26	27
Whether I would get along with teachers and other staff in school	31	25	25	16	26	20	24
Whether I would be able to deal with pastoral issues	8	11	13	9	10	19	12
N =	394	1371	1742	185	336	703	4731

† N-numbers vary because those who did not state at each item were excluded.
Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not add up to 100.

- Primary phase trainees were more likely to report concerns about '*whether I could manage the workload*' (74%), '*whether I could cope with the academic difficulty of the programme*' (58%) and '*whether I would be able to manage financially*' (57%); whilst higher percentages of secondary phase trainees expressed concerns

about '*whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (74%), and '*whether I would be able to bring about pupil learning*' (48%)[35]

- A higher proportion of those in the 20-24 age group than those in other age groups expressed concern about whether they would be able to cope with the academic difficulty of their programme (53%). This compares, for example, to 43 per cent of respondents in the 45 or over age group. A higher proportion of those aged 30-34 indicated that they were concerned about '*whether they would manage financially*' (57%) compared to those in other age groups (for example 41% of those in the 45 or over age group).[36]

Case study data suggest that some of the concerns that trainees hold about undertaking teacher training can also be related to their previous occupational backgrounds. Most notably:

- Trainees who had previously worked in schools as support staff reported concerns about the transition from working *for* a teacher, to training and working *as* a teacher. This was sometimes seen to be more acute where trainees had to make such a transition within the same school

- Trainees coming from alternative (non-education) career backgrounds were more likely to report concerns about identifying skills they had developed in their previous careers which could support their transition into their teaching role

- For those entering teacher training programmes straight from A-level courses, undergraduate courses, or with little break in between to pursue alternative careers (i.e. less than two years), data suggest that there are two central areas of concern, namely: (1) the transition from A-level to undergraduate study, or from undergraduate to graduate level study; and (2) the transition to a professional lifestyle and the responsibilities associated with this (developing a teacher persona).

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[35] In all cases the differences between the responses of primary and secondary respondents were statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.01$).

[36] For both items the differences between the responses of respondents in each age group were statistically significant (Chi-square: $p < 0.001$).

The extent to which these concerns were founded, in relation to trainees' early experiences in school, is explored in Chapter 7.

5.4 Summary and implications

Aspects of teacher training survey respondents had looked forward to

Trainees indicated that, before starting their ITT programmes, the main things they were looking forward to were:

- being in classrooms and interacting with pupils

- developing an understanding of teaching and learning

- learning to teach their specialist subjects.

Aspects of teacher training survey respondents anticipated would be important to learn

When asked about a range of different kinds of knowledge and skills that they might learn on ITT programmes, over 70 per cent of survey respondents stated that it was *very important* that trainees should develop:

- the ability to bring about pupil learning (91%)

- the ability to maintain discipline in the classroom (86%)

- knowledge about their teaching subjects (74%)

- knowledge / understanding of pupil motivation and behaviour (73%)

- knowledge / understanding of how pupils learn (71%).

Fewer respondents considered that it was very important for them to develop:

- the ability to deal with pastoral issues (35%)

- an awareness of research findings about effective teaching methods (23%).

The respondents would appear to see themselves (or hope to be seen) very much as prospective teachers, wanting to be in the classroom and bringing about learning through their teaching, whilst recognising that a pre-condition for this is good classroom management.

Where case study trainees talked about the sorts of skills and knowledge they anticipated developing during their ITT, these data largely confirm the survey findings, although *learning subject knowledge* was talked about by more interviewees than any other aspect. The three activities mentioned by the highest numbers of case study trainees were:

- learning subject knowledge

- developing creative / inspiring teaching styles

- learning behaviour management strategies.

It will be interesting to explore in later stages of the project whether, and in what circumstances, given the benefit of hindsight and experience in the profession, these views are revised or not.

The data suggest that there were differences between trainees following different ITT routes, regarding the things that they reported believing (prior to beginning their training) trainees should learn. Most notably:

- a higher proportion of trainees following employment or school-based ITT routes than those following other training routes indicated that they had a classroom-oriented perspective.

Trainees' preconceptions about different learning strategies in ITT

Trainees indicated that, before beginning their ITT, they expected that the most important ITT learning strategies would be:

- being observed and given feedback by experienced teachers

- watching other teachers teach

- getting assistance with lesson planning

- being given specific strategies for teaching specific topics.

Again there are differences between the preconceptions of trainees following different ITT routes. For example, a higher proportion of those following the BEd route than those

following other routes indicated that it was very important to '*study ideas about how pupils learn*'.

It will be interesting to see, in later stages of the project, which activities trainees in fact consider to have been most helpful in their ITT, and whether the differences between those following different ITT pathways persist.

The confidence of trainees in their chosen route in equipping them to be effective teachers

Overall, there is a high level of confidence amongst the trainees that their chosen route will equip them to be effective teachers. This can be explained in part by the initial high level of 'self-efficacy' for many (discussed in Chapter 3), and / or by the frequent use of current or past graduates as sources of information when making a choice of route and provider. If the latter is in part responsible for trainees' confidence, it suggests the need for all programmes to continue to ensure that graduates emerge as satisfied and well-prepared not only for educational reasons but for the sake of future recruitment.

Aspects of teacher training causing concern prior to starting training

Both survey and case study data indicate that the main concerns that trainees had, prior to beginning their ITT, were:

- teacher workload
- pupil behaviour and classroom management
- whether they would manage financially.

These relate closely to the reservations trainees expressed when making their decisions to enter teacher training (discussed in Chapter 3). Case study data suggest that trainees viewed all these as *personal* concerns as opposed to concerns about their training. (They were worried about whether *they* would be able to manage classrooms, for example.)

These concerns reflect some of the main reasons for withdrawal from secondary PGCE courses (Chambers *et al*, 2001). It will be interesting to examine whether trainees'

personal concerns at this stage relate to the causes of failure or withdrawal from ITT or teaching as the project proceeds.

In addition to the three main concerns listed above, a substantial number of questionnaire respondents indicated that they had concerns about whether they *would get sufficient help for teaching*. In relation to this, it was found that GRTP trainees were more likely than those on other routes to report this concern. With respect to these findings it will be interesting, as the project progresses, to explore the extent to which trainees perceive help as forthcoming, as well as the main sources of that help. It will also be interesting to explore trainees' conceptions of 'helpful mentoring' as well as the actual nature of the 'help' reported, as some recent research on mentoring (Elmajdob, 2005) suggests the need for mentors (and other course personnel) to be very aware of when it is appropriate to provide 'social help' (doing things for people, telling people useful information) and when it is appropriate to provide 'scaffolding help' (supporting others to learn to do things, including to use 'conceptual tools').

Finally, case study data suggest that, to some extent, the concerns that trainees hold about undertaking teacher training relate to their previous occupational backgrounds. For example, those entering ITT straight from A-level courses, undergraduate courses, or with little break in between to pursue alternative careers, are more likely to report concerns relating to the transition to a professional lifestyle and the responsibilities associated with this (developing a teacher persona). In Chapter 7 we will explore how some of these early concerns may have played out in trainees' early school experiences. First, in Chapter 6, we discuss aspects of the vexed question of the perceived 'theory / practice' divide through a consideration of trainees' preconceptions about 'theory' in ITT.

6 Trainees' initial conceptions and early experiences of 'theory' in initial teacher training

Kerr, Hobson, Malderez & Tracey

6.1 Introduction

As we have seen in previous chapters, many trainees report that they had purposively selected different training routes for, amongst other considerations, the balance of elements such routes offer. One of the major contrasts between training routes relates to the extent and nature of Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs') involvement in training. Much debate about ITT has centred around the involvement of HEIs and the kinds of knowledge beginner teachers need to learn / develop.

Given this, it would be pertinent for the 'Becoming a Teacher' project to explore trainees' conceptions of 'theory' and their perceptions of its utility and relevance to 'practice'. Exploration of such issues is further justified by the regularity with which trainees utilise the terms as 'theory' and 'practice' to refer to elements of their experience of ITT. For example 50 of the 85 case study trainees talked about 'theory' without being prompted to do so in the interviews.

We have already seen, in the previous chapter on trainees' prior expectations of ITT, that when asked what, prior to starting their ITT, trainees thought it important for programmes to include, they attributed least importance to items which they perceived as having less relevance to the more practical (notably classroom-based) aspects of teaching. Developing this theme, in this chapter we draw upon case study data to explore trainees' perceptions of the 'theoretical' dimensions of their ITT programmes. In addition, we examine whether trainees on different types of route, which might be expected to place different emphases on 'theory' (e.g. HEI-administered or employment-based routes), hold different views about 'theory' or the kind of study that they may perceive as being of less immediate relevance to their teaching.

To explore these issues in depth, we firstly consider the range of meanings trainees attributed to 'theory' when they talked (without specific prompting) about this issue. We then explore how trainees perceive the value and relevance of 'theory', as they have conceptualised it, within their training. Here we deal with the different training routes in turn, with this allowing the balance of elements within different routes to be considered. Within this discussion we also highlight how, at this stage in their training (i.e. early in their only or final year of ITT), the way in which trainees perceive 'theory' (or aspects of this) often relate to:

- how they perceive the role of HEIs in initial teacher training
- how their training programmes / routes are structured
- the extent to which they have had prior experience of working in schools.

6.2 Trainees' understandings of 'theory'

Trainees from across all training routes were found to subscribe to broad definitions of 'theory' with different aspects of 'theory' being perceived as more or less useful to their development and practice as teachers. Trainees used the term 'theory' to refer to a broad range of knowledge ranging from the work of developmental psychologists to knowledge of the national curriculum and more 'practical' considerations such as discussion-work on lesson planning and assessment. For example, when asked what she meant by 'theory', one trainee, in a response typical of many, commented:

> Well, the essay writing and the reading and that sort of, I guess the sort of research type side of it, about teaching and learning styles and you know… having people come in and talk to you about how to do your assessment and recording and reporting. *(Female, 25-29, SCITT, secondary, MFL)*

Other trainees were found to make a much more explicit demarcation between these different aspects of 'theory', and to attribute different levels of value to these, drawing attention to what they saw as the abstract nature of some 'theoretical' knowledge:

> I mean, we have to do assignments and they're expecting you to find all these references and reference all this research and you're starting to think, that's not really relevant, what's relevant is what I can do in the classroom. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

Those aspects of ITT course content which trainees referred to most frequently (without specific prompting from the interviewer) when discussing 'theory', are listed below:

1) knowledge which supports classroom teaching and assessment of pupils' work – e.g. lesson planning, behaviour management strategies, how to differentiate work (n=31)
2) knowledge about how children learn – e.g. study of child psychology (n=24)
3) subject content knowledge (n=19)
4) legal issues which teachers need to be aware of, such as child protection (n=8).

Looking at the range of issues trainees encompass under the term 'theory', it is particularly interesting that even activities which trainees saw as directly relevant to practice and as embedded in this (for example, developing a three part lesson plan), were still widely seen as 'theory' (n=31). Literature suggests that whether or not trainees perceive aspects of their ITT as 'theory' or 'practice' may have much to do with the 'site' of learning – with those aspects experienced in an HEI setting being seen as 'theory', while those experienced in schools are seen as 'practice' (c.f. Furlong *et al*, 2000). Indeed, our only case study trainee who had opted to train exclusively in school through the RTP route,[37] suggested that she might be missing out on 'the theory side' by not also participating in HEI-based training (even though some of the things she identified as theory, she saw as part of her in-school training):

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[37] Trainees following the RTP route must hold professional qualifications equivalent to two years of degree level study prior to starting their ITT. The RTP programme allows trainees to complete a further year of degree level study in order to gain a Bachelors degree alongside QTS. Some RTP providers offer trainees the opportunity to study education at degree level, in order to qualify with a Bachelors degree in Education. The RTP trainee referred to above has opted not to participate in the programme of study offered by her RTP provider, but has, instead, chosen to complete a degree in her subject specialism (D&T) at another HEI.

All I could focus on was the classroom side of things... That's what I thought for being a teacher, that was the bit I needed to learn... Because I've opted to do it solely in school and I haven't done any of the day release at [my HEI] that I could have done, I think I've missed out on things like learning styles and different teaching methods and I think, but obviously I've got a lot of that from the training, but the theoretical side of teaching I think I've probably missed out on doing it this way. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

This quotation raises an interesting issue, which moves our discussion from trainees' definitions of theory, to the roles played by HEIs in initial teacher training, and the role prior work experience in schools appears to play in shaping trainees' beliefs about the utility of 'theory'. The RTP trainee cited above suggests that one of the roles of HEIs is to teach 'theory'. In addition, we can see that although the trainee's initial concern was to be in the classroom, now that she has experience in a teaching role, it may be that she has started to identify gaps in her knowledge which 'theoretical' input might redress.

As we shall now go on to explore, there is an interesting contrast in the data between (i) those who have substantial prior experience in schools, or are training predominantly in schools, and are now looking for 'theoretical' input to help them expand and explain their practice; and (ii) those who see the role of HEIs as to equip them with the 'theoretical' knowledge they will need to go into schools and be successful practitioners. Unsurprisingly perhaps, the latter group attribute less value to 'abstract' knowledge (especially that relating to child psychology and the philosophy of education), while the former talk more often about how they think such theory might come to inform their understandings of practice in the future, and vice versa.

With this in mind, we turn, firstly, to look at the views of trainees on traditional HEI-administered and Flexible PGCE programmes. We then examine the views of those on GTP programmes, undergraduate programmes and SCITT programmes.[38]

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[38] The small number of RTP trainees in the case study sample (n=4) does not warrant a separate discussion of RTP trainees' understandings of theory.

6.2.1 University-administered PGCE trainees

When talking about the perceived value of 'theory' within PGCE programmes, two distinct groups emerge within our case study cohort of PGCE trainees, namely trainees with substantial prior experience as LSAs or unqualified teachers (n=6); and trainees whose prior experience of teaching children is often comparatively limited and in non-school settings (e.g. volunteer work in playgroups) (n=22). We consider the views of each of these distinct groups below.

PGCE trainees with substantial prior experience

To look firstly at the views of those PGCE trainees with substantial prior experience, one trainee explained that she had wanted to pursue a PGCE course to be able to develop a theoretical knowledge of / for education, which would allow her to build on her experiences as an unqualified teacher:

> I… felt that there were things which I was doing which were a bit, were obviously, working and not working, sort of thing, and I thought… it would be useful to have the sort of background information, the theory and alternative suggestions and what have you, because when you're up to your neck in the classroom… you don't get the same theoretical background and I think your confidence is undermined to a certain extent. *(Female, 40-44, PGCE, secondary, history)*

Similarly, a trainee who had previously taught in higher education explained that while she had considered the GTP she:

> ...genuinely felt that it wasn't appropriate, that there was too much to learn and the technicalities, the legalities, the strategies and so on, I would have felt there was too much to learn simply by being in school. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)*

Another trainee with several years' experience as an unqualified teacher explained how, although she had initially viewed a PGCE simply as a way to gain QTS, she had come to see value in the 'theoretical' aspects of her training – that is, her pre-course perceptions had been challenged by her early experiences:

Doing the PGCE course and the exposure to... theorists of education, teaching and learning styles, and they were things I would never have known if I hadn't done a PGCE. There were gaps in my knowledge that are now being filled because I'm doing this course... My feeling now is so much different from that pre-PGCE time because now I feel like, although I'd been doing supply for so long, I can see the deficiencies I had. Honestly, when I started the PGCE course I did not envisage that I would see myself like that... there were things I had got away with as a supply teacher which was due to ignorance. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)*

The trainees cited above have talked about the perceived value of 'theory' in relation to their previous experiences, and indicated that this has helped them to develop their knowledge of education and their practice as teachers. As we shall now go on to see, those PGCE trainees with little prior experience, as adults, in schools, tended to present contrasting views to those set out above.

PGCE trainees with little prior experience

Some PGCE trainees with comparatively little in-school experience as adults appeared concerned that the university-based aspects of their training were not addressing their needs as trainee teachers. Generally, within this group of PGCE trainees, there was a strong belief that the HEI-based element of a PGCE programme would be explicitly geared towards classroom teaching, requiring minimal, if any, 'academic' study (n=8) (despite 'PGCE' providing an academic qualification). For example, trainees who were able to confidently recall their prior expectations of the PGCE route commented with hindsight:

I thought it was going to be more teacher focused in giving you, arming you with all the tools really to actually go into the classroom and teach. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

I thought that we would maybe [have] some sort of mock go... I thought we would have some dummy runs first [practising teaching in the university] *(Female, 35-39, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

We have, like, four and a half hour long lectures... I didn't really expect it would be that full on and the amount of theory as well. I mean we have to do assignments... and they expect you to reference all this research. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

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A concern to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to become effective practitioners appeared to relate to a perception among some PGCE trainees that 'theory' and 'practice' are largely divorced from each other. Five PGCE trainees commented that while they had been willing to engage with 'theoretical' issues at the start of their training, they felt that too great an emphasis had been put on these. Eight trainees suggested that 'theory', as they saw it, was separate and irrelevant to the development of teaching skills, and to knowledge which would be directly applicable in a classroom situation:

> Too much emphasis is placed on [research] rather than them telling us what to do if we're accused of touching a child or the real issues that occur day-to-day... enough about that theory and that theory, tell me how I mark a child's book. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

> I've learnt a lot from the things I've read, it's just that that was all very well and good in the beginning but it's just that now there's only so much theory you can really take on board and you kind of feel like you've got your values and things and you can get a bit overloaded with all that load of drivel. I think sometimes they put too much emphasis on, you know, can you quote the constructivist theory and things because you go and ask a real teacher in a real school... they don't relate to that anymore because they're in there doing a real job. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

Six trainees suggested that 'theory' was only of value when presented explicitly in the context of their own subject specialisms. For example, one interviewee, specialising in PE, commented that the professional studies part of her university training, designed to give a broad introduction to 'in-school' and other educational issues:

> seems to be completely irrelevant quite often... Take for example this week... [In professional studies on Monday] they had us analysing science written work, and we were all PE students saying 'hang on a second'... on the Tuesday the lecturer tried to adapt what has gone on [in Professional Studies] to PE which just seems a complete repetition really because you might as well have a PE and not Professional Studies. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, secondary, PE)*

Further to this, in six instances, even where PGCE trainees recognised that there were skills they might be able to develop more readily in schools than in their HEIs, trainees

nonetheless believed HEIs should help them to develop those skills prior to entering schools:

> We haven't had any lectures on marking. That is such a huge part of teaching. I can't believe we haven't had any lectures on that. But that is something that is hard to teach... you will pick it up in schools... but there must be some way [the university] could have done that... they've given us subject knowledge and they've taught us how to teach different subjects, but it's all the little extra things like displays and talking to parents. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

A final point was raised by one trainee who had not only expected her HEI to equip her with the skills and knowledge to teach, but had also expected the HEI-based part of her training to support her personal 'educational philosophy'. What the trainee saw as a mismatch between her aims as a teacher, and the content of her HEI-based tuition, was leading her to question her ability to teach in the manner she valued:

> We're having up to 16 hours a week [university input] on maths and English and science... I know they're the core subjects, but at the end of the day children need a balanced education and it makes you wonder whether you're going to be able to provide that. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

The GTP case study trainees, who have opted to train in-school, with minimal HEI input, offer an interesting contrast to the views, outlined above, of those PGCE trainees' with little prior experience in schools as adults. As will be illustrated below, GTP trainees are, in general, more positive than such trainees regarding the utility of 'theory' and HEI input.

6.2.2 GTP trainees

The GTP programmes which our case study trainees are following are QTS only (trainees do not gain a PGCE in addition). Reflecting this, trainees typically receive much less direct HEI input into their programmes than trainees on other training routes.

As a group, one of the central reasons the GTP case study trainees had opted to follow GTP programmes, was the fact that their training would be based fairly exclusively in schools. In making this decision, trainees were, prior to starting their training, often

making judgements about the 'value' of what they considered as 'theoretical' issues and HEI-based training. A desire for 'hands on learning' (male, 30-34, GTP, primary) and not to return to study, was common across the group. For example, in relation to 'theory' and how she imagined she might have been taught on a PGCE, one GTP trainee explained that, a term into her course, she was still happy with her decision to pursue her chosen route:

> I mean the theory might be nice and I'm sure there are certain things I might want to know in more depth that I would have got on a PGCE, but then you spend hours in a lecture theatre trying to think about how it would work in the classroom, whereas I can do things and see how they work in the classroom and it's so much more beneficial really. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

In addition, rather than expecting the HEI, or the consortium administering their training, to furnish them with everything they needed to know, some GTP trainees (n=7) saw their learning as much more self directed than the PGCE trainees cited above:

> I think GTP's the sort of thing where you drive your own learning anyway, so I'm confident that whatever I've got to do, I'll do it. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

In driving her own learning, one GTP trainee explained that, rather than dismissing 'theory', she had found it valuable to use the freedom she had to draw upon educational research to inform and evaluate her practice, seeing 'theory' and practice as intertwined:

> With the best will in the world, I don't think classroom management can be taught from a book. You need the life experience outside the classroom and you need to see it in action, and I suppose you could have argued that lots of observation in the classroom followed by 'try it out' [in the classroom] could have been most effective, but I found being able to try it and observe and read a load of literature all at the same time has probably been better for me. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, French)*

Thus, rather than, like those PGCE trainees with prior experience who were approaching 'theory' as a means of developing a better understanding of their practical experiences, this GTP trainee had adopted an approach early in her training which married theory and practice.

A number of GTP trainees highlighted the ways in which they felt they had benefited from HEI-based input as a means of expanding their knowledge and skills base. They highlighted a number of ways in which 'theory' enhanced their understanding of their early in-school experiences. Firstly, two GTP trainees explicitly highlighted how HEI-based input had helped them to develop a more holistic understanding of the policies and strategies they found themselves implementing in school:

> I actually enjoy coming into [my HEI]... some things are beneficial like... doing the Key Stage 3 national strategy. You don't really get the opportunity in school. You see it implemented all the time but you're not actually coming to grips with it. You haven't got the materials and the nitty gritty. *(Female, 35-39, GTP, secondary, PE)*

Secondly, five trainees highlighted the benefits of HEI-based input in introducing them to issues which they might not encounter in their training schools:

> The uni' side is useful because there are certain things that you wouldn't purposefully look at but they make you look at. For example, EAL [English as an Additional Language], the school I'm at at the minute has no-one... I wouldn't even have maybe thought of it as an issue... if it wasn't for a taught session you might not think of it and then panic when it did arise. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

Thirdly, trainees commented on the importance of being provided with a broader understanding of issues and a range of alternative approaches to those adopted in their teaching placement schools. In contrast to the PGCE trainees, some GTP trainees were worried that the understandings they were developing were too specific, having been formed in a particular school context (n=7):

> Being in a school I thought straight away I'm going to learn how the school is run and I thought I would learn more of the theory based stuff that you would do on maybe a PGCE, for example, classroom management skills. That hasn't really been covered. That's something we've been expected to learn in school... I'm very aware that when I go to a new school, I may have to learn it all again. I would welcome some more uni' input on that, something more general like you would get on a PGCE. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

I think what would be very useful [for the uni' to provide] would be, not an individual school's idea of SEN, but more of an overview of SEN [which is not specific to any one school]. *(Female, 35-39, GTP, secondary, history)*

When asked, having reflected on their experiences of training so far, what their ideal ITT programmes would involve, four of our case-study GTP trainees presented an enhanced role for 'theory' and university input:

My ideal programme would be... next term, when we've done something and we've got something to reflect back on, would be to have three or four days in uni', dotted through next term when we've got some experiences of classroom management, behaviour management and so on to reflect and develop what we're thinking about it... It's not a PGCE so... the aim of the course I guess is for it to be done in school but I think there could be a bit of input from the uni' maybe just two or three days from the uni' on how to do it. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

We come [into university] on Mondays and that's when they teach 'Subject'. On Tuesdays they do the pedagogy of teaching which I don't know anything about but [because I'm only in uni' on Mondays] I don't get to [attend these lectures]. [The university] need to teach us [GTP trainees] more about child psychology and pedagogy... why do children behave the way they do? *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

In addition, two GTP trainees explicitly stated that they felt they could have benefited from more HEI input prior to going into school. At the same time, however, these trainees also suggested that it is perhaps only now that they have spent some time in schools that they are able to identify those things they feel they would have benefited from knowing earlier on:

The taught sessions have been useful, the input we've had in college. I mean there are so many things that you feel you need to have in place before you actually get in [to the classroom] but in some ways you realise that you appreciate [these things] better when you come in to discuss them in the uni'... and then you gain some more methods through the taught sessions [at the uni']... you're at least getting it confirmed that what you're doing is right, or at least getting some guidelines. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

To reflect, it appears that the GTP trainees' views are quite similar to those of the PGCE trainees who had prior in-school experience as adults – within both groups, trainees tend to see 'theory' as valuable because it explains, situates, and further develops the

knowledge and skills they have already acquired in schools during their early training experiences.

We move now to consider the views of those case study trainees following BEd and BA/BSc QTS undergraduate training routes, who in general tend to be younger and who come to their ITT courses with fewer life experiences, including in-school experiences as adults, than those trainees discussed above.

6.2.3 Undergraduate trainees

Among the undergraduate trainees (from BA/BSc QTS and BEd programmes), three distinct groups emerge with regard to the value placed on 'theory' within their training. Nine trainees talked about theory and practice as being interrelated; six suggested 'theory' to be relevant primarily to obtaining a degree, seeing the acquisition of QTS as largely separate to this; and a further five trainees saw 'theory' as providing a useful 'background' to school experiences, though not as being something they would consciously draw upon when teaching. We consider these views below, dealing firstly with those undergraduate trainees who see 'theory' as related to practice (whether as a useful background to this, or as intertwined) and secondly, with those who viewed 'theory' as relevant primarily to obtaining a degree.

Theory related to practice

Those undergraduates who saw theory and practice as interrelated, tended to talk about this in relation to course duration and structure. These trainees recalled how their views had been changing during their training, from a prior / early expectation that their HEIs would provide all the skills and knowledge they needed to teach, to seeing the HEI and school-based components of their programmes as complementing one another. Although, by showing this shift in some undergraduate trainees' thinking, our focus extends beyond trainees' early ITT experiences, such discussion is justified in this instance as it provides a useful context for later research. It will be interesting to see whether, and if so at what stage in their ITT trainees following one year graduate programmes might start to develop their views on the usefulness and / or relevance of 'theory', and to what extent

these might relate to the views of those who have followed longer undergraduate programmes.

Where undergraduate trainees had initially questioned the relevance of the 'theoretical' aspects of their training, they also suggested that the length of their training programmes (three or four years) had allowed valuable opportunities to see 'theoretical' issues 'in practice':

> I think one of the things that really hit home is that you learn quite a lot while you're at university but it never really, like you can say you understand it, but it never really makes sense until you're in a school situation I don't think and I think that you can forget things, go into school and do something and your mentor says 'you could do this' and you think 'I learnt that at university but I'd just forgotten it because it has no real relevance till you're in school I don't think. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

> I think I thought there was going to be more 'here's a good idea, you can use this' which there was initially. You know, the first year or two you would get 'here's a pack of ideas for doing music lessons' but now it's more developing your own philosophies and your own ideas of, like assessing things yourself... partly through practice in the classroom, and partly, I guess, through being told, which you are to an extent, but it's a lot more you research yourself different teaching styles and you adopt one that suits you. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

In addition, for this group of undergraduate trainees, where they could not see the immediate relevance to teaching of the knowledge and skills they developed in an HEI context, trainees still anticipated being able to develop a clearer understanding of theory through practice:

> We may have been taught things and it wasn't until you got into school that you noticed you started to understand, so that... probably made it a bit more relaxed because if a lecturer had said something and you were a bit like 'oh oh' you know, you think 'well I'll wait until I go into school' and you know, see it carried out. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

There is, however, a question as to how trainees will use their knowledge of 'theory' in the future. The undergraduate trainees cited above suggest that 'theory' can be used to understand and inform practice, and vice versa, but at the same time, there were five

undergraduate trainees who talked about theory as useful *per se*, but were not sure to what extent they might consciously think to apply theory to their teaching, or use one to understand the other. For example, one BA QTS trainee, when asked if her experiences of training to date had been different in any way to her prior expectations, replied:

> No, not at all really, just, just like supporting you through with... having the knowledge and all the theory
> [Interviewer: What do you mean by theory?]
> Things like, psychologists you know what they've come out with and things and like you know they've done studies that found that children like to learn in this way or this way in certain subjects... you feel that it supports you ready for when you go into schools you know you've got it all there behind you and things. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

Another trainee volunteered:

> I feel that things like learning about theories of how children learn and things are useful, but I can't honestly say I've ever put them in my teaching, I think it more relies on your knowledge of your class, I don't think I've ever used what educational studies [pause] that's terrible. But maybe I do subconsciously, but I don't know. I think it will probably become more useful especially for answering [job] interview questions. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

Some of those who have not consciously drawn on 'theory' have been much more negative in their views, as we shall see as we now turn to consider the views of those undergraduate trainees who saw 'theory' as relevant only to obtaining a degree.

Theory as relevant to only to obtaining a degree

A final distinct group among the undergraduate trainees were the six trainees who saw the HEI-based part of their training as necessary to gain their undergraduate degree, with this being a separate exercise to gaining QTS and developing teaching skills:

> I originally thought that a lot more of my marks towards my degree would be based on my school experience and my teaching experience, but… the emphasis is on being able to write a good essay and knowing this person said this and this… In the opinion of people I've spoken to, the head teachers and teachers, you're never going to use it, you need to have practical experience and confidence. That is my main objection to this course at the minute. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

Notably, there was also still an undergraduate trainee in the case study sample who, even at the start of her second / final year in training, was critical of the HEI-based element of her training, for failing to address all the issues she might encounter in schools:

> [The university training should include] just some things that when you went into schools you didn't feel like such a complete and utter idiot when they are talking about things and you don't know what they mean. You know, some of the terms, what some of the terms mean. The school I'm at at the moment is about to be 'Ofsteded', and they all keep groaning on about this S9 form and you do feel a bit of an idiot when you have to go and ask somebody what an S9 form is. *(Female, 30-34, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

Reflecting on the data from BEd and BA / BSc QTS trainees, where these undergraduate trainees have started to marry theory and practice, this appears to relate, in part, to the duration and sequencing of their programmes, in that they have had the opportunity in schools to see the value of 'theory'. This said, not all of the undergraduate trainees had started, by the final year of their training programmes, to link the HEI- and school-based elements of their training. Some, although believing 'theory' to be useful, doubt that it will prove relevant beyond getting their degree and presenting themselves at job interviews.

We turn, finally, to look at those trainees following SCITT programmes. Interestingly, while SCITT programmes typically last for only one year, the attitudes of SCITT trainees towards the theoretical aspects of their training broadly mirror those presented by undergraduate trainees.

6.2.4 SCITT trainees

Within the case study cohort, SCITT trainees appear largely split between those who see 'theory' as irrelevant and as an adjunct to time spent in schools (n=5), and those trainees who, at an early stage in their ITT, have started to draw together their knowledge of 'theoretical issues' and their in-school experiences (n=7). In addition, two SCITT trainees identified the 'theoretical' components of their early training before they went into schools, as useful knowledge to have prior to in-school training. A further three trainees,

reflecting on their early training experiences, suggested that their one year SCITT programmes would not be long enough to accommodate both 'theoretical' and 'practice' based elements – and saw teaching experience as the more important of the two. To reflect these different views, we consider firstly, trainees views of theory in terms of its relevance to their training, and secondly, we look at how some trainees have, given time constraints, prioritised 'practice'.

Trainees' views of the relevance of theory

For those SCITT trainees who had started to link the 'theoretical' and 'practical' elements of their training at an early stage, four related this specifically to the structure of their SCITT programmes. One trainee had sought an ITT programme with a structure he believed would facilitate such linking:

> It was just the course that let you do set days a week in schools, so things that we learnt in lectures from tutors, you could apply them almost straight away. Obviously we didn't have the skills to begin with, but it was easier rather than spending seven or eight weeks sat in a lecture hall and then suddenly being thrown into the classroom. This was a much more gradual process which certainly helped me. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, primary)*

By contrast, five SCITT trainees viewed the HEI-based elements of their programme as irrelevant to, or in two instances, as a lead into, in-school experiences, where the 'real' learning would take place:

> I mean, learning styles and theorists and that kind of thing. It gives you that, which on reflection is probably useless to be honest. When you go into a class of thirty Year 7s your mind doesn't even think about ten minutes ahead, never mind two months ago. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, secondary, ICT)*

Like some of the PGCE trainees seen earlier, three trainees following SCITT with a PGCE qualification, commented that they had not expected there to be such a substantive academic element to their training. As one trainee put it:

> One thing about this course is that there are more essays which I didn't expect. I thought I'd done all that before, doing the degree I had done essays, but

unfortunately there are quite a lot of essays which don't really help. You want to be more focused on the teaching part of it, not the academic part. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT, primary)*

Prioritising 'practice'

Three trainees suggested that only having one year to in which to train, the academic element of their training programmes should take second place to the practical – though the two might be married at a later stage:

> Some days I feel like, even professional studies, I feel, how does that relate to what I'm trying to do in teaching? Maybe when I start my NQT year it will all link in... but because I'm going through a certain period of time, I'm so focused on what I need to do. *(Female, 20-24, SCITT with PGCE, primary)*

To reflect on the views of SCITT trainees as they related to their early experiences, it is notable that the trainees hold a range of divergent views, and it will be interesting to explore whether the different positions outlined above persist until the end of trainees' ITT programmes, and whether (further down the road) they might relate to other aspects of our case study participants' early professional development and early career paths. It will also be important to explore whether those trainees who do not (consciously) make connections between theory and practice during their ITT begin to do so during the induction year for newly qualified teachers.

6.3 Summary and implications

Meanings attributed by trainees to 'theory'

Findings presented in this chapter show that:

- Overall, trainees used the term 'theory' to refer to a broad range of knowledge ranging from the work of developmental psychologists to knowledge of the national curriculum and guidelines on lesson planning and assessment.
- Different individuals appeared to conceptualise 'theory' in different ways, from broad general notions ('if it isn't 'practice', it is 'theory'), to more specific references to, for example, 'theories' or research findings about how pupils learn.

- No discernable differences in case study participants' conceptions of 'theory' were found between trainees following different ITT routes, or trainees with varying amounts of prior experience in schools.

- Identifiable differences in trainees' perceptions related largely to the utility of 'theory' and its relationship with practice.

- Among those trainees who saw 'theory' as useful and relevant to their (classroom) practice, some had *entered* ITT with the belief that 'theory' would help them to understand and develop their in-school experiences, while others had come to see connections between 'theory' and 'practice' *after* they had begun their ITT programmes, notably after gaining some practical experience in schools.

Conditions which facilitate a positive perception of 'theory'

Data relating to this issue suggest that:

- people with more experience in schools as adults (i.e. in addition to that gained as pupils), whether prior to or during their training, were more likely to perceive 'theory' as useful and relevant to and connected with the practice of teaching.

- when trainees have *prior* experience in schools as adults and *bring* that experience *to* any exposure to 'theory' (as conceptualised by the trainees in question), its relevance and utility is more readily and immediately seen.

While some trainees may have entered training with questions and issues to resolve in respect of their experiences in schools, it is possible that implicit experiential learning associated with prior experiences in schools as adults may have created an ability to see a relevance and value for 'theory' when it is encountered, without any conscious process of deliberation or reflection on action. Support for this hypothesis can be found in the work of Claxton (1998), Atkinson & Claxton (2000) and Tomlinson (1999a, 1999b) amongst others.

For trainees without extensive prior experience in schools as adults, some data suggest that trainees might eventually come to see 'theory' as relevant to 'practice' via a conscious process of 'reflection-on-action', in which aspects of practice are explained or

understood through perceived 'theoretical' frames, or planned for with the help of 'theory'. What is of note in these data is that there are only a few indications of this process actually occurring. This may be because trainees had not yet had enough experience in schools, or it is possible that a 'theory before experience' sequencing is eventually effective only for certain types of trainee: those who are reflective either by disposition or training.

The findings reported above, relating both to trainees' conceptualisations of 'theory' and to the conditions required for trainees to view 'theory' as useful, are of key importance to policy-makers, teacher education and the teaching profession alike. It is necessary, not only for individual teacher development, but also for the development of the profession and the education sector, for trainees and teachers to view 'theory' as 'useful' in order to be equipped, for example, to be responsive to circulars and documents intended to be supportive, or to potentially helpful explanatory frameworks or 'conceptual tools' resulting from educational research. Teacher education programmes need therefore to be structured and implemented in ways which:

- take the specific conceptions of 'theory' held by particular trainees into account
- facilitate, in part through careful sequencing of programme components, trainees' abilities to see the connections, relevance and utility of 'theory', however this is conceptualised
- engage trainees and teachers in critical (re-)evaluations of their conceptions of 'theory'
- engage trainees, and their tutors, in critical reflection on practice in ways which integrate personal theorising with public or academic theory (e.g. how children learn) in the development of a 'personal practical knowledge' of teaching and learning (Shulman, 1986)

To reiterate, findings presented in this chapter and discussed above, seem to suggest that considerable *experience in schools as adults,* that is, experience over and above that of an 'apprenticeship of observation' as pupils (Lortie, 1975), is, for many trainees, necessary for 'theory' to be seen as useful, and for informed development to occur.

Later stages of this project will explore these issues further. It remains to be seen, for example, whether those trainees who, at the time of the interviews reported here, appeared more sceptical of the value of 'theory', later draw on theory to understand and develop their teaching and vice versa, as they gain more classroom experience. Equally, it will be interesting to see whether those GTP trainees who reported that they may have been 'losing out', still hold this view at the end of their training, and if they do, whether they will seek to address this as part of their early professional development. In general, it will be interesting to see in later stages of this project, whether, in what ways, to what extent, and in what circumstances, trainees' views on these issues (what constitutes 'theory', how useful that is, the extent to which they perceive it as inseparable from practice) may change. We will also seek to discover whether views become more (or even less) differentiated by route and / or provider.

We now turn to explore data relating to trainees' early in-school experiences of being a trainee teacher.

7 Trainees' early experiences of ITT

Kerr, Hobson, Malderez & Tracey

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we explore case study trainees' accounts of their early experiences of ITT, with a particular focus on their early experiences in schools and on how they adapt to being in teaching roles as trainee teachers. We report data which were generated when interviewees were asked to recall their first five or six weeks in schools, focusing on the types of in-school activities they were expected to engage with; how they were introduced to the school community; and their relationships with members of school staff.

To reflect these issues, and to explore aspects of trainees' early development as teachers, the chapter is organized under the following headings:

- trainees' transition from previous occupations
- trainees' early introduction to teaching
- trainees' early development relating to their in-school experiences
- support from school staff.

7.2 Trainees' transition from previous occupations

Throughout the report, we have explored apparent links between trainees' backgrounds and life stages, the choices they have made in relation to ITT, and their prior expectations of ITT and teaching. Taking this theme further, when we considered case study participants' experiences of taking on the role of 'trainee teacher', some interesting contrasts appeared from a grounded analysis of the data which seem to relate, in part, to the occupations case study participants held prior to entering ITT. As a result, we consider below the experiences of those coming from support staff backgrounds, those who had pursued alternative (non education related) careers prior to entering ITT, and those classed earlier as students / recent graduates (*see* Chapter 2: Research Design). In

many cases, experiences that trainees discussed related to the ways they discovered, during the early periods they spent in schools as trainees, that their pre-course concerns (*see* Chapter 5), were either founded or unfounded.

7.2.1 Support staff

As indicated in Chapter 5, trainees who had previously held support roles reported a number of concerns about the transition from working *for* a teacher, to actually being a teacher. Eleven trainees anticipated that, should they train in the same school, they would still be viewed by staff, pupils parents, as having a support role, with this undermining their ability to develop as teachers. In two instances (1 PGCE; 1 GTP) trainees explained that they had consciously decided to move school to avoid this scenario, wanting a 'fresh start':

> I didn't do it in my own school because I wasn't sure that it would be so easy there... I felt I had already gone from a transition from being a parent to being a member of staff, and to change again from being a member of support staff to be a member of the teaching staff, I wasn't sure, especially in the set up there, whether I would have been accepted or how that would have gone down. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

Trainees who stayed in the same schools reported a range of initial anxieties about how others would receive their new role / status, though, at an early stage in their training, were generally able to view these prior concerns as 'false fears'. Two trainees, both working in secondary schools, said they were concerned at first about how they would be viewed by pupils. One of these is quoted below:

> I was a bit concerned because having been a support assistant [the pupils] always knew that I wasn't the one in charge, the teacher was and ultimately had the final word so I was a bit worried that when I started teaching they wouldn't look at me like that, but I've not had any problems at all with that. They seem to have accepted the fact that I'm a teacher now and I tell them what to do and they do it. It's been all right. *(Female, 30-34, RTP, secondary, ICT)*

Another concern for trainees who had previously held support roles in their teaching placement schools, was how fellow support staff would view their change in role (n=5).

106

One interviewee, when asked how, prior to training, she had envisaged her relationship with other staff as a trainee, commented:

> I wasn't very confident about that because I had been a technician and LSA, particularly with the other LSAs. I thought I might have a problem with them that they might not like to see me, you know, going up and doing something, and getting a bit more pay than them and I've been there less time, and I thought that might be a problem, but they've been very supportive in my lessons. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

Although trainees' experiences of staying in the same school were, on the whole, positive, two RTP trainees reported a level of reticence among staff who were unclear about the trainees' new status within their schools:

> Because I'd been at my present school for four years and I'd gone as a nursery nurse, to suddenly change position, some people weren't quite aware 'if she's not a nursery nurse what is she? She's not a student because she's not out at college all the time, she works here all the time'. *(Female, 45 or over, RTP, primary)*

How trainees viewed themselves, and came to see their previous supporting roles, was also an important area of transition for some when moving to a trainee role. Two trainees (1 PGCE, 1 RTP) talked about how they were sometimes uncertain as to what tasks they could undertake, now they were no longer support staff:

> At first, because I'd worked as a classroom assistant before, I found it hard to switch from the role of assistant to a teacher and I wasn't sure, as trainees, what was expected of us. There was obviously a classroom assistant in class and a teacher. Whilst the classroom assistant was tidying up, I was thinking well, should I be tidying up or should I be being the teacher? *(Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary)*

> It was a big thing [becoming a trainee], I was very nervous about it. I think after about the first four weeks I started to believe it. I mean I still do things I used to do when I was a technician that I should just leave... I get my wrists rapped in a jokey sort of way and get told to leave that alone now, no other teacher would put the washing in the washing machine when they've got to teach a lesson. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

Three trainees also talked about how they had come to reflect on their previous support roles, and through this, were developing an appreciation of how best to work with support staff:

> I think obviously because I've done the job that they've done, that helps as well because I can understand from their point of view I think. *(Female, 35-39, RTP, secondary, D&T)*

> When Ofsted came they complemented me on my planning for the support assistants but I know about that being important because when I was a TA sometimes the teacher wouldn't tell you what you were doing and if you didn't know you couldn't help. I like to have it all planned out and little bits for them to do. *(Female, 25-29, GTP, secondary, Business Studies)*

In the longer term, it will be interesting to see whether those who have previously held support posts report different kinds of relationships with support staff (or indeed other staff or pupils), to those teachers from other backgrounds.

7.2.2 Career Changers

As we saw in earlier chapters, some trainees who pursued alternative careers outside education prior to entering ITT, talked about skills they had developed in previous occupations which would help ease their transition into a teaching role. For example, one trainee, who had worked in the construction industry, reasoned:

> Before I did this [PGCE] I worked on a building site for four years so I sort of thought of the skills on a building site and then I had to think really hard what they were. But one of them I realised was being able to communicate with all sorts of people. So I realised that that's probably a skill I can transfer. And another skill, I had to sort of work with numbers a fair bit, that was another skill I could transfer. *(Male, 25-29, PGCE, primary)*

Nevertheless a small number of 'career changing' trainees reported difficulties in making the transition from their previous occupational roles, to taking on the role of trainee teacher. Where these trainees made reference to specific features of their teaching placement schools, they talked about how they had found schools to:

- have different status relationships or more hierarchical structures than their previous working environments (n=4)
- have a less collegial ethos (n=3)
- be organized inefficiently and have poor communication systems (n=2).[39]

Illustrative quotations are provided below:

> I'm used to going into businesses and telling people what they're doing wrong and how they should restructure their business. I went to a meeting on how the school was going to make provision for able students. I raised my hand and a teacher commented on why was I giving an opinion when I'm not even a teacher. They are like that. *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

> Just the way departments are organised, it's very strange... it just doesn't feel like a very cohesive unit. It doesn't feel like there's a team producing a product... it's like there's a load of individuals there and they could be anywhere and that wasn't what I was expecting. *(Male, 40-44, PGCE, secondary, maths)*

With specific regard to teaching activities, four trainees talked about their early realisations that training people in industrial and commercial settings is very different from teaching pupils. This is particularly interesting given that these trainees had indicated that their previous involvement in providing training had been one of the reasons they wanted to enter teaching in the first instance:

> I'd done presentations at work but still, standing in front of that number of people is a shocker. There's nothing that compares to bad and good… [When it's bad you can see pupils'] jaws drop, like what the hell's he talking about, which is the worst side really... Nothing can prepare you for standing in front of the little so-and-sos. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, secondary, ICT)*

A final point is that of the three trainees in the case study sample who, at an early stage, said they would leave ITT and pursue alternative careers if training did not meet their expectations, two were 'career changers' who identified difficulties in making the transition from their previous occupations. For example, the secondary ICT GTP trainee

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[39] As only small numbers of trainees raised these issues (and others were not specifically asked about them), we are not able to comment on how widespread such perceptions may be.

cited earlier in this section (*male, 40-44*), was of the view that if he had to make what he saw as too many compromises in order to fit into the role of teacher (both in terms of the sort of teacher he wanted to be and ways in which he wanted to do things) he would simply leave ITT and return to industry:

> You have to go with the flow and if you don't, you're just going to spend your career swimming upstream and there's no point in that. I didn't go in with a view of bucking the system. I went in with the view that I am a certain personality, I will teach in a certain way, and if they don't like it, then I won't be a teacher, I'll just do it for a year and leave... If my personality and way of doing things didn't fit into the system, I'd go back to IT.

We turn now to look at the third distinct group identified earlier – namely those who, in their early in-school experiences have had to make a transition from 'student status' to the status of trainee teacher.

7.2.3 Students

For those entering teacher training programmes straight from A-level courses, undergraduate courses, or with little break in between to pursue alternative careers (i.e. less than two years), data suggest that there are two central areas of transition during their early training. These involve: (i) the transition from A-level to undergraduate study, or from undergraduate to graduate level study; and (ii) the introduction to a professional lifestyle and the responsibilities associated with this.

We see that for some of the trainees coming straight from A-levels, their initial concerns were more closely related to pursuing a degree programme and becoming undergraduates, than with the practicalities of teaching and obtaining QTS (n=5). For example, one trainee drew attention to the transition between being an 'A'-level student living at home, to leaving home to pursue a BA with QTS:

> I've had to learn to cook for myself, wash up and all that, so it is basic skills that set you up for life... The first year was... just getting into the new way of life and new friends and new experiences and things. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

Trainees who expressed concerns about pursuing a degree programme also recalled concerns about the academic element of their programmes:

> When I started at the university, [I was] particularly excited about going into schools, concerned maybe about the workload I think... you have assignments for all the modules... I think that was the main thing and maybe there's always in your mind I've only been to college, I'm only young, will I ever make it through university? *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

> You come in and you go to your first lecture and they start bringing in all those things, and start using terminology and it's like 'oh my God, what are they talking about?' and you write it all down... You know like science, some of the information you already know but you've forgotten it because you did it at school. I mean I only did it a few years ago in GCSEs... so you are trying to remember it... It's all a bit overwhelming at first. *(Female, 20-24, BEd, primary)*

One of the PGCE trainees who had entered ITT immediately after completing a BA in English and Media spoke about the transition from undergraduate to graduate study coming as a shock:

> You know, when you do your first degree you've got so much time, and my dad was really against my first degree because I had so much spare time and he thought you've got to pay all this money to go and then you're not doing anything, and now he's really shocked by how much I'm doing... I'm always like working. [My parents] can't believe it really, even they think it's too much. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

More specifically related to the development of a 'professional lifestyle' and the responsibilities associated with this, five interviewees from a 'student' background highlighted certain 'life-skills' they had had to develop as trainee teachers (n=5). For example, three trainees commented on having to learn to 'dress as teachers', with one trainee identifying one of the most useful parts of her early training as lectures on 'the professional side really, on how to dress and the code of practice' *(Female, 20-24, BEd, primary)*. Another trainee recalled:

> When we first started - you used to think, you know when your alarm clock went off early, 'oh this is so annoying' just because you weren't used to getting up that early. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

Interestingly, one trainee talked about how his perception of teachers changed during his early training, his initial thoughts about teachers being based on the perceptions he had as a student:

> I thought I'd be totally different from all the other staff and have absolutely nothing in common, they'd be really old and they don't go out and they don't like football, but that's total rubbish. Even the old ones go out. From working in schools a bit you begin to see the other side of teachers. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, English)*

Five trainees on undergraduate routes, who had come straight from A-levels, talked about their growing realisation that teaching is a 'responsible job'. In this, they indicated that they had started to make a shift from 'student status' in which responsibility is largely individual, to a 'teacher status', where they are responsible not only for their own actions, but for the pupils they teach:

> I don't think you realise until you're actually on school placement how much maybe the kids rely on you and especially, as a young person, how much they'll tell you... and being responsible and things, because going straight from school to college to university on my first teaching practice I was 18 and at 19 I was teaching secondary school kids and to me that's nuts that I had this responsibility for those children. But also, you learn through other people that it's important and not that scary or anything but before I don't think I had any idea of what a responsibility it was... I think you grow up a lot. God knows what I was thinking when I took this on. I think I have changed a lot definitely. More responsible, more mature. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

Having presented some of the contrasts trainees noted between their lifestyles as students, and as trainee teachers in schools, it is interesting to reflect that, as we saw in Chapter 4, one reason mature trainees gave for following employment-based routes, and to a lesser extent, school-centred routes, was that they did not want to return to being students, having been professionals. This, coupled with the contrasts set out above, reaffirm the importance of examining trainees' backgrounds and their expectations in order to contextualize and make sense of their subsequent experiences of ITT and teaching.

7.3 Trainees' early introduction to teaching

Although there are differences in the balance of elements offered by different training routes, case study data suggest that trainees from different routes have had broadly similar early introductions to teaching in their teaching placement schools. When asked about activities they had undertaken during their early in-school experiences, some of the activities referred to, unprompted, by case study trainees included:

- observation (of experienced teachers teaching and of pupils working) (n=20)
- working with class teachers to plan and deliver parts of lessons (n=15)
- being introduced to the school environment and community – e.g. talking to subject co-ordinators, SEN teachers, reading school policies (n=10)
- small group work with pupils (n=6).

Interesting differences appear between trainees following different training routes in relation to their attitudes towards these early activities. Unprompted, four GTP trainees suggested they had benefited from a gradual lead into teaching, in that it had allowed them to gain knowledge about their placement schools which would inform their practice as teachers. For example, one primary GTP trainee recalled:

> When I first started in September, it was an important time just to get your head round the logistics... it's just unbelievable with all the health and safety and various things, you can't just take the register in the morning, it's got to be dinner dots and red cards for if someone has a problem and link classes and they've just got endless rules and policy... what you've got to wear or not wear for PE and whether you're allowed to take their earrings out or you're not allowed to take their earrings out for them and who's going to store them so you don't get accused of nicking them. *(Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

It may be that these GTP trainees appear to have felt less pressure to teach at a very early stage knowing that their training route will maximise the time they spend in schools and opportunities to teach. Indeed, in three instances where GTP trainees were unsure at what point in their training they would be expected to start teaching, they were relieved to find there would be a 'lead-in' period:

> I think lots of us thought we were going to arrive and it was going to be 'there's your class, here's your book, this is the scheme we want you to follow'... I was going from a very naive perspective of 'if I'm given a class on day one what will I do? Will I just have somebody pop in occasionally and point me in the right direction?' At least that point was cleared up when I first went to the school and one of the first things my school-based tutor said was 'you won't have your own class', so that at least clarified that point. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

In a similar vein, a SCITT trainee who, although initially frustrated at being unable to take a leading role in the classroom, reflected that had he been asked to teach sooner, he would not have been ready to do so. He also suggests that the programme of lead in activities suited his needs, although he became aware of this only with hindsight.

> It was very teacher led... he would ask me to concentrate on say, addition or subtraction, work through it with [small groups] and give them lots of examples and just keep doing it until they're almost fed up... At that time I felt quite frustrated, but now I feel that it suited me and possibly because I was going in feeling quite nervous... I had to gradually take it in and finally fell on my feet. Looking back now, I think if you'd asked me to teach sooner, I would have found it perhaps much more difficult. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, primary)*

When considering these views, it is important to take into account the related issues of: (1) at what point in their ITT trainees undertake their early in-school experiences; and (2) how much preparation for teaching trainees receive prior to entering schools. While trainees following different routes tended to undertake similar activities during their early in-school experiences, those on employment-based and school-centred routes tend to experience these at an earlier stage in their training, and consequently may not have had as much out-of-school (notably HEI-based) preparation for teaching prior to entering schools as those on other routes. With this in mind, we turn now to consider whether trainees on HEI-based routes present different views about their early in-school experiences.

Eleven trainees, all from HEI-based training routes, said they found a gradual lead in to teaching in the classroom to be monotonous and / or frustrating. For example, one

114

trainee, who spent her first three weeks in school observing and working with small groups, commented:

> Imagine how boring it was, over those three weeks. It was awful, it really was. You were under people's feet... I mean, even if you are helping in a class, you can only help so much. I think it was just to make sure people didn't hate schools. *(Female, 30-34, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

Such negative feelings may be considered in relation to the structure of the ITT programmes followed by trainees on HEI-based routes. For example, one BA QTS trainee, whose early experiences in schools had consisted of two four week placements – largely observation-based – one in her first year and one in her second year, stated:

> I expected, when we were told we were going into schools the first and the second time, I think it would have been a lot more beneficial if we had been able to stand up in front of the class because... you sort of waste two years if you get to the third year and [still don't know if] you can stand up and teach… [then if you find you can't and you] quit the course, you end up with nothing. Whereas, if you had a chance in the first year then maybe [if you find you can't stand up and teach] you have lost a couple of weeks. *(Female, 25-29, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)*

One PGCE trainee commented how, given the compact nature of her programme, she felt it important to start teaching early on:

> Obviously, the year is only nine months long, and if you're going to get a taste of teaching ready for your long school placement after Christmas, you really need at least to start having a go... I think once in the school, you wanted to have a go quite quickly. Previously, coming to the course you think 'oh my God, I can't stand in front of a class in a month', but after a month, because you've been observing, you just want to do a bit of a lesson, even if it's only group work. *(Female, 25-29, PGCE, secondary, English)*

It may be that those on HEI-based programmes have felt that, having had various forms of HEI-based preparation for teaching before entering schools, they did not need as much support on entering the school as those from other routes. Such findings may also suggest a need, at least in some instances, for a closer active partnership between HEIs and

115

schools. This may, in part, explain the negative tenor found in the way some PGCE and undergraduate trainees talked about their early in-school experiences.

7.4 Trainees' early development relating to their in-school experiences

In this section, we explore trainees' accounts of aspects of their early development within classroom teaching situations. By focusing, in particular, on the 'coping strategies' trainees report having adopted to help them respond to in-school situations, we are able to gain some potential insights into their early development as teachers. Here, we consider, in turn, how trainees had started to:

- develop a teacher identity
- rationalise when things went wrong
- develop an early reliance on plans and paper.

7.4.1 Developing an image of 'the self as teacher'

On first entering classrooms in a teaching role, a central coping strategy reported by some trainees was to adopt what they saw as a 'teacher persona' which would help them to establish effective classroom management. Relating to this, twelve trainees reported that even at an early stage during their in-school experiences, they had started to move away from their prior belief that there is an 'off the peg' 'teacher persona', to a realisation that as teachers, they would need to develop their own classroom personas, shaped in part by their own personal characteristics or identities:

> You try to be the type of person you think they want you to be but as time goes on you realise that actually the score has changed. You don't have to be an automated person. You are your own person, you bring all these things to the job, obviously under the confines of the school... I think it's almost like a misconception for people that you're a teacher and I had the same misconception thinking teachers were straight-laced. You have to keep control of your class... that's more like a personal confidence thing rather than how I'm supposed to behave in the school. There's no rulebook to say you have to be like this, bringing in your personality to the teaching role is part of how you teach. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

116

I was worried that obviously I'm in a job of a lot of responsibility, but I've learnt that you don't have to drastically put on this teacher persona... I think that if you've got it, you teach. I mean I teach very much through my personality, and I think that a lot of the time that's a plus, because I think the children... relax and they feel safe around you. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, drama)*

I'm not really as strict as I thought I would be, but it's all about respect and setting boundaries which I didn't even think of doing before. I do find I can talk to the children, they're a lot more grown up than I thought they would be and you can talk, actually have a good laugh with them... I was obviously worried about the control of the children but that's not really a problem. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, PE)*

In contrast, other case-study trainees talked about how, at first, they had sought to become friends with their pupils, and then found themselves having to adopt a more authoritative 'teacher persona' (n=8):

I suppose when I went into my placement I realised that I, especially when you first go in, you want to be liked by the children don't you, but then you have to be firm to get their respect... so I suppose I changed in that way... I probably went in there being a bit soft to start with. *(Female, 25-29, BEd, primary)*

I was used to speaking to the children in a certain way being more like a friend than a teacher. [When I started in school] I had children coming up and hugging me and talking about what they did at the weekend and then when I had to teach them at the end of the second week there were discipline problems because I hadn't got the right respect and showed them what my role was... I knew I'd done wrong and I changed and I took on an authoritative role and that worked and now my role is completely as a teacher. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

How trainees were introduced to pupils also appears to have had some bearing on how able the trainees felt to establish themselves as teachers in the eyes of pupils. Fifteen trainees explained how being introduced as a 'trainee', 'associate' or 'student', made it difficult for them to establish themselves in a teaching role:

I think if the children know, especially the older children, if they find out that you're a student... they tend to try and wind you up basically. We were given a badge... and it said 'graduate teacher training programme' and I just thought 'I am not wearing it' so it got shoved in the bag and left there until I left because I just

117

thought that is going to be a hurdle for me to get over. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

Where trainees were not explicitly introduced to pupils, or their status was not made clear, they reported mixed experiences, some positive, some negative. In 15 instances, trainees stated that they were introduced as 'Mr...' or 'Mrs...' without their status being addressed. Nine of these trainees found that they were readily accepted in a teaching role:

> The children are almost unaware that I'm training. That hasn't been laid out... they are children, they just think 'it's Miss'. *(Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

Others (n=6) suggested that their lack of introduction caused confusion, with pupils being unsure how to react. Where trainees had spent some time in classrooms observing before taking on teaching responsibilities, this was seen to be a particular issue:

> It was a little strange in that when we were observing lessons, they never introduced us, we just sat at the back... mostly the kids ignored you when you were around which was a bit weird. And then when you suddenly appeared at the front it was 'Whoa, what are you doing?' *(Male, 40-44, PGCE, secondary, maths)*

7.4.2 Rationalisation

During case study interviews, various trainees volunteered, without prompting, other coping mechanisms that they had developed to help them manage their early in-school experiences. One strategy (n=3) was for trainees to identify any discipline problems they experienced as characteristic to their placement school, or to a particular group of pupils, rather than being related to their teaching skills. For example, one GTP trainee recalled:

> I did a lesson with my boss observing. It didn't go brilliantly, it felt like the opening scene from Saving Private Ryan and she took the next half of the lesson. It was Year 9, very difficult kids, but I coped. I wasn't a brilliant teacher, but I got through the two hours. *(Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

Another trainee had reasoned that although he was encountering difficulties in his teaching (and identified pupils as partly responsible for this), the outcomes he had wanted to achieve by entering teaching were still obtainable, and would become more so:

[The placement I'm in] it's just got incredibly poor discipline and behaviour problems... people kind of think 'oh you know, they're only students what can they do' but if it's different students all the time giving you lip... it wears you down emotionally... There are days when I just come home thinking 'bloomin heck', you know, almost in tears, going 'I can't do this' but then you pick yourself up because you have a, you know, you have one of those experiences that makes you think, 'okay, yeah, this is the right career for me, this is the right choice and I'm making a difference.... when something clicks... and [the pupils] realise that all [the] work and effort they've put in throughout the lesson culminates in something worthwhile and relevant to them... You kind of think 'wow breakthrough' definitely. I think after all that's why anyone goes into the profession. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, drama)*

Four trainees talked about how they saw themselves as engaged in a learning process, with mistakes being part of this, and teaching skills being something that they would build up over time:

When I went into the school... [the teachers] made it look so easy. Anything that came up they had an answer for straightaway... I did feel it might be impossible to pick all this up in 12 months. I remember thinking that they do make it look so easy, but reminding myself that they've been doing it for so many more years... I said to myself not to be silly, you're not going to be fantastic on day one. I broke it down to myself block by block. *(Male, 30-34, SCITT, primary)*

7.4.3 Reliance on plans and paper

A further coping strategy reported, unprompted, by a number of trainees (n=6) was an initial reliance in classroom situations on lesson plans and worksheets. For example, when reflecting on her early teaching experiences, one BA QTS trainee recalled:

You know, I had ridiculous plans coming out of my ears and you know, even the teachers were kind of laughing and saying I can't believe you plan this much, but then to me it was essential, because I was so nervous I needed the plan to be there so that I knew exactly what I was doing. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

One trainee recalled a lesson, early in his training, when he realised it was impossible to plan for all eventualities:

> The first day everything went, I won't say wrong, but I didn't act like myself. As it went on and you knew exactly what was happening you could plan for things going wrong, you knew what might go wrong, like I've left all the books out and no-one has taken them... but then, a little thing I hadn't thought about [happened. A pupil asked] 'can I open the window?' and [the pupil] was on a table about to open a high window. *(Male, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, English)*

Those data (to date) which suggest a lessening reliance on detailed lesson plans, come predominantly from undergraduate trainees, who were interviewed early in their fourth year of training and (whilst asked about their first 5-6 weeks in school) tended to reflect over a longer period of time than trainees from other ITT routes. It will be interesting to see whether trainees from different routes present similar reflections on their experiences in the future.

7.5 Support from school staff

A further important feature of trainees' early experiences in school, relates to how well trainees felt they were supported within their schools as they took their first steps in teaching. In-school mentors and the attitudes of staff within their teaching placement schools more generally, were highlighted by our case study trainees as important factors shaping their early experiences. In the majority of cases, trainees reported positive experiences, though a minority reported that relations with their mentors and / or other school staff had a negative impact on their early experiences in schools.

7.5.1 In-school mentors

Thirty-nine trainees spoke, unprompted, about how their relationships with their in-school mentors had had a positive impact on their early experiences. Of these, the majority talked in very general terms – 'my mentor was fantastic and gave me lots of support' being a very typical sentiment. Eighteen trainees talked about specific aspects of their relationships with their mentors, or specific ways in which their mentors had helped them. Below we set out some examples of the range of ways trainees recalled having been helped by their mentors.

One BA QTS trainee who described herself as 'overwhelmed' going into her first school placement aged 18, explained how her mentor had helped to boost her confidence:

> The teacher I was with, very experienced, key stage 2 co-ordinator, special needs co-ordinator, you know, fantastic. She was really supportive although she wasn't, she didn't sort of 'come on now, you're doing really well'. It was quite a tough love approach really with her, you know, sort of like 'of course you can do it!' which I needed. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

Another trainee recalled how her mentor had acted to help her maintain her status in the classroom after a difficult session:

> There was one particular lesson which hadn't gone very well and there were reasons for it, and apart from that, I hadn't managed the class terribly well so I learnt a bit from that and [my mentor] was very good. She actually had a word with the class afterwards and said 'your behaviour, your concentration, this time wasn't as good as the last time I saw you'... so I think that is probably a big advantage to me. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, secondary, MFL)*

In four instances, mentors were seen to have an important role in providing trainees with strategies which they could use to improve their teaching:

> I'd spent one session and it was almost like I was shouting, my voice just rose and rose and at the end of it I was really hot and flustered and my teacher who'd been watching me, she fed back to me afterwards and she gave me some strategies to use and I used them next time and they worked. *(Female, 25-29, GTP, secondary, history)*

One trainee, although not recalling a specific incident, spoke about how he found it reassuring to know that his mentor would be there to support him as and when he encountered difficulties:

> I guess the most useful person during that early time was my mentor because that was the person who I could kind of, always knew was there in school, if I did have a problem or something went wrong ... I could have gone to my mentor... You know, he'd given me his home phone number, I had ways of contacting him and he'd said to me, you know 'whenever you need to ring me, ring me', so I felt like I could, he made me feel comfortable with that. *(Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, drama)*

Another trainee highlighted how her mentor, as well as responding to any difficulties encountered, offered guidance which helped to establish good working practices at the outset and thus offset a number of potential difficulties:

People moan about paperwork and stuff but I have a really good mentor... [with] a good attitude to it all which she's instilling in me, you know 'don't do more than you need to. Get the basics. Yes, you've got to do it properly but there's a way of doing it properly and not stressing out over it'. She's helping me to manage my role from the beginning. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

Finally, some mentors (n=7) were identified as having helped trainees explicitly to shape their own early in-school experiences in terms of the activities they were engaged in:

[My mentor] made me feel like I was valued. It was 'what would you like to do today?' and I'd say 'I'd like to work with this group' and he'd say yes - this was before we were allowed to teach lessons. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

My mentor, the class teacher, he was brilliant, he was just mad, and everything we did was about having fun. He would ask me 'how could we do this so it's really fun, and how can we do this?' and I just had such good fun there. It was just brilliant, I was able to put myself into more and I was probably a bit more relaxed because the class was quite relaxed. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)*

Whilst all of the above experiences are positive and have aided trainees' early development, a minority of trainees (n=13) recalled difficulties caused by their relationships with their mentors. In five instances, trainees suggested that they had been 'misused' by their schools. For example, in her first school placement, one trainee reported how her class teacher, who was also her mentor:

[was] sort of asking me to go off and make her cups of coffee and things and I didn't like that at all. I thought 'if it's going to be like that then it just isn't for me...' I mean I don't mind getting her a cup of tea at break but when I was meant to be observing her, when I was in the middle of working with a group for her, and she'd come over and say 'do you mind going and getting me a cup of tea' I don't feel then I'm being treated like I should be because that's not what I'm there for. I'm there to learn a job. *(Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

Four trainees reported that their mentors had been 'too busy' to help them, or indeed, had been absent; whilst three trainees suggested that their mentors were reluctant to let them take on responsibilities in the classroom at an early stage:

In my first placement the teacher didn't want to let go of her class, she loved them too much and it was like 'no they're mine' *(Female, 25-29, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)*

Interestingly, in two instances, trainees reported that where they had had a bad relationship with their mentors, other teachers in their placement schools had stepped in to offer support:

In my placement my class teacher [also my mentor] wasn't so great, but the deputy head and a teacher that I had got quite friendly with from Year 1 she was absolutely fantastic and she went through all the planning with me and, because I really did, in my first week, I really did want to throw in the towel and think I'd had enough because I wasn't getting the support. *(Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

7.5.2 Placement schools

Some trainees (n=9) highlighted the benefits of undertaking their initial in-school training in schools which are experienced in working with trainee teachers. This was seen by these trainees as an important factor in ensuring that they received sufficient support, especially at an early stage:

I thought, if I go someplace that knows what they're doing, I'm obviously going to get a head start and that really is the case… [The other students on the course] a lot of them are the first [GTP] candidate going through where not only are they new to the system, but their tutor is new to the system, whereas my tutors know what they're doing and have everything in place for me. *(Female, 40-44, GTP, primary)*

The relationship between schools and HEIs, especially pertinent given the emphasis on 'partnership' in ITT policy, was also raised as an issue by nine trainees. Four mentioned close links between the placement schools and HEIs as a positive factor relating to their early in-school experiences:

I was lucky because [my first school] was a school with close links to the university, one of the lecturers is sort of quite good friends with the Head… [The school] has student teachers to do various bits of training there and things like that, so the whole school accepts students well... The Head was quite young and quite forward thinking and it was very much 'yeah we love students, bring them

in, they've got good ideas!'… So I was really lucky. I think if I had gone into a school initially that was hostile, that would have probably put me off. *(Female, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

By contrast, five trainees talked about how, although feeling well supported by their placement schools, they felt that they were under pressure to take a co-ordinating role between their school and HEI, or that HEI support was difficult to access:

> Some teachers obviously had students before and some haven't and they are looking to you for advice and you may not particularly know either. I think I expected more guidance from the university than we had. *(Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary)*

> It was quite scary because I didn't really quite know where we were going with the programmes... The problem with my school is that my mentor hadn't done anything on the course so she was new to it so it meant sometimes we've just had to muddle through... If it needs to it goes to the [HEI] quality assurance tutor so there is a hierarchical structure just in case you do get stuck but most of the time you just have to be professional about it. *(Female, 20-24, GTP, primary)*

In addition to the above, two RTP trainees reported a lack of awareness of and understanding about their training route among school staff:

> I think the problem was it was an unknown to some people... Some people voiced the opinion that I wasn't getting a proper training because I wasn't going out to college. Some think it's an easy option, others have completely the opposite view that 'well, you're doing the job, why don't you just get qualified?' *(Female, 45 or over, RTP, primary)*

In one instance, a Flexible PGCE trainee reported that the first time her link tutor (employed by her HEI to visit her in school) came to see her, the tutor was critical of her training route:

> She actually goes round [into schools], you know... saying that she wonders how the PGCE works because she comes from a four and half year training programme. And she did that. I am training and for her to say that was extremely unwise and she is a head teacher mind you, so that kind of thing is really important to me. *(Female, 40-44, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

Fifteen trainees reported that their placement schools had, in general, been unwelcoming. One interviewee stated that:

> The department I was in was very welcoming but none of the other teachers would talk to us and there were five students there, so we were always sticking together but we were in different subjects in five different departments. [I]n general we were shunned in the staffroom and I was like 'maybe that's what it's like in a secondary school, I don't know'. If I was on my own I would find this quite an isolating experience. But my mentor has been very, very supportive. *(Female, 25-29, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)*

Interestingly, one trainee, who having been welcomed into a school as a parent-helper believed she would be well supported in a school as a trainee, found that staff were actually less supportive of her than she anticipated:

> It was very strange because I'd gone in as a parent helper for a long time. I went in with a different role and I found that quite a hard adjustment in that I wasn't Mrs M or S's mum, or whatever, I was the student, and I felt like when I'd gone in as a parent I was really welcomed and I was valued, as a student I don't think I was… I was more of a hindrance I think. *(Female, 30-34, BEd, primary)*

To what extent this 'mismatch' in the trainee's expectations and experiences might be related to her training route is worth considering. Whereas, as a parent helper, the trainee had previously 'belonged' to a school, she may now be perceived as a 'university' trainee, spending time in different schools. Some literature (e.g. Evans *et al*, 1996) has suggested that schools may make different levels of investment in trainees from different ITT routes, and it will be interesting to see how far trainees' experiences suggest this to be the case when considering their reflections on their ITT programmes as a whole.

7.6 Summary and implications
Trainees' early concerns about their school-based experiences

In this chapter we have seen how some of the prior concerns of trainees (reported in Chapter 5) were played out in the early school-based experiences of case study trainees. For example, in line with some of their concerns, some trainees coming from alternative (non education related) career backgrounds, reported difficulties in making the transition

into their teaching role. A minority of trainees made reference to specific features of their teaching placement schools which seemed to compare unfavourably with previous working environments – notably they found these schools to:

- have different status relationships or more hierarchical structures than their previous working environments
- have a less collegiate ethos
- be organized inefficiently and have poor communication systems.

Two 'career changers' who identified difficulties in making the transition from their previous occupations had, at an early stage, said they would leave ITT and pursue alternative careers if training / teaching did not meet their expectations. The reasons given seem related to a notion of identity: '…I am a certain personality, I will teach in a certain way, and if they don't like it, then I won't be a teacher.' (*Male, 40-44, BA QTS, secondary, ICT*)

In the present chapter, we have also seen that case study participants, irrespective of prior experiences, reported additional early concerns with their own image or persona as a teacher, thus confirming the findings of previous research (Edwards, 1998; Edwards & Ogden, 1998). Such findings might interest programme providers in their efforts to support trainees in the personal and therefore delicate process of establishing a personal teacher identity.

Further data reported on in this chapter from trainees on longer routes suggest that over time, they come to realise that what they need to do is not so much to 'change into' a teacher, but to find the teacher in themselves. This will be an interesting avenue to follow up in subsequent stages of the research.

Trainees' early introduction to teaching

Case study data reveal that trainees from all routes have had broadly similar early introductions to teaching in their teaching placement schools. When asked about

activities they had undertaken during their early in-school experiences, the activities referred to, unprompted, by the highest numbers of case study trainees included:

- observation (of experienced teachers teaching and of pupils working)
- working with class teachers to plan and deliver parts of lessons
- being introduced to the school environment and community – e.g. talking to subject co-ordinators, SEN teachers, reading school policies

Whilst the activities undertaken during early training were similar across ITT routes, data suggest that case study trainees following different routes tended to have different attitudes towards such activities. For example:

- trainees on employment-based and SCITT routes were more likely to report that they had benefited from a gradual lead in to teaching
- more trainees from HEI-administered programmes stated that they found a gradual lead in to teaching in the classroom to be monotonous and / or frustrating.

Speculative interpretations include: those on HEI-administered routes may have had more 'preparation' for going into schools outside of schools; trainees on employment-based and SCITT routes may have received programmes more tailored to their individual needs (perhaps due to the comparatively smaller cohort sizes which are a feature of most school-based routes); or trainees on employment-based and SCITT routes may have felt less pressure to teach at a very early stage knowing that their training route would provide considerable time in schools and opportunities to teach.

Trainees' early development relating to their in-school experiences

Through a focus on 'coping strategies' that trainees report having adopted to help them respond to in-school situations, data reported on in this chapter reveal some insights into trainees' early development in a teaching role through the detail of their efforts in:

- developing a teacher identity
- rationalising when things went wrong
- developing an early reliance on plans and paper.

Again, further stages of the project will permit an analysis of whether, in what ways and in what circumstances these procedures change, and how they might contribute to trainees' later development.

Support from school staff

In-school mentors, and the attitudes of staff within their teaching placement schools more generally, were highlighted by our case study trainees as important in influencing their early experiences. In the majority of cases, trainees reported positive experiences, though a minority reported that relations with their mentors and / or other school staff had a negative impact on their early experiences in schools. There is useful detail in the data reported in this chapter on ways in which mentors were considered helpful. Data suggest that mentors who were considered helpful in these early experiences provided a range of forms of assistance including:

- provision of ideas and techniques for teaching;
- providing encouragement and boosting trainees' confidence
- direct intervention in trainees' relationships with pupils;
- 'being there'; and
- allowing trainees to have an input into the kinds of early activities they would be involved in.

It is interesting to note that the kinds of mentors help referred to by trainees and summarised above all refer to assistance of the 'social help' (*see* Section 5.4) variety. It will be interesting to examine whether, by the later stages of trainees' ITT programmes, the nature of the assistance which mentors provide has changed, and if so whether this now includes interventions of the 'scaffolding help' (Elmajdob, 2005) variety. Trainees' evaluations of the assistance provided by mentors later in their courses will also be of important to consider.

Placement schools

Case study data reveal that:

- some trainees highlighted the benefits of undertaking their initial in-school training in schools which are experienced in working with trainee teachers.

- some trainees felt that the close links they had experienced between the placement schools and their 'partner' HEIs were helpful.

- a number of trainees reported that they found themselves having to liaise between their school and HEI, or that HEI support was difficult to access.

- fifteen trainees reported that they felt unwelcome in their placement schools.

Some trainees coming from non education-related career backgrounds reported difficulties in making the transition into their teaching role and a minority of trainees made reference to specific features of their teaching placement schools which seemed to compare unfavourably with previous working environments. For example, some suggested that their placement schools had a more hierarchical structure and / or a less collegial ethos than they had experienced in their previous working environments.

The difficulties that some trainees encounter in their placement school experiences within ITT suggest that effective NQT induction programmes may be of crucial importance for such beginner teachers. In addition, ITT providers might find food for thought in the detail of these data.

8 General themes and conclusions

Malderez & Hobson

One of principal aims of the Becoming a Teacher (BaT) research project, as originally conceived by the DfES, GTCE and TTA, was to investigate the experiences of teachers following different routes into the profession and to examine the effect that these routes have both on initial teacher training and the early professional development of teachers. On the basis that learners view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of knowledge, experience and beliefs (Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997), the design of the Becoming a Teacher study acknowledged and anticipated that teachers' experiences of ITT, induction and early professional development were likely to be affected not only by the ITT pathway (and individual programme) followed but also by trainees' / teachers' prior conceptions and expectations about teaching and teacher training. The research findings presented in this report illustrate some of these prior conceptions and expectations and suggest that on several key issues and in different respects, trainees following different ITT routes *were already different* before they began their initial teacher training.

For example, differences between trainees following different ITT routes have been reported in relation to:

- their initial reasons for entering teacher training;
- the reasons given for their choice of ITT route and provider;
- their pre-course views about what they should learn in ITT, about the most effective ways of learning them, and about the utility of 'theory'; and
- their pre-course concerns or worries relating to ITT and teaching.

We have seen that there are also significant differences, in relation to some of these issues, between the positions of: male and female trainees; those seeking to teach in primary as opposed to secondary schools; trainees in different age groups; (secondary)

trainees pursuing different subject specialisms; and those with different kinds of prior (work) experience.

All of these variables will interact to part shape teachers' experiences of ITT, induction and EPD. It will be interesting to explore whether the initial differences between trainees / teachers entering the profession via different ITT routes and within each route become more or less marked over time.

Through reporting data on trainees' reservations about embarking on ITT, their pre-course worries, and their early training preoccupations, we have also seen the importance and value, in this research, of tracking over time issues such as this which are likely to affect recruitment and retention.

In addition, a number of key themes have emerged across the data (and the findings chapters) presented here which appear to be central to the experience of becoming a teacher, regardless of training route followed. These are:
    (1) identity;
    (2) relationships;
    (3) relevance; and
    (4) emotion.

Given the necessity of a role-shift from being a non-teacher to being a teacher for the trainees, it is hardly surprising that these data reveal our first theme of *identity*. It is similarly unsurprising, if the nature of the two activities trainees are engaged in – teaching and learning – is taken into account, that a considerable amount of data revealing the central role of *relationships* in the experiences of trainees during this time has been generated. Nor, given the focus on trainees' own learning, is it unexpected that data should reveal a concern with the *relevance* of elements of the process designed to support their learning to be teachers. And finally, *emotional* responses to experiences are understandable given the very personal endeavours undertaken in seeking to develop /

achieve a teacher identity, in creating new productive relationships, and in learning and teaching.

We now consider each theme in turn.

8.1 Key themes

8.1.1 Identity

Clearly visible across the data is our first theme of *identity*. For some research participants (those with a more vocational motivation, for example, and who 'always wanted to be a teacher', Section 3.2.2), becoming a teacher seems to mean actualising an already identified potential. For many, however, initial perceptions seem to have included a perceived necessity, at least initially, to undergo a transformation of self in the endeavour to become, or *change into*, a teacher.

What some case study participants perceived as being their existing strengths which they could build on as a teacher varied from knowledge of the subject, having a suitable personality, having a creative side for which teaching would be an outlet, or, for older trainees, identified 'transferable skills', such as interpersonal skills (Section 3.2.2).

However, there were differences across the age-groups in their approach to their 'identity projects' (Edwards, 1998; Edwards & Ogden, 1998). Many 'school-leavers' appeared to be concerned about the transition to a professional life-style and the responsibilities of being a teacher (Section 4.3.2). One younger participant spoke of researching 'different teaching styles' and adopting (as if 'putting on') 'the one that suits you' (Section 6.2). However, others found during early experiences in schools, that teachers were not as different from themselves as they had previously thought (Section 7.3). Some older participants also expressed concerns about their developing identities as teachers. One participant who had already undergone one role-shift from parent to teaching assistant (TA), worried about the change from TA to teacher but found her worries unfounded.

However, another (*male, 40-44*) seemed less prepared for personal changes, stating 'if I don't fit, I'll leave' (Section 7.2.1).

8.1.2 Relationships

Past, potential or actual *relationships* with a range of people have been central to the lived experiences of trainees. These include: (1) relationships with children and young people; (2) relationships with (trainees' own) teachers, past and present; (3) relationships with teachers as colleagues in schools; and (4) other social relationships, including those with family members and peers.

Relationships with children and young people

Relationships with (or as) children or young people have been reported to have had an important influence on many trainees' decisions to become a teacher (*see* Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). A number of key concerns expressed by trainees (Section 3.3) also relate to past, potential or actual relationships with children and young people. These largely cover whether they will be able to facilitate pupil / student learning or deal with their behaviour. On the other hand, we have seen that 84 per cent of survey respondents indicated that (prior to their training) they were 'particularly looking forward' to 'being in classrooms and interacting with children' (Section 5.3.1, Table 5.1), whilst two items concerning relationships with children and young people (ability to bring about learning, ability to maintain discipline) were considered by high numbers of trainees to be amongst the things that they most needed to learn on their ITT programmes.

The experientially learnt and perhaps intuitively held view of the centrality of the teacher-pupil relationships emerging from these data is supported by current socio-cultural perspectives on learning, by work in the field of group dynamics and by much current educational literature (e.g. Claxton, 1990).

Such findings may have implications for teacher training programmes, as well as those who teach on such programmes, as they suggest not only the need to have an explicit focus on such issues (e.g. how to form and maintain cohesive and productive learning groups), but also a need for teacher educators / trainers (including tutors and mentors) to

model appropriate strategies for dealing with such issues / challenges, in order to facilitate trainees' experiential (if unconscious or implicit) learning.

Relationships with (trainees' own) teachers, past and present

Relationships with participants' own teachers in the past have also been shown to have influenced some participants' decisions to enter initial teacher training. Teachers are seen to have provided models both to imitate or reject, as well as to have stimulated some of our participants' concerns. For example, 84 per cent of survey respondents indicated that 'being inspired by a good teacher' had been an 'attracting factor' in their decision to train as a teacher, whilst 57 per cent were attracted by 'wanting to teach pupils better than in my own experience'. Case study data (Section 3.2.2) also reveal how negative models motivated some participants to 'the idea of going back and doing it better'.

Relationships with participants' current 'teachers', notably ITT programme personnel, also seem to be very important to participants' lived experiences of training. Most talked about amongst these are relationships with school-based mentors. The majority of case study trainees talked in terms of positive relationships with their mentors who, for example, 'made me feel valued', or 'helped me to manage my role from the beginning'. The minority of negative experiences reported concern inappropriate relationships between mentor and trainee, as in the case, for example, of the trainee who indicated that she felt considered by her mentor as a 'dogsbody' and tea / coffee-maker rather than teacher-learner (Section 7.5.1).

One implication of these data is that there may be a need, in some cases, to strengthen whole school preparation for receiving trainees.

Relationships with teachers in schools / colleagues

We have seen that some trainees saw the prospect of collegiality and team work as an attractive factor in their decision to train as a teacher. Survey data, reveal, for example, that 57 per cent of all trainees indicated that they were (strongly or moderately) attracted by 'the collegiality / teamwork aspects of teaching' (Table 3.1, Section 3.2.1), whilst 45

per cent of survey respondents stated that they were 'particularly looking forward' to 'becoming a part of the school community'.

Case study data suggest that, in these respects, the reality of trainees' early school experiences was mixed. One trainee with a mentor 'who wasn't so great' and who had felt like throwing 'in the towel' because she was not 'getting the support', found help from another teacher who was 'absolutely fantastic' and 'went through all the planning' with her (Section 7.5.1). On the other hand, some (15) case study participants found their placement schools unwelcoming. One trainee stated that she, and her fellow trainees, were 'shunned in the staffroom'. Although her mentor was 'very, very supportive' and her host department welcoming, she felt that if she had been on her own she would have found this 'quite an isolating experience' (Section 7.5.2). Another teacher (it is unclear whether this person was the designated mentor or not), seemed to have been unable to resolve a typical mentoring dilemma and, from the trainee's perspective, to have prioritised her relationship with her class over that with the trainee. In the trainee's words, she 'didn't want to let go of her class, she loved them too much' (Section 7.5.1). Two of the 40-44 year old males in the case study sample commented unfavourably on the absence of effective team work and the less collegial, more hierarchical structure than they had expected in their placement schools (Section 7.2.2).

The importance of a supportive whole school ethos for both pupil and teacher learning is widely supported in the literature. These data also suggest that all teachers in schools receiving trainees, including, but not limited to the mentor, would need opportunities to prepare themselves for their part in a supportive training school ethos.

Other social relationships
We have seen that relationships with family members (parents, partners and children) were influential in some trainees' decisions to enter ITT (Section 3.2). Family considerations also affected choice of ITT provider and route perhaps as much for affective reasons as for financial ones. For some with young families, teaching was seen as family-friendly, providing them with time for their own children. Family reasons

(including both time to give attention to family relationships as well as financial concerns relating to the needs of their families) were given by some participants as their reason for the choice of the Flexible PGCE route (Section 3.2.2). Peers (people who were following or had followed a particular programme) are also seen to have influenced decisions to train as a teacher. For example, 34 per cent of all survey respondents (and 43% of those following PGCE programmes) indicated that one of the factors influencing their choice of ITT route was the desire to 'train alongside people in my peer group / in the same situation' as themselves.

8.1.3 Relevance

A third theme which is apparent in much of the data on trainees' prior conceptions and early experiences of ITT concerns the perceived relevance of elements of course provision. One case study participant summed up the sentiments of many in stating that 'what's relevant is what I can do in a classroom'. Another trainee saw much of what she was learning as relevant only in obtaining the certificate and for use in interviews. Another, when talking about theories such as constructivism, indicated a belief that real teachers in real schools 'don't relate to that any more' as they are 'in there doing a real job' (Section 6.2). The fact that the trainee did not see the influence of theories, or hear teachers talking in theoretical terms, does not necessarily mean that teachers are not, in fact, making use of such understandings in their decision-making. The difficulty and challenge (perhaps for mentors in particular) is in making this thinking and reasoning as a teacher explicit for trainees (*see* e.g. Woods, 1996; Claxton, 1997; Atkinson & Claxton, 2000). We say this may be a challenge for two reasons: mentors, like their teacher colleagues, may not have needed to put this kind of thinking into words for many years, as the main practice of teaching does not require talking *about* teaching; and the words and language used need to be meaningful and relate to the listener. With the trainee above, for example, the mentor may need to use the language the trainee has learnt and be explicit about the relationship between, for example, 'formative assessment', or 'eliciting student ideas' and constructivism.

In addition to whether what trainees are taught is relevant or *what* is considered relevant (which seems to vary considerably individually), data relating to this theme shed light on *when* perceived relevance occurs in relation to (a) experience in schools as adults, and perhaps (b) stages in teacher learning. First, data suggest that school experiences can create the need to learn (including learn what trainees perceive as 'theory'), or that schools are the site of the realisation of relevance: 'it has no real relevance until you go into school' (Section 6.2).

Data also support some of the literature on stages of teacher development which suggests that learner teachers go through successive cumulative phases (Kagan, 1992; cf. Capel, 2001). For any teacher new to a class or context, an initial concern is with acceptance by the community in the role, and the focus therefore on themselves (their identity and performance as a teacher). In order to prepare an appropriate climate for learning, a concern with pupil behaviour and the establishment of group norms is added. Finally, attention can turn to pupil learning, which is potentially the stage at which much of what is taught in ITT might become relevant for the beginner teacher.

As we have seen (e.g. Table 5.4, Section 5.3.3) the strategies most often perceived by trainees, before they began their training, as important in supporting their learning, are those which focus on the teacher's 'front-stage' behaviours (cf. Berry & Loughran, 2002). This is consistent with both an initial stage in teacher learning, or in anyone joining a new community (concern with the role) as well as with a lay perception of teaching as performance, and therefore of learning teaching being about learning to do what teachers do in classrooms (rather than also being about understanding and practising the kind of thinking and decision-making that has led to those actions).

If we accept that current curricula content are necessary and relevant in ITT, then these data suggest the need to re-think, in some programmes or institutions, or for some individuals at least, the sequencing of such content in relation to trainees' school experiences, the pacing of its introduction, and / or the pedagogies used to enable trainees

137

to see the connections between their studies and their life and work as a teacher. In other words these data reveal 'theory-practice' gaps of various kinds.

There is a sense in which there is no 'theory-practice' gap from the perspective of the individual trainee or teacher: what any teacher does is wholly consistent with deeply held beliefs (if not necessarily with espoused beliefs), even though these may not be consciously held. Trainer pedagogies which, amongst other things, draw on experiences to touch and surface these deeply held beliefs are therefore essential if new input is to be seen as relevant. In other words, many traditional forms of adult teaching may be ineffective on their own. All those charged with supporting trainee learning (including mentors and other programme personnel), therefore need space and time to develop these methodologies, especially as this is a relatively recent concern within the field with as yet, comparatively little research or scholarship in the area (Kane *et al*., 2002). By 'these methodologies' we are thinking both in terms of classroom strategies (for example, from fairly traditional ones such as lecturing and discussions, through micro-teaching, video observations, or the use of learning or teaching diaries, to metaphor elicitation, work with stories and narrative cases, professional interpersonal skill development work and so on), but also the need for each teacher of teachers to develop their own informed, confident way of working, their own personal practical knowledge. In addition, given the data referred to above on the centrality of the school experience to connection-making, and the amount of data on relationships with mentors, it would seem especially important that mentors (and class teachers other than officially designated mentors) have these training and development opportunities.

Again it would seem that the sequencing of experiences provided is also crucial and that appropriate experiences in schools (or, if on occasion impossible to arrange, vicariously via video for example) are needed in connection with work on related or emergent issues. In addition, however, if trainees' are to be able to make the most of these experiences, some kind of noticing skill development would also be an initial pre-requisite (Mason, 2001). Other issues in sequencing of programme elements include the need to support

learners through what we have called here 'stages of teacher learning' within the time-frame of the ITT programme.

8.1.4 Emotion

A final theme emerging from the data is the central place that emotion appears to play in the becoming a teacher experiences. Throughout the case study data we can see that participants have used emotive language, and words such as 'excited', 'love it' and 'relaxed', as well as 'panic', 'overwhelming' and 'shock' (e.g. Section 7.3) are frequently found in the data as case study trainees volunteered information on their recalled emotional states.

Confidence in embarking on any new project is a necessary, but not sufficient, precursor to success, and data from case study trainees on their early experiences in schools, perhaps unsurprisingly, reveals variations. For some trainees explicit theoretical knowledge was seen as confidence boosting; for others a perceived lack of relevant information for classroom teaching could trigger 'panic'; whilst one trainee described how not understanding the language and terminology used in schools made her 'feel like an idiot' (Section 6.2).

These data support work on the importance of emotion in the learning, lives and work of teachers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991; Arnold, 1999; Day, 2004). The extreme positive and negative emotions reported might in some instances be understood as indicators of the perceived level of skill (related to the sense of self-efficacy and confidence) available to meet the challenges experienced (*see* Csikszentmihalyi, 1991) and have implications for the selection, staging and sequencing of programme elements. A further possible interpretation relates to stages in the personal change process. It has been suggested that in any new project emotions change over time, moving from uninformed optimism, excitement or arousal, through (as a result of being more informed) to pessimism, and progressing gradually (providing the project is continued past this 'danger point') to feelings of resignation, hope and then reward. As individuals, beginner teachers are not only undertaking a new learning project, but they are also engaged in new identity

projects, as we have seen above. In addition, and in relation to the issue of 'joining clubs' (both the profession and the particular school community), the literature on group dynamics may be relevant here. A group is new when any new member joins it and the typical stages of group life which need to be navigated by any new group before full effective functioning involve a similar emotional journey through predictable stages of group life for all group members (*see* e.g. Dornyei & Malderez 1997). The literature which identified stages in teacher learning (*see* Kagan, 1992; Berry & Loughran, 2002) could also be understood as having identified the novice teacher's first experience of and attempts at managing the stages of group life experienced by themselves and their pupils / students.

Implications of these data include the need to continue efforts to provide effective support which helps trainees navigate these emotionally-charged stages. Programme personnel will need to take emotional states into account when assessing trainee needs, and to have devised appropriate strategies for responding to these. In particular, programme personnel might usefully consider the detail in these data in working out ways in which trainees' confidence and self-efficacy can be maintained, not only for reasons of retention, but also because confidence supports both conviction and enthusiasm which are necessary for effective teaching (Hay McBer, 2000).

8.2 Interaction between themes

The four themes referred to above are not as clearly delineated in the data as might be suggested in the preceding section. In fact, data reveal that there are very clear interactions between them, which provides additional support to the finding that they are central to trainees' prior beliefs and early experiences of teaching and initial teacher training respectively. We illustrate this below by discussing interactions between (firstly) relationships and emotion, and (secondly) relationships and identity.

8.2.1 Relationships and emotion

Some relationships, particularly with mentors or mentor-like colleagues, seemed to allow participants to deal with the emotional vulnerability that becoming a teacher involves

(Section 7.5), as well as to help them develop the crucial feeling of confidence. In addition, strong positive and negative emotions (such as 'loving it' or 'shock') are regularly associated with relationships with members of school communities.

Many trainees made their initial decisions to train as teachers because they felt they would enjoy 'the human interaction', or because they remembered the 'enjoyment and amount of pleasure' they had derived from their own relationships (as pupils) with their teachers (Section 3.2). Similarly, in their early experiences in schools, relationship issues with children or staff were talked about in emotional terms, both positively and negatively.

8.2.2 Relationships and identity

Data also suggest a strong link between the themes of relationships and identity. Some trainees who had previously been employed as school support staff, for example, perceived challenges in both relationships and identity, notably in the perceived need to adapt from working *for* (or with) teachers to working *as* teachers (Section 5.3.5). One younger participant – one of the 17 per cent of survey respondents who indicated that she had been (moderately) deterred by the perceived public perception of teachers and teaching (Section 3.3.1) – did not immediately tell friends and family she had applied for teacher training (Section 3.3.2). Others, on the other hand, wanted to 'belong' to what one trainee called the 'little club' of a 'respected profession'.

These data echo the collegiality theme discussed above, on the one hand, and current socio-cultural understanding of professional learning on the other. From a socio-cultural perspective, teacher learning is about ever less peripheral participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Data suggest that programmes and schools recognise this aspect and provide time initially for trainees to investigate norms (including the 'endless rules and policies', Section 7.3). However, and unhelpfully from the perspective of both teacher learning and the growth of the profession, there are also indications in the data that, for some trainees, the 'club' is perceived, in individual schools, as resistant to the influence of newcomers (e.g. staff unwillingness to listen to ideas from trainee, staff

shunning trainees in the staffroom), causing newcomers to adopt a defensive position (e.g. 'If I don't fit, I'll leave'). Cultures and groups become less permeable to outside influence, more cohesive and more conservative (with a small 'c') when under perceived threat (Dornyei & Malderez, 1997; Erhman & Dornyei, 1998). Implications of these data include the need for whole school involvement in and understanding of the trainee experience. They also suggest a need for continued attention at the policy level to both the manner and speed with which successive innovations are introduced, to school leadership preparation, and to the effect of policy on individual schools' ability to create cohesive yet open staff teams which discover, value and use the individual expertise and experience every staff member brings to the school.

Data relating to some aspects of trainees' early experiences of ITT reveal the complex interaction of *more than two* of the four themes identified as central to their experience. For example, the themes of emotion, identity and relationships are all evident in those data which demonstrate the 'concern' and 'lack of confidence', expressed by some ex-support staff trainees, regarding how pupils and teachers would relate to them, and whether they would accept them in their new roles as teachers (Section 7.2.1).

8.3 Key themes and the fulfilment of basic needs

We end this discussion of our research findings by suggesting that one way in which all four themes identified as central to the becoming a teacher experience (relationships, identity, relevance and emotion) might be drawn together is by seeing trainees' early experiences of ITT as attempts to meet their basic psychological needs, with their emotional responses relating to their perceived success or frustration in meeting those needs. Using Glasser's (1998) typology basic needs are for: (1) a sense of security, (2) belonging, (3) success, (4) freedoms, and (5) fun.

In relation to the first basic need, the desire for *financial and practical security* is evident, for example, in data relating to some of the reasons trainees gave for making the decisions to train as teachers (Section 3.2) and for their choices of training route and individual providers (Sections 4.2.4, 4.2.5, 4.3.1). More generally and perhaps

fundamentally, *psychological or emotional security* appears to be central to much data relating to each of the four themes.

Trainees' desire for a sense of *belonging* is particularly evident in data revealing their hopes for collegiality, in their aspirations to join the teaching 'club' and in difficulties encountered in this respect. Such a desire can also be seen in much of the data relating to trainees' (actual or potential / hoped for) relationships with significant others.

Trainees' need or desire for success might be seen in data relating to their strategies for successfully dealing with the challenges of (for example) classroom behaviour management, to their attempts to facilitate pupil learning and, more generally, in their desire to complete their ITT programme and 'graduate' to NQT status, which might in some cases be hampered by what some trainees see as inappropriate mentoring or lack of support.

Trainees' need for *freedoms* or 'choices' is evident in data relating to the expressed desire, by some participants, for as individualised a provision as possible, whilst a desire for *fun* can be seen, for example, in the data and discussion on the enjoyment procured or hoped for through productive relationships, notably with pupils / students and teacher colleagues / mentors.

A final implication of the findings presented and discussed in this report might thus concern the need, for reasons of recruitment and retention, amongst others, to continue to pay explicit attention at all levels of decision-making – from policy to local implementation – to trainees' / beginner teachers' basic psychological needs.

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Appendix A

Different ITT routes

•**Post-graduate HEI-administered programmes (PGCE and flexible PGCE)**

These have both a substantive HEI input and a period of training in schools. Trainees achieve an academic qualification (a Post-graduate Certificate in Education [PGCE]), in addition to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Programmes typically last for one academic year (full time), or five academic terms (flexible), and applicants must hold a first degree or equivalent. In the majority of cases, to train as a secondary school teacher, trainees must hold a degree relevant to the subject they are to teach, or, if their degree is a non-related subject, have substantial experience relevant to the subject. There can be greater flexibility at primary school level with regard to subject specific experience.

• **Undergraduate HEI-administered programmes (BA/BSc QTS; BEd)**

These programmes allow trainees to achieve a Bachelors' degree – either in a specific curriculum subject or in education – as well as QTS. There are variations in the length of time required to complete BA/BSc QTS and BEd programmes. Traditionally these programmes last for three and four years respectively, though the length of programmes is becoming more variable, with institutions offering two, three and four year programmes. Shorter two-year programmes appear to have been designed for entrants with professional qualifications equivalent to degree level study. Trainees are able to build on their existing qualifications in order to gain a formally recognised degree, as well as achieving QTS. Programmes include substantive HEI input and in-school experiences.

• **School-centred Initial Teacher Training programmes (SCITT)**

In the SCITT route a single school or a consortium of schools is primarily responsible for a programme of initial teacher training. Depending on the training provided, trainees may achieve solely QTS, or may have the opportunity to gain additional academic qualifications, namely a PGCE. Programmes typically last for one academic year, and as

with HEI-based post-graduate programmes, applicants must normally hold a bachelors degree relevant to the subject they wish to specialise in (or at primary level, relevant to the primary national curriculum). Prior to starting their training, trainees work with teachers in their training school to develop an 'individual learning plan'. This sets out what individual trainees need to achieve in order to meet the Standards.

• Employment-based programmes: Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and Registered Teacher Programme (RTP)

In the GTP trainees take-up a salaried teaching post and achieve QTS while in-post. Generally, employment-based routes offer QTS only, and typically last for one academic year. Until this year the GTP was only open to those aged 24 or over. Applicants must have a first degree in a subject relevant to their teaching specialism. By contrast, the RTP is open to those who do not yet hold a degree but have qualifications equivalent to the first two years of Bachelor's degree study. Typically, the RTP is a two-year programme during which trainees will be employed in a teaching post, whilst also completing a further year of degree-level study on a part time basis. In both instances, prior to starting their training, trainees must develop an 'individual learning plan'. This sets out what individual trainees need to achieve in order to meet the Standards.

For both Graduate *and* Registered Training Programmes, schools may pay trainees at the rate for either qualified or unqualified teachers, and (the school) may receive a grant, from the TTA, of up to £13,000 towards the costs of employing the trainee, and a grant of up to £4,000 per annum to cover the cost of training.

Appendix B

Results of factor analysis of data relating to issues influencing trainees' decisions to undertake a teacher training programme, by route

As stated in Section 3.2.1 factor analyses were conducted on the questionnaire responses of trainees following each of the six training routes, relating to the issues influencing their decisions to undertake ITT. The results of this analysis suggest that quite different factors influenced trainees following different routes and account for up to 95 per cent of the total variation.

For trainees following the Flexible PGCE route, for example, eight factors were identified which accounted for 94.6 per cent of the total variance in the data. Factor 1 for these trainees was to do with the nature of the profession, and encompassed items such as '*the challenging nature of the job*' and '*helping young people learn*' as well as items relating to perceived benefits.

The seven factors identified for trainees following BEd programmes accounted for 84 per cent of the total variance in the data. Factor 1 for these trainees encompassed ideas related to the perceived status of the job. The seven factors identified for PGCE students accounted for 57.8 per cent of total variance in data, which was the lowest percentage by route. Factor 1 for these trainees related to finance and other related benefits.

Data from SCITT trainees (which revealed eight factors accounting for 80.1% of the total variance) shows a Factor 1 encompassing 'altruistic' items such as '*working with children or young people*', '*helping young people to learn*', and '*wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience*', while for GRTP trainees (whose data revealed 9 factors accounting for 71.5% of the total variance in data), Factor 1 encompassed items relating to others' opinions and the status of teaching.

Table B.1 below lists the top three factors by route and illustrates differences across routes. A more detailed breakdown of the items listed in each factor is given in Tables B.2-B.7 below.

<u>Table B.1</u> Summary of factor analysis, by route*

Factor	Route					
	BEd	**BA/BSc QTS**	**PGCE**	**Flexible**	**SCITT**	**GRTP**
1	Benefits & status of the profession (23.6.%)	Benefits & others' opinions of teaching (10.8%)	Finance & other related benefits (13.0%)	Altruism, nature of teaching & financial concerns (18.4%)	Altruism (13.0%)	Others' opinions & status (12.7%)
2	Benefits & others' opinions (13.5%)	Benefits & conditions of service (10.6%)	Professional status & nature of teaching (9.0%)	Family & nature of teaching (15.2%)	Others' opinions of teaching (11.5%)	Adverts & inspired by a good teacher (8.5%)
3	Family, benefits, & conditions of service (11.6%)	Altruism (9.2%)	Altruism (8.1%)	Altruism & nature of teaching (13.9%)	Nature of teaching (10.7%)	Financial benefits (7.9%)

* The factor titles cover a range of items, the combination of which may vary. For example, the term 'others' opinions' can encompass items including '*how the public perceives teachers / teaching*', '*one or both of parents is / was a teacher*' and / or '*speaking to teachers about the profession*'.

Table B.2 BEd

Rotated Component Matrix(a)							
	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession	.829						
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)	.662	.494					
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching	.534		.528				
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	.701						
How the public perceives teachers/teaching	.525		.691				
Job security	.670		.468				
Long holidays	.579						-.572
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")	.574		.484				
Speaking to teachers about the profession	.815						
Spending more time in higher education	.946						
Staying involved with a subject specialism	.756						
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)	.627	.573					
One or both of parents is/was a teacher		.872					
One or more of friends is/was a teacher		.906					
Fit with family or other commitments			.625				
Teachers' morale			.806				
Giving something back to the community				-.730			
Salary				.821			
The professional status of teaching				.824			
The challenging nature of the job					.459		.727
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience					.736		
Working with children or young people					.863		
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions						.608	
Being inspired by a good teacher						.839	
Helping young people to learn						.685	
Opportunities for career development							.711

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Seven factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 84.8% of the total variance in the data.

Table B.3 BA/BSc with QTS

<table>
<tr><th colspan="9">Rotated Component Matrix(a)</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th colspan="8">Component</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th><th>6</th><th>7</th><th>8</th></tr>
<tr><td>Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)</td><td>.560</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.475</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>One or both of parents is/was a teacher</td><td>.842</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>One or more of friends is/was a teacher</td><td>.805</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)</td><td>.726</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Being inspired by a good teacher</td><td></td><td>.493</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching</td><td></td><td>.677</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>How the public perceives teachers/teaching</td><td></td><td>.460</td><td></td><td></td><td>.513</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Teachers' morale</td><td></td><td>.771</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>The challenging nature of the job</td><td></td><td>.664</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Giving something back to the community</td><td></td><td></td><td>.553</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Helping young people to learn</td><td></td><td></td><td>.748</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Opportunities for career development</td><td></td><td></td><td>.486</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Working with children or young people</td><td></td><td></td><td>.696</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial incentives attached to teacher training</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.797</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Salary</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.874</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Job security</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.727</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Long holidays</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.714</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.473</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Speaking to teachers about the profession</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.480</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Spending more time in higher education</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.843</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Staying involved with a subject specialism</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.764</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Fit with family or other commitments</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.711</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>.904</td></tr>
<tr><td>Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>The professional status of teaching</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Eight factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 66.1% of the total variance in the data.

Table B.4 PGCE

Rotated Component Matrix(a)							
	Component						
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)	.608						
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching	.488						
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	.672						
Job security	.711						
Long holidays	.591						
Opportunities for career development	.457						
Salary	.602						
Speaking to teachers about the profession	.491						
How the public perceives teachers/teaching		.546					
Teachers' morale		.616					
The challenging nature of the job		.769					
The professional status of teaching		.540					
Giving something back to the community			.713				
Helping young people to learn			.696				
Working with children or young people			.752				
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions				.770			
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")				.737			
Fit with family or other commitments					.672		
One or both of parents is/was a teacher					.696		
One or more of friends is/was a teacher					.669		
Spending more time in higher education						.819	
Staying involved with a subject specialism						.636	
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession							.493
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience							.753
Being inspired by a good teacher							
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)							

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Seven factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 57.8% of the total variance in the data.

Table B.5 Flexible PGCE

Rotated Component Matrix(a)								
	Component							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions	.476					.842		
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)	-.750							
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	-.908							
Giving something back to the community	.833							
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")	.705							
Staying involved with a subject specialism	.782							
The challenging nature of the job	.637		.528					
Working with children or young people	.668						.567	
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession		-.548						
Fit with family or other commitments		-.694						
Job security		.911						
One or more of friends is/was a teacher		.870						
Opportunities for career development		.816						
The professional status of teaching		-.500	.591					
Speaking to teachers about the profession			.925					
Spending more time in higher education			.876					
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience			.694	.499				
Being inspired by a good teacher				.655				
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching				.661				
Salary				-.935				
How the public perceives teachers/teaching					-.891			
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)					.909			
One or both of parents is/was a teacher						-.876		
Helping young people to learn							.880	
Long holidays								.825
Teachers' morale								.856

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Eight factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 94.6% of the total variance in the data.

Table B.6 SCITT

Rotated Component Matrix(a)								
	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching	.507		.524					
Helping young people to learn	.890							
Salary	-.472					.722		
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience	.498			-.606				
Working with children or young people	.892							
Giving something back to the community		.764						
How the public perceives teachers/teaching		.688						
One or both of parents is/was a teacher		.745						
One or more of friends is/was a teacher		.791						
Spending more time in higher education			.637			.604		
Staying involved with a subject specialism			.807					
The challenging nature of the job			.584	.720				
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)			.735					
Long holidays				.556				
Teachers' morale				.705				
The professional status of teaching				.705				
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions					.469			
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)					-.657			
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")					.884			
Speaking to teachers about the profession					.578			
Fit with family or other commitments						.765		
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession							.841	
Financial incentives attached to teacher training							.760	
Being inspired by a good teacher								-.663
Job security								.773
Opportunities for career development								.787

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Eight factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 80.1% of the total variance in the data.

Table B.7 GRTP

	Rotated Component Matrix(a)								
	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
How the public perceives teachers/teaching	.864								
Salary	.459		.469						
Speaking to teachers about the profession	.467				.622				
Teachers' morale	.772								
The professional status of teaching	.746								
Advertisements from ITT programme providers/institutions		.626							
Being inspired by a good teacher		.738							
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession		-.653							
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")		.630							
Benefits package (e.g. occupational pension)			.670						
Financial incentives attached to teacher training			.839						
Collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching				.617					
Fit with family or other commitments				.620					
One or both of parents is/was a teacher				.628					
One or more of friends is/was a teacher				.532	.640				
Staying involved with a subject specialism				.487					
Opportunities for career development					.831				
Spending more time in higher education					.465				
Giving something back to the community						.817			
Helping young people to learn						.766			
Job security							.542		
Long holidays							.810		.495
The challenging nature of the job								.703	
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience								.470	.625
Working with children or young people								.755	
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. Grange Hill, Teachers, Hope and Glory)									.767

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Nine factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, and accounted for 71.5% of the total variance in the data.

Appendix C

Interactions of variables

Explorations of the plots generated in the general linear model (ANOVA) analyses

The item '*working with children or young people*', which was part of the question '*In weighing up whether or not to undertake a teacher training programme, how much, if at all, did the following attract or deter you?*' is presented here as a typical example of an item where differences according to both gender and phase are found *within routes*.

The plots in Figure C.1 below highlight the differences between male and female responses across and within routes, with females typically being more attracted to '*working with children or young people*'. They also illustrate, for example, greater polarity between male and female BEd trainees than between genders on other routes, with SCITT trainees being less differentiated by gender than any other route. These graphs illustrate typical patterns for most items (with the exception of items relating to terms and conditions).

(Numbers on the 'estimated marginal means' axes on figures C.1, C.2, and C.3 are the mean of totals derived by coding responses as follows: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree).

The plots in Figure C.2 illustrate this same item by phase across and within all routes. Here we see that typically secondary trainees are less attracted by the prospect of working with children or young people than their primary counterparts. Again, the differences are more marked within the BEd route, and again this is a typical pattern for most items (except those relating to terms and conditions and subject specialism).

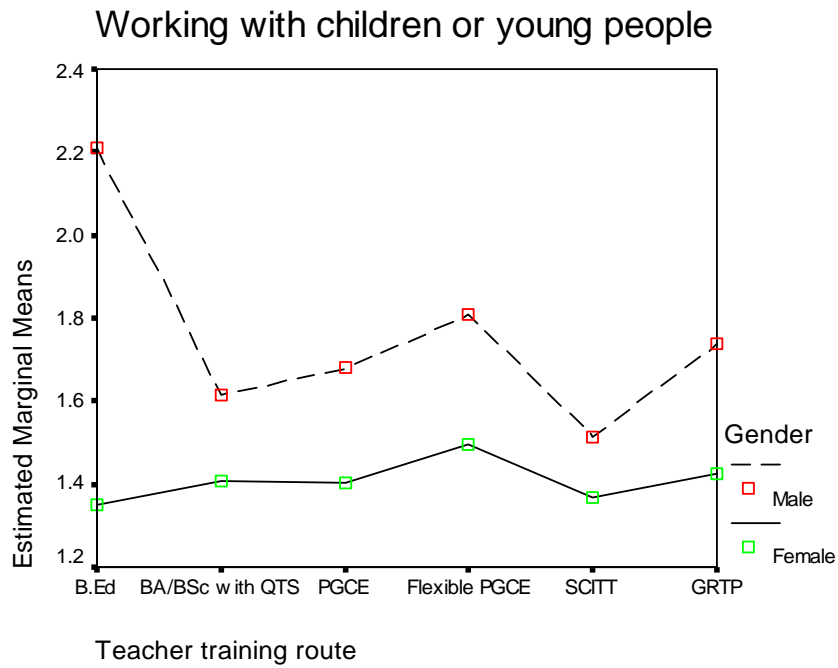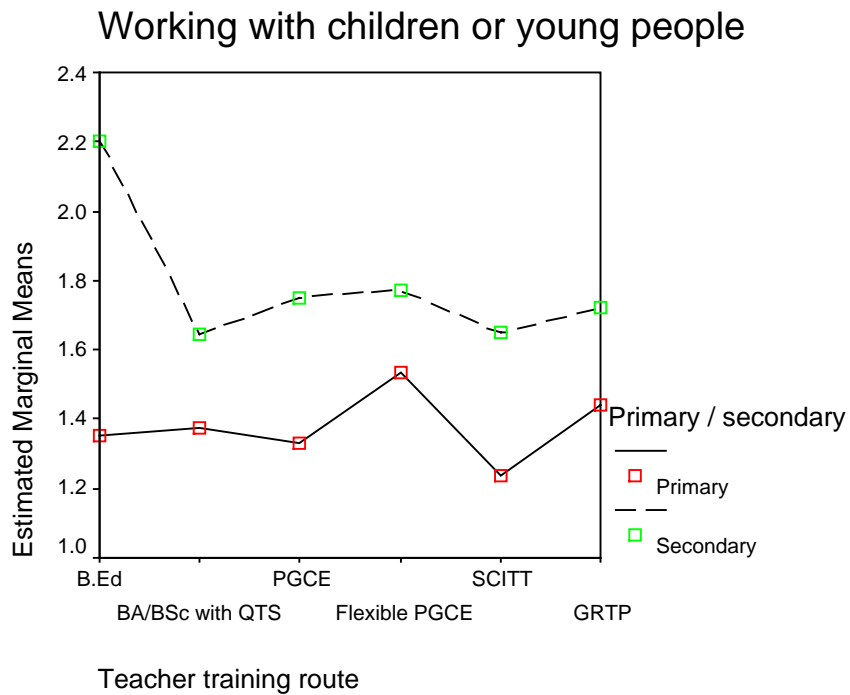Figure C.1 Working with children or young people by gender and route

Working with children or young people

Figure C.2 Working with children or young people by phase and route

Working with children or young people

The plots shown in Figure C.3, because the lines are not parallel, demonstrate an interaction between gender and phase. In addition to the fixed factors effects of gender and phase discussed above, it can be seen that the attitudinal difference between primary and secondary males is much greater than between primary and secondary females.

Figure C.3 Working with children or young people by gender and phase.

Working with children or young people
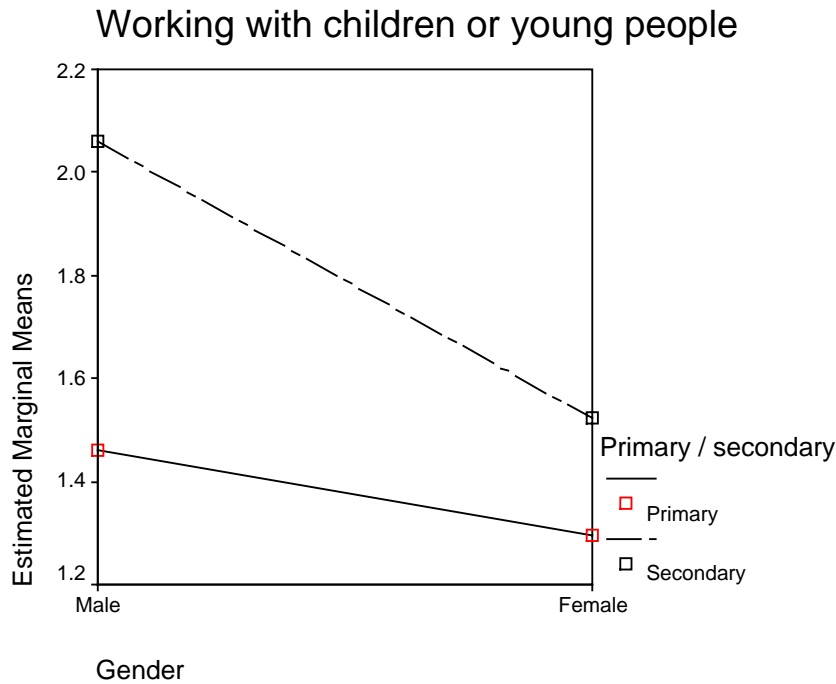
From this analysis certain trends seems identifiable. These are:

- *Route*
    - o Flexible route trainees' responses seem less positive than the other routes about the attractions of teaching overall.
    - o Differences in responses between the genders and/or phases were especially noticeable within the BEd route.
- *Gender*
    - o males' responses tended to indicate less attraction overall to training to teach than females'.
- *Phase*
    - o secondary phase trainees' responses tended to indicate less attraction overall than primary phase trainees'.

160

Appendix D

Cluster analysis and discriminant analysis of data relating to student teachers' concerns, prior to beginning their ITT

Tomlinson, Pell, Malderez, & Hobson

In this Appendix section we report some preliminary results of 'Cluster' and 'Discriminant' analysis of data generated by Question 19 of the questionnaire survey.

Cluster analysis
Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate which, if any, of the following list of 11 factors may have been a source of concern or worry for them as they were about to commence their ITT program (abbreviated labels used in the figures below are given with each item).

- Whether I would be able to cope with the academic difficulty of the programme (AcDiffct)
- Whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom (mntnDisc)
- Whether I would be able to bring about pupil learning (PplLrng)
- Whether I would be able to develop rapport with the children I teach (RapprtCh)
- Whether I would be able to manage the workload (Workld)
- Whether I would be able to pass the skills tests (Sklltsts)
- Whether I would be able to deal with pastoral issues (Pastoral)
- Whether I would get sufficient help for teaching (HelpTch)
- Whether I would get along with teachers and other staff in school (GetonSt)
- Whether I would manage financially (Finance)
- Whether I would enjoy the training/teaching (EnjoyTr)

The full dendrogram resulting from the cluster analysis of the Question 19 data is shown below in Figure D.1.[40] Looking first at the top of the dendrogram, we see two main branches indicating two major clusters (I and II). The height of the join between these

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[40] In a vertical dendrogram, the height of the fusion between branches linking individuals/clusters indicates the *dissimilarity* between such individuals/clusters. Conversely, the lower the point at which two individual/cluster branches join, the more similar the joined individuals/clusters are in terms of the profile of variables being considered. Thus long branches with groups of 'twigs' at their ends indicate within-group homogeneity together with between-group difference of profile.

two cluster/branches of responses indicates that the individuals eventually included within them (i.e. within the I and II parentheses along the bottom axis) have a relatively different pair of 'average' profiles. It can then be seen that the individuals and sub-groups forming cluster II do join at a relatively low level, indicating relative similarity amongst their profiles on the items of Question 19. All this would suggest that we should think in terms of a '2-cluster' view of Question 19 profiles.

However, by contrast with cluster branch II, main cluster branch I does not grow down to a low level before splitting into what would thereby be indicated as relatively similar groupings, rather it splits at an intermediate level, indicating still somewhat contrasting sub-branches (labelled 1 and 2). Taking into account original cluster II, this may suggest that we should rather be thinking in terms of three clusters (clusters 1 and 2 that are sub-groupings of original cluster I and cluster 3 which is the same as original cluster II). The upper, mid-grey shaded area of the figure focuses attention on the 2- and 3-cluster solutions just referred to, whilst the off-white shading highlights the members within the three clusters
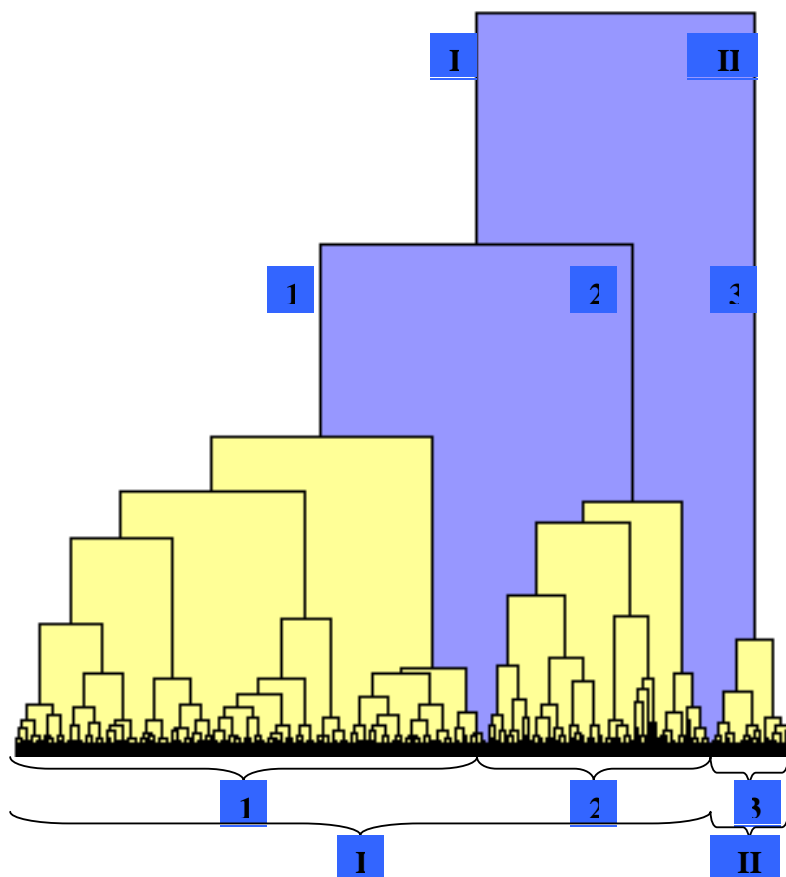

Figure D.1: Full dendrogram for Question 19 – Three-clusters highlighted

However, it is also clear that clusters 1 and 2 break into further series of sub-clusters, sub-sub-clusters and so on. Thus there are further differences amongst these sub-groupings, though their low fusion levels indicate relative similarity amongst them. All in

all, then, a 'rather messy 2/3-cluster' picture seems more adequate. Namely, there is a relatively small (502 respondents out of 4790) but homogenous minority forming cluster II/3 whose profile shows a marked contrast to the remaining majority. Although that majority shows some broad tendency to divide into two main subgroups, their differences are not great and the progressive further sub-groupings suggest that we need to consider each individual for her or his relatively unique characteristics rather than as representatives of clear-cut profile types. However, in making such interpretations, we also need to take into account the variable profiles of the groupings suggested by the analysis.

We can begin to investigate this by examining the profiles of various clusters using the visual portrayal of histograms. Figure D.2 below presents the proportions of individuals within the groupings of the 3-cluster solution indicating the various concerns included in Question 19.
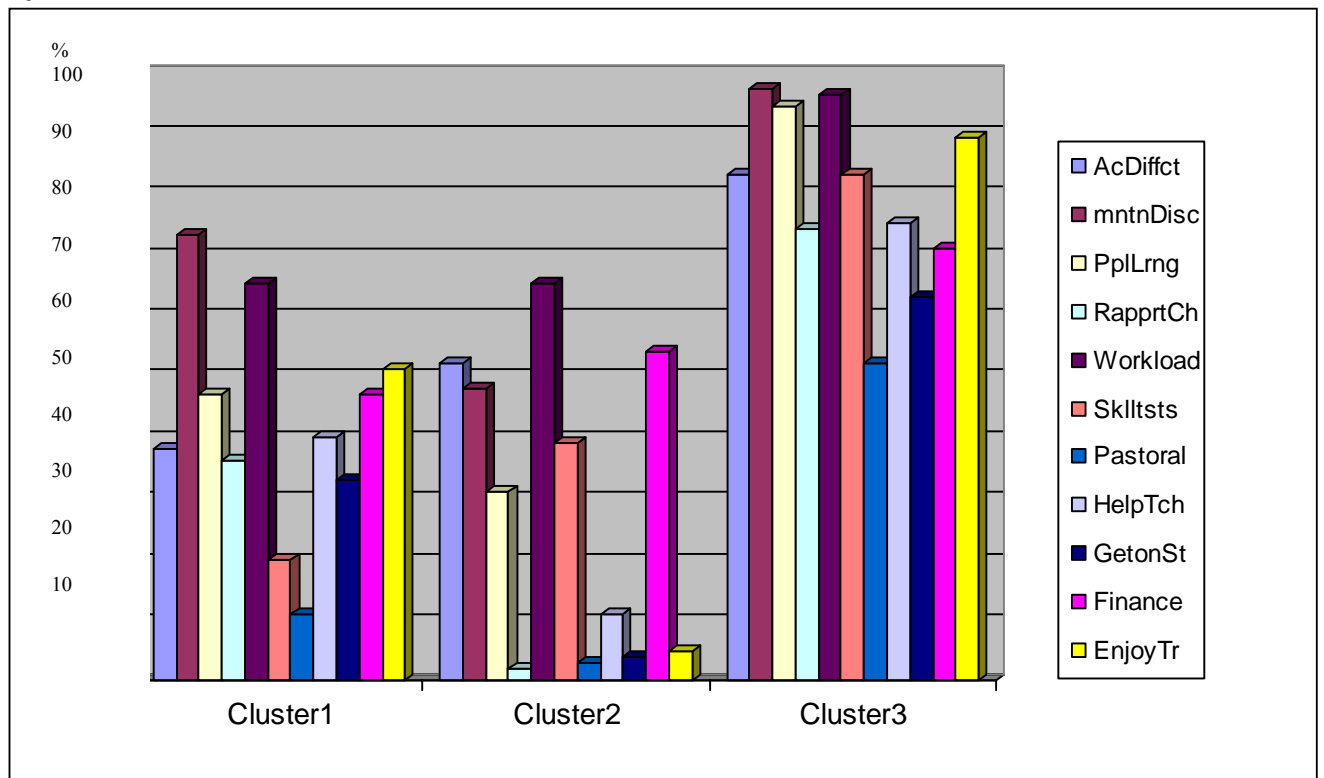

Figure D.2: Question 19 item profiles for 3-cluster solution

Perhaps the most obvious features of Figure D.2 are the indications of homogeneity in cluster 3, in which roughly 90 per cent of members indicate concerns about *maintaining discipline*, *bringing about pupil learning*, *coping with the workload* and *whether they will enjoy training/teaching*, and roughly 80 percent have concerns about *coping with the academic difficulty* of the course, *establishing rapport with children*, *coping with the skills tests* and *getting help with their teaching*. Given that every concern indicated in Question 19 is shared by at least 50 per cent of the group, one might begin to suspect that cluster 3 tends to bring together those people we might call 'the worriers'. However, such

a characterisation would tend to ignore the fact that some items are indeed endorsed by only around 50%.

In subsequent analysis we will explore the characteristics of the cases that form the clusters identified above, to examine whether the clusters of individuals may relate to ITT route, gender, age or phase. Some clues about this may be derived from the results of 'discriminant analyses' of Question 19 data.

Discriminant analysis

Discriminant analysis allows us to examine whether there is a sufficient communality of response across the items to accurately predict which subgroups (e.g. gender or age) the respondents may belong to. It follows that if it is possible to assign respondents to their appropriate subgroup with a high degree of accuracy then this ought to indicate the presence of conceptual clusters.

Discriminant analysis of data from Question 19 shows that it is only possible to predict with a moderate degree of accuracy which sub-groups respondents will belong to. The *ITT route* that respondents are following can be predicted with 24 per cent degree of accuracy, whilst, given the existence of 6 routes, it would be possible to arrive at a 17 per cent degree of accuracy by chance. The participants' *sex* can be predicted with a 58 per cent degree of accuracy, when one would be able to 'guess' this with a 50 per cent degree of accuracy; and a similar result is obtained when analyzing responses to this question in relation to respondents' *age*.

On this ('concerns') question, discriminant analysis suggests that the patterns of responses to this question allow us to predict the *phase / sector of education* (primary or secondary) in which trainees are seeking to teach more accurately than any of the variables reported above. Respondents' 'phase' can be predicted to a 63 per cent degree of accuracy, indicating that these subgroups have a more homogenous response profile. Subsequent analysis will explore whether this corresponds to the clustering shown in the previous section.