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## **Does the keeping of a professional development profile lead to an enhanced self awareness in newly qualified secondary teachers? A study conducted in a large UK University**

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**Does the keeping of a professional development profile lead to an enhanced self awareness in newly qualified secondary teachers? –a study conducted in a large UK University .**

**AERA Annual Meeting New Orleans April 24-28, 2000**

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Sheffield Hallam University . UK**

### **Topic and research questions**

To qualify as a teacher for secondary schools (pupil ages 11-18 years) in England and Wales students are now required to be assessed against a set of National Standards and to complete a Career Entry Profile (CEP) before obtaining qualified teacher status. This University has a large secondary programme (700+ students) providing 3, 2 and 1 year routes into teaching. Those following the three year route undertake in their final year the same programme as graduate students (who in the UK follow a 1 year route). The reason for this is to have a common school placement pattern for all students from SHU which makes it easier for schools to deliver the school based component of training (which must be at least 24 weeks). Three year trainees have for the past 5 years set up and kept a professional development profile at the start of their course and so should have considerably more experience of reflecting on practice, setting and monitoring personal development targets and the other perceived advantages of maintaining a portfolio than students recruited to 1 year routes. The first two years of the three year route are mainly concerned with subject enhancement in a main teaching subject and an introductory course in education that has an emphasis on professional and personal development, including a serial attachment to a school. The Government required all students (from 1998) to complete a CEP at the end of their initial training, which is more of a summative record of strengths and future development needs than a portfolio (Teacher Training Agency, 1999). Not wishing the benefits of the existing formative portfolio to be lost, the course team devised for the 1998/99 year a new assessment profile for all final year students that would simultaneously meet the requirements of the CEP. The design of the profile was formative in that self assessment in meeting National Standards was required at 4 points during the year with school mentors making a formal assessment at the end of each semester. Students were required at each review point to set targets for their own development and discuss these with a University tutor, who monitored their progress throughout the final year. At the end of their course, strengths and future development needs were recorded in the CEP.

The research addresses the following questions:

1 Does the keeping of a professional development portfolio throughout the 3 year route help to produce more rounded and professionally aware teachers than those who follow a 1 year graduate route?

2 Are the perceived strengths and future development needs of 3 year undergraduate students different from those following the 1 year graduate route as identified from Career Entry Profiles?

Answers to these questions have implications for the future development of both routes and wider issues concerning the value of time spent on constructing and maintaining a professional development profile by trainees following the 3 year route. The research is also seeking to add to the growing literature about different ways of using portfolios in pre-service teacher education (Winsor et al,1999).

Most trainee teachers for secondary schools in England and Wales are already graduates and follow the 1 year route. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA), the government organisation that has responsibility for National Standards in pre-service training has introduced a competency based set of exit standards and prescribed knowledge (tightly linked to the delivery of the school National Curriculum) that now leaves very little time for reflection about wider educational and professional issues. Students undergoing a one year of training may be perceived to be at a disadvantage compared with those having a longer route of training that is supported by a professional development portfolio (PDP).

### **Relevance to conference theme**

The raising of educational standards is a top Government priority and "modernisation" of the teaching profession and pre-service teacher education is seen as an important element. All pre-service courses now have to meet criteria set out in DfEE circular 4/98. Compliance with the criteria is monitored by Ofsted, the government inspection organisation who make judgements about the quality of trainees, the quality of their training and performance in schools against a set of National Standards. These standards have been the subject of intense academic debate from which Welch and Mahony (1999) identify five main areas for criticism:

- no indication of how teaching is conceptualised or recognition that there may be several interpretations
- standards are largely concerned with the subject knowledge and craft skills needed to teach the National Curriculum, that depicts the new teacher more as a technician rather than a professional
- there is overemphasis on individuality of the teacher rather than teamworking
- the social and political contexts and purposes of teaching and learning are limited to economic and vocational dimensions

- teachers responsibilities to promoting equity within education are limited to having knowledge of Government reports rather than the methods that might be used by teachers to combat discrimination

The notion of teaching as a research based profession was made in the Sutherland report (1997, p4) and was subsequently reflected in the TTA's corporate plan for 1998-2001 in which one of the objectives was to "secure teaching as an evidence and research based profession". This is now certainly happening with the publication and analysis of inspection data and assessment data. There is however concern that much of which is presented as data for research is invalid and that this data is used selectively by Government and policy makers. For example the validity of much of the data on pupil achievement eg SATs tests in English has been strongly criticised by teachers. There has also been much national concern about the validity of comparing external examination results year by year when the method of assessment is changing. Clearly, as education and the raising of standards in schools is a top Government priority it is not unexpected that steady positive gains are reported each year.

Within Teacher Education doubt has been cast on the whole process of the inspection of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) by Graham and Nabb (1999) in their recent survey of 152 Deans, Heads of Departments and Course Leaders of ITE providers. For them the inspection system is seen as inconsistent, lacking in validity and reliability, failing to acknowledge the realities of partnership courses, unacceptably dominated by TTA grading requirements, imposing excessive burdens, insufficiently promoting quality enhancement, and representing poor value for money. The publication of performance profiles and league tables for ITE providers (TTA, 1999) which are based largely on inspection judgements, has further served to lower the confidence of teachers and teacher educators in Government strategies. This is largely because of the criteria required to be met by ITE providers or risk the loss of accreditation and future funding. This has caused some University Departments to stop initial training. It also appears that although some small scale funding has been made available by the TTA, research at the level of the teacher remains tokenistic. In future the internet is to be used to publicise good practice and small scale research in schools which may lead to further growth in this area. There has been recent public debate about the value of the reflective practitioner movement with the Chief inspector for Schools (Woodhead, 1999) referring to it as "dangerous romanticism". He suggests that there is not much to be discovered about teaching that is not already known and that concepts such as "teacher as researcher" are irrelevant.

The view of faculty at this University is that teachers of the future need to engage far more than is currently the case with the research community if they are to become true professionals, and this needs to start at pre-service level. They also need to have the ability to critically analyse and participate in researching the reforms imposed by Government. This could take place at the local level so that trainee teachers can gain experience of the research

process and feel some ownership of findings. At SHU this is achieved through staff student councils, the involvement of students in data collection and the interpretation of findings. The seeds of a new research based stance towards teaching, and the multitude of related educational issues are therefore being sown in pre-service training. Within the research focus described above the findings can only be interpreted in the context of multiple perspectives of teacher professionalism, awareness of self and of educational policy.

### **Influences on the development of portfolios**

The inspiration to use professional development profiles in our longer routes of pre-service training came from North America. The writings of Barton and Collins (1993) about the portfolio being able to provide evidence of the pre-service teacher's performance as a thinking, problem solving professional, the account of how journals, diaries, logs and records of experience can be useful in the understanding of self-development in pre-service training (James and Denley, 1992) and the opportunity to engage in action planning strategies (Wall, 1993) were all useful to our planning process. Portfolios were introduced to our longer routes of secondary training in September 1994. Evaluative research (Brand and Holland, 1999) on the effectiveness of the portfolios took place between 1996 and 1998. CEPs were introduced in 1998 towards the end of the academic year leaving ITE providers little time to prepare trainees for this new task resulting in it becoming a summative exercise, at least for the 1 year trainees. The conception of the reflective practitioner Schon (1982), issues of ownership, the experiential learning cycle of Klob (1983), making students increasingly responsible for their own learning (Harris and Russ, 1994), periodic checking of portfolios (Dollase, 1996) and issues about teacher professionalism (Firestone and Bader, 1992 and Farrugia, 1996) were key influences in the development of profiling within our 3 year ITE route and of the subsequent evaluative research. During the developmental period we became aware of not only the some of the positive features of portfolios, for example Shulman (1998) considers that creating a portfolio entry is a theoretical act in that what is declared or reflected upon is related to a personal view of values that underpin a theory of teaching but also some dangers in the process - trivialisation as well as mindless standardization (Lyons, 1998). The CEP clearly is clearly based on the National Standards, so potentially limiting a personal theoretical view of what is important in teaching, and the guidance given on how to complete entries tends to encourage standardization. So without a fairly intensive period of study about the process of portfolios (with little time for this in 1 year routes) it is difficult to see how the full benefits of portfolio use could be achieved.

## Evaluative Research on the Development of Portfolios in ITE at SHU

Students' views about the value of keeping a Professional Development Portfolio were obtained from three cohorts of trainees (120, 129, 125) who started a three year route of training in 1995, 1996 and 1997. A total of 34 student interviews using a semi-structured schedule were conducted in schools during placements in 1997 and 29 school mentors were also interviewed about the value of portfolio keeping by pre-service teachers. Also, all of the 1997 3 year cohort of students completed a 24 item attitude questionnaire about teaching as a professional occupation (Holland, 1999). They concluded that teaching did match up to most of the criteria needed to establish teaching as a professional occupation but did not feel that this view was being supported by Government policies or the media. It was also found that trainees at the end of their 3 year route were less idealistic about teaching being a profession than those at the beginning of their training. In the UK, teachers not only have they lost control of what to teach (a National Curriculum has been in place for a decade) but are now losing control of how to teach (Government literacy and numeracy strategies are already in place in primary schools and are shortly to be extended into the secondary curriculum). This is prompting debate about whether or not teaching is a professional occupation and about how the recent reforms (including the introduction of new technologies) are changing the status, public image and roles of teachers. Such debate is, of course, at the heart of professional development profiling. The planners of the PDP process for the secondary ITE route at this University have been forced to confront the issue of professional development in a climate of rapid change. The ten precepts for teacher professional development identified by Day (1999) do in the author's view provide a basis on which to build portfolio work with trainee teachers. It goes well beyond the simplistic view of teaching presented in the CEP by including statements about values. In summary form these are:

- teachers are the schools greatest asset
- teachers should inculcate in their students a disposition to lifelong learning
- career long professional development is necessary for all teachers
- learning from experience alone can limit development
- thinking and actions of teachers depend on life histories, school settings, social and political contexts, and current phase of development
- successful teaching demands intrapersonal, interpersonal and professional commitment
- the way the curriculum is constructed is linked to teachers' constructions of their personal and professional identity
- teachers need to be developed actively and involved in decisions about their own learning
- successful school development is dependent on successful teacher development
- planning and supporting career-long development is the joint responsibility of teachers, schools, and government

Within these value statements is the notion that teachers (and trainee teachers) bear much of the responsibility for their own professional development. It is for others to ensure that the necessary resources are available for the development to take place. Providers of Initial Training together with schools provide this resource, but in the case of University providers this is being attempted at a time of declining financial resources with reduced contact and lecture time and an expectation trainees will use self managed time wisely. The PDP is therefore potentially a useful process to facilitate greater trainee engagement in the learning process

In 1998 the Career Entry Profiles of all students completing a course of training were analysed on the basis of strengths and future developmental needs. In summer 1999 a similar but more substantive analysis (which is the focus of this paper) compares CEP entries from 1 year students and those who had followed the 3 year route (who had the perceived benefit of keeping a PDP throughout the duration of their course). Because of the Government requirement for students to be graded by school mentors (moderated by University tutors) on a 1-4 scale in aspects of the National Standards, for example, in subject knowledge, teaching skills, ability to assess pupils etc this data was also available for comparative purposes between the two student groups (sample 100 in each group).

### **Outcomes of the research leading to the introduction of the CEP**

When surveyed at the end of their first semester of teacher training of the 1997, 3 year cohort (95 students) 59% agreed that keeping a PDP was increasing self-awareness, 45% said that it helped to evaluate their own learning and 51% felt that keeping a portfolio increased their awareness of the need to monitor and record ongoing professional development. This tends to mirror other research (Winsor et al. 1999) in that all portfolio users report some satisfaction and some problems, not least of which is the time involved in construction. Other issues such as what evidence to include, the setting of realistic but demanding goals, and how a portfolio can provide evidence of growing maturity also emerged. Final Year trainees (325) completing the CEP in 1998 for the first time had their CEPs analysed for mention of areas of weakness.

Summary of Statement	% of students who felt area was a weakness
are familiar with the 14-16 ys and post 16 syllabuses and courses including vocational	16.4
have a secure knowledge of the content specified in the ITT National Curriculum for ICT	10.0
identify pupils who have SEN, are very able or not yet fluent in English	21.0

set high expectations for pupil behaviour, establish a good standard of discipline	10.0
effective questioning which matches pace	10.0
are familiar with the statutory assessment and reporting requirements, know how to present information to parents	14.0
can take responsibility for own professional development and up to date in research in pedagogy in subjects taught	10.0
understand professional responsibilities in relation to school policies and practices	15.7

Table 1

This data was fed back to tutors responsible for delivery of the Secondary ITE programme so that these areas of concern could be given greater attention in the 1998/9 academic year.

**Analysis of the grades awarded for practical teaching and CEP entries for the two cohorts ( three year and one year trainees completed in July 1999)**

A sample of 100 three year route trainees ( almost the complete cohort) was compared with 100 trainees from the one year route on the basis of having similar grades awarded by schools for their final semester placement. Schools were required to award grades on a 4 point scale for nine criteria, with 1 being very good and 4 poor quality. The criteria (in summary form) were:

- Knowledge and understanding of the school curriculum
- Using subject knowledge and understanding
- Planning
- Teaching skills
- Class management skills
- Self evaluation
- Monitoring, assessment, recording and accountability
- Other professional requirements
- Information and communication technology

By the end of training there was an assumption (from the TTA) that most students would have made sufficient progress to be be rated as being at least good (2) or very good (1) on the above criteria. The mean grades



(calculated on mentor ratings in the above nine criteria) for the three year cohort and 1 year cohort were 1.69 and 1.64 respectively which indicates that both groups of students were judged to be equally competent at addressing the National Standards by the schools responsible for the assessment, and so provides a measure that suggests comparability between the two groups in practical teaching.

The CEP required statements to be written by the student about their strengths and areas for further development under four headings that related to the National Standards. Guidance on what might be included was given in the TTA briefing documents. The entries were discussed with both the student's school based mentor and a University tutor and both had to agree that these were realistic and an accurate self reflection of the students stage in development at the completion of initial training. The guidance provided by the Teacher Training Agency (1999) for completing the CEP required statements within four broad areas that reflected the National Standards. They were:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Planning, teaching and class management
- Monitoring, assessment, recording and accountability
- Other professional requirements

The analysis of the entries in the CEPs was by the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) which involved the separate analysis and coding of each CEP as a basis for developing possible categories. Using the process of clustering (Goetz and LeCompte, 1981) categories were merged when thought necessary, leading to those below.

**Areas of Strength** (% of entries for all students (200), 1 year route (100) and 3 year route (100))

	both groups	1 year route	3 year route
sound subject knowledge	21.5	23.0	20.0
good planning ability	14.6	15.0	14.3
effective use of questions	5.3	5.0	5.5
personality descriptions	1.5	1.5	1.5
high expectations for behaviour	5.3	4.0	6.5
good relations with colleagues	5.0	5.0	5.0
confident in use of ICT	4.4	4.3	4.5
good at self evaluation	7.0	5.8	8.3
good relations with pupils	5.1	6.0	4.3
effective assessment /monitoring	11.8	11.3	12.3
good range of teaching styles	5.3	5.5	5.0
able to differentiate learning	3.1	4.0	2.3
partoral/extra curriculum	1.5	0.8	2.3
high professionalism	3.3	1.8	4.8

Table 2

While all trainees were encouraged to identify their strengths in relation to the National Standards for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) this did not appear to limit their responses. Overall, the differences in identified strengths between the two groups is small. This is to some extent encouraging to faculty and supports the finding of very similar gradings received by both groups from mentors and an expectation that those leaving the University with the award of QTS would have similar levels of competency. However, those who followed the three year route more frequently mentioned strengths in:

- professionalism
- self evaluation
- pastoral/curriculum
- high pupil behaviour

*professional conduct and listening to advice in a positive manner,taking into account the feedback of the mentor and staff and using it to make changes in teaching*

*I am aware of the professional responsibilities of a teacher.I have gained considerable experience in the role of the form tutor and have been keen to develop myself in this area.*

*have undertaken the role of form tutor and recognise the need for pastoral care-have demonstrated a professional outlook and sets a good example to pupils taught*

*very efficient at organising and managing pupils- always give clear instructions- evaluate lessons with a high degree of analytical thought and constantly modifies approach in order to improve lesson quality*

*develops excellent working relationships with both staff and pupils and adopts a highly professional attitude towards teaching*

*excellent working relationships with colleagues- very focussed on professional development and familiar with school policies and practices*

*sets high expectations for pupil behaviour and has sufficient presence in the classroom to establish and maintain a purposeful atmosphere*

*evaluates lessons critically and uses this to improve future lessons- seeks guidance from experienced staff and implements this*

Bearing in mind that three year route trainees had undertaken significantly more professional learning over a more extended period of time it is not surprising that these areas appear in the analysis of the CEPs. They also had the benefit of short school placement (6 days) during which reflective writing was undertaken, resulting in the submission of a log book. Trainees were then expected to transfer appropriate material into their professional development portfolio. The requirement to begin a professional development portfolio at the start of their course, engage with tutors in a rigorous process of self reflection, and engage in reflective on practice throughout their placement may account for the above differences.

The analysis of the strengths by gender of the combined cohorts (male 97 cases, female 107 cases) also revealed some small differences in the following :

Strength	Male %	Female %
good planning ability	11.3	17.5
confident use of ICT	6.2	2.8
effective assessment /monitoring	9.4	13.8
target setting	0.8	3.5
good range of teaching/learning styles	6.5	4.2

Table 3

In all other categories the differences were negligible.

This suggests that in their self assessment of strengths, female trainees have greater strengths in planning, assessment and target setting than males . Interestingly enough males perceive greater strengths in ICT and use a good range of teaching /learning styles.

Some differences were also apparent when the strengths were analysed by main subject. (Number of cases: English 21, maths 28, science 21, modern languages 23, design technology 41, religious education 17, physical education 30, information technology 9, business studies 10)

Strength(%)	E	MA	SCI	ML	DT	RE	PE	IT	BS
sound subject knowledge	23.8	20.5	22.6	23.9	20.1	23.5	20.0	19.4	20.0
good planning ability	16.7	10.7	13.1	18.5	14.6	16.2	22.1	16.7	15.0
effective use of questions	6.0	3.6	6.0	1.1	6.1	5.9	8.3	2.8	5.0
relations with colleagues	11.9	4.5	4.8	3.3	4.9	2.9	5.8	2.8	0
self evaluation	7.1	6.3	9.5	5.4	7.3	0	12.5	5.6	2.5
relations with pupils	7.1	7.1	3.6	1.1	4.3	8.8	7.5	2.8	0

Table 4

The interpretation of the data can only be done in terms of multiple perspectives – through knowledge of the composition of subject groups, the curriculum followed, differences in the school based training etc. A surprising feature is that RE trainees have one of the higher strengths in relationships with pupils but one of the lowest when relating to colleagues. Is this because RE trainees are usually in a small department, teach a larger number of student groups than most other subjects, or find it more difficult to mix with the staff as a whole? The three subject areas with the higher strengths in self evaluation are the ones that contain the highest numbers of 3 year route students. Has the keeping of a PDP over an extended period of time been a factor? Very few modern language trainees identified questioning as a strength – is this because of difficulties in teaching through the medium of a foreign language?

**Areas identified by trainees in the CEP as requiring further development**

% of trainees identifying issue for all trainees (200), 1 year route (100) and 3 year route (100)

	both groups	1 year route	3 year route
Post 16 experience	7.5	7.3	7.0
ICT	11.5	12.0	10.0
assessment 14-16 yrs	2.2	2.5	1.8
assessment pupil having SEN	2.2	3.5	0.8
planning skills	4.3	4.3	4.0
pastoral role of teacher	4.7	3.5	5.5
teaching techniques	9.2	6.5	11.0
subject knowledge	10.1	7.0	12.3
assessment	12.4	10.8	13.0
keeping good discipline	4.6	4.5	4.8
providing differentiated learning	6.9	7.8	5.5
extending pupils	1.6	2.0	1.0
parental communication	5.1	5.5	4.3
target setting	2.1	2.8	1.3
self evaluation	2.0	3.0	0.8
equal opportunities	0.9	1.0	0.8
progression in Key Stages	4.3	4.5	4.3
governing /school policies	1.6	1.5	1.5
pacing of lessons	0.9	0.0	1.8
developing resources	1.0	1.5	0.5

Table 5

The differences between the two groups are again small but the 3 year trainees appear to be more confident in assessing SEN, target setting, self evaluation, assessment 14-16yrs and ICT. The 3 year group has however identified teaching techniques, pacing of lessons, dealing with difficult pupils, developing a pastoral role and developing specific subject knowledge

as developmental issues more frequently than the 1 year group. A tentative explanation for this may be in the greater confidence that 1 year trainees (already graduates) have in subject knowledge and that 3 year trainees may have acquired a greater understanding of the wider role of the teacher by virtue of the longer training route and perhaps value more highly the gaining of competence in teaching skills.

In comparing the 1998 areas of weakness (table 1) and the 1999 areas for further development (table 5), it is clear that there has been a significant reduction in the identification of areas of concern, with the exception of ICT. This can be accounted for by the actions undertaken by faculty and school mentors to address these concerns in the 1998-9 year. ICT clearly remains problematic to many trainees, particularly those following 1 year routes. Partnership schools are not currently all able to provide the expected level of ICT support and training. This situation is changing rapidly as more teachers undergo ICT training and with the recently introduced scheme for teachers to purchase lap tops at subsidised prices.

*application of National Curriculum levels to achievement in ICT*

*more understanding of how and when to use ICT in Mathematics*

*develop understanding of pupils' special needs and their implications within Design and Technology and develop different materials which set appropriate and demanding expectations for these pupils*

*continue to build upon my subject knowledge and understanding of educational theory and use this information to develop new teaching strategies*

*I need to become more aware of pupils' common misconceptions when designing and making, especially when using large machines*

*gain confidence, through experience become more animated, larger than life character, ensuring that my enthusiasm is transferred to the pupils I teach*

*concentrate on improving my French to take it to a high level - pay attention to French pronunciation before lessons*

*develop strategies to ensure positive behaviour and responses from poorly motivated students*

*need to develop further presence to create a disciplined and supportive atmosphere*

Areas identified as requiring further development was also analysed for gender differences (male 93 cases, female 107 cases)

Area for development	Male%	Female %
assessment 14-16	6.5	10.3
teaching techniques	44.1	27.1
extending pupils	2.2	9.3
self evaluation	10.8	4.7
progression in Key Stages	20.4	15.0
governing/school policies	3.2	8.4

In all other aspects the differences were negligible.

Table 6

Male trainees identify that more development is required in teaching techniques, self evaluation, and knowledge of Key Stage progression ( Key Stage is a term used in the National Curriculum to identify age ranges KS2 8-11yrs, KS3 11-14 yrs, KS4 14-16 yrs).

Areas for further development were also analysed by main subject. Number of cases; English 21, maths 28, science 21, modern languages 23, design and technology 41, religious education 17, physical education 30, information technology 9, business studies 10.

Area requiring further development %	E	MA	SCI	ML	DT	RE	PE	IT	BS
subject knowledge	6.0	10.7	7.1	8.8	3.0	4.4	10.0	13.9	2.5
planning skills	14.7	11.6	8.3	8.8	15.2	22.1	5.0	16.7	2.5
assessment	15.5	6.3	9.5	14.3	10.4	13.2	18.3	11.1	5.0
teaching techniques	3.6	11.6	8.3	3.3	11.0	8.8	9.2	8.3	15.0
ICT	4.3	11.6	8.3	8.8	15.2	22.1	5.0	2.8	2.5
pastoral role of teacher	1.2	5.4	3.6	14.3	4.3	1.5	1.7	2.8	5.0
post 16 experience	6.0	10.7	7.1	8.8	3.0	4.4	10.0	3.9	2.5
maintain good discipline	1.2	3.6	6.0	7.7	1.2	7.4	6.7	2.8	10.0
differentiated learning	4.8	5.4	11.9	6.6	3.7	4.4	8.3	5.6	15.0

Table 7

Differences between main subject groups in other areas of development were negligible. The interpretation of this data by subject is complex and requires multiple perspectives. Faculty who know the entry background of individuals in the subject groups and have monitored the progress of trainees during the final year of training, including the reflective writing required within assignments, are best placed to offer an interpretation. To some extent the different entry backgrounds of the subject cohorts can help

to explain the above differences. For example, RE only recruits graduate students, most of whom are unlikely to have received significant inputs in ICT within their degree. PE students all follow the 3 year route during which both planning skills and ICT receive significant attention in the first two years. The nature of the subjects also provides a possible interpretation, eg. assessment techniques in mathematics have a long history whereas in PE this is a developing area both for schools and trainee teachers. Teaching business studies requires a high level of ICT capability and trainees usually spend the most time teaching post 16.

### **The response of trainees to their CEP entries after one semester of employment as a school teacher.**

A follow up postal survey was carried out in January 2000 with 25 trainees from the above sample from each of the 3 year and 1 year groups. A total of 40 responses were obtained. To encourage busy teachers to provide the information a photocopy of the trainees' CEP entries were sent with a single side response sheet to the trainee's school. They were asked to write brief comments about the accuracy of their earlier comments made in the CEP, identify any areas of strength or further development not included in the CEP and finally some comments on whether or not the CEP had been used in the school induction programme for newly qualified teachers. Trainees who followed the 3 year route were also asked to comment on the usefulness of the PDP started at the commencement of their course. The analysis below is for all trainees because of the small sample involved.

Areas of **strength written in the CEP** were almost universally regarded as being accurate and this had been confirmed in their first term of teaching by mentors responsible for the induction year. A minority mentioned that the demands of a full time job meant that formal written plans for lessons were necessarily shorter and than on teaching practices. Also it was not always possible to demonstrate as a trainee some of the wider aspects of the teacher's role by virtue of being on an assessed placement rather than an employee. Four trainees felt that they had begun teaching with strengths in ICT but they had not identified this at the time of completing the CEP.

*it is hard to maintain the standard on a full timetable as well as the all the other professional requirement which weren't necessarily there on teaching practice*

*subject knowledge was regarded as a strength by many students but it was not until starting first jobs that gaps became apparent.*

*over optimistic - had to learn how to use Acorns(computers) and teaching the economics part of Business Studies at A level*

*I have had to do some quick research on Judaism and Islam*

*classroom discipline and subject knowledge were found to require further development*

The comments on **CEP entries about further development needs** were characterised by a view that they were generally accurate and that progress had been made in with most areas. Several trainees commented that they still had not had the opportunity to develop post 16 expertise and that ICT was rarely used to deliver teaching in their department and therefore was hindering their progress. There was also a recognition that there are differences between schools and that experience (in the role of the teacher) counts.

*just because there are areas for improvement in the last TP it does not follow that these will be the same areas in the next school*

*knowledge and understanding comes with experience and cannot be gained to genius level in just one year*

*going to a new school is like taking a step backwards*

Areas for further development not recorded in the CEP but now identified were varied. They included pastoral responsibilities as a form tutor, how to manage an ever increasing workload, how to use SEN support assistants and administrative work associated with SEN procedure. The school's **induction programme** for newly qualified teachers was generally well regarded with positive features being :

*lots of inset courses*

*the use of the CEP in the planning of the programme*

*regular meetings and observations.*

The main negative experiences of the induction programme to date were:

*still being treated as a student, amount of additional paperwork*

*cancelled courses outside school due to lack of participants*

*some tutorials not having aims or targets*

*missing lessons to attend courses*

On the question of whether the keeping of a PDP throughout the 3 year route had been a valuable experience that helped trainees with the CEP and the induction process in school there was a mixed response. The two cohorts



of trainees had completed their training at a time of rapid change within ITE and the internal PDP process for the 3 year route could not be integrated into the CEP process, as this had yet to be published. A consequence of this is that some students retrospectively regard the formative PDP process as less relevant since the only national requirement is to complete a summative CEP. There was also a problem during the second year of the course when several students reported that subject tutors who were expected to monitor the PDP failed to do so. Faculty have subsequently modified the first year of the 3 year route to give more time to developing subject knowledge and partly replaced the PDP by a Professional Standards Unit in each year of the course. The regular monitoring of this is undertaken by the newly created role of Academic Tutor (who is a subject specialist) and training and resources have now been made available to support this role. The Academic Standards units link more closely with the National Standards for newly qualified teachers and the CEP.

## **Conclusion**

The evidence suggests that students who follow the 3 year route of training are identifying broadly similar strengths and areas for further development to those on the 1 year route in the Career Entry Profiles. They also as a group achieve very similar gradings in practical teaching from school mentors. Some differences eg. in target setting ability, self evaluation and professionalism are more frequently cited in the CEPs of trainees who have followed the 3 year route. This may be attributed to the emphasis that was given to these areas in the first year unit concerned with the principles underpinning the development of a Professional Development Profile. Most faculty who teach both groups (mixed for education) in their final year of teacher training at this University recognise that there are a number of differences between students on the short and long routes leading to qualified teacher status. By the final common year it is evident that as the 3 year route trainees have not yet graduated they are giving more time to work that is to be formally assessed than those following the 1 year route. Also, the 3 year trainees have followed a broadly common programme whilst 1 year trainees join the course having graduated from a wide range of UK and overseas universities, each having a very different undergraduate experience which often includes work outside the field of education. The PDP does appear to be important in the development of some of the key attributes necessary for success as a teacher, notably an ability to self evaluate their performance as a teacher and an understanding of teacher professionalism. This provides some confidence in retaining a significant input into the process of constructing a PDP with 3 year trainees in their first semester, including exposure to some of the issues that will encourage trainees to adopt a professional stance to their own learning from the outset. The use of the CEP as a purely a summative document has already been rejected at this University and all routes now require trainees to keep an evidence file which will be cross-referenced against progress towards

meeting the National Standards in each year of their course. Our challenge is to encourage all trainees to look further than the competency model of teaching that underpins the National Standards and the Career Entry Profile and to build upon our growing experience in the use of professional development profiling.

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