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Heroism, complexity and core tensions: An appreciative exploration of schools as teacher learning environments within the Teach First Training Programme

by

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Declaration

I, Anna Kia Polly Glegg confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Word count

44,993 words

Exclusive of appendices and the list of references; including footnotes, endnotes, glossary, maps, diagrams and tables.

Abstract

This thesis examines teacher learning during the first year of Teach First's Training Programme, a two-year employment-based route (EBR) into teaching in England. Arguing that EBRs differ materially from fee-funded, HEI-led routes, I explore teachers' learning experiences within the principal context of the Training Programme: the employing school.

My research adopts an 'appreciative stance', derived from Appreciative Inquiry and reflecting my commitment to engendering positive outcomes for teachers and pupils. I interviewed eleven 'trainees' coming to the end of the Training Programme, inviting them to *tell me the story of how you learned to teach*. I analysed participants' stories using thematic analysis within a qualitative methodology, and literature on teacher learning and workplace learning.

Seven analytical themes illuminate how: the design of the Training Programme shapes trainees' learning; trainees experience learning to teach as professional learning; and trainees' learning is personal and relational. From this analysis I develop concepts of the 'heroic programme' and 'heroic trainee' within initial teacher preparation, considering affordances and constraints of the Training Programme for trainee learning. I propose that Teach First pay regard to three 'core tensions' within the Training Programme's design which act to shape, and often limit, the quality of trainees' learning in their placement schools: that expectations and conceptual frameworks of the Training Programme's three partners are not consistently well-aligned; that being employed in a 'teacher' role increases the challenge of recognising and fostering trainees' 'learner' identity; and that trainees' early responsibility outweighs their competence. Finally, I offer ways that this proposal might be operationalised by Teach First and by school-based mentors.

This research extends understanding of new teachers' learning experiences on the Training Programme, with pertinent implications for policy and practice around EBRs, including the Training Programme, at a time of substantial change in teacher education in England and internationally.

Impact statement

This research is timely. In England, ITP providers are <u>struggling to recruit and</u> <u>retain student teachers</u>, a pattern replicated internationally, and Teach First are <u>unlikely to meet this year's recruitment target</u>. My research has the potential to influence both policy and practice that aims to better attract, prepare and retain new teachers.

Insights from my research are influencing teacher education practice within and beyond my institution. Having won an IOE Impact Fellowship while writing up my findings, the animation I subsequently produced is a concise resource about improving mentoring which I have shared with mentors and other teacher educators. I used the video recently in presenting to a Spanish organisation setting up a new ITP programme. Follow-up discussions indicated that my work influenced thinking and planning around their next steps. Closer to home, colleague teacher educators have shared the video with mentors on their ITP programmes and at least one ITP leader in another university has also shared it with her mentors. A Teach First Development Lead fed back 'this video is brilliant and should be a part of our mentor training as far as I am concerned! It's really concise and sums up the trainee experience perfectly.' This demonstrates impact mainly at the level of individual teacher educators and suggests my work has the potential to contribute further to professional practice. I intend to disseminate my findings through practitioner conferences, blogs and my work in teacher education consultancy, with the intention of influencing the actions of individuals working directly with student teachers.

More strategically, I hope my research will inform future developments by Teach First, if not wholesale re-evaluation and reform of employment-based ITP. I have already discussed initial findings with senior Teach First leaders; my fuller findings and recommendations have the potential to shape the evolution of the Training Programme, reaching c.1500 trainees/year. My research is also relevant to leaders of other English employment-based ITP programmes, and to similar Teach For All programmes internationally. Furthermore, through engaging with policy makers in government, there is potential for my findings to

inform ongoing changes in national ITP policy, particularly in relation to the design and evaluation of employment-based programmes. I will address these goals through professional conferences, personal approaches and targeted briefing papers for Teach First and policy makers.

Academically, my findings, to be disseminated through conferences and academic papers, advance understanding of student teachers' learning experiences on the Training Programme, contributing to the literature in relation to the growing area of employment-based ITP. Furthermore, they highlight cross-disciplinary potential to research other professional training programmes modelled on Teach First (e.g. social work/Frontline).

Finally, the research has informed my personal teacher education practice by drawing attention expressly to student teachers' needs and experiences. I am more explicit in discussing with student teachers how their experiences are shaping their learning, and more aware of how my actions contribute to this. Feedback from tutees highlights the impact these changes are having on the quality of learning I facilitate for them.

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For all that has been given to me by so many, with such love and generosity, thank you. You've each left your trace. You've made me a better writer, academic, teacher and person. Any mistakes that remain are mine alone.

Reflective statement

I began my EdD studies in 2014, a year after leaving teaching to become a teacher educator at what was then the Institute of Education, University of London. Unlike peers who entered the programme with a clear research focus, I joined not knowing what I wanted to study. I was still finding my feet in a new and exciting role, in a community of learned academics to which I did not yet feel I belonged. I knew that doctoral study was important if I wanted to fully join this academic community, and I felt that it would make me better at my job, leading the business education strand of the Teach First London region Training Programme. But I did not feel that I knew enough to know at that stage what I wanted, or needed, to research. Instead, I approached the taught phase of my studies with curiosity and trust that I would come, along the way, to what was important for me and my professional learning.

Programme elements

The first module, Foundations of Professionalism (FoP), was an opportunity to begin to make sense of my new professional context and the identity I was starting to build as a teacher educator and academic. My assignment was titled: Constructing a professional identity as a beginning teacher educator in the post-2010 English setting of initial teacher education. Within it I addressed two key questions:

Question 1: what is the particular expertise that I have (or should have) which others do not?

Question 2: what are the key defining principles or goals which should inform the way in which I exercise my judgement?

In answering these questions and engaging with ideas introduced during the module, I was supported to think hard about what it means to work in HEI-led ITE. I was able to articulate clearly, for the first time, what I understood to be the foundation of my expertise and the principles that should inform my work, and to recognise that these are contested. More broadly, the module opened my eyes to wider debates around professionalism and I began to delineate more clearly

my previous teacher identity from my new identity as a teacher educator. Although I did not yet really understand what a conceptual framework was, I knew that I needed to make more sense of my role, my expertise and my understanding of how to do my job well, and writing the assignment did just this. Looking back now, this first module was absolutely pivotal for my engagement with the doctoral process: sufficiently disruptive that it opened my mind to new, scholarly, ways of thinking about teacher education as professional practice, yet supportive enough that I could work through the disruption without losing confidence or feeling overwhelmed. I see now that this was the beginning of my journey 'into' the academy, when I began to conceive that, one day, I might earn my place in the intellectual community of my employer.

The next two modules, each completed in 2015, were Methods of Enquiry 1 (MOE1), a research proposal, followed by Methods of Enquiry 2 (MOE2), a pilot investigation for the MOE1 proposal. With most of my working time spent with Teach First 'trainees', as they are known, I elected to explore a specific aspect of their learning – being observed teaching and receiving feedback on this, within the context of the Training Programme – being observed relatively infrequently compared to fee-funded student teachers, by four 'support roles' (mentors and tutors). As a counterpoint to the many quantitative surveys used to evaluate the Training Programme, I was interested to learn more about trainees' experiences in depth, in their own words. MOE1 was titled: *The Teach First participant experience of receiving lesson observation feedback from multiple sources (a proposal for IFS)*, and MOE2: *The Teach First participant experience of receiving lesson observation feedback from multiple sources: a pilot investigation*. Both assignments were structured around the same research question:

How do Teach First secondary participants report their experiences of receiving lesson observation feedback from multiple sources in relation to their professional development during their training year?

These two modules laid the foundation for my thesis, in that they drew my attention to the student teacher experience within ITE as worthy of study and to the concept of communities of practice for making sense of this experience.

MOE2 was also my first opportunity to use interviews and thematic analysis in collecting and analysing data. Although only a small study, I deliberately varied the presentation of interview questions to each participant to explore the effect of breaking down the research question in different ways. I drew on lessons learned here in designing my thesis study, mindful that I wanted to minimise my impact as researcher on the stories that participants would tell me.

In 2016 I began the Institution Focused Study (IFS). This 20,000-word assignment offered much greater scope to undertake a substantial piece of research than the 5,000-word assignments to date. Despite an original plan to work up the MOE1 research proposal, by this stage my interests had evolved, and I chose not to continue looking at lesson observation and feedback itself but to explore the beliefs about subject that inform so much of the feedback that observers give. A benefit of working in a large education faculty is the access it offers to colleagues with such a range of expertise, although this can also bring its own challenges. My ongoing commitment to curiosity in my studies meant that I was dipping over time into different research groups and following up interesting discussions with colleagues with further reading. As a result, my interest developed in the nature of different subjects, particularly as my own, business education, is relatively small and little-theorised in comparison to subjects like geography and history, with whose subject leaders on the Teach First Training Programme I was working closely at this stage. I had become increasingly interested in how my subject was understood by the school-based mentors who worked closely with my trainees, since this was so key to the observation feedback that they would give and to trainees' wider ITE experiences.

My IFS research, therefore, was an investigation into how teachers mentoring business education student teachers conceptualised business education as a subject. My assignment was titled: *Business education in London secondary schools: how teacher-mentors conceptualise the subject and why this matters for business education*, with the research question at its heart:

How do business teacher-mentors in London secondary schools conceptualise business education?

I continued to use interviews and thematic analysis to collect and analyse data, building my confidence and competence as a qualitative researcher alongside my familiarity with key debates around subject and curriculum. As my IFS study drew to a close I planned to continue my research into business education through an exploration of business as a specialist subject for my thesis, using the work of Bernstein, Young and Muller, and Klafki, for example, to deepen understanding of what it means to be an expert business teacher.

Wider work context

My work in teacher education throughout my studies was a substantial influence on my overall doctoral journey. From starting out as a subject leader and teacher educator embedded in business education, my work from 2014 to the end of the IFS in late 2017 expanded to incorporate alongside this role two large international consultancy projects, developing teacher education for experienced teachers in one country and student teachers in another; responsibility for quality across seven ITE programmes in my institution; and codesigning and running an induction programme for new teacher educators at my institution. My capacity to take on this work was supported by my studies where, for example, learning from FoP gave me the initial knowledge, vocabulary and awareness of key issues to design induction and development programmes for other teacher educators. More broadly, as I increasingly felt part of the academy, albeit still very junior, I gained the confidence I needed for these more strategic roles. And my work shaped my studies, too, especially as I moved into the thesis stage.

After finishing the IFS, personal circumstances interrupted my studies for a few months. This was an opportunity for reflection on how my career was progressing and where my interests lay for the future. I mapped a possible career path which exploited my developing expertise and interest in teacher education across subjects, moving away from business education. I used this to plan a new direction for my thesis that I anticipated would be both interesting

and professionally relevant. I explored during my interruption the interface between teacher education and workplace learning, which led to a short, exploratory piece of research using Fuller and Unwin's (2013) expansive-restrictive framework to analyse trainee teacher experiences on the Training Programme. I presented this at a Teach First conference, receiving positive feedback on the value of the study from Teach First and university colleagues. Spotting an opportunity to influence the Training Programme and those working on it through my research, I decided to treat this as the pilot to my thesis, which would further explore trainees' learning experiences. In this pilot study I incorporated, alongside the expansive-restrictive framework, the concept of communities of practice first encountered in MOE2 and the qualitative research approaches I had been developing throughout earlier aspects of the programme, as I later would in the thesis itself. A change of supervisor at this stage was timely as her expertise aligned with the direction in which I had now chosen to travel.

While planning my thesis study, I worked on an EEF-funded evaluation of the Early Career Framework pilot programmes in England. This further sharpened my research skills developed through the EdD to date and exposed me to the process of conducting mixed methods research at scale, particularly the rigour of high-quality analysis and discussion. This was exceptional research training which further developed my confidence and competence in undertaking qualitative research of my own.

Professional development and learning

Almost at the end of my doctoral journey now, I am fundamentally changed as a researcher and teacher educator. The different lenses through which I have examined my professional practice across assignments – my professional identity, the student teacher experience and subject specialism – have each enriched my holistic understanding of what it means to be a university-based teacher educator and to educate teachers. I now have a conceptual framework and language for articulating and interrogating my personal professional practice, and for engaging actively with the wider context of my profession. I find

this both necessary and empowering at such a pivotal time of change in teacher education policy in England. I am also much more confident, and competent, in working to develop other teacher educators, which has become an important aspect of my work.

When I began my studies, I was new to the academic teacher education community and hoped that completing the EdD would help me to belong with my peers. While my learning experience has not been without its challenges, the trust I placed in the process at its outset has borne fruit. While I have much still to learn, I do indeed feel that I belong now in the academy. My studies have equipped me with the skills, knowledge, confidence and motivation to participate in this community, as a practitioner and a researcher. The thesis which follows is offered in this spirit as a contribution to teacher education practice and research.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This thesis examines teacher learning during the first year of Teach First's Training Programme, a two-year employment-based route (EBR) into teaching in England. Arguing that EBRs are materially different in structure to fee-funded, higher education institution (HEI)-led routes, therefore meriting special investigation, I set out to explore teachers' learning experiences within the principal context of the Training Programme: the employing school.

The research developed from my observations and discomfort as subject and programme leader for the HEI-led aspect of the Training Programme in the London region, and my wider role as a university-based teacher educator and academic committed to excellence in teacher development. In 2020, I interviewed eleven teachers coming to the end of the Training Programme (secondary age phase), inviting them to 'tell me the story of how you learned to teach'. To analyse their stories I adopted an 'appreciative stance', derived from Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005), using thematic analysis within a qualitative methodology and literature from the fields of teacher education and workplace learning to frame my approach.

The first year of the Training Programme culminates in trainees achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), the English licence to teach, a period referred to variously as initial teacher education (ITE) and initial teacher training (ITT). Since each term reflects certain orientations towards the purpose and process of developing new teachers, I follow Hobson et al. (2008, notes) in using the language of *initial teacher preparation* (ITP) to describe the period, sharing their intention 'to remain neutral as well as accurate' in doing so. It is harder to remain neutral when discussing the participants in ITP, since the labels 'student teacher' and 'trainee' each imply particular understandings of what and how the new teacher should learn, without an obvious impartial alternative. Even the relatively benign 'novice' carries the problematic weight of opposition and subordination to those deemed 'expert'. Throughout my writing I use terms most associated with the contexts under immediate consideration: when discussing the Training Programme I use *trainee*, which is how Teach First identifies their programme participants and reflects the discourse in which participants are

immersed. When discussing HEI-led ITP I use *student teacher*. Absent of specific context, I use the terms interchangeably. At all times my intention is to communicate ideas clearly and in context, not to advance any given perspective.

My research is intended neither as endorsement, critique nor evaluation of the Training Programme *per se*, but as a way of better understanding what is, for better or worse, now a significant part of national ITP provision. England is a leader internationally in embracing paths to teacher accreditation which do not mandate university input or oversight (Labaree, 2017). Government policy, dating back to 1984 (Menter et al., 2019) and amplified since 2010, has promoted the marketisation of teacher preparation (Ellis et al., 2019) and an apprenticeship model of learning, encouraging school-led and employment-based routes, including the Training Programme. Overarching policy narratives promote 'a narrow and one-dimensional approach to educational knowledge' (Hordern & Brooks, 2023, p.14), privileging decontextualised, codified lists of what teachers should 'know that...' and 'know how to...' (DfE, 2019b) and apprenticeship-style learning from practising teachers rather than university academics (Gove, 2010). They arguably reject much of the complexity and contingency (Jones & Ellis, 2019) identified elsewhere, instead:

promot[ing] the view that teaching can best be learnt from observing the practice of established teachers, and that an off-the-peg, national training programme based on research about 'what works' can be 'delivered' to teachers; reflecting a view of teaching as a set of skills, and reducing ITE, as well as teaching itself, to a performative, functional task. (O'Kelly, 2020, pp.28-29)

The reframing internationally of teacher education as a policy problem (Cochran-Smith, 2005) has increased government use of 'policy levers' such as the promotion of alternative routes, the marketisation of ITP and the mandating of national standards (Burn et al., 2023). Teach First relies on government funding for a large part of their income, are represented on advisory groups responsible for developing key policy and standards frameworks in initial and inservice teacher education (DfE, 2019b, 2019a, 2021) and are now authorised to recommend QTS. They increasingly operate, with considerable influence and

growing scope, across the full life cycle of pre- and in-service teacher professional development (Teach First, n.d.-a). The wider political terrain within which the charity operates, therefore, is complex, with Ellis et al. (2020, p.12) positioning Teach First as part of Wolch's (1990) 'shadow state', 'known for their closeness to government policy'. This is a strong warrant for my research, given the power that the organisation, its alumni and representatives wield.

Although internal and external programme evaluations (Allen & Allnutt, 2017; Muijs et al., 2010; Ofsted, 2008, 2011, 2016) indicate the Training Programme is successful against a number of quantitative indicators such as percentage of trainees graded 'outstanding', Allen and Allnutt (2017) and Muijs et al. (2013, 2014) highlight uncertainties about the impact of trainees' teaching in their training year and I identify a gap in knowledge around trainees' learning experiences in their host schools during this period. From themes developed through my analysis I identify three 'core tensions' within the Training Programme which act to shape, and often limit, the quality of trainees' learning, and therefore their teaching, in their placement schools: that expectations and conceptual frameworks of the Training Programme's three partners (Teach First; partner university; school) are not consistently well-aligned; that being employed in a 'teacher' role increases the challenge of recognising and fostering trainees' 'learner' identity; and that trainees' early responsibility outweighs their competence. I develop two alternative narratives which explain how these tensions are navigated on the Training Programme, the 'heroic programme' and 'heroic trainee', and I use these to inform recommendations for improvement.

1.1. The Training Programme

This section presents an overview of the Training Programme. The High Potential Initial Teacher Training and Leadership Development Programme (HPITT) is an employment-based, salaried, ITP programme funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The organisation Teach First runs the programme under the current title of *Teach First Training Programme* (the 'Training Programme'), subcontracting university partners to help design and

'deliver' content. The two-year programme places 'high-performing' graduates and career changers into schools serving low-income communities with high numbers of economically disadvantaged pupils (Bidstats, 2019, n.p.), with the mission to ensure that 'no child's educational success is limited by their socio-economic background' (Teach First, 2018, n.p.). Trainees are contracted and paid to work in placement schools throughout the period of the programme, first as unqualified teachers on a (slightly) reduced timetable then as qualified teachers in the second year. From the outset, trainees are responsible for all teacher duties in relation to their allocated classes, rather than supernumerary to a qualified class teacher as on fee-funded pathways. They undertake concurrently programmes of ITP and leadership development, leading to the award of QTS at the end of the first year and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education and Leadership (PGDE) at the end of the second.

Teach First recruits both trainees and schools, matching trainees with schools where possible according to their preferred teaching phase/specialism and regional location. However, to meet schools' needs some trainees are allocated to subjects that they have not studied formally since A levels or equivalent, and/or in which they did not elect to specialise. Trainees attend a five-week 'Summer Institute' (SI) led (at the time of data collection) by Teach First and university partners and including some teaching practice in a host school, before starting full-time employment in their placement school in September. The school allocates a mentor, for whom Teach First provides some guidelines and training, and trainees immediately teach 60-80% of a qualified teacher's teaching allocation. Trainees have periodic taught days and conferences away from school to work towards QTS and the PGDE (Teach First, n.d.-b). The Training Programme includes a week-long placement at a contrasting school.

When I began this study, the Training Programme operated through a tripartite model comprising Teach First, regional university partners and the partner schools employing trainees. Some elements of the programme (e.g. leadership development, cross-subject pedagogical training, trainee monitoring and review) were designed and led by Teach First, others (with guidance) by mentor teachers in each school. Sub-contracted university partners designed and

provided a substantial, subject-specific, proportion of the programme, assessed and recommended QTS and awarded the PGDE for their regional cohort. Trainees were therefore supported by subject-specialist university *tutors*, phase-specific (but not necessarily subject-specific) Teach First (*Professional*) Development Leads (DLs or PDLs) and (usually subject-specific) school-based mentors. Subsequent programme design updates have diminished the role of university tutors, who no longer teach trainees directly but continue to assess academic work for the PGDE (BSU, n.d.). Subject teaching is now undertaken by Teach First Subject Development Leads (SDLs) with additional support from Practice Development Leads (PrDLs). The recommendation for QTS is now made by Teach First. Subject cohorts are organised nationally rather than regionally, with blended (face to face, online synchronous and online independent) study in place of fully face-to-face teaching, including during SI. From 2022 trainees are no longer visited in person by SDLs undertaking lesson observations but are observed remotely using specialist technology and receive feedback online. PrDLs, working regionally, visit schools and observe trainees in-person but are unlikely to be able to draw on subject specialist knowledge for most trainees. The person specification (Teach First, 2021) for the SDL role in my own subject, business, indicates that SDLs are not required to have subject expertise commensurate with that of the university subject tutors whom they replace. The potential impact on the Training Programme of these changes, in light of my findings, is addressed in chapter 5: Discussion.

1.2. Professional context

My interest in the conditions in which new teachers learn arises from my experience as a school-based teacher and mentor who moved into university-based teacher education, teacher educator development and education research. Engagement with discourses around professional learning, teacher knowledge and models of teacher learning (e.g. Burn et al., 2003; Burn & Mutton, 2015; Grossman et al., 2009; Winch et al., 2015) caused me to reflect on how the limitations of my knowledge at the time had shaped my own mentoring practice in school. Working as a tutor and leader for the London

region Teach First university partner, I simultaneously grappled with how these discourses are operationalised by ITP providers. I came to conceptualise differently and more explicitly the role of school experience within ITP, drawing on my evolving conceptual framework for teacher professional learning and, as I did so, to problematise what I encountered on the Training Programme. I became academically and professionally curious about how the characteristics of the programme, the conditions and contexts in which trainees were learning, shaped their ITP experiences. I sensed that, with a better understanding of these experiences we, the Training Programme's teacher educators, could do more to foster trainees' learning in school.

In the Foundations of Professionalism module of the EdD, perspectives on craft and apprenticeship in professional learning (e.g. Philpott, 2014; Sennett, 2008) spoke to my growing interest in EBRs. I realised the inherent tension in justifying employment-based ITP on the basis of an apprenticeship model of learning when the Training Programme both allows for mentor teachers who arguably lack the expertise of a traditional 'master' and separates trainees (apprentices) and their mentors for most of the working day. This did not reflect the principles of apprenticeship as I understood them. Fuller and Unwin's (2003) expansive-restrictive continuum of workplace environments for apprenticeship learning, rooted in Lave and Wenger's (1991) work on communities of practice, seemed a powerful framework with which to consider more deeply the school workplaces in which my trainees were placed, and the assumptions underpinning the Training Programme model and employment-based routes (EBRs) more generally. The framework also prompted me to consider the affordances of EBRs alongside their challenges. The more I read, particularly Hordern (2014), Davies et al. (2016), Lave and Wenger (1991) and the concepts of communities of practice (ibid) and expansive-restrictive workplaces (e.g. Fuller & Unwin, 2004, 2010; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005), the more I became interested in how professional knowledge is contextualised and the function of boundary crossing in learning. I recognised that the practices and assumptions underpinning HEI-led ITP cannot simply and unproblematically be transferred to EBRs. Some colleagues on the Training Programme shared

these concerns. Acknowledging our collective unease and drawing on my learning, I felt that there was benefit in bringing together literature on ITP and work-based apprenticeship learning to examine the Training Programme as employment-based ITP.

1.3. Situating my research

A substantial body of literature has explored multiple aspects of teacher education (see Menter, Mutton & Burn, 2019 for a helpful overview). Typically small, bar relatively few larger, funded, studies (ibid), and usually conducted within a single ITP route (most commonly the HEI-led PGCE), studies have explored, for example, student teacher perceptions of teacher educators and mentors (Murray et al., 2019), experiences of mentoring (Hobson, 2002, 2016), the development of student teachers' thinking and learning (Burn et al., 2003; Hagger et al., 2008), student teachers' learning in school (Burn et al., 2015; Douglas, 2015), the value of ITE (O'Kelly, 2020) and experiences of problematic school placements (Johnston, 2016). These studies highlight the complexity of the ITP experience, the importance of mentoring and the school environment for trainee development regardless of route, and the contingent and personal nature of trainees' learning.

In a rare wide-scale, 6-year longitudinal study 'Becoming a Teacher', Hobson et al. (2005, 2008, 2009) sought to understand the 'nature and impact of beginning teachers' experiences of initial teacher preparation, induction and early career and professional development' (Hobson et al. 2008, p.409). I find this study significant since it notes both features of lived experience common to student teachers across age and ethnic groups, gender, phase and ITP route, and where experiences differ 'systematically' (p.407, abstract) across these categories. Across their sample of 4790 participants, 1,443 tracked across the full project, the study highlights the affectively charged nature of ITP, the importance of relationships with others, the perceived 'relevance' of aspects of provision and a preoccupation with developing an identity as teacher. It finds that the ITP route being followed is statistically significant in shaping experiences of aspects of ITP. In a review of 40 learning-to-teach studies,

treating the ITP and first year post-qualification as a combined period of learning, Kagan (1992, p.155) identified key influencing factors on development including '...the configuration of a preservice teacher education program...and...the contexts in which practice and beginning teaching occur'. These studies lend weight to the premise of my research, that the characteristics of the Training Programme and, specifically, the school-based contexts in which Teach First trainees learn, are material to their development. Building on this work, my research aimed to illuminate trainee experiences on one ITP route with particular dynamics between partner organisations (school, Teach First, university). This has additional relevance given the complexity of ITP provision in England and tensions underpinning the ongoing evolution of the ITP 'market'. Furthermore, since the Training Programme's five-year trainee retention rate is substantially below other ITP pathways, and the per-teacher cost for those remaining after five years much higher (Allen et al., 2016), there is benefit in researching the programme with a view to better equipping and motivating trainees for a sustained teaching career. Retaining these teachers in the profession would both reduce training and recruitment costs and improve the quality of teaching for pupils over time (Allen & Sims, 2018; Heilig & Jez, 2010).

Recent research has studied more specifically those following school-led and employment-based ITP pathways, including Teach First (e.g. Cameron, 2014; Hardman & Carroll, 2011; Hyde, 2019, 2014; Southern, 2018; Tatto et al., 2017; Tillin, 2023). Further studies consider Teach For America, the model on which Teach First was based, as well as other national 'Teach For...' programmes (e.g. Carter et al., 2011; Donaldson & Johnson, 2010; Ellis et al., 2016; Heilig & Jez, 2010). In both pre-service (e.g. Hyde, ibid) and in-service teacher development (e.g. Fuller et al., 2005; H. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004, 2005; P. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004), some work has already been undertaken that combines insights from research on teacher learning and workplace learning, indicating the capacity for similar research into the Training Programme.

I identify five major organising characteristics of the Training Programme, which I judge to be those elements (at least in part) responsible for the differences by ITP route that Kagan (1992) and Hobson et al. (2008, 2009) highlight. These are summarised in Table 1.1 alongside, for comparison, the corresponding characteristics of typical HEI-led provision.

Table 1.1 Characteristics of the Training Programme and typical HEI-led provision

Characteristic	Typical HEI-led provision	Training Programme
ITP curriculum and pedagogy	School experience (SE) is integrated with taught input and self-study across ITP programme Curriculum is carefully sequenced by ITP provider with controlled entry over time into practice(s) of teaching Characteristics of apprenticeship learning evident in SE model, with trainee co-located with mentor teacher for much of their time Partner schools are selected, so far as possible, for the quality of learning experience available and alignment with provider's curriculum and pedagogy	SE is dominant aspect of trainee curriculum. Limited control of SE by Teach First Immediate assumption of full teaching responsibilities on entry in September Limited apprenticeship in reality: teaching as a 'cellular profession' (Lortie, 1975) in which mentor and trainee are mostly physically separated in different classrooms Partner schools apply to the programme to fill vacancies and are accepted on meeting entry criteria
Dominant underpinning	Socio-constructivist	Behavioural, cognitivist

Characteristic	Typical HEI-led provision	Training Programme
theory of learning	Apprenticeship as gradual move from peripheral to full participation in school community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991)	Apprenticeship as learning through exposure to experts, reproducing observed behaviours
Dominant discourse of professional knowledge	Draws from wide knowledge bases relevant to subject and phase, recognising contested nature of conceptions of professional knowledge Teaching as evidence- informed	Draws heavily on Lemov's Teach Like a Champion (TLAC) framework (2010, 2015, 2021), Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction (2012) and the Learning Scientists '6 Strategies for Effective Learning' (Smith & Weinstein, 2016), selected for 'the evidence of their effectiveness' (Craster, 2019, n.p.) Teaching as evidence-based
Trainee position in school	Guest, outsider, supported to adopt an inquiry stance in relation to practice observed and experienced Supernumerary status supports gradual assumption of teaching duties Dominant role as learner	Employee, insider Status as unqualified teacher requires immediate assumption of full teaching duties Dominant role as teacher

Characteristic	Typical HEI-led provision	Training Programme
Supervisory relationship with school- based mentor	High degree of mentor oversight; supernumerary trainee is second adult in the classroom Mentor has dual role: mentor / assessor	Infrequent mentor oversight; trainee is often lone adult in the classroom Mentor may have multiple roles: mentor / assessor / colleague / possibly also line manager

Table 1.1 summarises core differences in the ways that learning to teach is conceptualised in the two approaches. In Chapter 2: Literature review, I explore these further in relation to what Jones and Ellis (2019) term 'simple' and 'complex' views of teacher development.

1.4. The Training Programme in literature

Most literature focusing specifically on the Training Programme falls into two broad categories: evaluations of programme impact and evaluations of programme components.

Impact evaluations demonstrate correlation between schools' engagement with the Training Programme and a subsequent increase in pupil outcomes as measured by performance on statutory examinations. Mixed-methods analysis by Muijs et al. (2010, 2012, 2013) of matched data in the years 2001-2009 from schools participating with Teach First and comparable schools not participating suggests that Teach First participation can explain 20-40% of between-school variance, and that this variance appears one to two years following the first year of engagement, although this varies by cohort. The authors note that the correlation may arise from other factors, such as the nature of school leadership, rather than Teach First itself, but within-study qualitative evidence from school leaders, mentors and trainees reflects a common perception that the Training Programme does, indeed, deliver benefits to pupil outcomes. Allen

and Allnutt (2013, 2017) adopt a similar approach in their smaller, quantitative study, although with a different approach to matching schools. Again, their findings suggest that placing Teach First trainees in (secondary) schools likely leads to modestly improved examination outcomes. A notable aspect of both studies is the delay between initial participation and pupil impact, implying that trainees only begin to have impact in their second year of training (post-QTS) and drawing attention to my particular area of interest: the training year. Muijs et al. (2010, 2012) discuss an 'adaptation period' that reduces trainees' initial impact during the first year, especially the first semester [sic], which was the barrier to success identified most commonly by trainees in interviews within the study. Allen and Allnutt (2017) identify several possible reasons for the absence of positive effect in the first year of participation. One is the limited time for which pupils have been exposed to trainees as a proportion of their schooling; the other that trainees may be less effective in their first year given their novice status. McLean and Worth (2023) analyse newer data from cohorts between 2012/13-2018/19 with similar conclusions: a positive impact on examination outcomes from year two of participation.

The possibility that trainees do not positively impact pupils during their training year is both significant and worthy of further study. It makes sense, of course, that trainee teachers new to ITP gain competence as they develop their knowledge and skills. A challenge for all ITP pathways is for school partners to feel confident that pupils are not receiving a poorer education due to the presence of the trainee. Greaves et al. (2019) modelled the effect of trainees' presence in schools on pupil outcomes across ITP routes and concluded, reassuringly, that there is on average no significant impact on outcomes. Nevertheless, population-level impact is one measure; pupil-level impact quite another. Based on the discussion above and my own experience in teacher education, there is a plausible risk of a detrimental cumulative impact on individual pupils of being taught over multiple years by one or more first year Teach First trainees, teaching with sole responsibility and without the moderating presence of a qualified colleague. I see this as warrant for my research into better understanding the training year.

Evaluations of the Teach First training year include Ofsted inspection reports (2008, 2011, 2016, 2023); an evaluation of the early programme by Hutchings et al. (2006); Muijs et al.'s work previously cited; Hardman and Carroll's (2011) study of participant perceptions of learning on the Training Programme; Cameron's (2014) exploration of mentoring on the Training Programme; Tillin's (2023) study of trainees' perspectives on the three partner organisations supporting their learning; and my own pilot investigation for this research (Glegg, 2019). What these works communicate is that Teach First recruits highly competent graduates who identify strongly with the charity's mission, and that much of the Training Programme is perceived of as high quality. Ofsted's most recent report, for example, praises an 'academically rigorous and demanding programme' (2023, p.1), and strong support from university and Teach First support roles is repeatedly recognised across evaluations. However, common themes across studies and time identify persistent challenges in securing quality and consistency of mentoring, within and between schools. Trainee well-being is another repeated topic, allied to issues of workload, stress and in-school support. An early priority for trainees around managing behaviour appears linked to perceptions that the Summer Institute does not prepare them fully for taking on full classes in September.

These issues have seemingly persisted despite being identified on multiple occasions and Teach First's rigorous (in my experience) approach to programme review and improvement planning. They appear to be largely embedded within the school contexts in which trainees are placed. My research therefore orients towards employing schools as learning environments in an attempt to understand more about their contributions to trainees' learning. Although Hardman and Carroll's work explores strategies that trainees report as effective for their learning, this is somewhat an outlier and further research in this area can improve understanding of, and practice relating to, trainees' learning.

1.5. Research aim and question

My research aims to understand the impact on Teach First trainees' learning of the workplaces in which they are placed. Using unstructured interactive interviews (Corbin & Morse, 2003), I set out to learn about the aspects of trainees' experiences which shaped their learning during ITP, the first year of the Training Programme. By speaking with trainees at the end of the programme's second year, I hoped they would be close enough in time to their ITP to remember it well, using subsequent experience to reflect on their learning with a degree of clarity that would foster depth in their discussion.

Addressing this aim, my research question is:

What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher preparation, as experienced by newly qualified teachers?

1.6. Summary

Having set out the broad frame of reference of my research in this introduction, in Chapter 2: Literature Review I develop the conceptual framework for my study using literature from the fields of ITP and workplace learning. I bring together ideas arising from Lave and Wenger's (1991) work on communities of practice and apprenticeship learning with ITP-specific literature around schools as sites of novice teacher learning, the nature of and approaches to fostering this learning. Jones and Ellis' (2019) framework of simple and complex views of teacher development helps here to make sense of a contested field. Chapter 3: Methodology details my appreciative stance and approach to data collection and analysis, where I use template analysis, a form of thematic analysis, to help me 'tell a rich story' (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.56) of my interview data. In Chapter 4: Analysis I present in detail the seven themes arising from this analysis, organised into three overarching analytical categories which address: the impact of the design of the Training Programme, the nature of learning to teach as professional learning and teacher learning as relational and personal. In Chapter 5: Discussion I explore important issues for teacher education

arising from my analysis. I introduce three core tensions at the heart of the Training Programme and develop two narratives from my data, the 'heroic programme' and 'heroic trainee', around how these tensions are navigated. Finally, in Chapter 6: *Reflections and Recommendations*, I offer ways that my findings might be operationalised by Teach First and by mentors in schools, in line with my appreciative stance and commitment to engendering positive outcomes for trainees and their pupils.

2.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the conceptual framework that shapes this study. I draw on workplace learning literature which explores the position that teacher learning is social and situated. I explore concepts of the 'good' teacher and teacher learning that inform varying goals of ITP, connecting diverse understandings of practice in ITP to conceptions of apprenticeship learning in workplace learning, and I consider limitations and affordances of schools as sites of learning within ITP, before offering a final analysis of perspectives on apprenticeship. The literature suggests that features of the Training Programme render it an especially challenging context for trainee learning.

2.2. Teacher learning is social and situated

Theories of professional learning enable teacher educators to support (more) effectively our students' professional learning, through conceptualising what needs to be learned, how learning happens and how to organise learning (Philpott, 2014). In contrast to 'individualistic, universal 'information processing' models' (ibid, p.2) or technical rational models of acquisition historically dominant in teacher education policy (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005), a social theory of learning positions knowing as the ability to participate actively in the practices of social communities (Wenger, 1998) and learning as 'a fundamentally social phenomenon' (ibid, p.3). Learning can therefore be perceived as both relational and situated, bound to engagement with the culture, resources, policies and routines – the practices – of the community. As a theory of workplace learning, social learning theory positions learning as 'an integral part of everyday workplace practices, though it is richer in some workplaces than others, and richer for some workers than others' (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005, p.112). The potential for learning in any situation is therefore contingent on the social configuration in which that learning occurs, and on what is valued within that community as competence.

The communities encountered by trainees are typically their ITP provider and the host school(s) in which they are placed. In asserting that conceptions of competence are held within particular communities or contexts, situated learning theory implies that these contexts are bounded; that they 'end' somewhere and other communities begin, at which point what is recognised as expert practice or knowing may change. This is reflected in rhetoric of academics operating in their 'ivory towers' [one community] while teachers work at 'the chalkface' [another community] (Murray, 2002) and in the somewhat more generative 'Third-Space' theorisation (Jackson & Burch, 2019; Mutton, 2023) within which the intersections of communities can act as specific sites of learning and knowledge production. Within this conceptual framework, boundaries such as those that distinguish school-based and university-based learning contexts, and experiences of crossing these boundaries, take on particular meaning and value in shaping the learning opportunities presented to new teachers, as explored later in this chapter.

2.2.1. Communities of practice and the process of becoming

Much of the literature relating to social and situated learning builds on Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of communities of practice (CoP). The concept has been developed subsequently both as a theoretical framework for understanding learning (e.g. Brown & Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and a managerial prescription for fostering learning (e.g. Wenger et al., 2002). Cox (2005) cautions that the important differences across these four seminal works (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Brown and Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002) compel any user of the concept of CoP to be specific about their positioning in relation to the literature. In this case I am drawing from the theoretical perspectives first articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991) and later extended by Wenger (1998).

CoPs are understood for the purpose of this research as the organising structures within which practice, as the means and product of learning, has value. For Wenger (1998, p.45), a CoP is 'a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise.' CoPs exist where 'practice

is the source of coherence of a community' (ibid, p.72), a relation characterised by three dimensions: joint enterprise, mutual engagement and a shared repertoire. 'Learning' within a CoP entails becoming better able to participate fully in the practice of the community, which acts as a 'living curriculum' for the new entrant (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015, n.p.). For Wenger, it is through practice that our experience of, and engagement with, the world becomes meaningful. The ongoing negotiation of meaning that underpins this experience is constituted by the interplay of the individual's participation in the community and the abstractions that the community reifies, or gives material form. Reification can take the form of tools, procedures and paperwork that structure how practice is approached. Language, too, can be a reification, as in how one community might talk of 'delivering' lesson content while another 'teaches' the same material. In each case, what is reified, and how, serves to draw our attention to elements of practice ascribed value within the community.

For Philpott (2014, p.36), 'The insight of communities of practice is that learning might be conceptualised as being able to participate in practices rather than acquiring knowledge 'in the head". With this emphasis on learning understood as participation rather than acquisition (Sfard, 1998), learning is both embedded in the sociocultural context in which it occurs and about 'becoming', developing identity and relationships, as well as knowledge (Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Philpott, 2014).

Lave and Wenger set out to capture the characteristics of learning through apprenticeship that might contribute to a general theory of learning (Wenger, 1998), identifying three interconnected concepts of apprentice learning: situated learning, legitimate peripheral participation and communities of practice (Yandell & Turvey, 2007). Legitimate peripheral participation 'concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.29). The trajectory of participation for newcomers begins with subordinate activities at the periphery of the community that place reduced demand on time, effort and overall responsibility, modifications which make participation possible for the newcomer (Wenger, 1998). The novice moves progressively towards full participation, working closely with experts (masters) in

the community and observing and assimilating their practice until they, too, are expert. 'Journeymen' also play a part in apprentice learning: exposure to these more experienced, but not yet expert, colleagues has an important role in socialising novices and modelling to them practices to be learned. As Lave and Wenger caution, progress along the trajectory towards full participation can be distorted by the negative exercising of power, adversarial relationships, physical work layouts that separate novices from journeymen and the work they need to observe to learn, and challenges to gaining legitimacy in the workplace. Furthermore, the absence of a values framework underpinning CoPs means that the nature of the practice into which novices are socialised cannot be taken for granted. Dominant practices are not necessarily benign:

Communities of practice cannot be romanticized. They are born of learning, but they can also learn not to learn. They are the cradles of the human spirit, but they can also be its cages. After all, witch-hunts were also community practices. (Wenger, 2010, p.230)

Eraut (2002) problematises CoPs and legitimate peripheral participation when he argues that although participation in a CoP can be positive for learning, it is not the only way to learn and the concept fails to account sufficiently for the individual agency and history of the learner (see also Hodkinson et al., 2004). Drawing on previous work of their own and others, Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005, p.114) suggest that

combining the perspectives of learning as social and workplace participation, and those of learning as personal construction is intellectually possible and points towards more effective ways of understanding and improving that learning.

In later work, Wenger (2010) himself suggests that social learning theory can be combined with other perspectives, in a 'plug-and-play' manner, where this helps to explain certain learning situations. For example, using situated learning theory with theory around the reproduction of institutional structures to better understand how class reproduction can be construed as produced by learning, or constituting learning. A related and significant issue, particularly within the context of ITP, is that the model takes no account of formal learning opportunities such as the planned curriculum of provider-led, taught sessions 36

and school-based learning tasks that accompany school-based experience, or the learning goals that underpin this curriculum. Furthermore, Fuller et al. (2005, p.50) identify 'limitations of applying their perspective to contemporary workplaces in advanced industrial societies', given the nature of the studies on which the original work is based (tailoring, midwifery, butchery, quartermasters and Alcoholics Anonymous members). Fuller and Unwin (2003, 2004) address these limitations in their work on expansive and restrictive working environments, explored later in this chapter.

A second consideration in the application of CoPs to ITP relates to the values and ethical stance adopted by learners engaging with the practice of a community. Since the concept of CoP itself is values-free, operating as an analytical tool (Wenger, 2008) rather than a normative device, CoPs can form around conflictual as well as harmonious relationships and ethically questionable as well as sound enterprise. The potential consequences for schools as learning environments are significant because the trainee is vulnerable to local orthodoxies, arguably more so where the school is the dominant element in ITP as on school-led pathways, and particularly where the trainee is contractually beholden to the school as both teacher-in-training and employee. Recognising and planning for opportunities to cross boundaries between communities can support the illumination and disruption of prevailing beliefs in any given context and help to prepare teachers as occupational rather than organisational professionals (Evetts, 2011), equipped to operate according to (wider) professional rather than (narrower) organisational values and norms.

2.2.2. Boundaries and boundary crossing

CoPs have shared histories of learning, and boundaries mark the discontinuities between those who are part of this history and those who are not (Wenger, 1998). The boundary 'is constitutive of what counts as expertise or as central participation' (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011, p.132) within a given site of practice:

A boundary can be seen as a sociocultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction. Boundaries simultaneously suggest a sameness and continuity in the sense that within discontinuity two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way. (ibid p.133)

Boundaries are typically encountered in ITP by trainees moving between the schools in which they are placed and their ITP provider (Akkerman & Bruining, 2016). In the case of Teach First, the existence of two providers (the contracted university and the contractor, Teach First) increases complexity (Tatto et al., 2017). Trainees may even move between and interact across multiple communities within the school and/or university. Consequences for learning depend on how this crossing is managed, particularly in respect of maintaining continuity despite sociocultural differences, but boundaries are not, *per se*, problematic. Rather, '[t]he process of reestablishing action or interaction is seen as a resource for learning' (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011, p.136).

Building on Akkerman and Bakker's (2011) work on learning mechanisms at the boundary, Akkerman and Bruining (2016) conceptualise their Multilevel Boundary Crossing Framework. In this framework, boundary crossing can produce learning through mechanisms of *identification*, *coordination*, *reflection* and/or *transformation*. Each learning mechanism can occur at the *institutional*, *interpersonal*, or *intrapersonal* level. I find the most powerful of these in the context of ITP to be intrapersonal reflection, where '[a] person comes to look differently at his or her own participatory position because of the other participatory position' (Akkerman and Bruining, 2016, p.246), because moving beyond the boundaries of a given site affords the opportunity to see one's participation within that site afresh.

Variation theory (Marton, 2014) suggests that learners need to experience variation in critical dimensions of a phenomenon before they can discern each dimension. Boundary crossing is a key process by which dimensions of the taken-for-granted culture of one CoP (such as prevailing beliefs about learning in a trainee's host school) are disrupted as learners encounter variation across boundaries that helps them to discern and see differently critical aspects of that culture. Tatto et al. (2017, p.228) describe the contradictions and tensions that emerge from enacting practice as 'opportunities for development' (OfD)' where

An OfD is characterised by a sense of 'crisis' or critical period caused by a lack of alignment between the views and practices of an individual and one or more of the institutions from which they are learning, or from contradictions between the object motives and practices of the institutions themselves.

Tensions can also surface from the learner's internal contradictions, as Pedder and Opfer (2014) note when discussing the motivation to learn that can arise from recognising inconsistencies between personal values and practices. While learning across boundaries need not always be driven by crisis or dissonance, the disruption that can occur at boundaries can be a powerful driver for teacher learning.

2.2.3. Communities of practice and teacher learning

Philpott (2014) and Fuller et al. (2005), among others, question the applicability to teacher education of CoP as a concept on the grounds that it is hard to identify a clearly bounded community/ies in which student teachers participate. In the case of Teach First, for example, trainees engage throughout the year with their school subject department, pastoral team, student teacher cohort within the school, Teach First trainee cohort and university subject cohort groups which may overlap at times, with boundaries blurred. Furthermore, the diversity of practice(s) even within a small school department (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005) may preclude Wenger's requirement for a 'shared repertoire' and the fluid nature of school staffing is often a barrier to the shared histories and close practice which characterise CoPs. Across the range of interactions that trainees experience, what could usefully be labelled as a CoP (if at all) will depend on the actual practices of each group (Philpott, 2014). Since this implies a wide variety in trainee experiences, teacher educators may struggle usefully to base their practice around a clearly delineated and consistent model of the CoPs of their trainees.

Notwithstanding these challenges, CoP concepts are visible in aspects of teacher education practice and research. The structure of school placements during HEI-led ITP typically reflects a trajectory of legitimate peripheral participation (Yandell & Turvey, 2007) from student teachers supporting in

lessons, through co-teaching parts of lessons with the mentor teacher, to eventually taking (supervised) responsibility for teaching full classes independently. School departments are selected as ITP placements for the quality of the practice in which student teachers can participate, and contrasting school placements structure processes of boundary crossing and attendant learning mechanisms (such as school-based learning tasks within the provider curriculum). Conversely, the 'cellular' (Lortie, 1975, p.72) nature of teaching can act as a barrier to student teacher learning in communities, as can the placement of novice teachers in contexts where colleagues, and mentors in particular, are new to the school and therefore still on their own trajectories to full participation.

The school subject department has been identified in studies of pre- and inservice secondary school teachers as a key unit of analysis in understanding teacher learning (Childs et al., 2013; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005; Puttick, 2018). Whether or not this can be characterised as a 'true' CoP, for the reasons discussed, may be in some ways unimportant if useful principles hold. The subject department, the wider school context and even the national policy context of education (Tatto et al., 2017) are evidently material in shaping new teachers' learning, each of which could be conceptualised as a CoP.

2.3. Perspectives on teacher learning

I have presented Wenger's (1998) characterisation of CoPs as oriented around practice and bounded by the dimensions of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire, where mutual engagement is the process through which individuals in the CoP interact and create shared meaning. A challenge in the field of education is the degree of variation in how communities (a values-free concept) understand questions core to the field: the professional knowledge that teachers need, what constitutes 'good' teaching, and what it means to get better at teaching.

2.3.1. The knowledge base for teaching

One useful way of analysing variation in conceptions of the knowledge base for teaching is through Winch et al.'s (2015) three aspects of teachers' professional knowledge: situated understanding or tacit knowledge; technical 'know how'; and critical reflection. They define situated understanding as 'that element of 'know-how' which teachers clearly manifest in their practice but which cannot be rendered explicitly in discourse about it (Read & Hutchinson, 2011)' (p.204). It links to Ryle's (1945) contrasting of 'know-how', as the capacity to act, with 'know-that' or propositional knowledge, and with literature from beyond teaching on professional expertise (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Eraut, 2000; Polanyi, 1958). Technical 'know how', for Winch et al., is the technical knowledge necessary for teachers to plan, design, enact and evaluate aspects of their work towards goals which they set. Although they describe the assertion that teachers need technical knowledge as 'relatively uncontroversial' (p.206), they do not explore in any detail what this might comprise (nor can approaches to do so, such as the ITT Core Content Framework (DfE, 2019b), be described as 'uncontroversial). Critical reflection, as the third aspect of teachers' professional knowledge, relates to the capacity to 'review thoughtfully and systematically what they have done in the past with a view to sustaining or improving their practice in the future' (p.206).

Concepts within Winch et al.'s model are elaborated by others. Wider approaches to reflection in the literature emphasise to differing degrees the need for teachers to make use of or engage in research activity (e.g. Boyer, 1990; Stenhouse, 1975), and the extent to which reflection can take place 'in action' or *post hoc* (e.g. Schön, 1983). The concept of 'practical theorizing' as a particular form of teacher reflective practice (Burn et al., 2023; Hagger & McIntyre, 2006) has been influential in theorising specifically how novice teachers can bring together theoretical and practical learning. Elsewhere, authors have sought to specify with more clarity what might be classified above as technical 'know how'. Shulman (1987, p.8) proposes that, at a minimum, category headings for the knowledge base of teaching would include:

content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge...; curriculum knowledge...; pedagogical content knowledge...; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts...; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds.

These elements of an 'elaborate knowledge base for teaching' (ibid, p.6) enrich and extend the narrower, context-free, skills for teaching, or 'core practices' that are typically derived from quantitative research on teaching effectiveness, as measured through students' test scores in relation to teachers' observable activity. Shulman argues that through assessments focusing on new teachers' competence in these 'underlying generic processes' which research has identified as correlating with student success, 'teaching is trivialized, its complexities ignored, and its demands diminished' (1987, p.6).

Studies into the core practices of effective teachers are not new. However, recent years have seen an increasing focus in the English education system on teachers' core practices, mirroring a similar trend in the USA. This can be linked to an increase in 'early entry' models of ITP, such as the Training Programme (in England) and Teach For America (in the USA), in which trainees receive a short period of intense preparation before working as an unqualified 'teacher of record' concurrently with training (Zeichner, 2016). Teach First literature highlights an early emphasis during their preparatory phase on 'gatekeeper skills' of behaviour management, planning and assessment (Ademokun, 2019). which are taught through approaches drawing heavily on the Teach Like A Champion (TLAC) framework. Based on Lemov's (2010, 2015, 2021) analysis and codification of the observable practice of those he deems expert teachers, the TLAC framework articulates expert teacher 'moves' and presents them for other teachers to integrate into their own practice. While there is little to contest in equipping novice teachers with practices that expand their teaching repertoire, arguably missing in this approach are both sufficient rigour and validity in Lemov's method (Zeichner, 2016) and engagement of trainees with the conceptual work that others, including Shulman, assert as necessary alongside these practical tools. In the absence of a values base from which to consider their selection and enactment of TLAC practices, trainees are illequipped to make informed choices about, in this case, a framework for practice which it has been argued 'promotes working-class behavioral [sic] norms through a pedagogy of order, uniformity, and obedience' (Treuhaft-Ali, 2016, n.p.). Furthermore, at the extreme, privileging decontextualised, standardised teacher 'moves' excludes opportunities to explore what is contested in teaching and teacher education by reducing teaching to a set of practices to be learned and reproduced. Values and strengths of teachers as individuals are sidelined by what is 'best' and students for whom these 'best' practices aren't appropriate can be 'othered' as in some way deficient and needing of adaptation (Philip et al., 2018). A teaching workforce which is trained to enact, but not to evaluate and critique classroom practices, is disempowered in relation to their capacity to select and adapt approaches that best serve their students, and in their ability to engage in effective professional development. In a contrasting use of the term, a group of teacher educators collaborating as the Core Practice Consortium (CPC) are developing their own set of 'core practices' for deployment in teacher education, using 'approaches that foreground the practical, but see practice as complex, sophisticated, and thoughtful work' (Grossman et al., 2018, p.2). Evidently the CPC has imbued the concept with their own, more nuanced meaning, more aligned to a view of teachers as professionals than as technicians.

As this discussion illustrates, expertise in teaching is defined ambiguously across the education community and philosophical approaches to both the knowledge base for teaching and notions of the 'good' teacher are contestable and contested, contingent in part on their location in time and space (European Commission, 2013; Moore, 2004). Furthermore, the use of language around key concepts can lack clarity, or mean different things to different users (Cochran-Smith, 2021) and it is incumbent on the interested educationalist to be clear about how terms, such as 'core practice', are used within a given context (Jones & Ellis, 2019).

The contrast between a focus on teacher knowledge as learning (technicist) core practices and a broader understanding of teaching as a profession is clear

in Shulman's rich explanation of how professional education is framed at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching:

professional education is a synthesis of three apprenticeships—a cognitive apprenticeship wherein one learns to think like a professional, a practical apprenticeship where one learns to perform like a professional, and a moral apprenticeship where one learns to think and act in a responsible and ethical manner that integrates across all three domains. (Shulman, 2005, n.p.)

Articulating, like Shulman, the breadth and complexity of their conception of the knowledge base for teaching, Bransford et al. (2005) propose their *Framework* for Understanding Teaching and Learning which comprises: knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals, and knowledge of teaching itself. At the centre of these three overlapping areas sits 'a vision of professional practice' in which the teacher's conceptual framework equips them to make and act on well-reasoned decisions about practice. These latter tools may be conceptual and/or practical (Grossman et al., 1999), with practical tools equipping the teacher with what has been termed a 'beginning repertoire' (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1018) of classroom practices through which to enact their teaching role. Where this approach goes beyond the practical repertoire is in emphasising the wider aspects of the teacher's professional practice with which they make valuesinformed decisions on how to deploy the repertoire in practice. Kosnik and Beck (2009) and Hagger and McIntyre (2006) take similar positions in suggesting that teacher preparation should equip new teachers with the core practical, affective and conceptual tools to act and to make sound pedagogical judgements about their practice. These rich, integrated conceptions of teacher knowledge speak to ideas of 'becoming' a teacher as a process of fundamental change of the individual that goes far beyond their observable actions, in line with Lave and Wenger (1991).

2.3.2. 'Good' teaching

Perspectives on 'good' teaching are deeply connected to conceptions of the knowledge base for teaching. Extending their model of teacher knowledge

previously introduced, Winch et al. (2015) identify two popular conceptions of good teaching which draw differently on the three aspects of teacher knowledge they set out: situated understanding, technical knowledge, and critical reflection.

The 'teacher as craft worker' conception orients heavily towards situated understanding over the other aspects. The craft worker teacher becomes expert through accumulating situational knowledge 'on the job' and from experienced practitioners, or through 'intuition mediated by experience' (Kuhlee & Winch, 2017, p.233). They learn, essentially, through apprenticeship conditions in the workplace with little role for educational theory or research, or academic input beyond the development of subject knowledge expertise.

A second conception emphasises technical knowledge, positioning the teacher as an 'executive technician' who implements 'what works' as evidenced by educational research. The executive technician teacher acts according to theory rather than intuition or situational judgement, reproducing with little discretion 'best practice' protocols *derived by* others in pursuit of aims *set by* others. These can take the form of practices, scripts, use of particular materials and approaches to teaching, including those described in TLAC (Lemov, 2021). Learning in this model requires training and practice in these protocols for the teacher, and access to educational research and strong pedagogic content knowledge for the technologists who derive the protocols.

In his widely quoted book drawing on studies incorporating both trainee and qualified teachers, Moore (2004) identifies two dominant 'official' discourses present in policy and in literature targeting teachers and teacher educators. The *competent craftsperson*, also described as a 'training discourse' (p.75) and aligning with Winch et al.'s executive technician, draws heavily on a competence model of teacher expertise and a 'training' approach to ITP. This view of teaching and teacher preparation is reflected in the recently defined national ITT Core Content Framework (DfE, 2019b) and Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019a) which set out in detail what trainee and novice teachers should learn, respectively, based on 'the best available evidence'. While there is some acknowledgement that teacher preparation programmes may augment each framework with locally relevant content, their prevailing

message promotes a technicist conception of teaching in which great teachers require 'a structured introduction to the core body of knowledge, skills and behaviours that define great teaching' (DfE, 2019b, p.3). The knowledge base and skills required are defined by others, for teachers, based on a particular understanding of what constitutes 'best' evidence (largely drawn from cognitive science and large quantitative studies). Trainee progression is marked by the acquisition and enactment of this externally described knowledge and skill. While these frameworks are heavily referenced to a selective and limited evidence base, they fail to acknowledge the inherent incompleteness of any such selection when attempting to apply it to such complex situations as schools and schooling, instead asserting with confidence what teachers should know ('know that...') and be able to do ('know how to...') without sufficient reference to values, principles or the need for good judgement – what Biesta (2017) terms becoming 'educationally wise'. The inference of this approach, which Biesta convincingly refutes, is that classrooms as unique contexts are effectively immaterial, as 'what works' will work everywhere.

Echoing Biesta, Moore's *reflective practitioner* discourse challenges 'the notion that teaching is reducible to discrete and finite lists of skills and practices' (Moore, 2004, p.4), emphasising instead the need for teachers' 'informed *reflection*' (ibid, his italics) on what happens in the classroom. The knowledge base here is extended to encompass the teacher as the holder of knowledge, and the capacity of that teacher to reflect on their experience and exercise good judgement in relation to what is known, to improve their work. This aligns with Connell's notion of teaching as 'intellectual labour' (2009, p.225) and a recent vision statement from the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, representing university ITP providers in England, entitled *The Intellectual Base of Teacher Education* (UCET, 2020). It also speaks to the perspective of those authors I highlighted on p.45 who prioritise the development of conceptual as well as practical tools for new teachers.

Winch et al. describe both their craft worker and executive technician conceptions of good teachers as 'narrow' (p.210), overplaying one form of teacher knowledge at the expense of others, proposing instead the conception

of teaching as 'professional endeavour'. The teacher becomes a 'professional technician' who 'draws on a body of systematic knowledge in order to make appropriate judgement in situ in the workplace' (Kuhlee & Winch, 2017, p.232), thus bringing together situational judgement with research-based knowledge in a manner which gives authority to the teacher themselves, not a distant technologist. As with Moore's reflective practitioner, the 'knowledge, skills and behaviours' of the CCF and ECF may be necessary, but are insufficient, because their deployment *in situ* has to reflect both the values brought to bear by the teacher and the characteristics of that context.

Moore suggests that neither of the discourses he identifies exists in isolation. Furthermore, his research indicates that, as might be expected, teachers can shift in their positioning relative to different conceptions over time. Winch et al. base their argument in theory rather than empirical study, but we might reasonably conclude that teachers may also shift over time in relation to the three positions they identify. Taken together, these two frameworks highlight a range of conceptions that trainees, teachers and teacher educators might hold about 'good' teachers, the knowledge they need and how they deploy it, which influence the ways that they conceive of the aims and curriculum of ITP and of what it means to progress as a teacher.

2.3.3. Teacher progression

A core goal of ITP is that student teachers make progress across their programme of study towards a given understanding of 'good teacher'. How this goal, and the nature of trainee learning, are understood shape the learning experiences to which trainees are exposed through ITP. Two dominant ways of understanding progress, which illuminate differences summarised in Table 1.1, are as the acquisition of competences and as learning to 'see' classrooms differently.

Progression as learning to 'see' differently. In a three-year study into the role of the mentor in supporting student teachers' school-based learning, Furlong and Maynard (1995) identify a family of predictable 'stage' models of student teacher development over time, to which they add their own

characterisation of student teacher learning as developing the ability to think differently about aspects of their experience; to 'see' classrooms in conceptual terms. For them,

these concepts...allow student teachers to 'frame' what is happening around them; to interpret the significance or insignificance of events or behaviours; and to know what to expect....the formation of concepts will also enable them to think and act in ways in which the complexity of their decision making is reduced – it therefore helps them to gain control over their own practice. (p.70)

The emphasis on developing conceptual understanding as a way of reducing the complexity inherent in teaching aligns with the notion of 'rules of thumb' (Kennedy, 2016, p.11) or 'Gestalts' (Korthagen, 2010; Korthagen & Lagerwerf, 1996) as a means by which teachers engage with, make sense of and respond to complex classroom situations. In a similar vein, Edwards and Protheroe (2003, p.230) draw on sociocultural perspectives in viewing 'learning to teach as a process of learning to be, see and respond in increasingly informed ways while working in classrooms, i.e. to participate increasingly knowledgeably in the practices of teaching.'

Challenging the predictability of stage models, research by Burn et al. (2003) and Wilson and Demetriou (2007) finds teacher learning to be idiosyncratic, characterised by 'the enormous variation between individuals in terms of their starting points and the ways in which their thinking develops' (Burn et al., 2003, p.329). For Wilson and Demetriou, new teacher learning is shaped by factors relating to both the individual and the context, including 'teacher self-belief; teachers feeling valued and supported by colleagues; teacher autonomy; reflection on teaching' (2007, p.226). Studies examining the importance of biography, dispositions and prior beliefs about teaching in trainees' learning argue that teachers' learning is inseparably connected to those personal characteristics and experiences with which they enter the profession (e.g. Hagger & McIntyre, 2006; Hodkinson et al., 2004). Korthagen (2017) suggests that teacher learning has three dimensions: cognitive, affective and motivational, each of which is intensely personal. Notwithstanding contrasts in places with Furlong and Maynard's work, these studies nevertheless reinforce

the broader concept of teacher progression as learning to 'see' differently, albeit through individual rather than predictable trajectories, and of conceptual advancement as supporting teachers to undertake highly complex work in demanding circumstances. Considering teacher learning through this lens highlights the skill required of teacher educators in supporting trainees to develop not only practical competence but the ability to make sense of the complexity of classrooms and to exercise sound judgement in responding to what they 'see'.

Progression as the acquisition of competences. Whereas a 'learning to see' understanding of teacher development implies conceptual change as a driver of increasingly effective teacher practice, competence frameworks such as the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011), the criteria which must be met to achieve QTS in England, position progression quite differently. They frame progression as the acquisition of discrete competences which directly define aspects of practice and conduct. These frameworks can be positioned as supportive tools in helping practitioners understand how they will be assessed (Moore, 2004), in setting goals for professional development and/or measuring quality in teaching (European Commission, 2013), and as capturing how the profession values aspects of what their profession does (Biesta, 2020). They can also, however, be connected to a broad global shift in which neoliberal assumptions are applied to public sector services, sometimes framed in terms of New Public Management (Connell, 2009). By decomposing the complexity of teaching into lists of discrete statements, standards frameworks such as these arguably 'deintellectualise' teaching (Ball, 1999), providing the means by which teaching becomes 'auditable' and in which decisions about teacher actions are taken not by the teachers themselves but by those who determine the lists.

A list of auditable competencies can become the whole rationale of a teacher education programme. There is no need, in such a model, for any conception of Education as an intellectual discipline. There is no need for cultural critique, since the market, aggregating individual choices, decides what services are wanted and what are not. There is a limited role for educational research, mainly to conduct positivist studies to discover 'best practice'. (Connell, 2009, p.218)

This competence conception of teacher progression aligns with Moore's (2004) competent craftsperson or Winch et al.'s (2015) executive technician, with the current English ITP policy context, and with the Training Programme's initial focus on what are deemed 'gatekeeper skills' of teaching.

Hammerness (2013, pp.400-401) reviews the features of 'powerful teacher education programmes', highlighting the importance of 'a clear vision of teachers and teaching' around which the programme coheres, and which includes 'values about what and how teachers and students should learn'. As demonstrated above, beliefs about the 'good' teacher, teacher knowledge and teacher progression, which inform these values, are contested. Jones and Ellis (2019) have developed a valuable conceptual tool for exploring this issue. They argue that a lack of conceptual clarity in the research literature means that the word 'development' is itself a contested term, deployed to mean different things in relation to teacher change and learning. They draw on work from literacy research to broadly characterise different discourses around the processes of teacher learning and change as the 'simple view' and 'complex view' of teacher development. A complex view – understanding teachers' practice, like their learning, as situated, relational, contingent and inherently complex – positions 'good' teachers as able to 'read' classrooms and exercise values-led judgement in acting, drawing on their technical and situated knowledge in an agentive manner. It requires ITP which engages student teachers with the multiple perspectives, uncertainties, and incompleteness of educational theory as well as practical strategies for the classroom. Assessment of teacher progress is difficult because it must account for teachers' thinking alongside their observed practice. The work of Hagger and Mcintyre (2006), Biesta (2015, 2017), Winch, Oancea and Orchard (2015), Hammerness et al. (2005), Grossman et al., (1999) and Kosnik and Beck (2009) align with this complex view of teacher development.

A simple view, by contrast, frames teachers' practice as codifiable and relatively easily transferable across contexts and implies that 'good' teachers are those who acquire and reproduce a set of externally determined 'core competences'. Under this model, ITP can be understood as directed towards more

straightforward 'training' in 'performance', based on 'the best evidence', and assessment focuses on how closely trainees' classroom practice matches 'best practice'. Recent DfE policy (DfE, 2019b, 2019a), the influential Policy Exchange working paper *More Good Teachers* (Freedman et al., 2008), Teach First training approaches and Lemov's TLAC techniques speak to a simple view of teachers' work and learning. Despite some reference to '[t]he complexity of the process for becoming a teacher' (DfE, 2019b, p.4), these papers fail to specify either the source of this complexity or its implications for teacher learning and preparation.

I explore further in the following section how orientations to practice and learning matter in ITP because they influence the conditions and experiences to which trainees are exposed, and therefore the likely outcomes for those trainees

2.4. Conditions for teacher learning in ITP

There is no single, overarching theory of teaching or of teacher learning....With different conceptions of teaching come different conceptions of how PD [professional development] can improve teaching. (Kennedy, 2016a, p.946)

At the beginning of this chapter, I considered how situated learning theory can help to explain teachers' learning as they progressively participate more fully in the practice of their community. Focusing on secondary school teachers, I suggested that the school subject department is a key community and that the wider school and professional communities of teachers are also important frames of reference for this learning. Lave and Wenger's CoP model for learning explains novice learning through sustained engagement in practice with both an allocated 'master' and co-located 'journeymen', within a context of community. In ITP in England, the school-based 'mentor' or 'collaborating teacher' can be seen as effectively filling the role of 'master' and colleague teachers within and beyond the trainee's subject department, including other trainees, recently qualified and more experienced teachers, are teaching 'journeymen'.

Unlike the apprentices in Lave and Wenger's cases however, student teachers engage with both theoretical and practical learning, and with formal qualifications (QTS and, often, an academic PGCE or PGDE). They learn not only in the workplace through peripheral participation, mentoring and professional studies but also through formal taught input from their ITP provider. Thus, their learning is arguably more complex than that for which Lave and Wenger accounted within their theory. I return to this idea later when I discuss Fuller and Unwin's expansive-restrictive framework. Since the focus of my research is the school-based element of teacher learning, for matters of space I will not go further into university- or SCITT-led elements save for where these interact with school-based learning.

In their study of new teachers learning to plan lessons, Mutton et al. (2011) questioned whether situated learning theory can offer sufficient explanation of how beginning teachers learn. Since they understand teaching to be 'complex and cognitively demanding' (p.399, citing Westerman) – a complex view of teacher development – they find that beginning teachers need access to both the observable practice and the unobservable thinking and professional knowledge of more experienced teachers, their 'pedagogical reasoning' (Loughran, 2019). Hagger and McIntyre (2006) recognise the 'rich and powerful' (p.46) learning experiences available in CoPs while acknowledging that although incidental learning is of 'very great value' (p.48) it is not sufficient because tacit knowledge is not observable; experts often cannot articulate their tacit knowledge; experts who do talk about their expertise often do so in relation to espoused theory rather than theory-in-use (Argyris & Schön, 1974); it is hard as a newcomer/outsider to ask the sorts of critical questions about established practice that develop the novice's conceptual framework; and it is hard to learn much about pupils' perspectives as learners through incidental learning. For all these reasons, Hagger and McIntyre conclude that some trainee learning must be 'systematically planned, guided and facilitated. In other words, we need planned school-based curricula for their learning' (p.48). The planned curricula to which they aspire are based in schools 'because that is where the practice of teaching is' (p.65) and

should be concerned with providing optimal activities for the modelling, practice and feedback of good ideas for skilful teaching and for the complementary activity of practical theorizing about these ideas. The choice and use of these activities and ideas should be directed towards attainment of the goal that student teachers should become competent beginning teachers and also of the goal that they should acquire the understandings, skills and habits to go on developing their expertise critically as practising teachers. (p.69)

'Optimal activities' require close working with suitably skilled mentors over a sustained period to help trainees develop the conceptual, intellectual and moral as well as practical aspects of their work. Specific pedagogies of ITP used by these mentors might include collaborative planning which gives the trainee access to the thinking and professional knowledge of the mentor (Mutton et al., 2011), while representations, decompositions and approximations of practice (Grossman et al., 2009) help trainees to access, understand and rehearse aspects of complex practice in conditions of reduced complexity. Structured cycles of goal-setting, practice and feedback in some approaches to instructional coaching (e.g. Knight & Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012) would also support development in line with a complex view of development because they introduce core or 'high-leverage' practices not 'just for the practice's sake...[but]...only in the service of teachers' goals' (ibid, p.106). As Hagger and McIntyre caution, not all practice is equal and practice tasks need to be designed to meet trainees' current learning needs, for example through appropriate scaffolding and a gradual move to full participation.

Trainees engaging with the learning activities outlined above need space to develop their own understandings of teaching through the approaches they practise. Challenges for supernumerary student teachers working with 'other people's classes' can arise where mentor teachers 'unintentionally impose their own curriculum interpretations on the beginning teachers with whom they are working' (Mutton et al., 2011, p.402) or where the student's perspectives are in tension with those of the host school/teacher (Maynard, 2001). By contrast, employment-based trainees who work as unqualified teachers from the beginning of their ITP may have much more autonomy around how they choose

to enact their practice (Hyde, 2019), but suffer from working less closely with their mentor on a day-to-day basis.

The approaches outlined so far align with a complex view of teacher development and add complexity to understandings of apprenticeship learning within ITP. By contrast, a simple view reduces and simplifies the complexity of apprenticeship learning through asserting, at its most extreme, that placing trainees in schools to learn 'as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman' (Gove, 2010, n.p.) is sufficient to foster their development. In recent years the DfE has given more attention to the importance of mentors and supporting novice teacher learning, as captured in their National Standards for school-based initial teacher training (ITT) mentors (DfE, 2016), Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019a) and National Professional Qualification in Leading Teacher Development (DfE, 2020). Nonetheless, it remains that there are no minimum requirements of teachers appointed as mentors, nor substantial time or CPD mandated for the mentoring process within ITP (although this will change from September 2024 when new 'quality requirements' come into force). This is despite research suggesting that the effective selection and preparation of mentors is central in maximising the benefits and minimising costs of mentoring (Hobson, Ashby, et al., 2009). The knowledge, skills and qualities required to prepare student teachers well for professional practice have arguably not yet been acknowledged in approaches to mentoring within ITP. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that Teach First mentoring provision has been found to be inconsistent and indistinguishable from other programmes, despite claims to the high quality and specific nature of trainees' mentoring experiences (Cameron, 2014).

2.4.1. Schools as sites of teacher learning in ITP

HEI-led ITP has for a long time been 'essentially school-based' (Ellis, 2010, abstract), with school experience comprising a minimum two thirds of a secondary PGCE programme. In school-led and employment-based routes, trainees are even more heavily situated within their training school. The nature

of the school as a teacher learning environment is therefore of prime concern on the Training Programme, as with other routes.

Exploring trainees' situated learning highlights important challenges of school-based learning within any pathway into the profession. Since learning is so contextualised, questions are raised about how student teachers can be supported to go beyond their individual experiences to prepare for the wider profession. In the current policy context which privileges school-based experience *per se* (Mutton et al., 2017), on the assumption that "the classroom", in contrast to the university, is always "the best place for teachers to learn as well as to teach" (Gove, 2013)' (Hordern, 2015, p.431), there is a need for due regard to the nature of what and how student teachers learn from their experiences in school(s) (Ellis, 2010). Furthermore, since situated learning shapes identity and relationships as well as knowledge, and given the well-documented challenges faced by student teachers in relation to 'fitting in' whilst on HEI-led placements (Maynard, 2001; Ellis, 2010; Puttick, 2018), attention must be given to issues of power and agency within communities hosting employment-based trainees.

Some of the questions posed here can be addressed through close partnership models of ITP, where universities and schools have distinct roles in shaping the learning experiences to which student teachers are exposed. For Ellis (2010) the goal is not to standardise school placements, but to embrace diverse experiences and perspectives as opportunities for learning. Burn et al. (2017) draw attention to the importance of mentors engaging with relevant research findings to understand the nature of teachers' knowledge, experience and learning and student teachers as learners. This knowledge underpins a set of key principles which they propose inform mentors' practice as school-based teacher educators, a starting point for a school-based curriculum for student teachers which complements that learned in the partner university. We might ask, though, how effectively these actions can be mandated in an EBR context where schools are drivers of, rather than partners in, the ITP provision.

What these authors recognise, and what is not fully reflected in policy narratives that seek to move more ITP into schools, is that teaching is complex and those

involved in ITP need a carefully thought-through understanding of how new teachers learn (Mutton et al., 2017); that not all workplace experience is of equal value to those preparing for a teaching career. Particularly on school-led and employment-based routes, which privilege the needs of the school and often reduce the role of universities to 'service provider' (Brooks, 2017, p.47), if they have a role at all, new teachers may struggle to form a strong subject identity, or to prepare adequately to 'cope with changing professional contexts, or alternative views and perspectives' (ibid). Hordern (2015, p.438) warns of the risks of 'certain types of workplace experience' in limiting learning: without a strong conceptual grasp of education, teachers may not acquire the capacity to 'adequately interpret and make judgements about knowledge developed through educational research, or about suggestions for new curricular or pedagogical strategies' (ibid).

Trainees may be well prepared on school-led models to work in one institution or context (Brooks, 2017; Brown et al., 2016) rather than for the wider teaching profession. If the design of school-led ITP favours certain approaches of individual schools or school groups, there is 'the potential for particular institutions immersing new 'craft' teachers in particular teaching practices favoured in those institutions without developing the teacher's capacity to acquire, and to critique, other teaching practices' (Hordern, 2015, p.439). In contrast to universities, which view teaching as an 'occupational profession', Davies et al. (2016) suggest that school-led models might be more inclined towards 'organizational professionalism'. These orientations, drawn from Evetts (2009), reflect firstly a model of professionalism in which the teacher exercises technical autonomy over complex work and, secondly, a more restricted model in which we observe 'the replacement of 'technical autonomy' with organisational monitoring and evaluation of professionals' work against external standards.' (Davies et al., 2016, p.294). Where ITP providers are preparing teachers for their own contexts, rather than for the wider profession, we might heed the words of Fuller and Unwin (2013, p.424) who caution that 'the economic imperative which drives all companies, and, to a large extent, even organisations in the public sector, ultimately determines the approach which

organisations feel able or willing to take when constructing their apprenticeship programmes.'

2.5. Perspectives on apprenticeship

So far in this chapter I have drawn predominantly from teacher learning literature to identify the sorts of relationships, opportunities and activities that can foster trainee teachers' learning. I now turn to workplace learning literature for further insight into learning within schools as workplaces.

A major strength of workplace learning literature is that where teacher learning literature tends to view learning as planned and individual, research into workplace learning accounts more for learning as part of everyday working, and as a social and cultural process (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). Workplace learning literature also expands understandings of apprenticeship as they are often used in ITP, drawing attention to the implications for learning of how apprenticeship learning is conceptualised: 'whether we view apprenticeship as an impoverished or rich model of learning will depend on what we think is to be learned through the apprenticeship' (Philpott, 2014, p.66). As Philpott elaborates, apprenticeship is a means of acquiring craft knowledge, but 'craft', like 'practice', is understood in different ways. Where aligned with ideas of Moore's 'competent craftsperson' or Winch, Oancea and Orchard's 'craft worker', the concept is reduced so that apprenticeship learning is little more than learning to replicate work routines (what I've characterised previously as the simple view of teacher development). Conversely, where craft is understood in relation to 'craftmanship', it reflects ideas allied to a complex view of teacher development and approaches to fostering learning through apprenticeship are correspondingly richer and more complex.

Fuller and Unwin (2003, 2004) extend Lave and Wenger's work on CoP as a conceptual framework for learning, accounting for the role of formal education institutions in apprentice learning in contemporary societies. Through analysing cases of apprentice learning under the Modern Apprenticeship, they 'extend[s] and elaborate[s] the notion of learning as participation by, for example,

highlighting the pedagogical value of incorporating coherently planned on- and off-the-job learning experiences, and developing and reifying a workplace curriculum' (Fuller & Unwin, 2003, p.410). Drawing on variations observed in apprentices' learning environments, they propose 'a framework for categorizing approaches to workforce development according to their expansive and restrictive features' in which 'an approach to workforce development characterized by the features listed as expansive will create a stronger and richer learning environment than one consisting of features associated with the restrictive end of the curriculum' (Fuller & Unwin, 2004, p.129). Pairs of statements elaborate aspects of the learning environment, describing each end of an expansive-restrictive continuum. See table 2.1, below, for an example pair of statements, and appendix 1 for the full framework.

Table 2.1 Excerpt from Fuller & Unwin's (2003) expansive-restrictive continuum

EXPANSIVE	RESTRICTIVE
Planned time off-the-job including for college attendance and for reflection	Virtually all-on-job: limited opportunities for reflection

Analysis of the factors identified in each continuum can help us to make sense of the 'lived reality' of apprenticeship (Fuller & Unwin, 2003, p.408), including formal and informal learning opportunities, to 'expose the features of different learning environments and so make them available for inspection and critique' (Fuller & Unwin, 2004, p.132). By prompting concurrent consideration of different aspects of the workplace learning environment, Fuller and Unwin extend opportunities to engage with multiple, interacting environmental factors shaping trainee learning.

One of the strengths of this framework for my research is the flexibility with which it has been applied to learning in a range of workplaces, since this suggests that the underpinning concepts are both robust and adaptable enough to support analysis across a range of settings. Following Fuller and Unwin's work, Hodkinson and Hodkinson's (2005) adapted framework of expansive-restrictive learning environments for qualified teachers reflects their analysis of the workplace learning of experienced secondary school teachers. Other

iterations of the framework have been used in analysing knowledge workers' development (Fuller & Unwin, 2010), the learning of pre-service mathematics teachers (Hyde, 2014) and perceptions of secondary teachers regarding apprenticeship in employment-based ITP (Hyde, 2019). Hyde's (2019) adapted framework is particularly helpful in locating the concept of 'expansive-restrictive' specifically within ITP, as is her use of short titles, such as 'status', 'collaboration' and 'participation' for each of the axes within the framework. These titles bring clarity to the essence of each axis, while the expansive/restrictive descriptors for each axis relate specifically to schools as contexts for employment-led ITP, inviting their use by others in analysing employment-based ITP apprenticeship learning more widely.

2.6. Summary

In this chapter I have highlighted the prevalent themes and diversity evident in the field of ITP. I have suggested that teacher learning is both deeply personal and inherently social and situated. I have considered contrasting framings of teachers' practice and development, borrowing from Jones and Ellis (2019) the concepts of the 'simple view' and 'complex view'. I have also shown that there is a nexus between literature on teacher learning and workplace learning where perspectives specific to the practice of teaching (learning goals for student teachers) and the context of learning (the workplace) can be integrated to illuminate and advance understanding of trainee learning on the Training Programme.

These perspectives are important for my research because my objects of study, Teach First trainees, occupy a hybrid position as trainee teachers employed to work as they learn. The literature based in traditional ITP pathways accounts insufficiently for the context of trainees' learning in ways that can be enhanced by drawing additionally on workplace learning research. Fuller and Unwin's concept of a set of expansive-restrictive characteristics of learning environments offers an accessible and appropriately flexible starting point for making sense of the lived experiences of Teach First trainees through

considering the characteristics and configurations of their learning environment during their training year.

In Chapter 1: *Introduction* I introduced the research question at the heart of this study. For reasons explained in Chapter 3: *Methodology*, I decided to address this question by engaging with trainees in the year following ITP, when they were newly qualified. Using insights from the literature discussed here in Chapter 2, I have devised sub-questions that aid the exploration of my research question as I analyse the recent trainees' experiences.

The main research question is: What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher preparation, as experienced by newly qualified teachers?

The research question will be explored through three sub-questions:

- 1. How do newly qualified teachers (NQTs) conceptualise high quality learning for trainee teachers? Are a range of conceptions of teacher learning evident in the data?
- 2. What formal and informal learning experiences do NQTs most value in their training year?
- 3. What tensions/challenges are experienced in relation to teacher learning in the employment-based ITP environment and how can these be addressed?

3.1. Introduction and rationale

In this chapter I explain my methodological framework, based on Appreciative Inquiry, and my approach to collecting and analysing data to address my research question.

My desire to research meaning, through understanding trainee teachers' experiences of the world as it relates to their ITP, rather than to 'prove' truths about their learning, locates my research within the qualitative paradigm (Robson, 2011). Of the many 'camps' or orientations within this paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2013) my stance aligns with what King and Brooks (2017, p.18) term 'limited realism', in reference to a range of related philosophical positions that includes "critical realism" (Archer et al., 1998), 'subtle realism' (Hammersley, 1992) and 'natural realism' (Putnam, 1999) among others'. These positions marry a realist ontological stance and a constructivist epistemology, with the broad conclusion that although phenomena do exist outside of the subjective perspectives of individuals perceiving them, this subjectivity limits the possibility that we can ever 'know' the phenomena in a positivist, objective way. This has implications for how I understand 'quality' in research activity and for the steps I have taken to ensure trustworthiness in my practice and findings, of which more later in this chapter. It also foregrounds my own subjectivity and obliges me to embed reflexivity within my practice, since I cannot separate my individual perspective from the claims I make.

My personal experience of ITP contributes to my subjectivity as a researcher. I followed a HEI-led programme before mentoring student teachers from the same programme and from Teach First. I now have substantial experience working on ITP and other teacher education programmes, in England and overseas, and I know many of the colleagues (tutors and DLs) about whom my participants talk. I understand ITP in a particular way, from experience and study, and have personal, (small 'p') political views about teacher education. Rather than attempt simply to deny or minimise the impact of my subjectivity on

my research, I have instead embedded strategies to foster reflexivity. The section *Rigour/quality* later in this chapter further details these strategies.

3.1.1. Adopting an appreciative stance

I want my work to make a positive, supportive contribution to the provision of salaried ITP, as this is a significant route into teaching in England. I therefore conceived this research in line with the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI is an approach to organizational development which rejects 'deficit-oriented approaches to management' and instead 'selectively seeks to locate, understand and illuminate what are referred to as the life-giving forces of any human system's existence, its positive core' (Fry, 2014, p.45). Rather than orientate around identified 'problems' and their possible solutions, AI sets out to understand, embrace and reinforce 'what works', albeit from a very different perspective to the English government's What Works Network. Al is underpinned by social constructionist perspectives which frame organisations as socially constructed realities, within which the way inquiry itself is structured has a direct bearing on the development of the social system. By studying problems, attention is drawn to what is malfunctioning; in inquiring into what is positive, human systems move in this direction: 'Because the questions we ask largely determine what we find, we should place a premium on that which informs our curiosity and thought' (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2017, p.131).

In selecting AI as a methodological framework, I considered how its constructionist orientation fits with my limited realist perspective and constructivist epistemology. The terms 'constructionist' and 'constructivist' are used in varying ways across the literature, sometimes referring to broadly similar positions that reflect disciplinary divergence more than theoretical difference, and sometimes reflecting different meanings: 'the meaning of these terms is often contested and confused; there is no universal agreement on what these different theoretical traditions are' (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.184). I find my interpretation of 'constructionist' AI and my 'constructivist' epistemology, and their application to ITP, to be coherent within the context of this research. The 'organisation' under consideration could be considered most immediately as the

employing school, albeit also part of the wider Training Programme and, more broadly, located within the wider structures and systems that govern ITP in England. 'The school' as the primary organisation being studied is both a physical entity (the building and its tangible contents) and an intangible construct (a set of relations, cultures and beliefs). My understanding of AI is not that it denies the physical but that it highlights the intangible aspects of 'the school' as a constitutive part of the overall entity.

Al looks for stories of success as a starting point. It focuses on generative theory-building as a means of providing a language and structure through which to stimulate and bring about positive organisational change, which 'does not simply explain the status quo, but which challenges assumptions and offers new alternatives' (Gergen, 1978, quoted in Clouder & King, 2015, p.171). The 'stories of success' in which I am interested are those of teacher learning fostered by the school contexts in which learning happens as part of the Training Programme.

Al is traditionally undertaken by groups of individuals working together to investigate the organisation of which they are part, through a structured series of steps constituting an action-research cycle framed around an inquiry question: from the 'discovery' of underlying success factors that relate to the inquiry focus, through 'dreaming' of possibilities for development, to the 'design' and implementation ('destiny') of innovation that enacts positive change (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Collaboration between the researcher and members of the organisation is embedded in Al. At the time of initial design (pre-pandemic), I had moved away from working on the Training Programme and was therefore an organisational outsider. Mindful of the busy-ness of people working in and with schools, and of my own position, I had planned to draw from rather than faithfully reproduce the process outlined above. This aligns with Clouder and King's (2015) conceptualisation of AI as a philosophical approach to research as well as a specific set of methods to be applied, and with previous studies in higher education which have drawn from the methods or positive ethos of AI without fully employing its methodology (ibid). Nonetheless, my approach was designed to elicit and value the voices of my

participants, originally through a series of workshops and follow-up communications, and to ensure that the research was conducted *with* rather than *on* them. The research design concentrated on the initial stage of 'discovery', through which a detailed exploration of stories of success would enable me to articulate 'those strengths or success factors that connect across the most stakeholder stories' (Fry, 2014, p.45) as a basis for the development of generative theory and tentative proposals for future development of EBR programme design. Given my personal history and institutional connection to Teach First, I had hoped to build on this later to work with the organisation on activities that mirror the later stages of AI.

The year of data collection, 2020, was severely disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Realising that this meant I would not be able to work so closely and collaboratively with participants as I had planned had implications for all aspects of research design. Nonetheless, a key driver as I amended my plans was to stay true to the focus of AI on 'generative' work which orients research participants and users towards new possibilities. This was a way of respecting the time contributed by participants in that they would hopefully find our conversations productive for their own learning and practice. It was also in recognition of the tendency, in my experience, of tutors and teachers to find catharsis in sharing 'war stories' or focusing on what is not working, and my strong intention to make my own contribution to the field as practical and positive as possible.

I took the decision to work 'in the spirit' of AI despite not being able to run the workshops I had planned. Adopting this 'appreciative stance', even if not the full appreciative method/ology, was not intended to preclude recognition of those factors or actions which inhibit successful teacher learning or to accept overly simplistic answers to my research question. Nor did I deny the risk of invoking 'victory narratives', on the part of research participants and/or in how I constructed my findings, which demanded of me sufficient criticality, rigour and reflexivity that my findings could transcend the superficial and account for negative and limiting aspects of participants' school contexts. The research design discussed below has been developed with this in mind.

3.2. Methods

The methods used were shaped by my theoretical framework and constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. In line with my research question, my focus was on understanding experiences of school-based learning within the Training Programme from the perspective of the learners within the process. I sought to collect sufficient data, from a suitable sample, while keeping my sample manageable in size (Dowling & Brown, 2012; Robson, 2011), and to ensure that approaches to both data collection and analysis aligned with my chosen appreciative stance. I elected to conduct in-depth interviews with eleven participants and to analyse these using template analysis as a form of thematic analysis.

3.2.1. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

I originally intended to convene two phases of in-person activity, broadly in line with the AI framework, in which my participants would develop and share their ITP 'stories of success' through participatory activity, in their own words. Taking inspiration from innovative projects in medicine which have used the generation of patients' stories to improve healthcare practices (Callanan, 2012; Greenhalgh, 2006; www.patientvoices.org.uk; http://www.dipex.org.uk), I intended to use these stories not only as the basis of my own analysis but also within outputs which would amplify participants' authentic voices. I hoped that discussing successful learning experiences with other new teachers would be positive and generative for the individuals giving me their time. This was important from an ethical perspective since teachers work long hours (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022) and I wanted participation in the research to benefit them as well as me. Workshops were scheduled for the summer term of 2020. I intended to collect data from first-year trainees and early career teachers (ECTs), who should be close enough to their experience of training to recall it well (Opfer & Pedder, 2011) while also having, in the case of the ECTs, some additional experience of teaching, and distance from ITP, which would add depth to their reflections.

The Covid-19 pandemic early in 2020 meant that I could not collect data in person as planned. It also proved hugely disruptive to trainee teachers in the 2019-20 cohort (Rushton et al., 2021), to the extent that I judged their experiences would not be representative of typical trainees in 'normal' years. I therefore amended my research design and confirmed ethical approval to proceed (appendix 2).

3.2.2. Participants

I interviewed eleven teachers, selected on an opt-in basis from the 2018-19 cohort of trainees on the secondary Training Programme in the London region. At the time of data collection these were ECTs on the second year of the programme who had completed ITP pre-pandemic. I arranged for an invitation to participate to be emailed to all trainees through my university's virtual learning environment and subject cohort leaders were asked to briefly highlight the invitation during a training day. Interested trainees were directed to an online information sheet and sign-up link, through which they gave consent to participate and shared contact details. They also completed a short survey with biographical details. Appendix 3 details recruitment literature. Seven participants made contact independently and were interviewed. A degree of snowballing helped recruitment as four participants recommended the project to contacts of theirs who subsequently signed up. I take this as an indication that these participants found the experience productive, as I had intended.

I hoped that my sample would reflect a range of participant experiences and contexts, but I had to rely on those who chose to participate. I stressed during recruitment that all learning experiences contain elements of relative 'success' and that I wanted to hear from anybody willing to contribute, not only those who judged their overall experiences positive, as there was much to learn from what was successful within a difficult wider situation. I elected not to ask for details of participants' schools, to emphasise that my interest was not in celebrating or shaming employers but in participants' experiences. In hindsight this was sometimes problematic, as it became clear during some interviews that I had personal knowledge of the schools concerned. One occasion was especially

tricky as I had worked at the school myself and, it transpired mid-interview, knew some of the teachers mentioned. I chose to let the interview run to completion then explained my history with the school, acknowledging that this might change the participant's feelings about the interview. I invited them to take some time to reflect and let me know if they would prefer to withdraw their data, but they were ultimately happy to proceed.

Table 3.1 summarises brief participant details. All participants had mentors with expertise in their taught subject, and all at least one Teach First-trained colleague within their school. To maintain privacy, I have changed some non-material details (e.g. gender of mentor) within narratives where I feel this reduces likelihood of identification.

Table 3.1 Overview details of participants, pseudonymised

Name (pseudonym)	Age at enrolment: under 25 or 25 and over:	Career status on enrolment: graduate or career changer (CC)	Subject they trained to teach	Holds a degree in the subject being taught: Yes (Y) or no (N)	Notes
Matt	>25	CC	Maths	N	
Lottie	>25	CC	MFL	Y	
Sue	<25	Graduate	History	Y	Same school as Sasha
Ben	<25	Graduate	History	Υ	Same school as Nick
Penny	<25	Graduate	History	Y	Knows Tim
Janis	>25	Graduate	History	Y	
Hanna	<25	Graduate	History	Y	Same school as Angela

Sasha	>25	CC	Geography	N	Same school as Sue
Nick	<25	CC	Maths	N	Same school as Ben
Tim	<25	Graduate	Maths	N	Knows Penny
Angela	<25	Graduate	Business	Υ	Same school as Hanna

3.2.3. Interviews: 'tell me the story of how you learned to teach'

Al foregrounds stories as they are told by participants. As my research design evolved. I wanted to retain this focus, amplifying participants' authentic experiences without my researcher preconceptions, restrictive or directive questioning shaping what they were invited to share. Following a pilot interview to check and refine my approach, I used unstructured narrative interviews, sometimes called unstructured interactive interviews (Corbin & Morse, 2003) to collect my data using a single initial prompt to each participant: tell me the story of how you learned to teach. I intended to create space for participants to tell their stories in the form that they chose with as little interference from me as possible. Interviews, albeit it with more structure, have been used in similar studies to understand, for example, the learning of trainees on the Graduate Teacher Programme (Posner, 2016), workplace learning of teachers (P. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004) and workplace learning of apprentices in nonteaching roles (Fuller & Unwin, 2003). Eraut (2004) observes that interview studies are the most common methods he encountered while researching informal learning in the workplace, although 'not easy to conduct' (p.248) as the nature of informal learning can render it 'largely invisible' (p.249) – learners may lack awareness that they are learning, or have learned, and dominant discourse about learning can render it difficult for learners to describe all aspects of their work and expertise. I felt participants would be relatively well-equipped to talk about their learning given the emphasis within the Training Programme on 68

reflection and practitioner enquiry. I thought my familiarity with the programme would enable me to pick up on references within narratives and use follow-up probes (Robson, 2011) to explore points made or experiences not yet mentioned. For example, I asked one participant: 'you've not mentioned the contrasting school experience. Is there anything to say about that in relation to your learning to teach?'. Taking such an unstructured approach meant that I had to be alert to narratives going 'off topic' and consider how I would keep the focus sufficiently on my research interest. I drafted some possible prompts and strategies for refocusing participants without being too directive (appendix 4), which proved largely unnecessary in practice.

Interviews were conducted online due to Covid restrictions, with my camera on for all interviews to help establish rapport visually as well as verbally. I began by briefly recapping the project information sheet and offering participants a chance to ask questions, then confirmed consent for participation and audio recording. During interviews I made short notes which I used to prompt follow-up questions and to inform memos written *post hoc*. I was struck by how reflective many participants were, and how happy to share their experiences in detail and at length. Given that interviews happened during a period of national lockdown, these observations may reflect the novelty of the event as much as any specific strengths of my approach. The lockdown may also have contributed to the quality of my data overall: when I commented on the richness of one participant's reflection and asked how he had developed this insight, he suggested that it was because he had little else to do during lockdown but think!

3.2.4. Thematic analysis (TA)

In his foreword to Greenhalgh's (2006) book on the value of patient narratives in medicine, Sir Kenneth Calman (p.vii) emphasises the need to draw wider lessons from individual stories:

Stories record individual events involving particular people in particular circumstances. They need to be connected to other stories and other forms of evidence in order to put them in context and allow wider lessons to be drawn....otherwise the story will merely become an anecdote that can be used without reference to the broader knowledge

base, and the next patient (also an individual) with a different story (also specific to him or her) will not benefit from the learning experience.

With this in mind, I used template analysis (King, 2012) as a method to structure an overall thematic analysis (TA) of interview data in which I sought to develop themes that were relevant to my research questions, true to participants' experiences and, so far as possible, which aligned with my appreciative stance. I took active steps throughout to embed rigour and quality into my practice so that my findings met criteria for trustworthiness relevant to qualitative research.

I chose to use TA for this study as it aligns with the theoretical framing and purpose of my research. If the analytic 'task is to do one's best to make sense out of things' (Patton, 1999, p.1205) then analytic method must support this sensemaking within the wider context of the study. Since I wish to understand participants' experiences, a phenomenological approach is appropriate; since my interest is understanding these experiences primarily as a set, rather than as individual cases, TA offers a more suitable framework than other phenomenological approaches such as interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

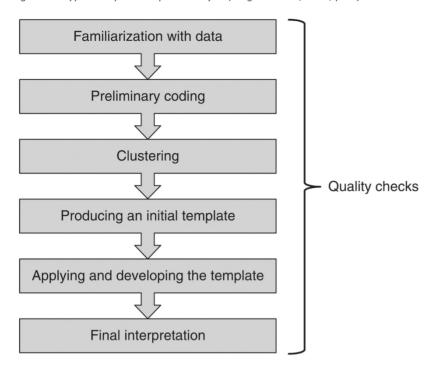
Thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022; Miles & Huberman, 1994) describes the process of 'searching *across* a data set...to find repeated patterns of meaning' (Braun and Clarke, 2022, p.86, their emphasis). It is now well-established as a qualitative research method, albeit with a 'diversity of orientations, concepts and practices across TA methods that make...differentiation essential' (ibid, p.5). Methods can be differentiated according to how themes are defined and then organised to illustrate the conceptual connections between themes (King & Brooks, 2017). Kidder and Fine (1987) contrast 'Big Q' research – qualitative methods embedded within a qualitative paradigm – with 'small q' research in which qualitative methods are used with a positivist orientation. Braun and Clarke (2022) develop this further in categorising forms of TA into 'reflexive' approaches, 'coding reliability' approaches and 'codebook' approaches. The former aligns with Kidder and Fine's Big Q while coding reliability approaches, after Boyatzis (2008), are small

q. Codebook TA approaches, which Braun and Clarke term 'medium Q', best describe my method. This is a grouping of theoretically flexible approaches which recognise both the subjectivity of the researcher within broad qualitative values and the utility of structured approaches that support the analytic process. Template analysis is one such approach.

3.2.5. Template analysis

Template analysis can be used in TA to support the organisation and analysis of qualitative data (Brooks & King, 2012). Typical steps in the technique (King & Brooks, 2013) are shown in figure 3.1., which I followed in my own analysis. The researcher develops a template, or coding framework, through the analytical process which organises codes and themes into a hierarchical structure that aids analysis and discussion (King, 2016) and can help the analyst to code data with both depth and clarity (King & Brooks, 2017). The approach does not define the style or structure of the template used, nor does it limit the researcher to developing descriptive or interpretive themes. In this way, despite the structure inherent to the process, it is nonetheless sufficiently flexible that it can suit a range of epistemological positions (Brooks & King, 2012), including my own. The template itself is not the research output; the structure of the hierarchical coding generated is intended to support the write-up of findings. The stages of template analysis are expanded further overleaf, where I describe the process of my own analysis.

Figure 3.1 Typical steps in template analysis (King & Brooks, 2017, p.26)



Template analysis is considered especially suited to applied research where *a priori* themes may, if used, be derived from existing literature and/or from research goals. These should always remain tentative so that they enrich, rather than limit, the analysis undertaken (King, 2016; Brooks & King, 2012). In my case I chose not to draft *a priori* codes, but I did make a visual *aide memoire* of the key sensitising concepts from my conceptual framework and my research question (figure 3.2). This helped me to 'check in' regularly with my developing template, to consider whether I was maintaining a sufficient focus on my research question and if I was missing anything relevant in my thinking that might be prompted by the display. My orientation to analysis could therefore be described as 'informed inductive', in recognition of the inevitable influence of my prior knowledge and conceptual framework on the codes and themes I would derive from the data.

What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning an/learnest for trainer teachers on the Teach first Training Programme of inside teacher education, at separation by MOTE?

The research quasition will be explored by sub-questions. Provisional working sub-questions are an age of conceptions of teacher learning education. Provisional working sub-questions are agreed conceptions of teacher learning experiences do NOTs most value in the 4st raining year?

2. What formal and informal learning experiences do NOTs most value in the 4st raining year?

3. What tenioning challenges are experienced in relation to teacher learning in the employment-based ITP

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Figure 3.2 A visual display of my key sensitising concepts and research question

3.2.6. Familiarisation with data

Braun and Clarke (2022) emphasise that analysis is less a discrete, bounded step within a project than an ongoing activity embedded across the research process. My analysis therefore began as I conducted each interview. I made informal notes as participants spoke, to support follow-up questions that elaborated their narratives. At the end of each interview I wrote a short memo, capturing my immediate responses to the individual participant and to the shape or focus of my research overall. I returned to these notes during transcription, expanding memos as appropriate while working on each narrative. Interviews were transcribed and checked for accuracy against the original recording. Transcription sought to represent accurately participants' words but did not include the detail that would be expected for other forms of analysis such as discourse analysis. Appendix 5 shows an illustrative extract of one transcript.

3.2.7. Developing codes and themes: preliminary coding, clustering and producing an initial template

In comparison to some approaches to TA, such as reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2018), which distinguish phases of coding and theme generation, template analysis brings the two together. Following data familiarisation, I returned to each transcript in turn for multiple cycles of code and theme development (illustrated in appendix 6). I first annotated two transcripts by hand with preliminary, inductive codes that described aspects of the data pertinent to my research question. I then moved to initial template formulation, clustering codes developed so far into meaningful groups labelled with initial themes. These themes, and the indicative codes that each theme described, were recorded in template version 1. I continued the process of annotating my data by hand and, after two further transcripts, revisited the codes and clustering in template version 1 to incorporate the additional transcripts. This included both adding themes and codes to the template and refining it by amending what was already there, considering the new coding. I continued the process of annotating transcripts, identifying, refining, and clustering codes and iterating the template after each set of two or three more transcripts. Template version 5 reflects the themes developed after coding all eleven transcripts. Each theme has a title, a summary description and a list of indicative codes or content that constitute that theme. Appendix 7 shows the iterations of developing the initial template, versions 1-5.

3.2.8. Developing the template

The twelve themes in the template at version 5 were notably different to the first iteration and could therefore not be said to reflect accurately the coding of transcripts addressed early in the process. As one illustrative difference, themes in template 1 included *Emotions: the impact of emotions on participant learning* and *Participant wants/needs change over time: stage of development matters*. By template 5 these had become the more holistic and integrated *Needs and priorities over the year: participants' learning, emotional and practical needs, and how these are prioritised across the training year*. I therefore undertook a

second full round of coding using the version 5 template and the computer programme Nvivo 12. Using specialised computer software at this stage enabled me to manipulate data efficiently in service of my overall analysis, mindful of García-Horta and Guerra-Ramos' (2009) counsel that such packages should be used only where they enhance, rather than limit the research process (the affordance here being the efficient manipulation of data). I coded all eleven transcripts on Nvivo using the developed themes in template 5. Coding was dense, with many extracts coded for more than one theme (see coding matrix in appendix 8). This reflects the complexity of learning to teach, the richness and depth of the narratives and the ongoing challenge of determining and allocating codes which capture and make sense of this.

I then filtered all extracts for each theme, printed these and used the resulting sub-sets of data to produce developed, written analyses for each theme. As is commonplace in early coding (King & Brooks, 2017), my codes were largely semantic and close to the data. Using my written analyses, I developed sub-themes for some of the headline themes which illuminate further the detail of each theme and are captured in version 6 of the template (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Template version 6 showing themes and sub-themes developed after coding all data to template version 5 and developing written analyses of each theme

Theme 1. Participants discussing their learning

- 1.1. Early beliefs and competencies
- 1.2. Goals for learning
- 1.3. Aspects of learning
- 1.4. Enablers of learning
 - 1.4.1. Feeling able to ask for help
 - 1.4.2. Being offered help
 - 1.4.3. Having 'space' and maintaining one's identity as a learner
 - 1.4.4. Exposure to multiple models of and ideas about good practice

Theme 2. Valued learning experiences

- 2.1 Extending and strengthening participants' repertoire of practice
- 2.2 Sensemaking
- 2.3 Building confidence and identity as a teacher
- 2.4 Maximising learning

Theme 3. Difficult learning experiences

Theme 4. Beliefs about good teaching

- 4.1 Achieving 'good' teaching
- 4.2 The complexity of good teaching

Theme 5. Needs and priorities over the year

Theme 6. Working within the Teach First model

- 6.1 Workload
- 6.2 Navigating three partner organisations

Theme 7. Significant relationships

Theme 8. Agency

- 8.1 Schools shaping participant agency
- 8.2 Participants managing their agency

Theme 9. The school as a context for learning

- 9.1 School policy
- 9.2 School colleagues
- 9.3 Physical characteristics of the school building(s)

Theme 10 – identity - was subsumed into other codes during this phase

Theme 11. Going it alone

Theme 12. Subject specialism

At this stage I felt the themes and sub-themes described were accurate but not yet sufficiently interesting (Braun & Clarke, 2022) for my reader, nor did they yet do justice to my participants. Some themes were oriented more towards 'shared topics' than 'shared meaning' and were therefore 'under-developed' (Braun &

Clarke, 2019, p.593). More work was needed to capture and convey 'the constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations' (Patton 1999, p.1205) of my data that would both 'make sense [and] really reflect the nature of the phenomena' (ibid); to consider not only the largely semantic, hierarchical themes developed so far but also the lateral relationships, or *integrative themes*, which connected across thematic clusters. King and Brooks (2017, p.35) explain that

[i]ntegrative themes can be thought of as undercurrents running through participants' accounts – integrative themes may not even be explicitly raised or addressed by participants, but nonetheless can be seen on careful reading of the data to pervade participants' discussion of the research topic.

These integrative themes are akin to Braun and Clarke's (2022) latent or conceptual codes in that they represent 'implicit meaning underlying the data surface informed by the researcher's conceptual 'take' on the data' (p.285). I found the concept of hierarchical and integrative themes particularly helpful in making further sense of theme 1 (participants discussing their learning) and the multiple sub-themes within it. This was the largest theme, with 123 extracts coded across the eleven participants and substantial overlap with other themes. For example, of the extracts for theme 1, 41 were also coded as theme 2 (valued learning experiences) and 31 as theme 5 (needs and priorities over the year). In conversation with my supervisor, and drawing on both guidance specific to template analysis (King, 2016; King & Brooks, 2017) and to thematic analysis more broadly (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Ryan & Bernard, 2003), I refined my template further to include both hierarchical and integrative themes that told the story, as I interpreted it, of semantic and latent aspects of the data. Figure 3.4 shows template 7, presenting the final themes and their relationships within three overarching analytic categories. These are discussed in detail in Chapters 4: Analysis and 5: Discussion.

THE DESIGN OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Theme 1. Into the lion's den

- 1.1. Early survival
- 1.2. Moving on
- 1.3. Getting 'stuck'
- 1.4. Developing subject specialism

Theme 2. No time to breathe and think

- 2.1 Workload and stress
- 2.2 Trainee/teacher identities

Theme 3. Dissonant partnership

- 3.1 Interaction of Teach First and the employing school
- 3.2 Interaction of Teach First and the university partner
- 3.3 Interaction of the university partner and the employing school
- 3.4 The school as the dominant influence on trainee learning

LEARNING TO TEACH AS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Theme 4. Moving towards complexity

- 4.1 Technicist teachers
- 4.2 Emerging professionals

Theme 5. Travel broadens the mind

TEACHER LEARNING AS RELATIONAL AND PERSONAL

Theme 6. It takes a village to raise a teacher

Theme 7. Hard shell; soft centre

3.2.9. Rigour/quality

I sought to design a methodologically coherent and trustworthy project which counters arguments against small-scale, qualitative research. Although positivist criteria relating to validity, reliability and generalisability (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) are both inappropriate and unachievable in the context of my study, given my focus on contextualised human experience within a wider 'limited realist' theoretical framing, it is 'still entirely appropriate that qualitative research be open to scrutiny and that the credibility of findings rest on more

than the authority of the researcher' (Madill et al., 2000, p.2). I have approached the issue of research quality in line with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) 'original, widely accepted, and easily recognized criteria' (Nowell et al., 2017, p.3) for trustworthiness of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, and with more recent guides to rigour in thematic analysis (e.g. Nowell et al., 2017; Braun & Clark, 2022; the 'quality checks' in King and Brooks' model cited in figure 3.1) which have deepened my thinking around quality.

Reflexivity is central to my identity as a subjective, contextualised, qualitative researcher. Since it is impossible, and arguably also undesirable (Braun & Clarke, 2022), to separate my practice from the beliefs and experiences that I bring to it, I have sought to engage with these characteristics as inherent aspects of my approach to research, the decisions I have made and the conclusions I have reached. I used memos throughout to capture both the 'daily logistics of the research' (Nowell et al. 2017, p.3) and more personal reflections, thoughts and insights about myself as a researcher (ibid). Regular peer debriefing with my supervisor, and an EdD colleague who completed the Teach First programme, challenged my thinking around my research and my position within it.

Template analysis is well-suited to the generation of an audit trail (King, 2016), contributing to overall dependability of the research outcomes, not least because the development of a central template, or coding framework, illustrates clearly how themes are generated. In line with King's suggested approach, I documented the stages of analysis undertaken and include within this report extracts of materials central to this. I also used this documentation during my research as I referred to earlier notes at later stages of the process, crosschecking the evolution of my thinking. This was particularly helpful during later stages of coding transcripts as, while coding using Nvivo, I re-visited my handwritten notes on each printed transcript. Sometimes, my earlier notes prompted me to consider more deeply something which initially stood out less at the later reading. Typically, though, I observed a high degree of correlation between the coding decisions I had made initially and those that followed, reassuring me of a degree of internal consistency across my analysis. By

contrast, my memos on theme development indicate starkly the conceptual refinement of my ideas as they evolved throughout analysis. I have been careful to recognise that my findings are contextualised for my participants (and my interpretation) and not to over-generalise, mindful of Patton's reminder that '[k]eeping findings in context is a cardinal principle of qualitative analysis' (1999, p.1198). I have sought throughout to provide sufficient detail to my reader that they may judge for themselves the extent to which my findings may be transferable to other contexts.

3.2.10. Ethical issues

I followed the British Educational Research Association's guidance on research ethics (BERA, 2018) and my institution's guidelines on research integrity, data storage and protection, securing ethical approval from my institution for my initial and updated research designs. The fluid, evolving nature of qualitative research meant that I had to remain alert to ethical issues throughout the life of the project, which was supported by the reflexivity embedded within my approach.

As an experienced programme leader, subject leader and tutor on the Training Programme, I remained alert throughout to the 'double-edged sword' of my 'insiderness', in relation to four topics of 'access, intrusiveness, familiarity and rapport' (Mercer, 2007, pp.5-6).

Access to senior leaders in my own university and at Teach First enabled me to gain permission to undertake the research and to distribute invitations to participate through university networks. I was therefore confident that all trainees received the invite but concerned that they might feel that participation was mandatory. To counter this the information sheet made clear that participation would in no way impact the awarding of qualifications, or judgements made by university tutors. I sought to obtain informed consent, so far as this is possible in practice (Malone, 2003), being clear about the extent to which I could guarantee full anonymity or confidentiality and the steps I would take to protect identities. I offered all participants the opportunity to withdraw or amend their data following their interview. One sent a short supplementary

email, but none redacted or removed their data. Narratives include examples of participants praising and/or criticising their tutors, mentors and DLs, seemingly quite freely, which suggests that they were confident to speak openly despite my relationship with programme colleagues.

Intrusiveness relates to how insiders alter what is being researched. As I was researching in hindsight a programme year during which I had almost no contact with research participants, this was not a significant ethical concern for me. However, questions around whether familiarity with the Training Programme would lead me to 'take things for granted, develop myopia, and assume [my] own perspective is far more widespread than it actually is' (Mercer, 2007, p.6) or to achieve deeper insight are key to the credibility of my study, particularly given the preference within education policy in England at present for large, quantitative studies in education (Helgetun & Menter, 2022). The desire for confidence that my familiarity with the Training Programme strengthens, rather than undermines, my findings, and that my interpretations of the data are defensible (Braun & Clarke, 2022) has been a key driver of my commitment to reflexivity throughout.

Insiders' rapport and credibility with participants may 'engender a greater level of candour than would otherwise be the case' (Mercer, 2007, p.7). During interview preamble I built rapport so that participants would feel comfortable being honest with me, clarifying my position in relation to the Training Programme so that I was credible as an interested, informed academic with a commitment to teacher education rather than appearing in any way to be evaluating participants. I was alert to risks of 'fabrication' (Hobson & McIntyre, 2013) as a response to perceived pressure to 'perform' or to appear competent, and participants modifying their contributions in a desire to please (Denscombe, 2002), so I also reiterated the content of the information sheet, emphasising the value of all experiences to my wider research goal.

Insider or not, it is important to protect the dignity of all research participants (Webster et al., 2014) and to 'tell a story that does *not do harm*' (Braun and Clark, 2022, p.214, their emphasis). To this end I have pseudonymised participant names and limited other identifying details likely to make them

identifiable to people familiar with the programme (Robson, 2011). 'Doing harm' in this context could also relate to how my representation of participants and the Teach First programme might do harm to past, current or future participants and/or to the children taught by trainees through undermining trust in the programme. My analysis undoubtedly raises some concerns about the Training Programme but the appreciative stance that I have adopted roots my work in looking to amplify what is 'working', so these concerns are always framed within a wider intention to 'do good'.

3.3. Summary

In this chapter I have explained how adopting an appreciative stance aligns with my values as a researcher and my ontological and epistemological beliefs. I have shown how a desire to embed rigour in my qualitative approach informed my approaches to data collection and analysis and discussed some of the challenges I encountered, and resolved, during these processes. I have addressed the ethical implications of insider research and shown how I have sought to maximise the benefits of the unique perspective that this affords me. Finally, I have touched on the tensions experienced in maintaining an appreciative stance while discerning troublesome themes within the data. I will return to these tensions in Chapter 5: *Discussion*.

In Chapter 4: *Analysis* I present and explore my research findings, expanding the themes and sub-themes captured in template version 7 (figure 3.4).

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I explore the seven themes developed through my analysis. which capture significant aspects of participants' experiences: (1) Into the lion's den; (2) No time to breathe and think; (3) Dissonant partnership; (4) Moving towards complexity; (5) Travel broadens the mind; (6) It takes a village to raise a teacher; and (7) Hard shell; soft centre. Themes are organised into three overarching analytic categories which address: the impact of the design of the Training Programme (themes 1-3), the nature of learning to teach as professional learning (themes 4-5) and teacher learning as relational and personal (themes 6-7). What becomes clear through my analysis is that the 'raw materials' of trainees' school-based experiences are broadly reflective of learning on other ITP pathways in England (Burn et al., 2017; Douglas, 2015; Hyde, 2019): trainees have a similar range of learning experiences to other student teachers, including observing others and receiving feedback on one's own teaching, learning within their peer group of subject trainees, independent study and mentor meetings (appendix 9 provides a more detailed breakdown of participants' learning experiences). What constitutes trainees' individual learning experiences, then, is how these experiences are configured within the Training Programme as a model of ITP, and within each school as the local context for learning. The analysis which follows demonstrates that, here, there are some substantial and material points of divergence from other ITP pathways.

4.2. The design of the Training Programme

4.2.1. Theme one: Into the lion's den

This first theme addresses a pattern within trainees' learning trajectories. I labelled the theme 'into the lion's den' after one participant's description of their entry into teaching, reflecting the challenge and shock of the experience. An

initial period focused intensely on early survival precedes a later shift, or 'moving on', towards increasing confidence and autonomy and greater emphasis on pupil learning. Although at first glance this appears similar to 'stage models' of student teacher learning (see p.48) and the 'practice shock' or 'reality shock' commonly experienced by new teachers (Hobson & Ashby, 2012; Korthagen, 2010; Stokking et al., 2003), what stands out here is the extent to which trainees feel unprepared and the lack of practical or conceptual tools from prior training on which they can draw as they grapple with their new role. This contrasts with research that indicates graduates of fee-funded programmes moving into their first paid role benefit from experiences, knowledge, skills and resources gained through their training with which to approach the significant challenges faced (Mutton et al., 2011). Most of my participants shift focus from survival to learning during their training year but some appear to get 'stuck' in the initial survival phase. Several factors, explored in the following paragraphs, seem to influence individuals' trajectories.

An important part of this theme is what participants bring with them to the beginning of the programme at the Summer Institute (SI) and as they start school in September. Descriptions of their early days of teaching illuminate powerfully how insufficiently prepared participants felt to be responsible for their own classes at the beginning of the school year.

Initial entry into the teacher role in September is, for many, stressful and uncertain with 'so much responsibility from the start' (Lottie), 'that feeling of helplessness of "I'm truthfully alone. This is totally my responsibility" (Sue) and, for some, little guidance or oversight from experienced colleagues. Early days in the classroom are characterised as 'shambles, chaotic' (Matt) and 'guessing work over whether my students were actually learning' (Angela). Participants learn to plan and teach lessons, manage behaviour, understand school policies and, in some cases, re-engage with subjects which they have not formally studied for many years, while immediately responsible for students' progress. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the start of term in September, 'you just show up on the first day and do whatever you think is best' (Angela).

Participants join the programme with varied beliefs about, and histories in, education which inform their early teaching. One mentions engaging actively with educational ideas in his background, through family connections to teaching. Others rely on their own experiences as learners – Lortie's (1975) 'apprenticeship of observation' – often in quite different contexts to their employing schools, or on beliefs which later prove inaccurate and/or unhelpful. For example, Janis begins SI wondering why teachers cannot just 'chat to students and say, hey, you know, be cool, man', before experience teaches her the need to 'find that perfect balance between being not a complete arsehole and not a complete pushover'. Sue mistakenly concludes from an early observation that teachers 'need to be scary', discovering later that she can develop a more authentic teacher persona founded on alternative characteristics. Other participants take time to realise that it's OK to ask for help (Matt), that you can be critical about how you engage with feedback rather than having to act on everything you are told (Angela), and, as Hanna explains here, that even experienced colleagues struggle with their teaching:

Sometimes...you walk around the corridors and you walk past classrooms and it looks like everyone's got it down, perfectly, the behaviour is there, kids are engaged, they're learning, they're making progress and it just sometimes feels like you're the only one who's clearly not getting this. But I remember so well when my Head of Department, who is loved by the kids, said "until today I have got one Year 8 class which will just not listen. They will start whistling at me, they will start clapping on the tables" and I couldn't believe it. I thought, "really, you [laughs], that still happens to you?"

SI is clearly a substantial part of the Training Programme, intended to equip participants as 'classroom ready' for September through a variety of theoretical and practical learning opportunities but, as Hardman and Carroll (2011) found, participants do not talk about it as a transformative learning experience. In Ben's words 'Summer Institute...wasn't so much how to teach, it was how to survive'. Participants speak of picking up tips or acclimatising to standing in front of a class, but identify challenges around opportunities for teaching experience, such as having to teach a different subject (Sue) or share teaching with other trainees (Sasha). The overall sense is of SI as 'partial' learning; a

period in which all learn something, but nobody learns all they need to feel wellequipped for teaching in September.

In summary, participants' early beliefs are varied, rooted in personal experience and assumptions. In combination with the 'partial preparation' of SI, and as captured so starkly in the quotes below, this means that participants begin their employment, and their teaching career, in September in a precarious position:

Teach First, they sort of throw you into the lion's den, don't they. My early lessons were shambles, chaotic. (Matt)

I felt like I was almost teaching before I'd learnt to teach. (Penny)

I walked into the classroom the first day, didn't really know what was going on. (Tim)

I'd say to summarise, my learning to teach experience was lots of failures and then trying again and again and again. (Hanna)

Early survival

Participants depict their early days of teaching as a period of copying, borrowing, and adapting from others during which survival metaphors dominate. Sue describes a common early focus on behaviour, where 'the first three months were pretty hellish but I very, very quickly learned how to behaviour manage because that's what I had to do to survive.' Unfortunately, this takes a toll on her learning, since 'the first two, three months, I was so unbelievably busy and exhausted, I didn't really have much time to think about teaching and whether I was doing it good. I was just frantically trying to swim and not sink'.

At this stage, it appears that participants do not yet have their own practical or conceptual tools to make sense of and support practice, so they rely on others to tell and show them how to 'do' teaching. Observing colleagues is important in this phase so that their practice (as it is observed) can be replicated, and the 'life jacket of the Teach Like a Champion techniques' (Ben) also offers accessible strategies to draw on and reproduce. However, early observations of others, while vital, are hampered by participants' novice perspectives which limit what they can 'see' in others' practice. Hanna, for example, 'didn't know what good teaching looked like yet' and had 'an over-obsession with behaviour', so

missed the 'million other factors that make a good lesson a good lesson'. Participants can also struggle to make detailed sense of what they are seeing where they do not understand the context and objectives of the lesson – 'where the lesson fits within what the class is doing at the moment' (Ben), where the complexity of the classroom overwhelms them or distracts their attention or where the teacher's expertise masks the decision-making behind their actions. Matt found his observations of 'really great' colleagues less helpful because he couldn't see them 'putting any of the TLAC practices in place'. Some value co-observing with an experienced colleague where this helps the novice to attend to aspects of the class which they might otherwise miss. The importance and complexity for participants of observing others suggests that the management and focus of how they do this merits more careful planning than is evident in the data, particularly as observations are typically undertaken without supervision and are not a key feature of the Training Programme structure (Hardman & Carroll, 2011).

Some participants recognise benefits to what we might call this baptism of fire. For example, despite being 'thrown in at the deep end', Sasha nonetheless values 'being a teacher, being a working professional, having that autonomy in a classroom' rather than 'just observing other people teaching and being observed for the whole year', as she reductively characterises fee-funded ITP. It is interesting that some feel more able to try out approaches to teaching and to managing behaviour while not being so frequently observed, as fee-paid trainees are, or recognise how having to manage their role independently helped them to learn quickly to do it, or to become more reflective. Nonetheless, participants' early days on the Training Programme are broadly characterised by anxiety, even fear in some cases, vulnerability, busy-ness, and being overwhelmed by what can feel like an 'insane job' (Lottie). Their early needs and goals are framed, naturally, around ameliorating these feelings.

Early anxiety links to general lesson planning and to specific concerns about being able to manage students' behaviour and general classroom routines.

Developing confidence around managing behaviour, to 'feel that [you're] not just going to get laughed out of the room by 30 teenagers' (Ben) dominates early

concerns such that participants appear unable to attend to what they perceive as the finer details of specialist subject teaching until behaviour management is under control. This seems to underpin an early desire for models, tips and tricks which can be easily copied. During this phase, some participants value the scaffold provided by centrally planned lessons or formulaic lesson structures imposed by schools, although these can later feel restrictive and in conflict with the participant's own evolving practices and beliefs about teaching.

The pressures described by participants illuminate the challenges of such a quick move by the apprentice teachers to Lave and Wenger's (1991) 'full participation' as an unqualified teacher, as against the peripheral participation and much more graduated accumulation of responsibility that the design of feepaid ITP affords. In trying to manage the complexity, responsibility and workload of their roles, participants understandably orient towards what they perceive as urgent priorities (e.g. maintaining order) and seek strategies that can be immediately reproduced. The risk here is that trainees may embed poor habits at the outset that seed an impoverished form of practice long-term, for example teaching which prioritises pupils' behaviour over their learning, or where teachers are concerned more with *what* they are doing than *why* they are doing it. As Mutton et al. (2011) caution in their account of novice teachers learning to plan lessons, 'the drive to be efficient' in the face of early career time pressures must not override 'the need to be effective' (p.409).

Moving on

Participants' approaches to learning to teach evolve as they overcome their initial shock at entering *the lions' den*. Having developed some classroom control, strategies and confidence in their new role, they have the desire, and increasingly the capacity, to make more active decisions about their learning. This can involve trying out practical ideas of their own or developing their conceptual understanding of teaching by shifting focus from students' behaviour to their learning; from what teachers do to why they do it. This is the stage at which many begin to really consider what it means to be a specialist teacher of their subject. It is important because it highlights not only changing participant

foci, but also, connected to this, changing requirements of the content and form of support given by those working with participants.

As they 'move on', participants rely less on others for direction and increasingly direct (or want to direct) their own learning. Many reduce observations of colleagues to focus on consolidating their own ideas and emerging practice. Nick's experience here is typical:

I felt I reached a point where I had enough points to work on. Maybe in January, the middle two terms, half terms last year. I felt like I'd just got stuff that I want to do, I want to work on...I didn't do any observations in that time because I had so many bits that I wanted to try...

Later in the year many participants return to observing others, now with a specific focus on what they want to take from the experience. Penny explains, 'it's almost the more you know, the more useful observing is.' Participants are, by this stage, able to direct observations towards much more specific, personal, learning goals:

later on when I knew 'okay, there's these particular teacher standards that I need to improve on, I'm going to observe this lesson with a focus on teacher standard four, or teacher standard five", that became slightly less work. (Hanna)

Getting 'stuck'

Some participants appear to get 'stuck' in the early survival phase, struggling to move on to a place of greater confidence and autonomy. Moving on requires several conditions: feeling sufficiently comfortable with classroom behaviour that it no longer consumes attention, opportunities to develop ideas about pedagogy and learning, reflective capacity and self-awareness, and confidence in one's subject knowledge. The absence of any of these seems to limit participants' progression. While this is damaging for the participants themselves, it is of course also hugely consequential for their pupils' learning. Matt is an extreme example of a 'stuck' participant, citing ongoing challenges with behaviour as a key reason for moving schools at the end of the programme. Lottie and Hanna are both clear that it is only in their second year

that they really felt confident in their behaviour management and could focus on pedagogy:

truthfully most of that [focus on pedagogy and curriculum] happened in my second year and I think that's because there was this overobsession with behaviour in my first year which now, looking back I wish there hadn't been. I wish I'd been brave enough to try out different activities knowing that it would go wrong, in the sense of behaviour, but still having learnt something in another area...I didn't like this feeling of losing control so I'd always try to avoid that as much as I could. (Hanna)

Participants with strong departmental support and skilled mentors appear to move more quickly past behaviour challenges to focus on the substance of their teaching, even in very challenging schools. Tim explains how his mentor 'really helped me' because his comments on observed teaching were based

purely on the ideas of planning and the ideas I've tried to put into the lesson. So it's not behaviourally focused. It's not focused on how did the class necessarily react to it, which was really important because it meant that I just started to be able to distil my ideas of what was good, what was bad without having to worry....[my school] is pretty bad in terms of behaviour. So that was a bit of a challenge to not let that get caught up in what it means to be a good maths teacher.

The quality of support and discussion available to participants around subject content and pedagogy appears quite varied and a core discriminator in learning experiences more broadly. While Tim and Nick clearly had exceptional mentors and wider departmental teams, the quality of support they received is not reflective of the eleven participants overall. Networks of support are explored more extensively in theme six: *It takes a village to raise a teacher*.

Trainees must learn to assess their own teaching and make decisions about their professional learning. Initially participants rely on external indicators of success including feedback from colleagues and benchmarking against more experienced teachers. Angela's description of her early attempts at judging her teaching conveys the need to *learn* to be reflective:

It was a lot of guesswork. One week, I'd feel like I had a really successful lesson, but then I'd get homework back and I'd be confused

why everyone got the question wrong. But I think it caused me to be extra reflective...because the onus was on me to understand whether it was working or it wasn't working.

Lottie describes her emerging self-assessment as 'trial and error' and Hanna and Penny also speak of the challenges of learning to reflect. Writing weekly journal entries and engaging in challenging lesson observation and feedback is not always enjoyable, but some participants explicitly acknowledge the benefit of these processes. Other useful experiences to support reflection are observing others, where the participant actively interrogates the observed teacher's practice, and having time to reflect on one's own teaching after the event. Becoming more self-aware is connected to becoming more autonomous learners: only when participants can effectively evaluate 'where they are now' and 'where they would like to go', can they make productive choices about observing others for professional development.

Developing subject specialism

A small, final part of the theme *Into the lion's den* reflects the experiences of participants who are not subject specialists at the beginning of the Training Programme. Four participants (Matt, Sasha, Nick, Tim) have degrees in domains quite different from their teaching subject and Angela's only partially overlaps. Matt and Angela describe putting in many additional hours of study to improve their subject knowledge, with Matt 'still more concerned about being found out about being crap at maths than anything, really'. Nick and Sasha acknowledge that they are not equipped to teach beyond GCSE-level classes, although Sasha (a career-changer) connects this as much to the time elapsed since she last studied as to her knowledge of geography, since 'the knowledge you need is so basic'. It seems that Sasha has not (yet) engaged fully with the complexities of her subject in the same way as her peers, perhaps *because of* the nature of her history with the subject. This highlights the additional challenges faced by non-specialists, particularly career-changers, allocated to positions outside their specialisms without receiving additional support or time.

This theme is important and merits its length because it speaks to the intricacies of participant learning within the context of the Training Programme. Trainees

are developing concurrently in relation to multiple facets of knowledge for professional practice. Their relative autonomy delivers scope to try out ideas and follow lines of personal interest in learning and development, but it also risks subordinating technical knowledge and research literacy during this stage in such a way that the ideas prioritised, and the strategies used in exploring them, may be informed more by a dominating need for control, (limited) practical experience and instinct than by the expertise of colleagues, support roles and academic literature. By contrast, fee-paid student teachers' much closer oversight by mentors and more frequent and structured taught input arguably helps to ensure that reflection and learning are informed by a better balance of different forms of knowledge.

4.2.2. Theme two: No time to breathe and think

This theme reflects the busy-ness of the Training Programme and how this impacts participants' learning. All trainee teachers, learning in the school environment, operate with two identities: the trainee, being inducted into the profession, and simultaneously the teacher, enacting the professional role. What this theme, *No time to breathe and think*, makes evident is that the workload Teach First trainees must manage, especially being salaried, has significant consequences for both identities. Theme two is illuminated through sub-themes entitled *Workload and stress* and *Trainee/teacher identities*.

Workload and stress

Participants frequently report regularly working around 60 hours per week – 20% more than the already heavy average secondary teacher load of 49.1 hours per week at the time (DfE, 2019c). This is 'pretty all-consuming' (Nick), leaving participants 'constantly fatigued' (Sasha), with no 'time just to breathe and think really hard about what I was doing' (Penny) or 'to unwind…all you do is work work' (Janis). Participants describe a range of strategies to manage this workload, including using resources from colleagues without taking time to adapt or personalise them, planning lessons day-to-day rather than strategically in sequence, reducing time spent on their own learning and working through their weekends.

The workload typically associated with the Training Programme evidently has a negative impact on participants' professional learning, reducing time available for activities such as observing others, reflecting, planning lessons thoroughly for individual classes and discussing teaching with experienced others, and fatiguing participants to the extent that they are unable to make the most of these activities where they do happen. Because of their workload, participants frequently orient their learning activity towards short-term, operational outcomes that have immediate impact on immediate priorities. Where some are afforded more time, through lower weekly contact hours or greater departmental support, their stories reflect lower levels of stress and greater strategic and conceptual engagement.

Trainee/teacher identities

first year, I definitely think you only remember you're a [trainee] teacher when you start going to Teach First days. That's it. (Angela)

Angela's comment exemplifies how participants' teacher identity, as a member of school staff, frequently dominates their trainee identity as a teacher-indevelopment. What is also clear from their stories is the variation in how participants are positioned by their employing school as learners and/or employees and the impact this has on their learning. Part of this is timetabling: Teach First stipulates that trainees should teach 60-80% of a qualified teacher's timetable but participants' allocations vary significantly within this percentage range (the size of the 'part') and according to the overall length of the school day (the 'whole'). At the lower end, Nick finds his school's timetabling 'quite generous' while Ben estimates his contact hours as 30 hours per fortnight. In contrast, Hanna has 21 teaching hours per week and Angela describes her workload in the same school as '80%' and 'to the brim'. Although Nick and Ben each discuss working hard, neither mentions concerns about timetabling affecting their learning. Angela, though, finds her workload 'overwhelming. There wasn't any space to breathe' and Hanna's summary of her situation reflects the scale of its impact on her and her pupils:

my learning process has been slower than those of participants who have been able to reflect after lessons because my situation

was...about getting through the week and meeting every deadline and planning every lesson and delivering every lesson and marking every book that I need to mark. It wasn't, truthfully for the first year...really a thing of "now I'm going to take the time and reflect on what I can do better" because I didn't feel like I had the time and energy for it.

Because of that...my students weren't making enough progress. And so I was forced by the support plan to add the reflection in. It did massively increase my workload and I have to say, sometimes I don't know how I got through it...I easily spent every day from 7 to 7:30 in school, Monday to Friday, towards the end of my first year, and that was really horrific and my health probably really suffered from it, my family relationships really suffered from it.

Expectations of participants also reflect how schools position them and the extent to which they are constantly navigating their dual roles. Sasha reports feeling 'like a trainee teacher...I was given some responsibility but not too much. You're kind of on your own but you can ask for help', while Matt was given 'a certain amount of leeway' as a first year but also 'left to [my] own devices to sink or swim'. For Angela, though, 'Teach First trainees, it was automatically just, "you're fully-fledged", and Hanna found that:

we were trusted with a lot and we were left alone with a lot...no one ever sat down with me and said 'do you want me to go over the lesson that you're teaching tomorrow?', or 'do you know where to find the lesson?'. It was just expected that you'd come in, you've got a full week of teaching but you will find your way around, and you'll manage.

All participants who mentioned weekly school-based CPD attended together with newly qualified teachers (NQTs), despite them having already completed ITP, and were clear that they were often seen by others, and frequently saw themselves, as on a par with these qualified peers. The expectation that participants essentially behave as qualified teachers in major aspects of their work, despite participating in ITP, leads to a degree of 'performance' in which they hide their concerns from colleagues; plan 'show lessons' when being observed rather than share their authentic teaching selves; work exceptionally long hours to keep up with expectations; take active steps to augment their learning beyond their formal support network by seeking out wider support independently; and, on occasion, take sick leave to write assignments.

Participants feel keenly the need to comply with expectations since 'at the end of the day we are employed by the school and if we get on the wrong side of the school, they will fire us' (Hanna). These responses may seem logical to participants, but they have the potential to limit trainees' learning over time to the ultimate detriment of long-term progress.

The importance of this theme depends to a large extent on one's conception of the 'good teacher' and teacher learning. If the desired goal is the development of executive technicians, perhaps there is little to raise concern, bar the welfare of novice teachers working unsustainably long hours. If, however, one subscribes to a model of teacher-as-professional, then the apparent variation in, and absence of deliberate planning of, trainees' learning conditions in schools is a red flag: conditions which foster participants' learning and learner status, through limiting contact time and responsibility to a manageable level and allowing for errors as part of learning, appear more serendipitous in participants' stories than embedded in the programme model. Rather than learning through legitimate peripherality (Lave & Wenger, 1991), participants frequently are quickly expected to act as full, competent members in their workplaces. Although the challenge of variable placement experiences pervades ITP provision (Burn & Mutton, 2015), the range of variation within the context of the Training Programme, and the limited mechanisms for addressing this within the programme model, has serious consequences for trainee learning. Except at the top end of this range, we see in participants' stories the significant negative impacts on trainee development of relying on schools, oriented as they should be towards pupil learning and the development of qualified teachers, to understand and provide suitable conditions for rich novice teacher learning.

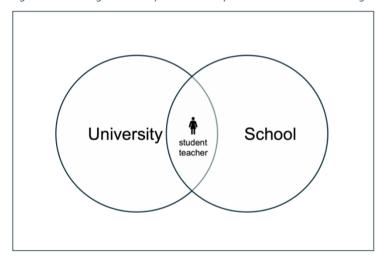
4.2.3. Theme three: Dissonant partnership

This theme is about how the partnership model underpinning the programme manifests for participants and their learning. I have called this theme *Dissonant* partnership to reflect how the tripartite partnership between Teach First, the contracted university and employing school can play out for participants as complex, challenging and not entirely congruent. My findings contrast starkly

with recent Ofsted reports which describe 'absolute coherence at the root of the partnership's training (2015, p.18) and 'complete continuity of voice between programme leaders and school staff' (2023, p.7).

In typical English fee-paid HEI-led ITP, schools agree to partner with providers with which they share broad goals for ITP, often contributing to, and upholding, the programme ethos, curriculum and associated pedagogies. The provider maintains oversight of school partners' roles in student teachers' overall learning, supporting where needed and on occasion deselecting schools where the experience for students is no longer sufficiently productive. Effort is invested in designing programmes where university input and school experience come together within a coherent learning experience in which theory and practice are reciprocally enriching (Burn & Mutton, 2015). Schools may well elect, pragmatically, to participate in ITP partly as a recruitment tool, but at the point of engagement there is often considerable investment for little immediate return. The partnership, with the student teacher at its heart, is mutually configured and produced, as illustrated in figure 4.1:

Figure 4.1 Two organisations partner to shape student teachers' learning in HEI-led, fee-paid ITP



The details of the Teach First partnership model are important when considering participants' stories of their learning. Firstly, the model comprises three organisations, not two: Teach First, the university partners contracted for 'delivery' and the schools recruited to employ trainees. Secondly, as participants' stories make clear, although they all share a headline commitment to reducing educational disadvantage and developing new teachers, variations

in partners' ethos, goals and practices in enacting ITP can produce dissonance for trainees. This disruption caused by this dissonance is experienced as generative by some and damaging by others.

The simple diagram in figure 4.2 models how the activities of the three organisations in the Training Programme overlap to produce each participant's learning experience, as outlined further below.

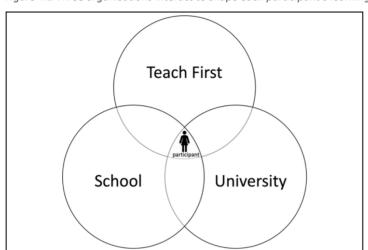


Figure 4.2 Three organisations interact to shape each participant's learning on the Training Programme

Interaction of Teach First and the employing school

Most participants find a reasonably good fit between content taught by Teach First and pedagogic expectations in their schools. This is unsurprising since schools signing up to the programme might be expected to understand and broadly align themselves with its content as marketed by Teach First. However, while a few participants report how their Teach First Development Leads (DLs) were able to hold the school to account around issues with the participant's workload or mentor support, others note the limited control that Teach First has over the wider impact of the employing school on trainees' day-to-day experiences, despite schools signing contracts committing them to agreed expectations. Penny describes the consequences for trainees:

Teach First needs to accept that they're ultimately just a dating agency and they have very little impact once you're in your school...that's why, unfortunately, so many of the experiences are so different. [A friend on the programme] loved his mentor, had such a positive experience but that's not down to Teach First, that's down to his mentor being amazing, his school being really supportive.

Interaction of Teach First and the university partner

Participants' experiences of the intersection of Teach First and university input to the Training Programme speak to a complex relationship between the two partners, their underpinning philosophies and practices, which produce quite varied learning conditions for individual trainees.

Teaching and assessment practices do not appear to be well-aligned for all participants, some of whom find content either duplicated or in direct conflict across partners:

They have this awful duplication of material because on the one hand it's a Teach First essay so they're saying "The emphasis of this essay is 'this' so therefore we need to do X, Y and Z sessions to deliver module content to you." And actually, the history [university] Teach First team are very prescriptive in terms of what they tell us to look at and...actually you can have the [university] essay stuff without all of the Teach First essay stuff. Any day of the week. (Ben)

Everyone has just got different priorities I guess and sometimes they just don't tie up. I felt like sometimes I was being torn between being a teacher who follows TLAC to the 'T' from the Teach First side of things and then someone who can teach really good geography. Sometimes those don't marry up... (Sasha)

Participants highlight differences in experiences of being observed teaching by different support roles. Where details are given, echoing Tillin's (2023) findings in the primary age phase, university tutors are valued for the conceptual rigour and subject-specificity of their feedback, which is contrasted with DLs' more generic or procedural orientations:

My [university] [observations], they were far more focused on the scaffolding and how to teach that particular subject....My PDL was very much focused on classroom practices... (Matt)

I actually spoke with other Teach First participants...we felt like if you have a lesson observation with Teach First, they kind of expect one thing. [With one lesson I taught] my Teach First mentor would have been like, "Wow, that lesson was great." [My university tutor] said, "That was really boring. It could have been delivered by a cover teacher." I think that probably speaks quite a lot to the philosophical

differences between the [university] and Teach First as organisations which I think is quite interesting just as a trainee teacher to just be aware of, that you're kind of caught in the middle of them....I think it's quite good to be exposed to different teaching philosophies. I would consider that to be a good thing. (Ben)

the person who I think improved me most as a teacher, by a country mile, was my [university] tutor...you'd have a feedback session with him which would genuinely inspire you...cutting away all of the pointless things to talk about. Like, you don't need to say, "Well done. The kids were really quiet," no, it's pointless. He'll talk to you about, "What is the point of this [history] lesson and actually would having a slightly different enquiry question have brought out a sense of period much better?" (Ben)

if [my tutor] thought there was a misconception, she would query me on whether I had a misconception...."Okay, so what do you think this meant? What do you think that meant? Okay. You understand what it meant, but this is actually what you said." And I was like, "But that's the same thing." And then she would explain why it isn't the same thing. And it was literally having a Business mum who would explain literally everything step by step, which was invaluable. (Angela)

These extensive quotes highlight the differing conceptual frameworks for teaching, and expertise, which inform university and Teach First input. They hint at the great potential for learning in the nexus of the two partner organisations. Arguably, though, they also demonstrate that this potential is not yet being consistently realised.

Interaction of the university partner and employing school

Participants' stories similarly indicate aspects of both alignment and dissonance between university and school expectations as institutions, reflecting Cameron's (2014) finding of the importance for trainees of the relationship between the university tutor and mentor as individuals. Schools respond quite differently to the PGDE requirement that participants write four assignments based around planning, teaching and evaluating sequences of lessons. Mentors range from fully supporting participants and promoting their work to departmental colleagues, through disinterest, to actively discouraging some approaches that participants have encountered in university teaching. Although the data do not

suggest that conflict between university partners and employing schools is a significant issue across participants' stories, nonetheless where this does arise the resulting challenges can substantially impact learning, as Penny explains:

There's a lot of contradictions between the way my school does stuff and the way [university] does stuff. So, that's quite difficult because I'm trying to keep [mentor] happy and I'm trying to keep [tutor] happy and they're quite often quite different things.

In the end I just planned lessons in a way that was against [university]/Teach First/advice from other schools/people and that my mentor and school approved of. This concession made my life at school a lot easier.

By contrast, and unusually in my sample, Tim's experience reflects strong alignment between his three support roles that benefits his learning throughout the Training Programme:

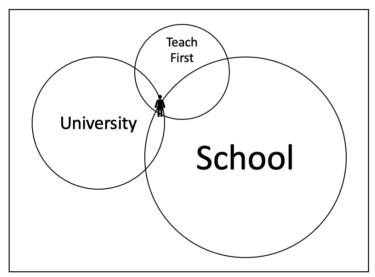
My mentor, my PDL and my [university] tutor all got on and had a really similar attitude to me....I always felt there was never any pressure on me...

Participants themselves operate at the intersection of the three partner organisations. Not only is their learning shaped by these institutions, and the individual mentors, tutors and DLs who represent each of them, but participants also bring their own biography to the relationships they are part of (Hardman & Carroll, 2011; P. Hodkinson et al., 2004). The variation in the learning experiences that are produced for each participant indicate how fundamentally relational this learning is, and how hard it proves to standardise learning experiences across the programme. The interactions of school, Teach First and university can be experienced by participants as broadly aligned or in tension, and this tension may be productive or destructive for learning. Negotiating and reconciling the norms of three institutions is clearly a material experience of the Training Programme, reminiscent of Furlong's (1996, p.47) 'separatist' partnership model in which 'there is partnership but not necessarily integration in the course; integration is something that the students themselves have to achieve'. Zeichner et al. (2015) raise similar concerns. Given how significant and varied this experience is for each participant, it is an area for further 100

consideration by programme designers. I return to this in theme five: *Travel broadens the mind* and in Chapter 5: *Discussion*.

I have amended figure 4.2, below, to account for the differential impact of each partner on participants and for the degree of alignment that narratives relate. In figure 4.3 the school is by far the dominant partner, as indicated by the size of each circle. The overlaps between circles represent the alignment between partners, with the Teach First/school relationship the most aligned of the three. That Teach First is more aligned with the school, typically, than is the university, yet has the least reported influence on trainees' development, poses a conundrum for Teach First as programme convenors, particularly in relation to overall programme consistency. In Chapter 5: *Discussion* I explore some of the likely consequences of this for trainees' learning, particularly in the context of recent changes to programme structure.

Figure 4.3 A revised illustration of the relative influence of each partner organisation and the degree of alignment between them



The school as the dominant influence on trainee learning

The school environments in which participants were placed vary significantly. Variation is evident across structural and cultural factors, which combine to shape practices and experiences of teacher learning. Following H. Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2004), the school environment as a community of practice in which participants are learning can be conceptualised both 'tightly' as the subject department or in relation to a wider set of influences across the school. Given the centrality of direct experience in schools to teacher learning across ITP

(Burn et al., 2017; Ellis, 2010), and the disproportionate influence of the school setting within the Training Programme, as above, understanding how school characteristics manifest for participants is key to addressing my research question. This section both illustrates the variation within experiences across the Training Programme and indicates that much of this variation appears driven by school and mentor priorities other than goals for trainee learning. Put bluntly, participants' learning seems often incidental to the main work of the school and to develop despite, rather than because of, the conditions encountered.

The school policy environment affects how teaching is understood as practice and opportunities available to participants to learn this practice. Six participants describe having full autonomy over day-to-day planning or being supported by their mentor when they want to teach something specific as part of professional development, while three others are tightly constrained by school policies around centrally-planned curricula or mentors' visions of what is suitable to teach. This extends to the planning of lesson sequences underpinning each PGDE assignment, designed to deepen pedagogical and curricular understanding and develop trainees as reflective, enquiring practitioners. While some participants received active support for this enquiry learning. Ben's mentor was 'not a barrier' to his assignment activities, 'quite supportive' in helping him to find lesson time for the teaching, but 'only interested in your essay up to the point that it's done and it's ticked off a list', and some participants faced active resistance. Hanna's lesson sequences had to be 'reduced to three, four lessons' alongside the planned curriculum which she still had to teach. Penny's mentor rejected the lessons she wanted to teach for one assignment, telling her "you are not doing that in my department" while Sasha's mentor would 'get guite touchy if I wanted to change stuff because it was his scheme of work and his lessons.' It is impossible to discern here the source and validity of mentors' resistance, but these examples do seem to reflect concerns expressed by Burn et al. (2017, p.105) around how little attention has been paid to school-based teacher educators' 'understanding of beginning teachers as learners and to the broader challenges of constructing a

curriculum for their school-based learning'. This can only be exacerbated where schools participate in ITP primarily because they need an immediate classroom teacher, not for longer-term or more altruistic goals.

Similar variation is evident in the control participants were given over other aspects of their professional learning. Angela's description of organising her contrasting school experience (CSE) placement reflects the dominance of logistics over her desire to attend a certain school and access particular learning experiences, while Penny's mentor 'basically just picked who I saw' for lesson observations. These participants are clear that this lack of agency, of capacity to determine actions taken that affect them, limits their learning. By contrast, some are afforded much more independence and choice in shaping their learning through, for example, being able to request supportive observations (Sasha) or in-class behaviour support (Tim) for classes they are struggling with, and in deciding who to observe and with what focus. Tim's experience here illustrates the unusual extent to which his colleagues were willing to support his requests:

There was a lesson I taught for an observation. I got some feedback from my mentor and my PDL. And I wanted to go and try it again because it didn't go very well, the lesson. But I was quite excited about the lesson. So I asked the other guy if I could teach our [shared] class.... When he taught them for their double, I was free. So, I would just go up most of the time, and I was like, "Can I take this lesson and try?" And he was like, "yeah". And then he gave me feedback.

Angela and Nick comment explicitly on their experiences of being afforded both too much and too little agency at times. Nick describes this as

a bit of a double-edged sword in that at points where I didn't want to be treated like a trainee, I kind of was...and I was not given a lot of agency about how to direct my own CPD and things that I needed to improve on....But then in other situations I wasn't treated like a trainee at all and...I've been called out for...missing a duty because I didn't know where to look, and talked to in a way that you would expect of a teacher who knows what they're doing and has been doing it for quite a while.

Only Tim relays any discussions with his mentor about how his agency might be managed, in terms of being able to ask for more or less frequent mentor meetings and to shape the nature of the meetings. For Tim 'it always felt like I was in control and gave me a lot of security that he's not going to try and catch me out or anything'.

The actions and expectations of departmental and wider-school colleagues beyond the mentor also shape participants' learning experiences. For example, some participants were placed in departments with rich cultures of collaboration and development around their practice. Tim's department exemplifies what is possible as a learning environment for a trainee teacher, even within a challenging wider school context:

It sounds really nerdy but we would go on a trip taking some year tens away...we didn't have to watch them at all...we just all sat down at a table, five of us, and started discussing the best way to represent division by fractions and how you explain it....everyone in there just had this opinion that they're good teachers, but how can we improve? We want to know more.

Outside of stuff that I went and asked for myself, there was no real training done by the school at all. I didn't struggle because my department was like one constant CPD session.

While some other participants also feel supported by their departments, many report circumstances arguably sub-optimal for trainee learning. This reflects Hodkinson and Hodkinson's findings that 'departmental cultures are significant in affecting teachers' learning' (2005, p.119). For example, Angela compares the incredibly supportive and collegial department at her contrasting school placement with her home department where 'your issue was your issue'. Matt bemoans the lack of co-planning in his department and Ben values his departmental colleagues for their 'gallows humour...when things aren't going well' and their pastoral advice but 'didn't learn much about teaching from them, except how not to teach'. Their 'visceral hatred of CPD' was 'just something to behold' alongside their 'massive cynicism towards everything', serving for Ben as a warning of habits not to adopt. Even where departmental conditions are tricky, though, participants are frequently able to draw on help and support from

wider networks across departments, underscoring the value of colleagues across the whole school.

An important factor for participants is how colleagues position trainees as learners/teachers. Some mentors' and departmental colleagues' approaches clearly reflect an understanding of trainees' learning needs. Tim and Nick, especially, discuss how practical help, extended discussions, developmental observation, opportunities to put ideas into practice and collaboration are all built into mentoring approaches. Sue explains how her head of department avoided the 'old-school' approaches of some school colleagues, characterised as 'you're a teacher, you have to teach what everyone else teaches', instead supporting her to undertake developmental enquiries and even asking colleagues to teach from her materials sometimes. This was both 'a big confidence booster' and meant that she could gather feedback from colleagues. For others, though, expectations of, and support available to them suggests that colleagues didn't have a clear vision of trainees as 'learner teachers', with needs distinct from those already qualified.

4.2.4. Summary of themes one to three

Themes one to three speak to the important ways in which the design of the Training Programme shapes participant learning, echoing findings of earlier studies of Teach First and Teach For America programmes (see p.26). At the top level the impacts identified are broadly negative in nature: asking trainee teachers to manage the complexity and workload of teaching nearly a full timetable, without much oversight, after a brief and partial period of preparation, is evidently stressful for participants themselves and limiting for their, and their pupils' learning. Furthermore, the burden of teacher development within the partnership model of ITP here is skewed towards school settings, which are oriented towards pupil, not teacher, learning (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005), and appear to be poorly prepared at a structural level to provide the learning experiences and support which literature (and the trainees themselves) indicate novice teachers need. As will become clearer throughout subsequent themes, positive learning experiences which do manifest – and it is clear that they are

present in some way for all trainees and substantially for a few – are unfortunately more readily attributable to serendipity and individuals than to anything more structural.

4.3. Learning to teach as professional learning

Themes four and five capture aspects of participants' talk about learning to teach as professional learning, in relation first to conceptions of teaching as professional practice (theme four) then the value of learning through crossing boundaries of professional communities (theme five). What becomes clear through these themes is how varied trainees' learning experiences are, particularly in their host schools, and how this variation impacts how trainees conceptualise and enact their role and the sorts of teachers they become.

4.3.1. Theme four: Moving towards complexity

This theme explores what participants' stories tell us about their emerging understandings of good teaching. I labelled the theme Moving towards complexity to reflect what I see in my data as a foundational evolution in how (most) participants conceptualise teaching: from an early assumption that good teaching is a stable goal, attainable and knowable once the teacher understands the 'best ways' to teach, to a more sophisticated awareness that teachers continually make choices about their practice which require active engagement, so that good teaching is an ongoing endeavour. Another way of expressing this is as a shift from positioning good teaching as a sort of external holy grail – 'out there somewhere, waiting to be known' – to something contextual and personal, a consequence of each individual teacher's decisions taken. This represents a broad move over time along a spectrum (see figure 4.4 below) from a technicist approach to teaching (the left end of the spectrum) towards a conception of teaching as professional endeavour (Winch et al., 2015) on the right, echoing Sfard's (1998) acquisition (initial) and participation (later) metaphors of learning and, after Jones and Ellis (2019), a shift from a simple to a complex view of teacher development. While I don't claim that this theme is unique to Teach First participants, it merits inclusion in my analysis

because of how central teacher conceptions are to their practice and to pupil learning. The theme illuminates aspects of the school conditions that appear to influence positioning along the spectrum, with implications for programme design.

Figure 4.4 A spectrum of conceptions of good teaching

Good teaching as a goal which is stable and identifiable. The practice of teaching as functional and reproducible.

Teacher learning as the acquisition and reproduction of 'best practice'

Good teaching as a contested concept. The practice of teaching as complex, contextual, intellectual work. Teacher learning as a journey that navigates multiple perspectives

Technicist teachers

In theme one I considered the early focus of participants on 'survival' and their need for easily transferable models, advice and direction that can be implemented directly in teaching. I surmise that this focus on addressing immediate problems, coupled with incredible workload and stress and the practice-oriented focus of SI, is connected to participants' early conceptualisation of good teaching largely to the left end of the spectrum. The highlighted excerpts (my emphases) in the quotes below indicate how some participants appear to understand teaching expertise early in their career as stable and reproducible, a set of actions that can be learned and copied if only somebody possessing this knowledge would reveal it in their words or actions. This is foundational for how the participants then orient their learning efforts, because it implies that their goal as a learner is to acquire and implement a previously-determined sequence or 'best practice' that exists separately from them and the context of their teaching.

I just would have loved to have those conversations, "You've taught this topic, you've taught cash-flow and profit, what is the best way to teach it?" (Angela)

to start off with I'd just be looking for, "Okay, how do they get the students in the room? What's their seating plan like? Have they done it alphabetically? Why have they got it in groups rather than rows?" Then after that it was more how are they teaching individual topics? What

structures have they put in place for differentiation? Can I copy this lesson? Could I do this lesson myself? (Nick)

you would go and see amazing teachers and have no idea quite how they got there. You almost wanted to go in and see someone mess up or see someone who wasn't quite so good so you could **see what steps were going to get you there**. (Penny)

At this early stage in their learning, the trainees are evidently committed to improving as teachers but their conception of good teaching limits their development. The quotes imply that they think of teaching in terms of actions that teachers take, rather than through the lens of pupil learning. Valued learning, therefore, is oriented towards action rather than, for example, exploring the decision-making that underpins teacher practice or evaluating pupil learning.

As well as being observed and receiving feedback on their teaching, participants gather ideas and 'tips' for practice from informal talk with colleagues in their home department and across the school. Some use Teach First and HEI-led days, networks and social media to exchange teaching ideas and resources with Teach First colleagues in other schools. At this stage of their development, participants' stories suggest that they are heavily focused on building their practical repertoire for teaching, driven by their broadly technicist conception of teaching.

While most participants move away from this conception during their training, some retain their initial ideas for much longer. When Matt talks about his current approach to teaching, two years in, he litters his discussion unquestioningly with TLAC references which apparently still frame his understanding of good teaching:

I try, well I do follow all of the TLAC steps and I do lots of 'I do, we do, you do'. I try to do lots of explicit modelling, I try to be very concise with my language...I do lots of the TLAC modelling...I do lots of the looking around the room to identify, and the short sharp [unclear] to get the kids' attention back to what they're doing. (Matt)

Perhaps more concerningly, because Matt does at least acknowledge that he has much still to learn, Sasha seems confident that she now understands what 108

it takes to be 'good' and that she has achieved this. Her comments towards the end of her second year imply a strongly technicist understanding of teaching that perhaps reflects her ambivalence about the subject she was allocated to teach:

I didn't even want to be a geography teacher in the first place. Because at Teach First they just dump you on a subject so if you're not really that fussed about being a teacher in that subject, it's really frustrating doing four essays focusing on being a geography teacher rather than being a generic teacher in the school and seeing a whole school improvement.

This year I think I've become good because I know what I'm doing. Like everything just kind of slotted into place. Your behaviour management's coming in on one side. My academic knowledge is coming in on the other. Your relationships with pupils have grown. You've observed a lot more. You've tried things.

This contrasts with most participants, though, who orient over time towards a more complex and contingent conception of good teaching and what it takes to be a good teacher. Ben is typical in observing that 'I'm very much still learning to teach. It's absolutely not a finished process at all....I think every teacher would say that and every reflective good practitioner would say the same thing'.

Emerging professionals

As their learning progresses across the training year, most participants' narratives increasingly reflect the right-hand end of figure 4.4. They speak thoughtfully and frequently of the complexities of good teaching, in line with my discussion on pp.44-45 around teachers as professionals, as their conceptual framework for teaching become increasingly sophisticated. For example, Ben acknowledges these complexities and the limitations of 'how to' guides in commenting on the initial value of TLAC as trainees learn to 'tread water and be adequate...but actually you don't really know how to teach, I don't think'. Elsewhere he likens the TLAC model to stabilisers, temporarily useful for novices but to be cast off as competence grows. Angela's explanation of the evolution of her thinking clearly illustrates her changing understanding of teaching:

I definitely think that has shifted as I've developed....starting off I just wanted someone to replicate, because it's easy to replicate someone, if I'm totally honest. But then I realised that it's not about whether I can replicate someone or not. I can go around my school acting like my headteacher, but that doesn't necessarily improve my students' outcomes....So, just take the initiative and go out there and see what has been done, read, engage with people who care about what has been done and what has proven to work and then try to adapt that to you as an individual and see if it works.

Nick, too, exemplifies how most participants come to understand teaching to be contextual. As with many of his peers, this was brought home to Nick through his contrasting school experience (CSE) placement. Having observed strong practice there, he returned to his school where he 'tried to replicate it and didn't successfully at all because it's a small school and all their lessons were taught like that and it was a wider school culture thing'.

Some learning experiences on the Training Programme are evidently valued specifically because they feed into participants' developing conceptual frameworks as teachers, even if this isn't the wording used. This could be in relation to participants' subject specialism, the local context of their school as a site of education, and/or the wider context of education as a domain of knowledge and practice. Alongside the clear desire for immediately applicable strategies to support teaching, some participants appreciate opportunities to deepen their understanding of how teachers think as well as how they act. This can be through feedback discussions following lesson observation or during informal talk with colleagues in their department or across the school. Participants want the opportunity to ask questions that surface underlying thinking such as 'why are you doing it that way, though? Why are you teaching that topic before that topic?' (Angela). Co-planning is similarly valued for the opportunity to access expert colleagues' pedagogical reasoning (Loughran, 2019), although this only works if these experts have the desire and the skill to make explicit and share their expertise. While university tutors are adept at the 'second order' practices of teacher education (Murray & Male, 2005), teachers are less likely to have developed specific skills of articulating their expertise for

the benefit of novice teachers, or indeed the time that co-planning demands (Burn, 1997):

one of the most fundamental things was I went to [the university] and spent two and a half hours with [my tutor] and it was amazing, just to see how she was like, "okay well what's this topic, okay..." ...we just sat and we just planned a scheme of work and it was amazing. (Penny)

we tried to do some co-planning but...within the maths department, we manage to keep this handful of people who've been there quite a few years, so if you turned around and said to one of them 'go and teach a lesson on simultaneous equations' he wouldn't even need to think about it. He would go straight into the classroom and he would say 'OK...open this textbook at a certain page' because he uses a textbook for his worksheets, and he would start teaching it....I haven't got the experience to do that...when we were doing co-planning we weren't ever really co-planning because they had it all up here anyway. (Matt)

In relation to teaching as intellectual practice, participants generally recognise (sometimes more so in hindsight) the conceptual power and value of HEI-led taught content and scholarly perspectives on teaching. There is broad agreement that university teaching within the Training Programme is of high quality, and that they would like more of it, but timing is key: for some the conceptual, intellectual pitch of the content goes beyond their early capabilities or needs. Ben finds that some of the topics addressed during SI 'only really start to make sense to me now...I've only really started to understand it much later on, or begin to understand it', while Sue finds university sessions 'very high-brow...scary' early on in the year. Her explicit rejection of the academic elements of her ITP as 'quite a big distraction when I was trying to learn how to teach' reminds us that there is perhaps little space for the more intellectual aspects of learning for participants while they are focusing on survival.

A few participants were lucky to be embedded within local teams that were clearly rich learning environments in themselves. Nick's experience is exceptional for the quality of departmental discussion about teaching and learning to which he is exposed:

literally my day would be I'd sit down, I'd talk to [my HOD] about maths. I'd keep talking to [my HOD] about maths and teaching or politics or whatever but it's ultimately in that sphere of thinking about education....Then I'd talk to [my mentor] about it and he would say, "Well actually, to be honest, at my old school we did it like this," or even, "I taught at a school before that and we did it like this and I actually think that that works better." But then he would also be like, "Actually, I thought that Inquiry was going to be really bad and it's really good." ... They just had this way of negotiating it....I think at points, [my mentor] would be like, "I find that Inquiry teaching itself might be restrictive," and [my HOD] would say, "Actually, [my mentor] maybe does too much direct instruction," or whatever. But I personally think that me being in the middle of that was really helpful.

Through this exposure, the HOD and mentor make visible their expert thinking, 'deprivatising' their pedagogical decision-making (Kriewaldt & Turnidge, 2013, p.105). Nick learns that teaching is contested and that strong teachers negotiate ideas about teaching throughout their career. It seems quite natural to draw a connection between exposure to this sort of discussion and the development of a richer, more plural understanding of teaching for novice teachers; it is regrettable that, in this research at least, Nick's experience is the exception, not the norm.

The data within this theme demonstrate how evolving beliefs about good teaching vary across participants and their learning environments. Although the majority have an impressive sensitivity to the complexities of good teaching by the time of interview, there are nonetheless some for whom teaching continues to be experienced as, arguably, over-simplified. Participants' beliefs are shaped by multiple factors: their experiences in their own school and short CSE placement, personal reflection, engagement with research, input from the university and Teach First and from observing colleagues. This theme makes clear how the overall impact of the sum of experiences for each participant varies, and this manifests in how each participant comes to conceptualise good teaching, as practice and as a goal for their learning.

No ITP offer, realistically, can expect to provide consistent experiences for all trainees, specifically because of the contextualised nature of professional learning. It is perhaps more appropriate to aim for coherent, commensurate 112

experiences of comparable value in terms of access to learning experiences, so that all ITP graduates are equally well-prepared as an outcome of their learning. This coherence would require that all partners commit to a shared 'vision of teachers and teaching' and 'values about what and how teachers and students should learn' (Hammerness, 2013, pp.400-401) - core features of powerful teacher education programmes. The data in this theme suggest that existing variation in school-based learning experiences on the Training Programme, and in the visions and values underpinning these experiences, is contributing to differences across trainees that produce teachers with a range of conceptions of learning. While we might celebrate the value of 'letting many flowers grow' rather than producing 'cookie cutter' teachers, what is concerning here is that some participants, albeit the minority, appear not only to have different understandings to others but to be thinking less rigorously about their practice at all. The school as a learning environment is evidently at least partly responsible for this, because participants experience very different opportunities to learn how to think as well as act like a teacher. My findings demonstrate that being co-located with expert teachers isn't enough to help trainees develop as professionals themselves unless those experts have the skills and inclination to engage in particular ways with the trainees. Angela captures this powerfully in her desire to be 'brought into the conversation' by her colleagues:

I think people forget that the whole point of a teacher community, in my eyes, is to sharpen each other, is to help each other grow within the teacher community....There isn't this sense of "we help each other grow". It's just "we teach kids". But you can learn so much. You always never realise the expertise that another teacher has unless someone brings you into the conversation.

I extend questions around the development of criticality and good judgement in new teachers, and around schools as learning communities, further in Chapter 5: *Discussion*.

4.3.2. Theme five: Travel broadens the mind

This theme is about how participants access educational approaches and ideas beyond their immediate community that come to inform their professional

judgement and decision-making. On p.57 I raised concerns that school-led ITP may prepare teachers for practice in their local contexts rather than for the wider profession (Brooks, 2017; Davies et al., 2016; Hordern, 2015), connecting this to Evetts' (2009) distinction between occupational and organisational professionalism. In parallel with theme four's characterisation of participants' broad move towards conceptualising teaching as complex work, theme five illuminates a key means by which participants come to understand and exercise their professional autonomy in occupational, rather than organisational, terms. The theme is labelled *Travel broadens the mind* to reflect the powerful conceptual learning that can take place when participants cross boundaries between communities of practice. It develops threads from theme three: *Dissonant partnership* in considering how learning is fostered at the intersections of the three partner communities of practice in the Training Programme, as well as recognising a range of other notional communities and boundaries, largely informal, which shape participants' learning.

To summarise my discussion on pp.38-40, boundaries delineate practice within communities, and what is within a boundary 'is constitutive of what counts as expertise or as central participation' (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011, p.132). Crossing boundaries entails 'moving out of your own familiar patch to learn by engaging in a different environment' (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005, p.123), and through exposure to the practice of different communities, one might come to understand one's own community and practice afresh. Teach First trainees belong to the formal communities of their school, their Teach First (crosssubject) cohort and their university (subject) cohort. They also belong to other, less formally defined communities such as their subject department, their year team and the cohort of all new teachers in their school. They temporarily join the community of another school during their CSE placement. Participants traverse the boundaries of these communities throughout their ITP, sometimes as a formal part of the Training Programme (e.g. university and Teach First training days; CSE) and sometimes informally (e.g. social networks with peers; liaising with other school departments). As this theme demonstrates, experiences of crossing boundaries appear fundamental to how participants

develop as occupational rather than organisational professionals because this is how they come to understand that their employing school embodies one of many perspectives on how to teach rather than *the* perspective that all teachers share.

A strong part of this theme is the value of personal or vicarious experience of other school contexts in helping participants to make sense of education at an occupational level and reflect on the educational beliefs and choices which they may otherwise take for granted. This physical or virtual boundary crossing can come through the CSE placement or talking to Training Programme peers about the details of their own employing schools. For Tim, conversations with other maths trainees about contrasting approaches used in their departments are a strategy for understanding and resolving problems faced in his own classroom. Angela finds that 'coming out of your school context [during CSE] to see other kids in another context and how they deal with them was really refreshing to understand that there is choice out there'.

The need to learn about choices they can make resonates for others too. Janis describes how 'sometimes it can be hard to imagine other ways of structuring lessons, other different types of activities' so found CSE 'good just to see a different way of doing things'. And Sue is clear about the need to acknowledge multiple perspectives, having interpreted Teach First's commitment to the TLAC pedagogy to be the *only* pedagogy until she joined her school:

Teach First, they very much teach you their pedagogy...they sort of teach it to you as if this is how you teach, objectively, and, well it's not really an objective thing, everyone's going to have a different idea about what makes a good teacher. I think it was a very positive experience and I found that their approach has worked, but that doesn't mean that you can't do it another way....I thought Teach Like A Champion is the only way to teach. Until I arrived.

More locally, observing across his own school helps Tim to understand his tutor group's experience of the school and moderates his expectations of them (and of himself) through disrupting his existing conception of what school life is like for his pupils:

I tried in my frees to go off and sit in on some of their lessons where they were causing issues....It gives you a better sense of...what the kids come into your lesson having experienced. And sometimes it's very much like, "wow. They've had, like, two or three cover lessons today. That lesson was manic." So, when they come into my lesson and they're not perfect, and I'm like, "Well, what am I doing wrong?" sometimes you've got to realise that, you know, what else is going on out there? You're only providing one, maximum two lessons a day out of their 6 or 7 lessons. You can't change everything for their experience of the day...you can make it better. But you can't change everything. So, it was quite nice going around and seeing what else is going on and realising that they are struggling around the school and that sadly is just a reality of it.

Conversely, Lottie's observations encouraged her to expect more: 'some of the 'big hitters' from my class, in [another teacher's] lesson, they were just sat in silence doing maths work for 50 minutes. "What! They can barely write a sentence in my lesson."

Some participants were actively supported by their mentors to engage in this sort of boundary crossing, for example by brokering connections with other departments in the school. Others had to drive this themselves, perhaps missing out on or taking longer to access these important learning opportunities. Some boundary crossing can act to compensate for deficiencies in participants' immediate communities, such as where Ben, placed in 'I don't think a particularly inspirational or great department' with a mentor who is 'lovely, really supportive, frankly not a good [subject] teacher', uses his in-school network to connect with Nick's mentor in a different department and discuss education in a way not accessible in his own team. Despite the different subjects, Ben is clear about the impact of this on his learning: 'Will it improve my classroom practice? No. But will it improve the way I think about teaching? Yes, I think it will'.

The substance of this theme illustrates the many communities of which participants are members and the conceptual development that arises through crossing boundaries between communities. Not only do participants acquire resources and ideas for practice, but they come to think differently about teaching as practice and their roles as teachers. As Akkerman and Bruining (2016, p.246) explain, '[a] person comes to look differently at his or her own

participatory position because of the other participatory position. This is especially transformational in cases where the dominant community models poor or restricted practice, since boundary crossing can engage participants with ideas and ways of thinking that would otherwise be unknown. Approaches which foster this important form of learning include supporting trainee teachers to build networks across different communities within and beyond their school, to engage with these communities and to reflect on and learn from the experiences which arise.

4.3.3. Summary of themes four and five

Themes four and five, together, illustrate how participants understand learning to teach as professional learning. They demonstrate that for trainees on the Training Programme learning is, in essence, as for any novice teacher: they come to engage more deeply over time with different perspectives on what it means to teach well, and they learn through participation in, and movement across boundaries between, multiple communities of practice. However, the themes also surface the ways that this learning is shaped by the heavy influence of the employing school. This can limit learning where some trainees are not exposed to such rich and/or such frequent opportunities to learn as others, potentially restricting teacher development within a more technicist and definite, rather than complex and contingent, framework for practice.

4.4. Teacher learning as relational and personal

Themes six and seven are the final themes in my analysis. They convey the nature of participants' learning as relational (theme six) and personal (theme seven). As with themes four and five, these themes are evident in literature on ITP across training pathways but their expression in my participants' stories foregrounds the particular influence of the Training Programme and the conditions in employing schools which shape participants' experiences.

4.4.1. Theme six: It takes a village to raise a teacher

This theme is about the multiple relationships that underpin participants' learning. Drawing on the proverb *it takes a village to raise a child,* and following similar uses in teacher learning literature (e.g. Crisp et al., 2017; Milton et al., 2020) I labelled the theme *It takes a village to raise a teacher* to reflect the fact that no one person can likely meet a trainee's many needs. While trainees have an allocated mentor in school, mentors are part of a much wider network of relationships that nurtures the trainee as they complete ITP and meets the professional, personal and social needs that foster their holistic development. Reinforcing Milton et al.'s critique of school approaches that overly 'privatise' mentoring, rather than involving the wider school community in supporting new teachers, this theme demonstrates the range and number of individuals from whom my participants learned.

All participants relate significant relationships that impacted their experience of learning to teach. These relationships are with six main groups of individuals, both formal 'support roles' - school mentor, Teach First Development Lead (DL), university tutor - and informal sources of support (what Cameron (2014, p.62) terms 'personal allies') - other qualified teachers in school, other trainee teachers in the school and Teach First subject cohort peers in other schools. Appendix 10 summarises participants' relationships with each of the six groups and demonstrates that each participant has at least two 'positive' or 'very positive' relationships on which they draw. For Tim and Nick, all relationships are positive, while Penny and Lottie have only two positive relationships each plus others that are tricky (both) or even negative (Penny). Relationships with other teachers in the school, especially other trainee teachers, are almost entirely positive or very positive. This underscores the importance of local peer support networks and the challenges associated with placing lone trainees in schools without immediate access to peers.

The qualities of participants' positive relationships reflect the power dynamics at play in ITP as well as the degree to which teaching draws on and influences trainees' identity. Where participants feel comfortable with peers and support roles, they can expose concerns and vulnerabilities, inviting support and help.

Absent of this comfort, they either 'put on a show' that they are coping well or protect themselves by shutting down from the relationship, mirroring strategies of 'fabrication' identified by Hobson and McIntyre (2013) in NQTs concealing perceived shortcomings from significant others in the school. Angela contrasts her willingness to be 'real' with her DL and tutor with a form of acting in front of school colleagues:

With [my tutor and DL] it was more so, "I want you to see me as I am so I can get some really honest feedback." I didn't really feel the need to pretend. I never even used to tell my students [they] would be coming in because I don't even want them to act because there's a stranger. How you would act when no one's in the room is how I want you to act because if there's issues...if my class is disruptive...I want them to observe it...I didn't feel like I had to pretend because I knew they cared about me being a better teacher. And even if something wasn't good, they weren't going to be judgemental about it. But...my school's performance-driven....I definitely fell into the, you know, look like you have it all together, which is part of the reason why I didn't complain or make noise as much as other trainees because there is this pressure to kind of look like you have it all together. But with [my DL and tutor], yeah, I didn't really care to impress.

Hanna, meanwhile, perceived that her tutor was focused on 'grading us' rather than being developmental, with the result that 'it kind of led to me really dreading when they came to school and not really being able to take on what they said because I had to put on this defensive kind of coat of... "when the tutor comes in just care about not being completely distraught afterwards". It is the quality of the relationship with individuals that matters more than their role.

Factors fostering a positive, open relationship with support roles include feeling that the person recognises that you are a novice/learner, trust that they have your best interests at heart and liking/respecting the person as an individual. The absence of these conditions seems to underpin the more difficult relationships reported.

Participants gain in multiple ways from their positive relationships. Some individuals support participants' learning through, for example, making explicit and visible their tacit expertise, giving advice, shaping participants'

understanding of practice or acting as a role model. The ability to ask 'why isn't this working?' appears particularly helpful. Although this might be thought of as predominantly the responsibility of formal support roles, the data make clear that participants benefit hugely in this way from informal relationships with peers in and beyond the school too. Participants also value relationships through which they are offered strategies for improving their practice, including 'tips' and practical resources. There is obvious cross-over here with data in themes one: Into the lion's den and four: Moving towards complexity around valued learning experiences. This theme highlights the need for these learning experiences to be underpinned by positive relationships of trust and respect to render to participants their full value.

Positive relationships with informal sources of support in school and across the Training Programme appear particularly important in the provision of emotional support, although this is also a feature of some relationships with support roles. A strong message here is the importance of having a relationship with others who 'know what you're going through' or even who 'understand[s] the pain' (Penny). Notions of 'being in the same boat' and needing to 'let off steam' clearly indicate the emotional toll of completing the programme.

Participants value positive relationships that help them to connect with local and professional teacher communities. For example, helping them to navigate the school as an institution, understand expectations, build relationships with colleagues and access support. Beyond the immediate school community, significant relationships with Teach First peers in other schools are an important form of boundary crossing, enriching participants' understanding of teaching as a profession by expanding their awareness of variation in practice across schools.

Logistics affect the forming of supportive relationships for participants because they cannot connect with people they don't encounter. Being located near to somebody in the school building encourages relationship development; being physically separated by building layout can limit peer relationships. Participants appear to make connections more frequently with colleagues who are easily accessible and not to move equally around the whole school estate. Hence, the

physical characteristics of school buildings are important for teacher learning because it matters where trainees' classrooms and departmental bases are, and the extent to which they are likely to encounter others in the course of their work.

Technology supports informal relationship-building for some participants who use Facebook and WhatsApp for communication. Face-to-face university and Teach First teaching days are also cited as important opportunities to connect with Teach First peers for emotional support and the sharing of resources and information about other schools.

Theme six emphasises the relational nature of learning to teach and the multiple ways in which relationships shape trainee learning. It highlights the factors that help to nurture strong, productive relationships, both intrinsic qualities of the relationship itself (trust, empathy, expertise, care) and the more practical concerns of physical or virtual access to individuals.

4.4.2. Theme seven: Hard shell; soft centre

This final theme is about what participants' stories communicate about the participants themselves, as individuals undertaking ITP. In theme two: *No time to breathe and think*, I introduced the challenge of maintaining an identity as a learner where circumstances foreground the 'teacher' identity of trainees, and trainees' response in putting on a show, a performance, that they are coping well. I have labelled theme seven *Hard shell; soft centre* in recognition of what appears to be happening beneath this tough exterior, for participants who are often affected deeply by their experiences of ITP.

This theme reflects participants' understanding, expectations and presentations of themselves as teachers, especially how they can feel vulnerable, anxious and overwhelmed throughout the training year. These feelings are mitigated where participants perceive that others 'have their back', or receive reassuring feedback about their progress. This is especially important where they cannot yet self-assess accurately and are relying on external validation or holding themselves to unrealistic personal expectations based on unhelpful early beliefs about teaching. Here, needs are met where participants hear from experienced

colleagues who still struggle with classroom management, receive positive lesson observation feedback and feel supported by colleagues. Sue reports how 'nice and comforting' it was to learn that her mentor had also cried in front of students, for example. Sasha is typical of many participants in commenting that lesson observation feedback could 'literally make your week' if positive, while 'if you have a terrible one, it's just awful'. Participants also gain from conversations with peers during which they share 'war stories', 'commiserate' (Janis) or have 'bitching sessions' (Matt), and where they come to understand that they are not alone in their struggles.

In an echo of theme one: *Into the lion's den,* most participants report feeling overwhelmed at some stage, to the extent that this limits their learning. In early lesson observations, for example, Sue 'was so overwhelmed that it didn't really matter what [observers] said because I was still trying to figure everything out'. Penny's workload while on a support plan put her

under such pressure to get so much done in such a short amount of time, that actually all I was doing was going through the motions and getting everything done, but not necessarily understanding why or how...I just had this constant fear in the back of my mind.

It is clear from their stories that many participants question their own competence during their training and value experiences which build confidence. Observing, within and beyond the employing school, and being observed are key to this, as is informal talk with colleagues. Participants typically allude to having little confidence initially and are reassured by benchmarking their own practice to colleagues. For Sasha, 'you feel more on a par with the profession' when 'you observe other teachers and you realise that actually you're doing the same as them and you're getting the same results.' Penny finds it 'quite nice...seeing other teachers of, like, five years also not being able to handle your class either, so you were like, "Oh okay, I won't beat myself up too much".

Teaching at a different school during the CSE is transformative for some, boosting confidence and acting as a 'fresh start' where they are judged without preconception:

That helped me so much. I think I would have quit if I didn't do that. Because it gave me confidence in myself again. (Penny)

I worked really hard on all the behaviour techniques...I never thought that I was very good at it, but then I went to the second placement school...and actually, interestingly there, that was the thing they praised the most....So that was...quite a confidence boost... (Janis)

The power of feedback on participants' teaching is especially sensitive to the mode of delivery. Personal relationships and perceived intentions matter. Hanna explains that it is easiest to take challenging feedback in person, rather than by email, and when it is said 'with love and is actually said because they want you to become better and not because they just think you're failing'. Janis elaborates further on the qualities of powerful feedback, demonstrating the importance of *how* as well as *what* is delivered:

Janis: [My tutor]...was just like, just font of all knowledge and just really, really supportive and always had good ideas and...I think he had just a really good balance of telling you things that you'd done well, that sounded genuine and not just that kind of, "oh, you had a lovely presence", or whatever, that really vague kind of positive feedback which is just like, "oh, fine". He said "oh, you know, this is really good, this is really good", but also then gave me, you know, really tough criticisms of the things that weren't working but never in a way that made me feel like there was no hope for me becoming a good teacher.

Interviewer: Can you pinpoint what it was that created that feeling that you did have hope of being a good teacher?

Janis: I think it was because the positive feedback was genuine and it was something I could relate to and...it was to do with areas that I felt were important, that I felt like he had a good opinion of me and so it meant that I didn't mind when he was critical of things that didn't work and things that needed to change.

Despite the appreciative focus of my interviews, some participants related experiences where receiving observation feedback was either not helpful or actively negative, indicating how sensitive the process can be. Although Sasha recognised that having targets to work towards can be 'quite good sometimes' she nonetheless just wanted to 'get out of there' at the end of discussions about

her teaching so would 'agree to anything' during target-setting as 'it quite often just felt like they were something that we were just being given because we had to be given three targets at the end of it'. Janis sometimes felt that feedback received was 'quite vague and not completely specific', much preferring times 'where people were able to give me really precise examples and then ideas for how I could do things differently.' For Hanna and Penny, the experience of receiving feedback could be actively unpleasant, with Penny describing how her mentor 'would basically just tear me apart for an hour' and Hanna relating how she would sometimes be 'distraught' after receiving feedback that was 'very negative', perhaps because of having been 'written up quickly during the lesson and then handed over' without any personal discussion of the feedback.

The detail here and across this theme serves as a reminder that, despite often choosing to project a confident persona, new participants may well be managing strong, difficult, emotions and feel far more fragile than they appear. Matt's advice to other trainees, that '[t]here is no shame in asking for help' reminds us that new teachers don't necessarily enter the profession with the confidence and personal tools to reach out when they are struggling. Mentors might do well to heed, metaphorically if not physically, Matt's suggestion to seasoned teachers to 'reach out, find a trainee and help them. Hug a trainee, or something like that'.

4.4.3. Summary of themes six and seven

Themes six and seven highlight the importance for those involved in the Training Programme of understanding the experience of being a trainee and the range of needs that underpin their development. Learning to teach, to become a teacher, engages trainees' emotions and sense of identity as well as their practical and intellectual development. It is hugely personal and deeply embedded in the relationships that support learning. The data in themes six and seven show just how challenging it can be to undertake ITP through the Training Programme, arguably more so than learning on other ITP routes, and the significance of the quality of formal and informal support on offer for trainees, personally and professionally.

4.5. Summary

The seven themes in this analysis capture how I have interpreted my participants' stories through a process of qualitative thematic analysis to understand more about their experiences of learning to teach. Together, the themes illuminate how the nature of the Training Programme as salaried ITP shapes trainees' learning within schools. From an appreciative stance, details within the themes signpost the conditions in schools which participants experience as most positive and powerful in supporting this learning. In the next chapter, *Discussion*, I explore important insights and questions about trainees' learning in schools that arise from my analysis, returning to key concepts that frame this research as a means of deepening understanding.

I also consider in the next chapter important questions arising from my analysis about the nature of the Training Programme itself as a pathway of ITP. Although this goes beyond my research question, the focus of my research is to understand and, ultimately, help to improve ITP. I therefore feel an ethical imperative that I address within my discussion and conclusions this critical aspect of my data which has arisen through the process of analysis. I present three 'core tensions' which I identify as running across the analytical themes I have discussed, the resolution of which I judge to be fundamental to any serious attempts to improve trainees' experiences.

5.1. Introduction

'Statistics tell us the system's experience of the individual, whereas stories tell us the individual's experience of the system...' (Sumner, 2009)

My methodology was designed so that I might 'tell a rich story' (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.56) arising from my data, illuminating my participants' experiences of the 'system' of the Training Programme, with an appreciative stance. In my analysis I explored seven themes within participants' stories, organised into three analytic categories which illuminate the personal and relational nature of trainees' learning and the impact of the design of the Training Programme on both trainee learning within their employing schools and how trainees conceptualise this learning. In this chapter I consider important, provocative issues for teacher education surfaced by these themes, to address my research question which asks: What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher preparation, as experienced by newly qualified teachers?

Although my goal is to tell the most plausible, compelling story of my research (Braun & Clarke, 2022), I actually see two ways to 'read' the data I have presented. The first, aligning comfortably with my appreciative methodology, is a heart-warming story of trainee teachers in incredibly challenging circumstances, *most of whom*, nonetheless, succeed (to varying extents) because they can find *sufficient* support from somewhere within their training partnership to keep them going and develop them into recognisable, quite functional teachers. In telling this story, I can identify appreciative 'stories of success' in the operation of the Training Programme, as I have done in Chapter 4: *Analysis*, and amplify these as a means of proposing incremental improvements to the existing offer. I've called this the 'heroic programme' story, since it foregrounds the Training Programme as an ITP pathway that meets trainees' needs under tricky conditions.

The second story I read, which I find much more uncomfortable as an appreciative researcher, is a story of trainee teachers in incredibly challenging circumstances whose learning is constrained, perhaps even damaged, by the school contexts in which they're learning, who are *kept going* by fragmented access to support and their own tenacity and resilience. In this version, inschool support does sometimes prove to be truly developmental rather than functional, but this is serendipitous rather than 'baked in' to programme planning. The baseline offer of the Training Programme in this story is letting down many trainees because what, and how, they are learning are hugely problematic both for their long-term professional development and for their pupils. I've called this the 'heroic trainee' story, foregrounding the individuals who navigate the difficult circumstances in which they are placed.

The 'heroic programme' and 'heroic trainee' stories co-exist in the sense that each can be interpreted from my data; each reflects a perspective within the wider ITP field in England. But these stories co-exist in tension, and which is 'true' for any one reader reflects their wider stance in relation to teaching and teacher learning: how they conceptualise good teaching, teacher learning and the skills and opportunities needed by teacher educators to leverage this learning. Or, to use the concepts introduced on p.50, whether they adopt a simple or a complex view of teaching and teacher development (Jones & Ellis, 2019).

I believe the second story – of the 'heroic trainee' – is the most plausible reading of my data. Although I set out to look for, and found, 'stories of success' in participants' experiences, I also identified aspects of these experiences which raise serious concerns about the school environments in which trainees are learning within the overall construction of the Training Programme. An appreciative stance does not preclude engaging with difficult findings like these, as I set out in the discussion below. What it has meant for me, though, is that these findings are framed within my wider commitment to improving trainees' learning conditions. They are an important part of my overall research because, in better understanding the obstacles that exist for trainees in the present, I am

better placed to understand, amplify and recommend ways to build on for the future, that which seems to be effective in supporting their learning.

5.2. **Discussion of findings**

The first part of this discussion considers participants' overall experiences of learning to teach while employed, drawing predominantly on teacher learning literature. I then explore insights of situated learning theory as a conceptual framework for examining these experiences and the structure of the Training Programme itself, and I conclude with a discussion of the constitutive nature of schools as contexts for trainees' learning. Each interconnected line of discussion offers a perspective on the heroic trainee / heroic programme narratives I have proposed, as well as a lens through which to consider my research question.

The second part of the discussion introduces what I identify as three 'core tensions' running across my analytical themes and underpinning the Training Programme, which shape trainees' learning in schools, the presence of which ultimately foreground the heroic trainee within my research 'story'. These core tensions form the basis of recommendations in Chapter 6: Reflections and recommendations for developing the Training Programme to enhance learning for future trainees.

5.2.1. The experience of learning to teach through the Training **Programme**

The first insight from my analysis is that my participants' identified professional learning needs essentially mirror those summarised in Chapter 2: Literature review as aligned with a complex view of teaching and teacher development. What trainees want from their ITP, according to my data, is not unique to the Training Programme. Participants revealed their desire for learning activities which both model good practice and help them access the thought processes underpinning choices made by expert teachers, helping them to develop their practical repertoire alongside their conceptual framework for practice. They value time for reflection and opportunities to try out and evaluate new ideas. 128

They want to work with others, in communities rather than isolation, and they (mostly) recognise the importance of theoretical perspectives in extending their practice. What appears key, then, for Teach First trainees, is how, and how much, these opportunities are made available (or not) through the particular affordances (and constraints) of their employing school as a learning environment.

Themes one to three in my analysis – Into the lion's den: No time to breathe and think: Dissonant partnership – characterise the Training Programme as intensely busy, stressful and at times overwhelming. Beyond the ethical implications of routinely exposing trainees to such pressure, this directly and negatively affects opportunities for trainees to access the learning they desire, restricting time for observing others, being observed, engaging with literature, speaking to colleagues about their pedagogical reasoning and reflecting on practice. Mentors and colleagues appear equally busy and often not easily available to engage in the developmental conversations trainees seek, to observe or be observed. Angela's desire to be 'brought into the conversation' (p.113) strikes me as especially poignant, a reminder that developing criticality and good judgement in teaching requires active engagement with experienced colleagues. It is significant that supernumerary, fee-paid trainees can potentially observe or be observed by the class teacher in every lesson they encounter. Teach First trainees, as unqualified teachers, are alone with their classes from the outset. With immediate huge responsibility and high workload, their reliance on Teach First-endorsed TLAC strategies and adoption of technicist, compensatory approaches (p.92) is understandable but, nonetheless, potentially detrimental for long-term learning. In disregarding the complexity and contingency of teaching and learning, trainees run 'the risk of assumed universalism...that an initiative that works in 'x' place for 'y' staff will therefore work in all other teaching places for all other teacher staff' (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005, p.122). This raises the likelihood of embedding an impoverished conception of good teaching, especially if those who are copied are of limited expertise themselves (Ellis, 2010), or indeed such experts that much of what makes them successful is not immediately observable to be

reproduced. Importantly, this strategy is born of necessity, of the need to survive the 'lion's den', rather than a coherently designed approach to teacher learning. In fact, as theme three: *Dissonant partnership* makes clear, trainees' experience of partnership on the Training Programme is frequently disjointed, which for some leads to confusion or strategic game playing that holds back their development. This is an early manifestation of the 'trainee as hero' story, in which the trainee is largely left to integrate disparate elements of the Training Programme (Furlong, 1996; Zeichner et al., 2015), in difficult circumstances which often undermine coherent professional learning.

A perhaps surprising finding is how trainees move on from early technicism to a much more nuanced understanding of teaching, as theme one indicates that most do (p.106), despite experiencing constraints on their learning. Tim and Nick's exceptional mentors and colleagues made available the learning experiences that each needed, including supporting them to try out new ideas in practice. But these were experienced teachers, familiar with and committed to the mentoring role. They contrast starkly with others, with less teaching and mentoring experience, sometimes balancing mentoring with leadership roles and/or given, rather than having chosen, this responsibility. My analysis suggests that, typically, these teachers are not well enough equipped to provide the mentoring support trainees need. The evolution of many participants' conceptions of teaching appears to be fostered not by local experiences in their employing school, but through wider experiences of working with their university tutor, engaging with literature, and formal and informal boundary crossing. This serves to emphasise the limitations of restricted understandings of apprenticeship learning, such as then Education Secretary Gove's (2010) conviction that new teachers learn best in the classroom, at the knee of expert teacher colleagues - firstly because the Training Programme structure effectively separates trainees from many of the experts around them in school for much of the day, and secondly because teaching expertise is manifestly different to mentoring expertise (Burn et al., 2017; Daly et al., 2023). My findings demonstrate that there is no reason to assume that possession of the former confers the latter, not least because many teachers are not well

rehearsed in making explicit their tacit knowledge or pedagogical reasoning (Loughran, 2019). While some teachers have the personal and professional capacity to provide the opportunities needed, participants' accounts suggest that encounters with these individuals are not the norm. For schools to serve as effective learning environments for trainees employed within them, they need to resolve these limitations. But schools are set up for pupil learning, not new teacher learning, and may well lack the knowledge, resources or motivation to make the changes required, especially without additional support and resourcing.

None of this is to suggest that variation in mentoring quality and provision is unique to the Training Programme, but the nature of the programme means that it experiences a far greater turnover of partner schools and mentors, year on year, than other programmes. Mentor quality variation is an issue that has been raised in multiple reviews of Teach First provision (Cameron, 2014; Hardman & Carroll, 2011; Hutchings et al., 2006; Ofsted, 2008, 2011), yet this challenge persists in my data. For participants who experience the weakest mentoring, such as Matt and Penny, the reliance of the programme on mentoring as the main support for trainee learning and the poor quality of this mentoring has clearly impacted their progression substantially and, I suggest, unacceptably. My findings here amplify Burn et al.'s (2017) concerns that too little attention has been paid to school-based teacher educators' understanding and practice of teacher education, especially given the 'complexity of both the knowledge base and the role of mentors' (Langdon, 2017, p.543).

Even with good local access to expert mentoring and other learning opportunities, trainees benefit from wider contact and experience beyond their employing school. University teacher educators have both the expertise and the time to work with trainees in a way that evidently extends their school-based experiences and challenges their thinking, as demonstrated in theme four:

Moving towards complexity. Physical and metaphorical boundary crossing is clearly impactful, as per theme five: Travel broadens the mind, exposing trainees to ideas and practice not available in their employing school, extending their practical repertoire and stimulating conceptual change, including through

intrapersonal reflection (Akkerman & Bruining, 2016), as they come to question beliefs and practices which they might otherwise take for granted. A key characteristic of the school context for trainee learning, therefore, is how it is connected to other elements in their learning, affording both access to these elements and opportunities for trainees to put into practice what they have learned. Given the importance of these experiences for learning, it is concerning that several trainees described weak connections including CSE placements that suited the school rather than the trainee, and mentors disinterested in or even opposed to trainees bringing into their practice ideas developed elsewhere.

This first line of discussion reinforces the heroic trainee narrative in the extent to which it demonstrates gaps and inconsistencies in the programme design regarding learning opportunities in schools that both participants and literature identify as supporting development. For the most part trainees do come to understand that their professional learning is complex, and they identify the range of experiences that can help them to address this complexity. It is unfortunate that these experiences are not easy for Teach First to mandate within the school-based element of the Training Programme, where school needs have such priority and where there is limited control over who becomes mentors.

5.2.2. Insights of situated learning theory as a conceptual framework for analysing ITP

Situated learning theory and the concepts of community of practice (CoP) and legitimate peripheral participation have been powerful lenses through which to address my research question. This builds on previous work using situated learning theory to explore HEI-led ITP in England (Edwards & Protheroe, 2003; Maynard, 2001) and Scotland (Johnston, 2016), School Direct Salaried (Hyde, 2019) and in-service provision (H. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004) in England, and extends insights discussed so far through explicit focus on participants' schools as CoPs.

My analysis supports findings of previous research indicating significant variation within (Douglas, 2015; H. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004, 2005) and between (Johnston, 2016) schools as CoPs. Despite notable consistency in what trainees want from their learning, their narratives demonstrate the extent to which the contexts of their schools and departments shaped their development. Consider, as one example, the contrast between Ben's departmental colleagues from whom he 'didn't learn much about teaching...except how not to teach' and Nick's mentor and HOD, in the same school, 'both excellent colleagues...the amount of thought and the time that they both took to support me was genuinely second to none'. Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning theory suggests this variation is to be expected; it is important because it speaks to a fundamental tension in the Training Programme model, which applies a largely standardised programme to trainees in a wide range of schools. If we accept the inherent variation in workplace contexts, where 'learning conditions for entrants are constituted by constantly re-formed and dynamic relations' (Milton et al., 2020, p.4), then the design and support of any ITP programme must surely account explicitly for both variation and dynamism. This seems essential to providing trainees a coherent learning experience, either through Mutton et al.'s (2011) planned curriculum in schools, to bring greater consistency to school-based learning, or through a highly integrated and adaptive partnership structure which accounts explicitly for differences in experience. This second approach is difficult to achieve in practice: Furlong (1996, p.44) lists design principles of the muchlauded (and much smaller) Oxford Internship programme that include 'complementarity' and 'no need for consensus about good practice', yet even here variation was seen early in the programme as 'a problem to be overcome' through an "elaboration of 'entitlements' and 'expectations" rather than the programme team fully embracing the 'enormous pedagogic potential' of difference for student teacher learning (Ellis 2010, p.110). Theme three: Dissonant partnership lays bare the disconnect for Teach First trainees between the goals of each partner organisation and the elements of the programme that they lead, echoing the conflicting notions of the good teacher and good

teaching among partners on school-led programmes investigated by Hyde (2019).

Although I did not set out specifically to evaluate the quality of practice within trainees' host departments, participants' stories convey the sense that departments embody different notions of the good teacher and teacher knowledge - that the mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire of each as a CoP (Wenger, 1998), that shape what trainees learn within them. vary not only in detail but in quality. By this I mean that some embody a commitment to teacher learning not evident elsewhere. The collaborative activity of Tim's department, discussing maths teaching during free time on a school trip, contrasts starkly with Penny's mentor rejecting outright a unit of work based on resources from a university teaching day. Wenger (2010) highlights the danger of treating CoPs as a values-free concept, that perpetuates only desirable or optimum practice; Golding (2015, p.121) cautions that 'much within school knowledge is situated and idiosyncratic, rather than broadly based, and typically is not deeply informed by a current, broad, and knowledgeably interrogated research base'. My analysis demonstrates how the values and idiosyncrasies of the school CoPs in which my participants learned shaped their learning for better and, unfortunately too often, for worse.

The concept of legitimate peripheral participation is especially helpful in deriving new insights about trainee learning since it draws attention to the organisation of participants' learning experiences, highlighting a core difference between feepaid and salaried ITP in the timing and degree of responsibility for complex work that trainees take on. The gradual movement of fee-paid student teachers towards full participation affords them time while peripheral to access 'opportunities for peer support and for the exchange of narratives that shape the beginning teacher's understanding of teaching' and 'to maintain a distance - to participate but also to draw back, to act but also to look on' (Yandell & Turvey, 2007, p.544). The espoused narrative of the Summer Institute (SI) as a preparatory period, during which trainees spend a few days in their employing school and learn necessary 'gatekeeper skills' of behaviour management, planning and assessment because '[e]vidence shows this is key for trainees to

create the foundation they need to establish themselves in the classroom' (Craster, 2019, n.p.), could be conceived of as a form of peripheral participation, but it is clearly too little to develop the understanding and practice needed to participate fully in their school's CoP. Nor does this brief, intensive period of learning largely generic and context-free 'moves' facilitate the sort of deep learning that Yandell and Turvey identify in the extended and structured progression of the fee-paying student teacher. Unsurprisingly, then, my data indicate that participants do not learn all that they feel they need to during SI, which I described (p.86) as a period of 'partial preparation' at best. Trainees join their schools in September very much limited in the extent to which they are equipped to operate successfully within them.

Lave and Wenger (1991, p.110) describe the concept of 'productive peripherality', which

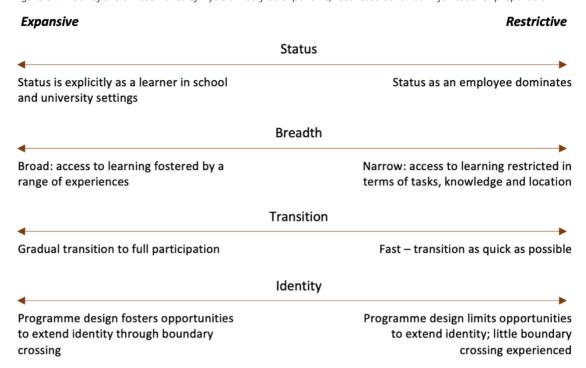
requires less demands on time, effort, and responsibility for work than for full participants. A newcomer's tasks are short and simple, the costs of errors are small, the apprentice has little responsibility for the activity as a whole.

My data demonstrate how my participants as newcomers were denied this developmental period. Trainees take on almost the full range of tasks of a qualified teacher from the outset – the activities of planning, teaching and assessing whole classes of students at 60-80% of a full timetable are neither short nor simple. The costs of errors are significant for teachers and their pupils, and trainees have full responsibility for their work as a whole. In effect, they are expected immediately to act as full participants in many ways without the experiences or learning that a period of truly peripheral participation would afford. Through this lens it is entirely understandable that trainees, yet to develop either their learning identity or practice within their community, and without the underpinning knowledge or values to inform independent decision-making, resort to shortcuts. Conditions are clearly ameliorated for some by strong relationships with mentors and colleagues, but those with weak mentoring relationships, as explored in theme six: *It takes a village to raise a teacher*, are further disadvantaged. Schools as trainee learning environments

within the Training Programme appear to exemplify Lave and Wenger's (1991, p.64) warning that '[c]onditions that place newcomers...in exhausting overinvolvement in work...distort, partially or completely, the prospects for learning in practice.' This helps to explain the reliance of trainees on their wider learning experiences through the university partner, Teach First, trainee networks and CSE to substitute for learning missed in their schools. To adapt the Training Programme so that trainees could be truly peripheral at the outset then follow a trajectory of increasingly complex and integrated activity towards full participation would be hugely resource-intensive in covering aspects of their workload, and seemingly impossible within existing constraints on school budgets and staffing. Until this is made accessible, trainees will have to continue their heroic work of navigating the challenges that this model presents to their learning.

As discussed in section 2.5, Fuller and Unwin's expansive-restrictive framework for workplace learning environments, and subsequent iterations for the schoolbased teacher learning environment by Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005) and Hyde (2019), are premised on the idea that 'an approach to workforce development characterized by the features listed as expansive will create a stronger and richer learning environment than one consisting of features associated with the restrictive end of the curriculum' (Fuller & Unwin, 2004. p.129). My consideration of participants' experiences through the lens of situated learning theory exposes expansive and restrictive elements of their school environments, indicating both strengths to be built on and weaknesses to address. Using Hyde's (2019, pp.73-74) 'Modified expansive/restrictive continuum for teacher preparation', (introduced on pp.58-59; full framework in appendix 11), which draws on the two earlier models and is adapted to account for her research into employment-based ITP, I identify four of her 13 axes in relation to which my participants' experiences are often particularly troublesome: the axes of Status, Breadth, Transition and Identity. These are shown in figure 5.1. and explained below. I address the axis of 'Transition' last as I see this as the most significant of the four in the context of my data.

Figure 5.1 Four of the thirteen axes of Hyde's modified expansive/restricted continuum for teacher preparation



The axis 'Status' relates to how trainees' status as learners is recognised. As my earlier analysis (pp.93-95) made visible, the conflation of participants' 'trainee' and 'teacher' identities can act to subordinate their learning needs. CoPs become more restrictive where their shared practices and beliefs allow expectations of the 'teacher' to overwhelm the needs of the 'trainee', including limiting space for the reflective practice that literature and my own data highlight as so important for learning.

The concept of 'Breadth' highlights as restrictive those schools which narrow access to learning opportunities, in my case by allocating trainees a punishing workload, or where mentors and other colleagues are not well-equipped to support trainees' learning through deploying suitable pedagogies of teacher education including modelling, practice and feedback and making accessible their pedagogical reasoning.

In the context of my data, I interpret the axis 'Identity' in relation to how employing schools allow trainees' participation in multiple CoPs to inform their practice in school, thereby shaping their teacher identity. A strength of the Training Programme is the access trainees have to multiple CoPs and to boundary crossing as a form of learning, but where trainees are blocked from

bringing learning from boundary crossing into their developing practice in school, the school becomes more restrictive as a learning environment.

Finally, in relation to 'Transition', Hyde describes as expansive workplaces characterised by trainees' '[g]radual transition to full participation' as opposed to the more restrictive '[f]ast – transition as quick as possible'. In this characterisation I see the Training Programme as restrictive *by design* in the speed of transition expected of participants.

The concepts of CoP and legitimate peripheral participation, embodied within these expansive-restrictive axes, not only help to make sense of my participants' experiences but contain within them indications of what might improve trainees' learning. It is noteworthy that these indications broadly align with participants' desires in my data: greater recognition of their 'trainee' status alongside their teacher role; better access to learning opportunities and time to make the most of these; and scaffolding to support initial entry into the workplace. These appear, then, to offer an initial response to my research question in identifying characteristics of productive workplace environments for Teach First trainees.

5.2.3. The constitutive nature of context in trainees' learning

The concept of community of practice does not exist by itself. It is part of a broader conceptual framework for thinking about learning in its social dimensions. It is a perspective that locates learning, not in the head or outside it, but in the relationship between the person and the world, which for human beings is a social person in a social world. In this relation of participation, the social and the individual constitute each other. (Wenger, 2010, p.179)

Here, Wenger emphasises the mutually constitutive nature of the relation between the individual and the social world in which they participate. The most striking finding of my study is the extent to which the school context is the dominant influence shaping, or constituting, participants' learning (p.101). At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that what seems to mark out learning on the Training Programme from other ITP routes is how the programme structure shapes access to the learning experiences trainees need. In fact, it seems

increasingly clear that on employment-based routes, such as the Training Programme, where the school is by such a margin the most substantial element of the programme, employing schools are arguably constitutive of much of what trainees learn about what it means to be a teacher. Rather than the intended goals and practices of the Training Programme as set out by Teach First being the dominant curriculum for trainees, who happen to be embedded in a school environment which facilitates the learning of this content, the planned curriculum may, in fact, be better conceptualised as operating in tandem alongside powerful, significant influences on learning arising from the characteristics of fundamentally distinct school communities – distinct according to the understandings and practices that are produced by their mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. Where the norms of the school communities render them open to trainees' learning from other elements of the programme and/or where they subscribe to what is being taught there, such as for Nick and Tim, there are opportunities for alignment and mutual enrichment. In cases where school CoPs are either ambivalent towards wider influences (as for Ben) or even antagonistic (as for Penny and Sasha), trainees are arguably shaped as much, if not more, by the school as by the planned curriculum of the Training Programme, in some cases 'limiting [their] horizons' (Muijs et al., 2014, p.37). Accepting this would mean accepting the incredible complexity that a situated understanding brings to programme designers managing a large, geographically dispersed programme working with a high turnover of schools and mentors. Hammerness' (2013) characterisation of powerful teacher education programmes with their shared vision and values does not appear borne out in the reality of the individual experiences of most of my participants, and perhaps this is too much realistically to aim for given the circumstances of the course. After all, Burn and Mutton (2015, p.227) remind us that, even within the small and collaboratively planned Oxford Internship ITP programme, 'intense scrutiny has essentially revealed the fundamental variability of interns' experiences'.

Within my data are elements of both the heroic trainee story, with trainees managing to make coherent sense for themselves of difficult circumstances

(Ben, for example) and the heroic programme story, where some tutors and/or DLs provide for trainees what their schools cannot or will not. The fact that either story is necessary, though, that 'heroism' of any kind has a place, highlights the challenges embedded within the programme design and their consequences for schools as learning environments. This aligns with Milton et al.'s (2020, p.2) investigation of new teacher learning in Wales which 'raises questions about the capacities of schools to act as sites of professional learning for new teachers'. The Training Programme model, where trainees are heavily embedded within a single school, within a programme that puts more responsibility on schools and less on expert teacher educators in universities, only serves to amplify the challenges faced when relying on schools to lead trainee learning. The question remains whether it is possible, in practice, to ask this much of schools without substantial, systemic change.

My findings are a strong argument for programme designers to engage thoughtfully with exactly how they conceptualise and account for the role of their many partner schools in shaping trainees' development. Adulatory policy narratives about Teach First may promote the heroic programme story, while Teach First itself arguably valorises the heroic teacher within institutional discourse – Elliott (2018, p.268) identifies an "individualised 'hero' narrative" which emphasises leadership qualities in Teach First's construction of 'the teacher' (i.e. that overcoming adversity on the programme develops leadership capacity and is therefore an asset for the long term). Neither approach, though, accounts for the detail and complexity evident in my participants' experiences, and each has consequences for trainees' learning and wellbeing, for their pupils and for the long-term development of the teacher workforce.

5.3. Core tensions for trainee learning

I began the chapter with two potential interpretations of the 'story my data tell', the 'heroic programme' and the 'heroic trainee'. Through insights explored within this chapter I have shown why I believe the 'heroes' of my 'story' overall are the trainees. While individual tutors, DLs and mentors clearly do much excellent work with trainees in challenging circumstances, which can be

perceived as heroic, this work is made necessary, not easier, by characteristics of the programme itself and how these shape trainees' school-based learning. I therefore see the programme as, structurally, the source of much of the challenge that requires heroics of anybody involved. Based on my analysis and the discussion arising, I identify three core tensions inherent in the structure of the Training Programme. I consider these 'core' because they are located within the design of the Training Programme itself and because their resolution is in the gift of Teach First as an organisation rather than the schools in which the tensions manifest, the trainees who must navigate these tensions or the support roles working with trainees.

5.3.1. Tension #1: Expectations and conceptual frameworks of the Training Programme's three partners are not consistently well-aligned

In reviewing literature about ITP programmes, I drew on Hammerness' (2013) findings that vision, coherence and a strong core curriculum grounded in practice are important features of teacher preparation programmes, and her note that these 'are not easy to enact' (p.404). In my findings, theme three: Dissonant partnership, directly highlights how different elements of the Training Programme can offer trainees conflicting messages, but the impact of poor coherence around a shared vision for teacher preparation at the heart of the programme is evident across themes. For example, the effort required to understand, process and satisfy different expectations of mentors, tutors and DLs adds to already heavy workloads and can be confusing as trainees develop their own conceptions of professional practice. Whereas university tutors are likely to work towards Evetts' (2009) goal of 'occupational' professionalism within a complex view of teaching and teacher development, some schools or mentors block trainees from exactly the sort of enquiry activity that is so central to this goal, instead pushing them to conform to existing school practice and develop as restricted 'organisational' professionals. Furthermore, schools primarily recruit Teach First trainees because they need teachers and understandably must, in times of tightening school budgets, get their money's worth. The financial imperative to increase contact hours and/or limit resources for support is in direct tension with trainees' need for specialist input and noncontact time in which to learn. My analysis suggests that trainees do not consistently have time for, or easy access in their working weeks to, the sort of rich learning that informs expert teaching and keeps teachers in the profession long-term. Where these learning experiences are available, for Nick and Tim, their mentors appear to have extraordinary personal commitment to the mentoring role and are very much the exception, not the rule.

Furlong (1996) explores models of partnership within ITP, describing three 'ideal types' of *HEI-led*, *collaborative* and *separatist* partnership. He makes two important points concerning the drivers for adopting each model: firstly, the impact of principled views held by some course leaders and teachers, and secondly financial and other institutional constraints around resourcing. In her fascinating investigation of the genesis of Teach First and the Training Programme, Rauschenberger (2016, p.275) exposes the negotiations behind the original design of the programme and the strain this placed on relations between Teach First and their first university partner. She quotes the first CEO of Teach First as saying:

One of my non-negotiable points [with the Teacher Training Agency] was that the university should feel accountable to us and not just the government. After all, this was the Teach First programme and we needed to be in charge of the messaging, recruiting, training and all elements of the programme. We should choose our university training partner since, in essence, they would be working for us.' – Brett Wigdortz (2012, p.177), CEO, Teach First

The principle underpinning the original design, therefore, might be interpreted as oriented towards the idiosyncratic preferences of a recently formed organisation with no ITP expertise rather than an openness to collaborating with university-based experts. My personal experience as a subject and programme leader suggests that the orthodoxies of the Teach First organisation continue to dominate espoused programme design, while university and school partners make localised decisions about their enacted practice. The extent of the dissonance experienced by some trainees suggests that their reality is that the concept of partnership in the Training Programme continues to be weakly constructed, lacking in the consensus about good teacher education, if not good

teaching, that underpins more coherent ITP offers (Hammerness, 2013; McIntyre, 1993). It gives truth to Penny's pithy observation that 'Teach First needs to accept that they're ultimately just a dating agency and they have very little impact once you're in your school', reminding us that strong partnership ties cannot be imposed by a programme handbook and a standard contract.

5.3.2. Tension #2: Being employed in a 'teacher' role increases the challenge of recognising and fostering trainees' 'learner' identity

Even students on fee-paid ITP programmes, placed in schools with a very clear 'trainee' status, can struggle with maintaining a dual identity as a learner as well as a teacher (Burn et al., 2017). My analysis demonstrates how much harder it can be for Teach First trainees to negotiate these dual identities when the people and structures around them in school construct them as teacher colleagues, with commensurate expectations of performance and behaviour. This is at odds with the apprentice model of learning underpinning the Training Programme, because it undermines the gradual move to full participation which Lave and Wenger (1991) position as key to novice learning. It also aligns with 'restrictive' characteristics of Fuller and Unwin's (2003) expansive-restrictive framework, and Hyde's (2019) adaptation, in imposing a fast transition to full participation, especially when accompanied by limited recognition of and support for the trainee as learner.

5.3.3. Tension #3: Trainees' early responsibility outweighs their competence

This tension is expressed explicitly through theme one: *Into the lion's den* and implicitly throughout all other themes. I consider this a core tension because it fundamentally shapes the learning in which trainees engage and their emerging concepts of good teacher learning. To illustrate this, pressures in the first term encourage trainees to focus on learning opportunities through which they can collect 'tips' and 'quick fixes' for what are perceived as immediate problems of control and 'performance'. This arguably encourages the reproduction and perpetuation of community practice through 'single loop' learning (Argyris,

1977). Norms and assumptions that inform local practice go un-challenged and much is taken for granted, such as implicit and explicit beliefs about how pupils learn or the purpose of curriculum. This isn't necessarily immediately problematic where the practice of the host community is strong, although this cannot be assumed, but ultimately it encourages a restricted form of professional practice with limited scope for 'disturbing [accepted] practice' (Loughran, 2006 quoted in Philpott, 2014, p.11), excavating and interrogating assumptions (Finney & Philpott, 2010, in Philpott, 2014) and stimulating transformative change – all necessary components of an evolving, self-improving profession. This may be particularly dangerous if early habits become embedded across trainees' careers and cohorts of senior teachers develop without the enquiry habits that underpin more critical 'double loop' learning (Argyris, 1977).

These core tensions impact my participants to different degrees. An appreciative consideration of the learning experiences of those who seem to have the smoothest entry into teaching (Nick and Tim) highlights the value of mentoring which engages with the complexities of subject-specific teaching, orientating participants towards questions of pupil learning as well as, or rather than, managing pupil behaviour. Immediate 'full immersion' into the teacher role is evidently overwhelming so approaches that help participants to reduce the burden of this, especially early on, are clearly also valuable. From an appreciative stance, this may mean in the short-term giving participants scaffolding such as direction around what and how to teach, including 'moves' to reproduce, while they accumulate experience and embed functional routines on which they can later build, so long as this is with a long-term view to building their reflective capacity and autonomy. The mentoring activity needed to identify and then address participants' needs in this way is hugely skilled and, as discussed, cannot be assumed or taken lightly. The degree of variation evident in mentoring across my sample indicates that there is much work still to do.

5.4. Conclusion

I began this chapter by proposing two possible readings of my data: the 'heroic trainee' and the 'heroic programme' stories. My analysis suggests that the 'heroic trainee' reading is the most apt, with participants demonstrating great personal tenacity in completing their training placements, even with the guidance and support of significant individuals in each of their personal contexts. Although this aligns with the "individualised 'hero' narrative" that Elliott (2018, p.268) identifies in Teach First discourses and as part of the motivation for some to becomes Teach First teachers, the burden of trying to be heroic both in the work of teaching (Elliott's analysis) and the learning of this work (my analysis) is arguably too much to demand of new teachers. It raises questions about the overall sustainability, and humanity, of a programme model which asks so much of trainees. As Elliott observes (2018, p.271):

The casting of the Teach First teacher as a hero has also acted as a motivating factor for some to leave. Realising that there is a dissonance between the ways in which the institutional discourse has framed their work and the stark reality of actually struggling with the usual difficulties of any beginner teacher in a challenging school, Teach First beginner teachers have reported feeling overwhelmed and incapable of doing what they were tasked to do. They do not identify as the heroes they are expected to be, but instead feel that the mission is impossible (Ness, 2004; Rice et al., 2015).

The 'stark reality' of my participants' experiences, laid out in my analysis and discussion chapters, raises fundamental questions about the extent to which schools within the Training Programme can be truly effective learning environments for trainees, given the characteristics of the programme overall. The issues raised in my analysis, and the core tensions set out above, are not new. Hutchings et al.'s (2006) early evaluation of the Training Programme identified trainees' focus on early survival, the incredible value of boundary crossing through the contrasting school experience, long working hours, problems for trainees teaching beyond their specialism, issues with mentoring, the importance of university teaching days and the value of peer group support. Ofsted's 2008 review of the Training Programme, *Rising to the Challenge*, noted a lack of coherence across some elements of the programme

and variation in the quality of host schools, including mentoring, which 'meant that some trainees did not reach the levels of competence of which they were capable' (Ofsted, 2008, p.5), compensated to an extent by additional programme support including visits to trainees by university tutors. Cameron's 2014 study highlighted again the variability of mentoring quality on the programme, and Carter et al.'s (2011) research into Teach For America, the model on which the Training Programme is designed, demonstrated both how stressed trainees orient towards strategies for immediate classroom application and how trainees experience tensions between meeting programme, school district and university requirements. Although more recent Ofsted inspection feedback has praised the coherence of training and the quality of mentoring across the Teach First partnership (Ofsted, 2016, 2023), this contradicts my experience of the programme – including as subject leader during the 2015 inspection, data collected for this study, my pilot research findings (Glegg, 2019), and Tillin's (2023) recent research. At a minimum, the tensions between these findings suggest that there is still some likely room for improvement.

Teach First has well-developed processes for gathering feedback, for programme review and development. Within this context, the fact that issues highlighted repeatedly over time by others persist in my data raises the question of whether they can, in fact, be resolved without wholesale programme overhaul. Without changing fundamentally what schools expect of trainees in terms of responsibility and contact hours, it is hard to see how workload can be seriously addressed; without changing significantly how school-based mentors are selected, prepared, supported and quality-assured, addressing mentor practice seems impossible; and without revisiting the basic assumptions about teaching and teacher learning that underpin the programme, the core tensions identified above will surely persist.

It is worth considering briefly current developments of the Training Programme, as outlined in Chapter 1: *Introduction*. Movement towards Teach First reducing university input and leading ever more of the programme, including for the first time subject-specific teaching, may help with programme alignment but it runs the risk of narrowing and weakening trainee learning. My research

demonstrates the importance of university tutors in developing trainees' thinking, and the impact of the university subject community as a CoP. These benefits may be replicated by Teach First structures, but it is unlikely that Teach First employees will have the same conceptual and practical approaches, given the differences in how my participants reported university and Teach First input. Furthermore, the move to offer almost all training online rather than face to face contradicts insights from analytical themes six and seven regarding the relational and personal nature of teacher learning. A movement towards national rather than local subject cohorts similarly risks undermining the importance for trainees' learning and wellbeing of local CoPs, including through virtual boundary crossing. Taken together, these 'innovations' actually risk going against specifically those aspects of the Training Programme which are most fruitful in the iteration that I researched: specialist input from expert teacher educators, multiple CoPs, and the affordances of boundary crossing. In their absence, the limitations of partner schools as environments for trainee learning may become ever starker, putting greater burden on trainees to manage their learning within these challenging contexts.

Teach First's Director of School Partnerships recently wrote in a *Schools Week* article:

Resilience is key, but so is teacher wellbeing. We've changed the learning on our programme to reduce trainee workloads – with less formal learning to juggle alongside in-school work commitments, helping prevent burnout. (Edwards, 2022, n.p.)

The danger here is that the well-intentioned reduction in 'formal learning', which I understand to be taught input and academic studies, may free up some time in the short term at the expense of trainees' long-term learning. My findings demonstrate the multiple benefits to trainees of these aspects of the Training Programme, which often cannot be delivered within their host schools – benefits including access to a range of perspectives on and experiences of teaching which afford them the opportunity to 'stand back' from the school context in which they are immersed and consider their practice and beliefs through a new lens. The danger of reducing access to this form of learning is an increased risk

of trainees developing as limited professionals steeped in the favoured practices of their employers rather than as full professionals equipped to exercise autonomy over their complex work.

Pragmatically, and assuming that the Training Programme will continue to exist within the English ITP landscape, my research indicates some ways forward that should improve the quality of learning within employing schools for trainees within the current, if flawed, programme model. These could orient around the three core tensions, drawing on insights from teacher learning and workplace learning theory, as I have in this chapter, to inform structural and cultural evolution of relevant elements of the programme. Important goals would be to (1) move towards greater alignment between partners; (2) put in place structures that honour and support trainees' dual identities and protect their 'learner' identities; (3) align better expectations of trainees with their emerging competence as teachers. In Chapter 6: *Reflections and recommendations* I present possible 'next steps' that could be adopted by Teach First and within their partner schools.

Chapter 6: Reflections and Recommendations

6.1. Introduction

In this final chapter I first address explicitly my research question and make summary recommendations for how my findings might be taken forward, recognising limitations of the study. I then offer some reflections on the process and impact of writing this thesis.

6.2. Addressing my research question

My research addresses the question:

What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher preparation, as experienced by newly qualified teachers?

This question is supported by three sub-questions:

- a) How do newly qualified teachers (NQTs) conceptualise high quality learning for trainee teachers? Are a range of conceptions of teacher learning evident in the data?
- b) What formal and informal learning experiences do NQTs most value in their training year?
- c) What tensions/challenges are experienced in relation to teacher learning in the employment-based ITP environment and how can these be addressed?

Sub-questions are addressed holistically through Chapters 4: *Analysis* and 5: *Discussion*. Returning to the overarching question, my research indicates that effective workplace learning environments for Teach First trainees can best be described not by listing characteristics of the workplace itself (e.g. number of colleagues; attainment of students; Ofsted grading), but by considering the opportunities that the workplace, and individuals within it, afford to trainee teachers. My findings demonstrate that my participants want particular learning opportunities through which they can develop both their practical repertoire and

conceptual framework for teaching, and that these opportunities reflect those discussed in much literature on novice teacher learning. My findings also indicate that these learning opportunities were not consistently made available during ITP to participants within their employing schools, and that the structural characteristics of the wider Teach First programme contributed to fostering the contexts in which this happened. Consequently, I characterised the 'story' of my research as that of the 'heroic trainee' who navigates a programme which embodies the three core tensions introduced in Chapter 5: *Discussion*:

- Tension #1: Expectations and conceptual frameworks of the Training
 Programme's three partners are not consistently well-aligned.
- Tension #2: Being employed in a 'teacher' role increases the challenge of recognising and fostering trainees' 'learner' identity.
- Tension #3: Trainees' early responsibility outweighs their competence.

I discussed the impossibility of standardising schools as learning environments within the Training Programme, proposing instead the aim that trainees' experiences are of commensurate scope and quality, with a baseline raised substantially from the weakest experiences reported to me. This recommendation echoes the conclusions of Hodkinson et al. (2004), who argue against approaches which try to standardise goals of and approaches to workplace learning for qualified teachers. They conclude instead that:

To improve workplace learning entails enhancing opportunities to learn in the workplace. This may involve constructing more expansive learning environments for workers, based upon a detailed assessment of what workers would want, respond positively to, or need, in a particular setting...

...efforts to improve workplace learning will always impact unevenly, across workplaces and individual workers. We need to accept that as a cultural reality; it is not a counsel of despair. (p.22)

Through this lens, my findings cast doubt on current education policy that promotes large, standardised programmes of teacher development, such as the Training Programme. They support previous findings that teachers' practice and learning are intrinsically rooted within their context, that schools are 'complex,

relational sites for the professional formation of new teachers' (Milton et al., 2020, p.1) and that teacher development is complex (Jones & Ellis, 2019). Programmes which do not account for this risk unacceptable variation in the overall quality, as well as the detail, of trainee experience. Nor is it likely that programmes will find success simply in mandating requirements of schools. Hyde (2019) draws on Evans et al. (2006) in highlighting the difficulties of changing individual school workplaces as expansive or restrictive environments, especially in the short term. The perpetuation of many of the underlying issues with the Training Programme since its inception is testament to the challenges of embedding substantial, material change.

Despite the confidence with which I discuss my findings, some qualifications are needed. My interview data is, of course, one perspective on the Training Programme through which I have interpreted my participants' 'truth'. My sample is small and self-selecting and may not be fully representative, although the frequency of themes throughout my data indicates a degree of saturation and findings align both with my pilot study and with feedback from colleagues and other trainees with whom I have discussed my research. Participants may have withheld or fabricated some of their responses, reflecting motivations around 'impression management and presentation of self' (Hobson & McIntyre, 2013 p.357) although the candid nature of responses suggests that participants felt able to be open with me. I have not sought data from mentors, university tutors or Teach First staff. Instead, I have tempered my data analysis and discussion by rooting it in an articulated theoretical framework, relevant literature, a degree of tentativeness in making assertions and my own reflexivity, intending to provide readers sufficient information to draw conclusions about the rigour, quality and trustworthiness of my work.

6.3. Recommendations

I designed my research in the spirit of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), committed to looking for stories of success that can help bring about positive change to school-based learning for trainees. In concluding Chapter 5: *Discussion*, I observed that there are limitations to the degree of positive change possible

within the current iteration of the programme without addressing the core tensions at the programme's heart. My first, ambitious, recommendation therefore would *innovate* the Training Programme, reducing the need for either trainees or support roles to be 'heroic' in navigating it:

Teach First should review the overall design of their programme to foster more expansive learning environments for trainees and address core tensions.

Teach First's mission means working with schools in challenging circumstances, which typically experience higher than average teacher turnover (Allen et al., 2018) and may have less capacity than other schools for the sort of change I advocate. There is a tension between working with schools which most 'need' Teach First and embedding the expectations and practices which would revolutionise conditions for trainees. Addressing this tension at the core of the programme may mean deselecting some partner schools, in direct, unacceptable, conflict with the mission.

Given that change at the core is a substantial undertaking, I have also identified from my analysis strategies likely to improve individual participants' experiences in the shorter term to some degree, even where they don't resolve underpinning, structural tensions. I have targeted these recommendations for mentors as the individuals who work most closely with trainees day-to-day and can effect immediate, if small-scale and local, change. Essentially, this approach strengthens the 'heroic programme' narrative by equipping mentors to better support trainees' learning despite the challenging programme structure. Drawn from my analysis of the stories of success derived from my participants' narratives, my second recommendation aims to *mitigate* core tensions and maximise fruitful learning opportunities for trainees within the existing programme design:

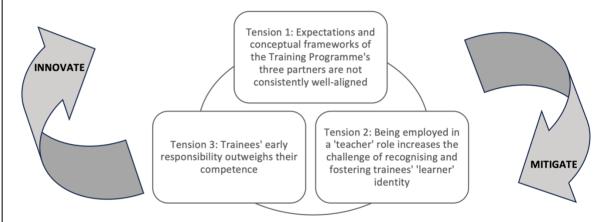
Mentors should make use of pedagogical and practical strategies to foster more expansive learning environments for trainees despite core tensions.

Figure 6.1 expands my two recommendations, illustrating how innovation and mitigation might be achieved by Teach First and mentors, respectively.

Figure 6.1 Recommended approaches for Teach First and mentors, to improve trainees' learning

Teach First should review the overall design of their programme to foster more expansive learning environments for trainees and address core tensions by:

- Moving towards greater alignment between partner organisations, and/or having clear shared approaches in place that reduce disruption for trainees where organisational expectations and conceptual frameworks differ;
- Putting in place programme structures and expectations that honour and support trainees' dual identities as both teachers and learners and protect their 'learner' identity;
- Identifying the learning experiences to which trainees should have access and training support roles in how to maximise learning from these;
- Reducing the scope and rigour of early expectations of trainees so that they align better with trainees' emerging competence as teachers.



Mentors should make use of pedagogical and practical strategies to foster more expansive learning environments for trainees despite core tensions by:

- Using pedagogical approaches within the mentoring relationship which help trainees to develop their expertise, in line with teacher education literature and the strategies identified by participants in this study;
- Supporting trainees to access and learn from a range of learning opportunities beyond the mentoring relationship, in line
 with teacher education literature and the strategies identified by participants in this study;
- Honouring and supporting trainees' dual identities as both teachers and learners, and protecting their 'learner' identity;
- Reducing the scope and rigour of early expectations of trainees to account for their emerging competence as teachers.

To encourage implementation, I used a research fellowship to elaborate 'mitigation' strategies into a resource for mentors, detailing research insights and corresponding actions. These insights and actions are summarised in table 6.1. and detailed in full in appendices 12 and 13.

Table 6.1 Summary insights and actions for mentors

Insight	What you can do to help
Into the lion's den	Acknowledge that learning takes time Scaffold your trainee's early learning like you would your pupils'
No time to breathe and think	Protect your trainee's time and limit their responsibilities where you can Actively recognise and support their twin identities of 'teacher' and 'trainee'
Realising expertise	Go with your trainee to observe colleagues Make your expertise visible Develop your trainee's thinking alongside their practice
Travel broadens the mind	Help your trainee to build networks with teachers in different communities Encourage innovation
Hard shell; soft centre	Be proactive with your support Advocate for your trainee Be a 'safe space' for your trainee
It takes a village to raise a teacher	Be a broker Build on individual strengths

6.4. Next steps

The scope of this research is necessarily limited. Given the richness of my findings and the importance of ITP I have identified fruitful avenues of further enquiry:

- In this thesis I have addressed the constitutive nature of the school on the individual but not how the individual trainee acts on the school. Research of this nature would contribute valuable perspectives to wider discussions around the value and practice of school-based ITP.
- Programmes modelled on Teach First for other professions include Frontline (social work), Unlocked Graduates (prison officers) and Police Now

- (policing). Since these share the premise of the Training Programme, that novices can learn professional practice whilst working, it seems likely that similar conditions, opportunities and challenges for learning may exist within these programmes. I see potential in further research exploring employment-based professional training across professions, including opportunities for sharing learning between programmes.
- Trainee teachers are the focus of my research, but ultimately ITP should aim to improve outcomes for pupils. My findings, coupled with earlier observations by Allen and Allnutt (2017) and Muijs et al. (2010) raise questions about the impact on pupils of being taught by first-year Teach First trainees across the course of their schooling. Research exploring the pupil-level impact of repeated exposure to unqualified teachers across years and subjects, ideally across multiple outcomes indicators, would improve understanding of the impact of trainees on their pupils, not only post-qualification but from the moment that they take on their own classes.
- Finally, the Training Programme has evolved in design since my research, with more remote and asynchronous training and a rebalancing of teaching responsibilities. Further research that explores future cohorts as they complete the current programme would add to my findings and ensure that conclusions and recommendations are of maximum use in practice.

6.5. Reflections

My decision to adopt an appreciative stance in undertaking this research has been both challenging and fruitful. The ethos of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) speaks to my commitment to amplifying voices of those less often heard within systems and to making a positive difference in and through my practice as a teacher educator and researcher. At the outset of this study, I had not anticipated sufficiently data which went beyond my intended 'stories of success'. As it became clear through my data collection and analysis that participants' narratives contained troubling as well as successful stories, I felt compelled to reflect carefully on how I would handle this data in a manner congruent with my appreciative stance. I found it helpful to foreground the core of AI as being

generative, oriented towards new possibilities, and to recall that the selection of methodological approaches and tools is in the service of the overall research aim, in this case to understand more about the impact on trainees' learning of the workplaces in which they were placed. I hope that the outcome has been an honest account of participants' experiences, told in a way that opens possibilities for improvement within school-based learning in employment-based ITP and for nurturing the strengths that exist, if somewhat unevenly, within the Training Programme.

I was a teacher educator throughout my research, for some of this time on the Training Programme itself. I found it hugely fruitful and mutually enriching to research and practice in parallel. Listening so carefully to participants' stories was a stimulus to curate better conversations with my own trainees, sensitised by my research to make space for discussions about their learning, wellbeing and agency. I reflected on my own teaching alongside how I worked with school and Teach First partners and became, I believe, a stronger part of the wider partnership. Being engaged as a teacher educator while researching kept my understanding of the field current. This feels especially important in the evolving context of ITP and the Training Programme if my thesis is to have applied value.

I find that my 'researcher' and 'teacher educator' personas are increasingly aligned, if not converging. My teacher educator practice is sharpened by the skills and perspectives I have internalised through my research, especially in looking for patterns of meaning within experience and in orientating towards understanding and building on strengths within systems. I have become more confident in making reasoned choices about my research activity, such as trading breadth for depth in electing to explore the detail of fewer participants' stories. I am more comfortable with the gains and losses associated with decisions and actions taken. I teach my trainees that teaching is a values-led, intellectual profession in which good judgement is paramount; increasingly, through the course of this study, I have come to apply the same criteria to my understanding of educational research.

6.6. Closing comments

This research has been a rich, stimulating experience. Investigating teacher preparation in the current period of incredible change in the ITP market in England feels both timely and important. I hope my work will inform decisions around how new teachers are prepared in the workplace moving forward.

My findings suggest that novice teacher learning is much more complex than is accounted for within the Training Programme, questioning the underlying assumption that teachers learn easily through co-location with other teachers and problematising workplace learning within ITP. My work contributes deepened understanding at the nexus of ITP and workplace learning. Since all ITP pathways in England draw heavily on the contribution of school-based learning, my research has the potential to influence learning for all student teachers, not just those following employment-based routes. Professional practice may be informed at the level of local ITP provision (schools, universities and SCITTs), regional and/or national teacher training alliances, and local and national policymaking. Good early support for new teachers likely impacts long-term teacher retention (Education Endowment Foundation, 2023), so my work may also contribute indirectly to workforce stability over time. Despite the challenges they have encountered in their learning, Teach First trainees in my sample have shown themselves to be tenacious, reflective and committed to serving their pupils well. They evidently have much to offer to the teaching profession. I hope that my research will contribute towards improving conditions for future cohorts so that their potential is fully realised at the outset of a long and successful teaching career.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Fuller and Unwin's (2003) expansive-restrictive continuum

Fig. 1. The expansive-restrictive continuum.		
EXPANSIVE	RESTRICTIVE	
Participation in multiple communities of practice inside and outside the workplace	Restricted participation in multiple communities of practice	
Primary community of practice has shared 'participative memory': cultural inheritance of apprenticeship	Primary community of practice has little or no 'participative memory': no or little tradition of apprenticeship	
Breadth: access to learning fostered by cross-company experiences built in to programme	Narrow: access to learning restricted in terms of tasks/knowledge/location	
Access to range of qualifications including knowledge-based vocational qualifications	Access to competence-based qualification only	
Planned time off-the-job including for college attendance and for reflection	Virtually all-on-job: limited opportunities for reflection	
Gradual transition to full participation Apprenticeship aim: rounded expert/full participant	Fast—transition as quick as possible Apprenticeship aim: partial expert/full participant	
Post-apprenticeship vision: progression for career	Post-apprenticeship vision: static for job	
Explicit institutional recognition of, and support for, apprentices' status as learner	Ambivalent institutional recognition of, and support for, apprentice's status as learner	
Named individual acts as dedicated support to apprentices	No dedicated individual ad-hoc support	
Apprenticeship is used as a vehicle for aligning the goals of developing the individual and organisational capability	Apprenticeship is used to tailor individual capability to organisational need	
Apprenticeship design fosters opportunities to extend identity through boundary crossing	Apprenticeship design limits opportunity to extend identity: little boundary crossing experienced	
Reification of apprenticeship highly developed (eg through documents, symbols, language, tools) and accessible to apprentices	Limited reification of apprenticeship, patchy access to reificatory aspects of practice	

Appendix 2: Original and amended ethics paperwork confirming permission from my university to proceed with my research

Original ethics application

Institute of Education



Doctoral Student Ethics Application Form

Anyone conducting research under the auspices of the Institute of Education (staff, students or visitors) where the research involves human participants or the use of data collected from human participants, is required to gain ethical approval before starting. This includes preliminary and pilot studies. Please answer all relevant questions in simple terms that can be understood by a lay person and note that your form may be returned if incomplete.

Registering your study with the UCL Data Protection Officer as part of the UCL Research Ethics Review Process

If you are proposing to collect personal data i.e. data from which a living individual can be identified you <u>must</u> be registered with the UCL Data Protection Office before you submit your ethics application for review.

To do this, email the complete ethics form to data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Once your registration number is received, add it to the form* and submit it to your supervisor for approval.

If the Data Protection Office advises you to make changes to the way in which you propose to collect and store the data this should be reflected in your ethics application form.

Se	Section 1 Project details				
a .	Project title		The workplace as a site of teacher learning in employment-based initial teacher education: An appreciative exploration.		
b	Student name and ID number	(e.g. ABC12345678)	Ann Gle	a Kia Polly 99	
C .	*UCL Data Protection Registration Number		Z6364106/2019/11/ 70 social research Issued 21 November 2019		
C	Supervisor/Personal Tutor		Redacted		
d	Department		CCM		
e	Course category (Tick one) DEdPsy			EdD	
f.	If applicable, state who the funder is and if funding has been confirmed.		N/A		

g	Intended research start da	January 2020				
h	Intended research end dat	е	December 2021			
i.	Country fieldwork will be conducted in If research to be conducted abroad please check www.fco.gov.uk and submit a completed travel risk assessment form (see guidelines). If the FCO advice is against travel this will be required before ethical approval can be granted: http://ioe-net.inst.ioe.ac.uk/about/profservices/international/Pages/defau It.aspx		England			
j.	Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?					
	Yes External Committee Name:					
	No $\boxtimes \Rightarrow$ go to Section 2 Date of Approval:					
 Submit a copy of the approval letter with this application. Proceed to Section 10 Attachments. 						
No	Note: Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some					
pa	participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such					
as	as the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) or Social Care Research					
Ethics Committee (SCREC). In addition, if your research is based in another						
institution then you may be required to apply to their research ethics						
committee.						
Section 2 Research methods summary (tick all that apply)						
36			арріу)			
	Interviews □ Controlled trial/other Focus intervention study groups □ Use of personal records □ Systematic review ⇒ if only method used go to Section 5.					

Action	Secondary data analysis ⇒ if secondary analysis used
research	go to Section 6.
Observation	Advisory/consultation/collaborative groups
Literature review	Other, give details: participant workshops (similar
	to 'collaborative groups' above)

Please provide an overview of the project, focusing on your methodology. This should include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, data collection (including justifications for methods chosen and description of topics/questions to be asked), reporting and dissemination. Please focus on your methodology; the theory, policy, or literary background of your work can be provided in an attached document (i.e. a full research proposal or case for support document). *Minimum 150 words required*.

Purpose/aims of the research

The purpose of this research is to advance understanding of the conditions in the workplace that foster high quality professional formation of trainee teachers on a particular type of initial teacher education (ITE) pathway. The ITE pathway being investigated is employment-based ITE, where the teacher is employed in a school while completing their ITE programme.

Research question

The main research question is: What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher education, as experienced by trainee and recently qualified teachers?

The research question will be expanded by sub-questions. Provisional/working sub-questions are:

- a) How do trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) conceptualise high quality learning for trainee teachers? Are a range of conceptions of teacher learning evident in the data?
- b) What formal and informal learning experiences do trainees and NQTs most value?
- c) What tensions/challenges are experienced in relation to teacher learning in the employment-based ITE environment and how can these be

Research design

There are a number of employment-based ITE programmes in England. One is the Teach First Training Programme, which is run by the charity Teach First (TF) in regional partnerships with university ITE providers. The IOE is Teach First's partner in the London region. I have previously worked on this programme as a subject leader and programme leader but I no longer have any direct involvement with the programme. The London region programme (secondary phase) will be the context for this research.

The Teach First Training Programme covers 2 years: the first is the ITE year and the second spans trainees' first year as a qualified teacher. Trainees continue to receive training and support during this second year and almost all remain employed for this year in the school in which they completed ITE. Participants are enrolled at UCL across both years on an academic course which awards a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) after the second year. Participants in the research will be drawn from both years of the programme, to include trainees who enrolled in the programme in 2018 (and are now first year newly qualified teachers, or NQTs) and in 2019 (who are now completing the ITE programme).

This is a qualitative research project. The project is designed in such a way as to assure rigour, credibility and trustworthiness in the research process rather than to meet positivist tests of validity and reliability.

The project derives from Appreciative Inquiry (AI), an approach used in organisational development as well as research activity. In line with the principles of AI, the research is designed around the collection of personal stories from participants in the Teach First Training Programme in London as a means of understanding their 'best experiences' of workplace learning / professional formation during ITE. Through this I aim to determine underlying success factors that connect the stories, to develop generative theory and to

make recommendations for the design of workplace learning in employmentbased ITE programmes.

The design of the research is as follows:

Phase 1

- Participants will be invited to share stories of their 'best experiences' of trainee teacher professional formation that has taken place within the school environment on the Teach First programme. Stories will be collected through individual interviews and group activities see details below and will be captured in the form of short (200-500 words) written stories produced by the participants. These pseudonymised stories will become the main data on which the project is based;
- The written stories will be analysed by the researcher initially, to identify themes or underlying core characteristics that connect across the stories;
- Fully pseudonymised stories and the researcher's initial analysis of underlying success factors will be shared by the researcher on a digital project space so that they are accessible to participants in the project. This space will be hosted as a 'course' on the UCL Moodle (virtual learning environment) site. This is a secure site accessible only to individuals with a UCL login who have been added as participants to the course. Individuals will be added only when they have consented to participate in this research. Moodle is therefore considered sufficiently secure for the purposes of this research. It is a key part of the research design that participants are invited to take part in analysing the data during phase 2, therefore it is necessary that stories are made available to other participants. If individuals do not want their pseudonymised stories to be shared during the research phases of the project, then their stories will be withdrawn from the data. If participants are happy for stories to be shared for research purposes but indicate that their stories should not be shared in any project outputs (e.g. as a resource for teacher education) then this will be honoured and stories will be omitted from materials used for wider dissemination of findings.
- Participants will also fill out a short contextual data questionnaire (see attached participant questionnaire) to provide data relating both to the participants (e.g. are they a career changer) and to their school contexts (e.g. is their mentor a subject specialist?). This is so that during the analysis of the data collected in this research, possible correlations can be explored between the data on school learning environments and characteristics of the person supplying the data.

Phase 2

Participants from phase 1 will be invited to review the stories and initial
analysis shared through the digital project space and to respond / contribute
to this analysis through participating in a second workshop or interview – see
below for further details. The intention is that:

- Participants who are able to review the stories and initial analysis easily through the project space will be more likely to want to participate in a follow-up workshop or interview;
- Where participants are unable or unwilling to participate in follow-up activities, they will nonetheless have the opportunity to read the material online and consider how this may inform their own understanding of trainee learning in the workplace.
- In line with the developmental and iterative principles that underpin AI methodology, I may wish to follow up participant stories that exemplify particular themes arising from the analysis, generating more detailed case studies of individual school contexts which present aspects of positive workplace learning environments. In this case the following activities may be undertaken:
 - phase 1 participants whose stories these are may be approached and asked whether I can conduct follow-up interviews with them to further explore points raised through the research.
 - It may also be desirable to conduct observations of the school context in which certain participants are working / learning, and / or to interview other individuals involved in those participants' workplace learning (e.g. mentors, training leads).
 - It may be desirable to analyse school documentation relating to ITE, as referenced in stories provided by participants, and with the permission of school headteachers as gatekeepers.

Should analysis in phase 2 indicate that these or other methods would be desirable, it will be necessary to seek further ethics approval and, except in the case of interviewing participants, to seek permissions from the participants' school and colleagues to gather the data. It is not possible to give a more detailed outline of this stage of the process so early in the research design, since the focus and nature of any case study material collected will be dependent on the outcomes of phase 1 of the study.

During phase 1 participants will be asked to share details of some personal characteristics as outlined in section 7(b): age group, career status on entry to ITE, position in the ITE process (current trainee or first-year qualified teacher). No special category data will be collected. During phase 2 this data may be used to explore correlations between certain themes arising in the analysis and characteristics of groups of participants (for example, whether participants with no previous working history cite different types of learning experiences to those who identify as career-changers).

Participants

Participants will be recruited on an opt-in basis. As outlined in section 7(a), the groups of individuals who will be approached to participate are as follows:

- (1) trainee teachers currently on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher education (ITE), who enrolled in 2019;
- (2) newly qualified teachers who are in the second year of the Teach First Training Programme (NQTs), who enrolled in 2018.

Participants will be approached in the following ways, seeking to maximise recruitment and reach all potential participants without overloading them with requests for participation:

- All trainees and NQTs have a UCL email address as part of their enrolment on the UCL PGDE. Information about and an invitation to participate in the research will be emailed to all enrolled students using their UCL email address;
- 2. Subject leaders with responsibility for each of the 11 subject pathways that make up the secondary TF programme will be asked to briefly introduce the research at one of their taught days with students (taught days are scheduled across the year and will be targeted according to when the research is launched). They will be provided with a short PowerPoint presentation or video to show, which should take no more than 5 minutes. The presentation will give an overview of the research and direct interested students to the supporting information sheet for more information. I will offer to attend this presentation if the subject leader wishes.

In each case, recruitment materials will give a detailed overview of the research project, its aims and the commitment invited from participants - see attached participant information sheet. It will be the choice of individuals to follow up using this information to find out more and/or to participate in the research.

Sampling

All trainees (2019 entry) and NQTs (2018 entry) in the secondary phase of the Teach First Training Programme at UCL Institute of Education will be invited to participate. This programme has been selected according to my access to the trainees / NQTs and to permissions granted by the Teach First course leader at UCL and Teach First senior leaders. Only trainees / NQTs in the secondary

phase (teaching students aged 11-19) will be included in the sample. This reflects significant differences between trainee teacher experiences in the primary and secondary phases, and my background in secondary education.

At this stage it is not possible to predict accurately how many individuals in the sample population will want to participate but, as a guide, the total population of trainee / NQT teachers meeting the criteria for this research is around 600. It is expected that each story will be between 200-500 words in length. The target sample size for this project is a maximum of 25 participants, representing just under 5% of the population. This would generate a maximum of 12,500 words for analysis. This is considered manageable within the constraints of an EdD thesis. I will maintain oversight of the sample size and take steps as necessary either to recruit additional participants or to give notification that data collection will be paused due to the volume of data collected.

Data collection (including justifications for methods chosen and description of topics/questions to be asked)

Phase 1

Phase 1 data will be collected in the form of stories produced by participants through one of two approaches as outlined below. A short questionnaire will be used in advance of the approaches to collect limited personal data about participants and their schools. See attached participant questionnaire.

- In line with Appreciative Inquiry approaches, the preferred format for the collection of these stories is in a group of participants with the researcher, working together in a face-to-face workshop-style setting.
 - o For participants' convenience the researcher will offer to travel to groups of participants to collect data (for example, to meet them at a school in which one or more of the participants work). See attached letter to head teachers seeking permission to collect data on school premises. Participants could also travel to the UCL site if they are more comfortable with this as a location. It may be possible to schedule workshops on days when participants are already attending UCL as part of their ITE programme, to reduce the burden on participants of travelling to take part in the research. It is expected that there will be multiple data-collection workshops. No travel expenses will be paid where participants agree to attend a workshop which requires them to travel (all travel would be within London). No

- pressure will be put on participants to travel to workshops and alternatives are available which incur no cost for participants.
- In each workshop I will introduce the AI approach and run the activity over a period of up to 2 hours, during which participants will each generate the written stories that will constitute the data for this study. Participants will work together in pairs or small groups through a series of structured discussions, through which their stories of 'best experiences' will be generated. A proportion of the workshop discussions that underpin these stories may also be audio-recorded as supporting data, with participants' permission. See supporting paperwork for the protocol for this method, including indicative topics/questions for discussion.
- 2. Some participants may not be able or willing to attend a workshop as outlined above. In such cases I will endeavour to collect data though one-to-one interviews conducted face-to-face or via Skype. These discussions may also be audio-recorded as supporting data, with participants' permission. Using Skype as a possible medium is considered necessary given how geographically dispersed the participants might be and the restrictions placed on access by their working patterns in teaching. Whilst online communication is considered less desirable than face-to-face data-gathering, because it places some restrictions on my ability to interact with participants, I have experience working as a coach and consultant using Skype and will be able to draw on this in ensuring that data collected in this way is sufficiently rich.

Phase 2

In phase 2 participants will be sharing comments and feedback on the data and analysis arising from phase 1. The exact format of this phase will depend on the number of participants recruited during phase 1 who express interest in participating in phase 2.

- The preferred method will be to run a series of **workshops** since these will enable rich discussions and the collection of data through **audio-recording or video-recording discussions**. These would take the same approach as workshops in phase 1, lasting a maximum of two hours and located either at UCL or in a participant's school.
- Should individuals wish to participate who are unable to attend workshops, interviews (face to face or using Skype) will also be used. In this case it is expected that the duration would be shorter (no more than an hour). As above, these discussions may be audio-recorded as supporting data, with participants' permission.

The methods chosen for data collection mean that it is not possible to maintain absolute anonymity for most participants (those attending workshops) during the

data collection itself as data collection is not undertaken in private. See section 8 on ethical issues for further discussion of this.

Data analysis

The stories produced by participants in phase 1 of data collection will be pseudonymised before they are shared for phase 2. I will keep a master file / 'key' so that participants can be contacted as part of follow-up of themes arising from data analysis, in line with details provided in initial consent documentation. The key will be stored securely and separately from the pseudonymised files in an encrypted / password protected online file accessible only to me.

Stories will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify themes or core characteristics which connect across stories. Inductive and deductive approaches will be used, so that analysis takes account of perspectives drawn from existing literature on teacher learning and workplace learning whilst maintaining theoretical space for the emergence of new perspectives. Phase 2 of the research process incorporates participant perspectives into data analysis: this is a key element of AI in empowering research participants to drive change in their workplace. To preserve the integrity of this as a piece of research, I will maintain oversight of the analysis process and will position myself explicitly in my writing so that it is clear how analysis has been conducted, and by whom, and on what basis conclusions have been reached.

Reporting and dissemination

See section 7c for details of how data will be reported and disseminated.

Section 3 Research Participants (tick all that apply)			
☐ Early years/pre-school ☐ Ages 5-11 ☐ Ages 12-16 ☐ Young people aged 17-18	Adults please specify below Unknown — specify below No participants As explained in section2 and 7(a), data will		

		be collected from qualified teachers, tutors working on	teacher mentor	s and
par as	: Ensure that you check the guidelines of ticipants will require ethical approval for the National Research Ethics Service (Normittee (SCREC).	rom a different ethi	cs committee su	uch
	tion 4 Security-sensitive materia			
und	urity sensitive research includes: comm er an EU security call; involves the acq orist or extreme groups.	•	•	
а.	Will your project consider or encounted	er security-sensitive	material?	Yes :
b.	Will you be visiting websites associate organisations?	ed with extreme or t	errorist	Yes :
C.	Will you be storing or transmitting any materials that could be interpreted as promoting or endorsing terrorist acts? Yes			Yes
* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues				
Sec	tion 5 Systematic reviews of rese	earch (only comp	lete if annlic	ahla)
a.	Will you be collecting any new data fr		Yes *	abiej
b.	Will you be analysing any secondary of	data?	Yes 🗌 *	
* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues				
If your methods do not involve engagement with participants (e.g. systematic review, literature review) and if you have answered No to both questions, please go to Section 8 Attachments.				
Sec	tion 6 Secondary data analysis (only complete if	applicable)	
a.	Name of dataset/s			

b.	Owner of dataset/s			
C.	Are the data in the public domain?	Yes	No	
d.	Are the data anonymised?	Yes 🗌	No 🗌	
		· · ·	o anonymise the data? No*	
			o use individual level data? No 🔲	
		· —	nking data to individuals? No	
e.	Are the data sensitive (DPA 1998 defin	ition)?		
				Yes*
f.	Will you be conducting analysis within	the remit it wa	as originally collected for?	Yes
ა.	g. If no, was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis?			Yes
h.	h. If no, was data collected prior to ethics approval process?			Yes
* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues				
If secondary analysis is only method used and no answers with asterisks are ticked, go to Section 9 Attachments.				
Section 7 Data Storage and Security				
Please ensure that you include all hard and electronic data when completing this				
section.				

a. **Data subjects -** Who will the data be collected from?

Data will be collected from:

- (1) trainee teachers (2019 entry) currently on the Teach First Training Programme and undertaking an employment-based programme of initial teacher education (ITE) alongside the UCL Postgraduate Diploma in Education;
- (2) newly qualified teachers (2018 entry) currently completing the second year of the Teach First Training Programme and continuing to undertake the UCL Postgraduate Diploma in Education.
- b. **What data will be collected?** Please provide details of the type of personal data to be collected

Participants will be asked to share personal positive experiences of schoolbased learning during their ITE experience. Participants will be invited to contribute to the data analysis process through participation in workshops about the analysis of data collected on these personal experiences.

Participants will be asked to share the following personal data. *See attached participant questionnaire*:

- Full name
- Current status in relation to employment-based ITE (trainee, NQT)
- Age group (under 25; 25 and over)
- Career status on entry to ITE (graduate; recent graduate; career changer)
- The name of the school at which they are/were employed during their ITE vear

Disclosure – Who will the results of your project be disclosed to?

It is anticipated that results will be:

- published in an EdD thesis, which will be made available to the public;
- published in academic and practitioner publications and disseminated through academic and professional conferences/presentations;
 - shared with individuals and organisations involved in ITE (e.g. university providers, Teach First), in order to contribute to the advancement of professional practice;
 - shared with project participants and with other interested parties through a project website resource, designed following the completion of the

research to share findings and resources with individuals involved in the preparation of employment-based trainee teachers. As noted above, no story will be used from any participant who wishes their story not to be included in this resource.

All outputs, including the online resource, will be fully pseudonymised regarding both participants and schools.

Data storage – Please provide details on how and where the data will be stored i.e. UCL network, encrypted USB stick*, encrypted laptop* etc.

Original recordings of workshops/interviews will be stored as digital files on the UCL network, in the researcher's personal files to which others do not have access. Typed transcriptions of these recordings, or excerpts of these recordings, will also be stored on the UCL network, as above. Paper-based data (e.g. signed consent forms) will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the locked office of the researcher. Any laptop used to access and work on data will be encrypted, with password-protected access and regularly updated antivirus software. USB sticks will not be used to store data in relation to this project.

The 'key' linking participants' personal data to their pseudonymised stories will be stored as above in digital form, sufficiently separately from participants' stories that a 'motivated intruder' would need to take more than three steps to convert the data and identify individuals involved in the study.

Participants' personal data will be stored only for as long as it is required – until the successful completion of the research. This is anticipated to be December 2021. After this time the data will be destroyed. Paper-based data will be shredded through the UCL confidential waste process. Digital data will be deleted from the UCL network. With the permission of participants, data in the form of written stories will be retained for possible future research.

Access to personal data of research participants is restricted to the researcher and any transcribers working with them directly on the project. The transcription service used will be a service approved for use by UCL, such as Way With Words.

Data storage and handling will be in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, UCL's Information Security Policy and UCL's Data Protection Policy.

*Advanced Encryption Standard 256 bit encryption which has been made a security standard within the NHS

e.

Data Safe Haven (Identifiable Data Handling Solution) – Will the personal identifiable data collected and processed as part of this research be stored in the UCL Data Safe Haven (mainly used by SLMS divisions, institutes and departments)?

How long will the data and records be kept for and in what format?

Pseudonymised data and records will be kept in their original formats (written documents, recordings, written submissions made online) for the duration of the project, until the completion of the researcher's EdD course (expected December 2021). Following this point, personal data will be destroyed but project data in the form of participant 'stories' will be kept for the researcher's possible future use.

Will personal data be processed or be sent outside the European Economicf. Area? (If yes, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protections in compliance with the DPA 1998 and state what these arrangements are:

Data will not be processed or sent outside the EEA.

Will data be archived for use by other researchers? (If yes, please provide details.)

No. Data will not be archived for use by other researchers. With participants' permission the stories will be retained by the researcher for her possible future use.

Please state clearly the ethical issues which may arise in the course of this research and how will they be addressed.

All issues that may apply should be addressed. Some examples are given below, further information can be found in the guidelines. *Minimum 150 words required*.

- Methods
- Sampling
- Recruitment
- Gatekeepers
- Informed consent
- Potentially vulnerable participants
- Safeguarding/child protection
- Sensitive topics

- International research
- Risks to participants and/or researchers
- Confidentiality/Anonymity
- Disclosures/limits to confidentiality
- Data storage and security both during and after the research (including transfer, sharing, encryption, protection)
- Reporting
- Dissemination and use of findings

This research will be guided by the British Educational Research Association's guidance on research ethics (BERA, 2018) and UCL guidelines on data storage, research integrity and data protection.

Participants and recruitment

Although I now have no formal contact with the Teach First Training Programme, I was until recently the programme leader of the programme being researched, and before this was a subject leader for business studies. This means I bear characteristics of both an 'outsider' and an 'insider' to the programme. In particular, trainees and NQTs may know of me because of my previous relationship to the programme and may therefore consider me to be an insider, regardless of my current status. While I have no formal role on the programme, I continue to work with, and maintain personal friendships with, people who do, so I retain a clear connection to the programme. I am alert to the 'double-edged sword' of this 'insiderness' in the research, in particular in relation to access, intrusiveness, familiarity and rapport. This will remain an important touchstone throughout the process of data collection and analysis.

Trainee teachers and NQTs may feel that their decision re: participation and responses given will affect how they are perceived/treated at the IOE or on their ITE programme. This is addressed explicitly in the initial presentation and information sheet, making clear that there will be no information shared by the

researcher regarding the participation or otherwise of individuals. All data will be pseudonymised before stories are posted on the project website.

I am aware of the vulnerable position of trainee teachers and newly-qualified teachers who are employed in the schools where they are training/developing, particularly in relation to comments they may make about their employer during data collection. To a large extent the appreciative design of this study reduces the likelihood of negative comments, since it is focused on positive experiences, but this doesn't preclude some discussion of topics which participants may not want shared with employers. The bounds of confidentiality will be made clear to participants both in relation to me (nothing will be reported to employers, and all data will be anonymised / pseudonymised before publication) and to other participants in workshops (see details below re: the 'Chatham House rule'). This is addressed in the participant information form and will be reiterated at the outset of each workshop. Participants will at no stage be put under duress to share data and they can withdraw their data / story at any stage with no repercussions.

I am alert to risks of 'fabrication' as a response to perceived pressure to 'perform' or to appear competent, and participants modifying their contributions in a desire to please. These challenges will be addressed through clear briefings at the outset of each episode of data collection. They should also be mitigated by the explicit focus in AI on stories of success within local conditions: participants are expressly asked for their personal 'best stories', not for examples of broader 'best practice'. The phrasing of the topics/questions that guide data collection will be shaped to reduce opportunities for fabrication that cannot subsequently be substantiated. See attached workshop questions.

Participation will be framed explicitly as opt-in, optional and confidential within the bounds of anonymity possible within this context: pseudonymisation and alteration of non-material details will be used but, given the nature of ITE and the size of the cohort being sampled, informed individuals may still be able to infer identities of participants in the final study from the stories published. I cannot therefore guarantee full anonymity, or confidentiality. This will be made clear in all communications with participants and steps taken to protect identities as far as possible where possible in reporting the research. Member checking of stories,

transcripts and any documentary evidence used will afford participants the opportunity to confirm that they are happy for resources to be used within the study. Where any participant indicates that there are aspects of their stories which they do not want reported in findings, this material will be removed or redacted before publication. Given that data collection will largely take place through workshops with multiple participants, it is not possible to maintain anonymity about who has participated in the research: participants will be visible to their peers at workshops, many of whom they will know already from their time on the programme. This will be made clear in all recruitment literature. During workshops there will be an explicit briefing on the expectation that the 'Chatham House rule' applies — that what is discussed in the room is part of the data generation (similar to focus group discussions) and may be used by participants (e.g. they may take and apply ideas in their own practice that they hear about in the room) but that the identity and affiliation (e.g. employing school) of all participants in the workshop must not be shared beyond the room.

I have received consent from gatekeepers associated with the secondary phase Teach First Training Programme at UCL Institute of Education to approach trainee and newly qualified teachers for the purpose of this research. If participants request that workshops be held on their employing school premises, I will seek permission from their headteachers as gatekeepers of the school site before proceeding with arrangements. I will make clear to participants that, in this case, their headteacher will know that they are participating in the research. See attached letter to headteachers.

For the generation of case studies in phase 2, should this be required, I will seek additional consent from the schools in which trainees are employed, not only for individuals' participation but to collect additional data relevant to the case study. This might include, for example, observing a mentoring session or sitting in a subject team base while curriculum discussions are taking place (the precise data to be collected will depend on the aspects identified by participants as positive and about which I wish to learn more). Approaches to this will be clarified in an updated application for ethics review, should this be required, once the nature of the data sought is detailed following earlier stages of the research.

See section 7 above for details of how data will be stored to address ethical issues.

Informed consent

To assure informed consent, the information sheet and consent forms are explicit about the population and sample selected for this research, the opt-in design of the research and the right of all participants to withdraw at any time without prejudice. There is also clear information about the pseudonymisation of data and that decisions re: participation / responses given will not be shared beyond the researcher or used in any way to influence the treatment of trainee or NQT teachers at the IOE. Participants will be made aware that data collection is designed to be undertaken in workshop settings, meaning they would come into contact with other participants during these activities: the impact of this on anonymity will be made explicit.

Consent will be documented in writing through completion of a hard copy consent form in each phase. Where data is collected by Skype, participants will be asked to complete the consent form and share it by email or by posting a hard copy to the researcher. Verbal consent will also be sought at the outset of any discussion / data collection activity. The phase 1 consent form will seek consent for phase 1 of the project as it is currently designed and for data in the form of stories to be kept by the researcher for her future use. The phase 2 consent form covers the proposed analysis workshops as outlined above. Further consent documentation will be included in a new application for ethics review if phase 2 of the research develops further data collection activities.

Risks of the research

No sensitive topics should form part of this research. Participants will be informed in the information sheet and at the outset of each data collection opportunity of their right not to answer a question and/or to withdraw from the research at any time.

There is some personal risk to me in visiting schools to collect data. However, this is no greater than the risks associated with conducting school-based visits which are a core part of ITE work. This risk is therefore not considered to necessitate further action.

Anonymity and disclosure

Information may be shared by trainees which identifies individuals involved in their ITE experience (colleagues, tutors, mentors, for example). In this case all references will be pseudonymised, changing identifying details if necessary, before being shared on the project Moodle space. As described in section 2, this is a password-protected online site to which only I and participants will have access. Any disclosures made to me regarding work complaints or conditions in relation to trainees' experiences on their ITE programmes will be treated confidentially and not passed on. However, individuals who make such a disclosure will be informed of the appropriate channels where their concerns can be heard and managed appropriately. The only exception to this is where a safeguarding issue is raised, in which case this will be reported via the channels in place for ITE provision at IOE.

Benefits of the research

Participants are being asked to contribute a few hours of their time to the research. Within the current context of education this is potentially harmful given the workload that trainees and teachers are asked to manage. This has been considered carefully within the research design, which has been adapted such that it is felt that the likely benefits to participants, in terms of deepened insight into teacher education as well as learning about a research/intervention method that could assist in their own practice, are sufficient to justify the time asked for.

Participants should not incur expenses in participating in this research, with the possible exception of travel costs to attend a workshop or focus group. No benefits or incentives will be offered in exchange for participation.

Post research

Findings will be disseminated as outlined in section 7(c). Participants will be able to access the results of the research through the project website resource for those involved in preparing employment-based trainee teachers.

Section 9 Attachments Please attach the following items to this form, or explain if not attached					
a.	Information sheets, consent forms and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research (List attachments below)	Yes 🛚	No 🗌		
- - - - -	 Information sheet for participants Letter to headteachers requesting data collection on their premises Consent forms for participants (phases 1 and 2) Participant questionnaire Protocol for phase 1 data collection through workshops 				
	If applicable/appropriate:				
b.	Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee		Yes 🗌		
C.	The proposal ('case for support') for the project		Yes 🗌		
d.	Full risk assessment		Yes 🗌		
	tion 10 Declaration				
I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information in this form is correct and that this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of this project. Yes No					
I have discussed the ethical issues relating to my research with my supervisor.					
I have attended the appropriate ethics training provided by my course.					
I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:					

The above information is correct and that this is a full description of the ethics			
issues that may arise in the course of this project.			
Name	e Polly Glegg		
Date 02 January 2020			

Please submit your completed ethics forms to your supervisor for review.

Notes and references

Professional code of ethics

You should read and understand relevant ethics guidelines, for example:

British Psychological Society (2009) Code of Ethics and Conduct, and (2014) Code of Human Research Ethics

or

British Educational Research Association (2011) Ethical Guidelines

or

British Sociological Association (2002) Statement of Ethical Practice

Please see the respective websites for these or later versions; direct links to the latest versions are available on the Institute of Education http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/research/research-ethics

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as Schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) CHECK, before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through at IOE.

Ensure that you apply for the DBS check in plenty of time as will take around 4 weeks, though can take longer depending on the circumstances.

Further references

The <u>www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk</u> website is very useful for assisting you to think through the ethical issues arising from your project.

Robson, Colin (2011). *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers* (3rd edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

This text has a helpful section on ethical considerations.

Alderson, P. and Morrow, V. (2011) *The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People: A Practical Handbook.* London: Sage.

This text has useful suggestions if you are conducting research with children and young people.

Wiles, R. (2013) What are Qualitative Research Ethics? Bloomsbury.

A useful and short text covering areas including informed consent, approaches to research ethics including examples of ethical dilemmas.

Departmental use

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, the supervisor **must** refer the application to the Department Research Ethics Coordinator (via ioe.researchethics@ucl.ac.uk so that it can be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A departmental research ethics coordinator or representative can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the REC. If unsure please refer to the guidelines explaining when to refer the ethics application to the IOE Research Ethics Committee, posted on the committee's website.

Student name	Anna Kia Polly Glegg
Student department	CCM

Course	EdD
Project title	The workplace as a site of teacher learning in employment-based initial teacher education: An appreciative exploration.
Reviewer 1	
Supervisor/first reviewer name	Redacted
Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?	I foresee no difficulties. Polly has given full and detailed consideration to the ethical issues in the proposed research and addressed these.
Supervisor/first reviewer signature	Redacted
Date	08.01.20
Reviewer 2	
Second reviewer name	Redacted
Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?	I do not foresee any difficulties with the project. The ethics form provides a thorough and highly reflexive account of potential issues and has designed a study that will deal with these sufficiently.
Supervisor/second reviewer signature	Redacted
Date	20.01.20

Decision on behalf of reviews		
	Approved	\boxtimes
Decision	Approved subject to the following additional measures	
	Not approved for the reasons given below	
	Referred to REC for review	
Points to be noted by other reviewers and in report to REC		
Comments from reviewers for the applicant		
Once it is approved by both reviewers, students should submit their		
ethics application form to the Centre for Doctoral Education team: IOE.CDE@ucl.ac.uk.		

Amended application following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic

Having discussed my amended research design with a member of our ethics panel, I received the following email, which confirmed that I did not need to reapply for ethics approval as my new design fell within the boundaries of my original application and approval.

Dear Polly,

Following our conversation today, I understand that your ethical approval form for your EdD research covers the online data gathering methods that you are currently using, and therefore there is no need to register any changes via the IOE amendment form.

Best wishes,

[Name redacted]

Appendix 3: Recruitment literature – initial email to trainees, information

sheet and consent form

Initial email text sent through my university's Teach First administrator

account

[This message is sent with the consent of Francine McMahon, programme lead for

secondary Teach First]

Dear 2018 secondary cohort

I'm a teacher educator and doctoral student at the IOE, doing some research into how

to best support trainee teachers who are on employment-based Initial Teacher

Education (ITE) programmes (like you). Could you spare an hour to be part of this – 15

minutes to read a brief information sheet and complete a very short survey, then 45

minutes for an online interview at a time of your choosing?

The outcomes of this research will help to shape future ITE programmes and support

provided to school-based mentors. By participating, you will contribute to improved

learning experiences for future trainee teachers.

If you think you might like to help out, you can find more information here [hyperlink]:

research information sheet and survey. This includes my contact details: please do get

in touch if you've any questions or comments about this research.

With all best wishes

Polly Glegg

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Text of information sheet and consent form held online and accessed through the hyperlink in the recruitment email

The Workplace as a Site of Teacher Learning in Employment-Based Initial Teacher Education: An Appreciative Exploration

This is an invitation to take part in research about trainee teachers' learning.

Hello, my name is Polly Glegg. I am a lecturer in education and doctoral student at UCL Institute of Education (IOE). After working in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for many years, including on the Teach First Training Programme, I am focusing my research on improving learning experiences for trainee teachers in employment-based ITE.

If you want to contact me about any aspect of this research, you can:

Email me: REDACTED Call me: REDACTED

WHAT?

The working title of my research is: The workplace as a site of teacher learning in employment-based initial teacher education: An appreciative exploration

The main research question is: What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher education, as experienced by recently qualified teachers?

The research is a study into the sorts of school / workplace environment and learning opportunities that are particularly successful at fostering the learning of trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme.

WHO?

I am looking for research participants who were trainees last year (secondary age phase, any subject) and are now in their NQT year (2018 intake). It doesn't matter whether or not you feel that your school was a model learning environment for trainee teachers – I'm interested in the 'best bits' of everybody's experience, even if that experience could have been better overall.

By agreeing to participate in this research, you would be committing to completing a short online questionnaire (less than 5 minutes) and participating in an online narrative interview of around 45 minutes. Interviews will be conducted using Microsoft Teams at a time convenient to you and will be audio recorded. During the interview I will ask you to 'tell me the story of how you learned to teach', with a focus on the school / workplace environment and on your most positive, powerful learning experiences.

WHAT ABOUT ...?

All decisions you make about this research will have no bearing in any way on your participation in, or success in relation to, the Teach First Training Programme, including awards related to your PGDE. Specifically, I will not tell anybody else who is participating, whether participants withdraw at any stage, or anything that is said by individuals. Your choice about whether or not to participate in the research is entirely separate from your progress on the programme. This is an opt-in study so you will not be included in it unless you actively say you would like to take part.

I will take all reasonable steps to protect participants' identity by pseudonymising individuals and removing or altering details from your data that could identify you or others (e.g. the name of your school or mentor). I will not share full stories from any individual participant, but I will combine your

collective data into composite stories which reflect the overall findings of my study. The process of doing this will protect the identity of individual participants.

You may withdraw your data from the study at any time until October 2020, without giving a reason for doing this. I will ask you for some personal information so that I can analyse themes in my data in relation to trainee characteristics (e.g. age, previous career), but I won't use this to identify you in any published work.

IS IT ETHICAL?

This study has been approved by the IOE's ethics process for postgraduate research activity, reference number Z6364106/2019/11/70 social research. Teach First and the IOE have also given their consent.

Local Data Protection Privacy Notice: The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk. This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice: For participants in research studies click here: privacy notice

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices. The lawful basis that will be used to process your personal data is: 'Public task' for personal data. Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible. If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

HAPPY TO PROCEED?

If you are happy to participate in my research, please click 'start' at the bottom of this page.

Text of the short survey that forms the first stage of participation

The Workplace as a Site of Teacher Learning in Employment-Based Initial Teacher Education: An Appreciative Exploration

If, having read the information provided about this research, you are happy to participate, please complete the consent form below.

Once you have completed the consent form you will be taken to the participant questionnaire.

If you do not wish to participate in the research you may close this page now. Thank you for taking the time to read this far.

Consent form

1. I have read and understood the information provided about this research

Yes No

2.	I agree to take part in this research by participating in an interview using		
	Microsoft Teams and completing the	participant questionnaire	
	Yes	No	
3.	I am happy for the interview to be au	dio recorded	
	Yes	No	
4.	I understand that if any of my words	are used in reports or presentations	
	they will not be attributed to me		
	Yes	No	
5.	I understand that I can withdraw from October 2020 by contacting Polly Glest telephone, and that if I choose to do the the study	gg (the researcher) by email or	
	Yes	No	
6.	I understand that I can contact Polly (telephone at any time using the conta		
	Yes	No	

J	project and destroyed once the project is complete, subject to the point below				
	Yes	No			
1	give permission for Polly Glegg (the form of my interview transcript and opersonal data, beyond the duration of use	uestionnaire responses, but not my			
	Yes	No			
9. \	What is your full name?				
10.	What is your email address? I will us Teams interview that you have agree				
11.	Please list some dates and times who in the interview using Microsoft Tea 45 minutes.				
	I will be as flexible as I can with sche during the working day, or at weeke				

you better. I	interviews can ta	ke place any tim	e during May,	June and July
2020.				

Participant questionnaire

12. On entry to the Teach First Training Programme (in 2018) what age group were you in?

Aged under 25

Aged 25 or over

13. Which of the statements below best describes your situation on entry to the Training Programme?

I was an immediate or recent graduate (I graduated in the few years before starting the programme and this is my first career)

I was a career changer (I had a career outside teaching before starting the programme)

Neither describes me well (please give details)

14. Which of the statements below best describes your situation during your ITE year?

I was the only subject specialist teacher in my subject area employed at the school during my ITE year

There were other subject specialists in my subject area employed at the school during my ITE year

Neither describes me well (please give details)

15. Which of the statements below best describes your situation in your employing school during your ITE year? (tick all that apply)

I was the only Teach First trainee (first or second year) employed at the school during my ITE year

There were other Teach First trainees (first or second year) employed at the school during my ITE year

My cohort was the first Teach First cohort that the school had employed

My mentor had previous experience of the Teach First programme before working with me

16. Which of the statements below best describes your mentor while in your ITE year?

My mentor was a subject specialist teacher in my subject area

My mentor was not a subject specialist in my subject area

Neither describes my mentor well (please give details)

Thank you for consenting to participate in this research and for completing the participant questionnaire.

I will be in touch shortly to confirm a time and date for your interview. If you have any questions in the meantime, you can contact me

by email at REDACTED
by telephone at REDACTED
Polly Glegg (researcher)

Appendix 4: Interview plan detailing my approach to managing each interview

THE WORKPLACE AS A SITE OF TEACHER LEARNING IN EMPLOYMENT-BASED INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: AN APPRECIATIVE EXPLORATION.

The activities, questions and prompts below are for use in participant interviews, for the generation of stories about participants' experiences of learning in employment-based initial teacher education.

For further information please contact Polly Glegg: p.qleqq@ucl.ac.uk / 07967 722105.

Introduction

- Researcher: thank you giving your time to participate in this research today. You've previously read some information about the research and given your consent to take part. I'm now going to recap some important details of the research and ask you to confirm your consent again before we start.
- Researcher summarises the study and the plan for this interview.

WHAT?

The working title of my research is: The workplace as a site of teacher learning in employment-based initial teacher education: An appreciative exploration

The main research question is: What are the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments for trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme of initial teacher education, as experienced by recently qualified teachers?

The research is a study into the sorts of school / workplace environment and learning opportunities that are particularly successful at fostering the learning of trainee teachers on the Teach First Training Programme.

- Researcher
 - o emphasises that this study is focusing on workplace-based learning, so please focus contributions on this today (i.e. not on learning taking place in taught sessions away from the workplace);
 - reiterates that the focus of the study is the ITE/training year, and asks participant (who is now an NQT) to focus their stories on the first year of the participation in the Teach First Training Programme...but of course make reference to examples from this year if helpful, draw on hindsight etc.;
 - o explains the notion of collecting participants' stories and how these will be analysed what it was like for you opinions, feelings, anecdotes helpful here;
 - reiterates that the focus of the interview is on positive learning experiences that researcher may, if necessary, prompt / refocus towards positive learning or what would have constituted positive learning experiences in a given situation;
 - addresses the issue of fabrication and reiterates that this isn't about presenting an 'ideal' image of employing schools but talking honestly about participants' learning experiences within the reality of their school environment;
- Researcher recaps key issues around consent, withdrawal of consent until 1 Oct 2020, anonymity and pseudonymisation
- Participant gives verbal consent to continue with the interview and for interview to be audio recorded
- Researcher asks if participant has any questions and answers these.

Interview schedule

Key question

So, [name], over to you. Tell me the story of how you learned to teach.

Prompts

To elicit further detail about the story

- a. What happened? What happened next?
- b. How did the experience come about? Was it pre-arranged? Planned? Happenstance?
- c. Who was there? What was their role in your experience? What did they do?
- d. Where were you? How did the environment affect your learning experience?
- e. What made this time different? Why did you choose to tell us about this experience rather than another?
- f. What happened as a consequence of this experience? What did you learn? What changed?
- g. When did this happen? How important was this timing for your learning?
- h. How did you feel at that point?

For use if discussion orients away from the positive and participant starts to raise negative topics, comments and / or express concern that positive change isn't possible:

- Frame discussions to be positive but avoid using this as a tool of silence in which discussions about negatives are simply shut down.
- 'I hear you saying... What does this tell you about what you wanted, where you wanted to go?'
- 'I hear you. I hear that this was a real challenge, and the ways your tutors and mentors have gone about things in the past haven't worked yet. What can we learn from this about what would have made it better?'
- 'If wholesale change feels like too much immediately, what single change would have taken you a step towards your ideal vision for your learning?
- 'Behind every problem is a frustrated dream. This problem you're describing: what frustrated dream is it telling you about? What are you dreaming of?'

For use if participant runs out of story to tell

- What are the core factors that give life /gave life to your school as a learning environment for you as a new teacher, without which the school would cease to exist as the organisation that you know?
- Thinking back to your training year, what one factor would you say made the biggest impact on your learning in your employing school?
- If you could re-write the story / stories you've just shared with me, to make your learning experience even more positive during your ITE year, how would you do this?
- If I take away one message from this interview about the characteristics of effective learning environments for trainee teachers in schools, what should that be?
- What sort of teacher did you become as a result of your learning experiences during ITE?
- How much were you allowed to be a 'learner' as well as a 'teacher'?

Appendix 5: An illustrative extract of an interview transcript

I = interviewer (interviewer in bold)

T = teacher

1 I: So, whenever you're ready, can you tell me your story of how you learned

2 to teach

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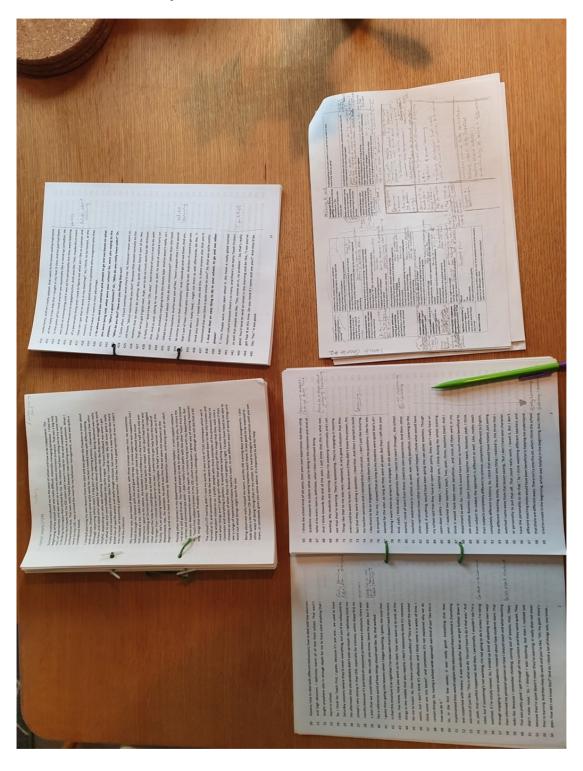
26

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T: Okay. So, I guess on the Teach First programme there's, like, a bit of training beforehand in a school, which is quite useful, sort of gets, like, the nerves out of it. But then realistically, I walked into the classroom the first day, didn't really know what was going on. I had broad ideas based on my own education. But then probably, like, the biggest thing that really helped me was having a mentor in school who was so, like, focused on what it is to be, like, a maths teacher. What, like, makes lessons. Like, I had an awful year ten class and a great year nine class. And he would come in and observe them, pop his head in, and then would always... irrelevant of like... so, I had one lesson, which I'd walk out and I'm like, "Oh, this went brilliantly", with my year nine class, and I'd walk out of my year ten class and go, "That was catastrophically bad." But every time, like, his comments were similar. Like, they're based purely, like, on the ideas of planning and, like, the ideas I've tried to put into the lesson. So, it's not behaviourally focused. It's not, like, focused on, like, how did the class necessarily react to it, which was really important because it meant that, like, I just started to be able to distil my ideas of what was good, what was bad without having to worry. Because my school's quite challenging [laugh]. My Teach First PDL person said that it's the hardest school she's seen in London. So, it is pretty bad in terms of behaviour. So, that was, like, a bit of a challenge to not let that get caught up in what it means to be, like, a good maths teacher. And the entire department I had was so helpful. Like, we were just... it sounds really nerdy, but, like, we would go on a trip taking some year tens away to, like, this employment sort of day thing. And we didn't have to watch them at all. They were allowed to walk around. And we just all sat down at a table, like, five of us and started discussing, like, the best way to represent division by fractions and, like, how you explain it. And just that thing of, like, everyone

Appendix 6: A picture of my initial coding work in progress, including a code table in development with annotations



Appendix 7: Initial stages of coding - the code table in its first five iterations

DRAFT 1

Emotions: the impact of emotions on participant learning	Confidence, fear, anxiety, enthusiasm, excitement Feeling like you're making progress, doing a good job What motivates them Hating working in some situations Feeling comforted, protected from being overwhelmed
Participants discussing their learning: focus on how it comes about, concepts of teacher learning	Inspirational, pivotal conversations and/or words of advice The role of theory in participant learning Learning as a process, sequence of events that can be coherent, fragmented Role of CSE Sensemaking
Learning experiences that participants value, want more of: focus on events, processes, activities, experiences	Networking with peers re: how to do things - focus on practicalities Reading and discussing practice-oriented journals, research, theory Opportunities to think Observing others - for 'tips', as role model for teacher persona Access to 'best practice' Coherence of learning experiences Engaging with expert colleagues Has to be realistic Knowing what it's like in other schools
Participants' beliefs about teaching, good teaching: talking about what they think good teaching is, or	Differentiating between 'adequate' and great teaching Thinking that 'best practice' exists and is waiting to be tapped into

revealing this through wider discussion	Teaching requires thinking
	Difference between CK and PCK
	Reflective practice
	'Survival' comes before great teaching. The importance of 'treading water'
	Org. and occup. visions of teaching
	Good teaching as a journey or a destination
	Complexity in good teaching
Participant	Learning to be 'adequate' as first goal
wants/needs change over time: stage of	The need for comfort at the beginning of the journey
development matters	Having to un-learn early habits as time progresses
Impact of speedy	Focus on what works <u>now</u>
move to full participation	Learning shortcuts, 'cookie cutter' approaches that can be easily transferred to practice
(should this merge with the previous code?)	Wanting 'relevant' input that makes easy sense immediately
	Being knackered!
	Early anxieties about very practical concerns
	Not having time to, e.g., observe other teachers
Working within	Being 'caught in the middle'
multiple sets of expectations:	'Gaming' the system
responding to expectations of school, TF, IOE	Learning from exposure to different philosophies
Significant	Mentor
relationships: positive	DL
and negative relationships, how	Tutor
they've come about	Others in school
and the impact they've had	TF peers (subj and non-subj specific)
Boundary crossing:	Code this on top of other codes for now. It's an analytical hunch at the moment, based on my BERA paper I think

	Look out for compensatory and expansive bx in other transcripts?
Dropping out, leaving teaching: talking about leaving the profession / the programme and factors that influence this	Avoiding getting to the point where it's so bad that you want to leave Factors that 'keep you going'
Power and autonomy: having control over learning and practice, including connecting TF/IOE learning to everyday practice	Include both where the school controls power, autonomy and where the TFP acts independently to make things happen
Contextual factors: wider aspects of the dept, school culture, structure of school building, how trainee learning valued (or not)	Look for positive and negative The impact of dissonance in driving learning Wider relationships within the school (not specifically the TFP's relationships) TFP's respect for their colleagues Quality of practice modelled around the school How TF as a programme is received within the school

DRAFT 2 - draft 1 amended after 2 further transcripts

Participants Inspirational, pivotal conversations and/or words of discussing their advice **learning:** focus on how The role of theory in participant learning it comes about. Learning as a process, sequence of events that can concepts of teacher be coherent, fragmented learning as a process Role of CSE Sensemaking Role of reflective practice Learning as copying, adapting from others Learning to assess one's own progress Valued learning Networking with peers re: how to do things - focus experiences: focus on on practicalities events, activities. Reading and discussing practice-oriented journals, experiences that research, theory participants value, want Opportunities to think more of Observing others - for 'tips', as role model for teacher persona Access to 'best practice' Coherence of learning experiences Engaging with expert colleagues Has to be realistic Knowing what it's like in other schools Narratives from other trainees Being observed and getting feedback Specific advice about teaching particular topics Beliefs about (good) Differentiating between 'adequate' and great teaching: talking about teaching what they think good Thinking that 'best practice' exists and is waiting to teaching is, or be tapped into revealing this through Teaching requires thinking wider discussion Difference between CK and PCK

Reflective practice

'Survival' comes before great teaching. The importance of 'treading water' Org. and occup. visions of teaching Good teaching as a journey or a destination Complexity in good teaching Judging teaching by evaluating student learning Teaching as personal: 'what works' doesn't work for everybody A trajectory of Learning to be 'adequate' as a first goal (learning) needs: The need for comfort at the beginning of the journey stage of development - reassurance that you're making progress, doing a matters; needs evolve good job as participants develop Confidence, fear, anxiety, enthusiasm, excitement Protection from being overwhelmed Having to un-learn early habits as time progresses Focus on what works now Learning shortcuts, 'cookie cutter' approaches that can be easily transferred to practice Wanting 'relevant' input that makes easy sense immediately Being knackered! Early anxieties about very practical concerns Not having time to, e.g., observe other teachers Not knowing what you don't know / need, especially early on Having to master beh management before you can move on to other things Working with 3 Being 'caught in the middle' providers: responding 'Gaming' the system to expectations of Learning from exposure to different philosophies school, TF, IOE Coherence across providers Box-ticking (by participant, by provider) Relying on luck, serendipity, personal contacts, 'luck of the draw' versus having carefully planned learning experiences

Significant relationships and structures of support: positive and negative relationships and structures, how they've come about and the impact they've had	Mentor DL Tutor Others in school TF peers (subj and non-subj specific) Support plans
Boundary crossing:	Code this on top of other codes for now. It's an analytical hunch at the moment, based on my BERA paper I think Look out for compensatory and expansive bx in other transcripts?
Sticking it out: talking about leaving the profession / the programme and factors that influence this	Avoiding getting to the point where it's so bad that you want to leave Factors that 'keep you going'
Agency: having power, autonomy over learning and practice, including opportunities to connect TF/IOE learning to everyday practice	Include both where the school controls power, autonomy and where the TFP acts independently to make things happen Does the system account for the individual? Does the individual have to conform to the system? Being able to try out new ideas, speak one's mind, make things happen What is given to the Trainee? What is taken by the Trainee?
The school as a context for learning: wider aspects of the dept, school culture, structure of school building, how trainee learning valued (or not), colleagues	Look for positive and negative The impact of dissonance in driving learning - where personal views are not aligned with the school Wider relationships within the school (not specifically the TFP's relationships) TFP's respect for their colleagues Quality of practice modelled around the school How TF as a programme is received within the school Expectations of Trainees

	Being seen as a learner / employee
	School's approach to T&L, including standardised lesson structures, plans etc.
Identity: becoming a teacher - the individual in the process	Shaping a teacher persona Asking for help Developing an identity, confidence as a teacher Seeing self as learner, Trainee, NQT, UT Motivations Choosing how to present oneself to colleagues and students
Going it alone: being a teacher of record from the outset, alone in one's own classroom, within the TFTP	Having full responsibility for results Learning to assess pupil progress (and having to 'guess' this early on) Pros and cons of being alone with pupils Learning by trial and error Not being watched much of the time Finding strategies that work
Subject specialism: learning to be a specialist subject teacher	Talking about subject expertise Anxiety around subject specialism Teaching a second subject Understandings of being a subject teacher

DRAFT 3 – amended after 3 further transcripts

Participants discussing their learning: focus on how learning comes about, concepts of teacher learning as a process, how it feels to be learning	Critical incidents, inspirational, pivotal conversations and/or words of advice Role of theory in participant learning Learning as a process, sequence of events that can be coherent, fragmented Role of CSE Sensemaking Role of reflective practice Learning as copying, adapting from others Learning to assess one's own progress Trying things out Categorising learning
Valued learning experiences: events, activities, experiences that participants found useful, want more of to foster learning	Networking with peers re: how to do things - focus on practicalities Reading and discussing practice-oriented journals, research, theory Opportunities, time to think Observing others - for 'tips', as role model for teacher persona Access to 'best practice' Coherence of learning experiences Engaging with expert colleagues Has to be realistic Knowing what it's like in other schools Narratives from other trainees Being observed and getting feedback Specific advice about teaching particular topics Rehearsal, practice
Beliefs about teaching: how participants conceptualise (good) teaching	Differentiating between 'adequate' and great teaching Thinking that 'best practice' exists and is waiting to be tapped into Teaching requires thinking

	Difference between CK and PCK
	Reflective practice
	'Survival' comes before great teaching. The importance of 'treading water'
	Org. and occup. visions of teaching
	Good teaching as a journey or a destination
	Complexity in good teaching
	Judging teaching by evaluating student learning
	Teaching as personal: 'what works' doesn't work for everybody
	Teaching as something that can be 'copied', replicated
A trajectory of	Learning to be 'adequate' as a first goal
needs: stage of development matters; learning, emotional and practical needs	The need for comfort at the beginning of the journey - reassurance that you're making progress, doing a good job
evolve as participants	Confidence, fear, anxiety, enthusiasm, excitement
develop	Protection from being overwhelmed
	Having to un-learn early habits as time progresses
	Focus on what works <u>now</u>
	Learning shortcuts, 'cookie cutter' approaches that can be easily transferred to practice
	Wanting 'relevant' input that makes easy sense immediately
	Being knackered!
	Early anxieties about very practical concerns
	Not having time to, e.g., observe other teachers
	Not knowing what you don't know / need, especially early on. Limited ability to 'see' classrooms
	Having to master behaviour management before you can move on to other things
	Recognising post hoc the value of all of the academic learning that didn't feel relevant at the time
Working within the	Being 'caught in the middle'
TF model: responding to expectations of	'Gaming' the system

school, TF, IOE as	Learning from exposure	to different philosophies
three providers working together	Coherence across providers	
	Box-ticking (by participant, by provider)	
	Relying on luck, serendipity, personal contacts, 'luck of the draw' versus having carefully planned learning experiences	
	Some content can only I	be learned in school/context
	Impact of assignments of to write)	on participant (e.g. taking time
Significant relationships and	Mentor	TF peers (subj and non- subj specific)
structures of support: positive and	Tutor	Support plans
negative relationships and structures, how they've come about and the impact they've had	Others in school	PGCE students in same department
Sticking it out: talking about leaving the profession / the programme and factors that influence this	Avoiding getting to the point where it's so bad that you want to leave Factors that 'keep you going'	
Agency: having power, autonomy over learning and practice,	Include both where the sautonomy and where the make things happen	school controls power, e TFP acts independently to
including opportunities to connect TF/IOE	Does the system account for the individual?	
learning to everyday	Does the individual have to conform to the system?	
practice	Being able to try out new ideas, speak one's mind, make things happen	
	What is given to the Trainee? What is taken by the Trainee?	
	Having to negotiate, ada	apt ideas
The school as a context for learning: wider aspects of the dept, school culture,	Look for positive and negative The impact of dissonance in driving learning - where personal views are not aligned with the school	

structure of school building, how Trainee learning valued (or not), colleagues	the Trainee's relationship. Trainee's respect for their Quality of practice modell How TF as a programme	colleagues led around the school is received within the school by colleagues, managers, employee _, including standardised
Identity: becoming and belonging as a teacher - the individual in the process	Shaping a teacher persona Asking for help Developing an identity, confidence as a teacher Seeing self as learner, Trainee, NQT, UT	Motivations Choosing how to present oneself to colleagues and students Commitment to the school, profession, TF ideology Relationships with pupils
Going it alone: being a teacher of record from the outset, alone in one's own classroom, within the TFTP	Having full responsibility for results Learning to assess pupil progress (and having to 'guess' this early on) Pros and cons of being alone with pupils	Learning by trial and error Not being watched much of the time Finding strategies that work
Subject specialism: learning to be a specialist subject teacher	Talking about subject expertise as aspect of teacher knowledge Anxiety around subject specialism Teaching a second subject	Understandings of being a subject teacher Conflict with dept around understandings of subject

DRAFT 4 - amended after 2 further transcripts

Participants discussing their learning: focus on how learning comes about, concepts of teacher learning as a process, the experience of learning to teach	Critical incidents, inspirational, pivotal conversations and/or words of advice Role of theory in participant learning Learning as a process, sequence of events that can be coherent, fragmented Role of CSE as a learning experience Sensemaking Role of reflective practice	Learning as copying, adapting from others Learning to assess one's own progress Trying things out Categorising learning Not knowing what you don't know / need, especially early on. Limited ability to 'see' classrooms
Valued learning experiences: events, activities, experiences that participants found useful and/or want more of to foster learning	Networking with peers re: how to do things - focus on practicalities Reading and discussing practice-oriented journals, research, theory Opportunities, time to think Observing others - for 'tips', as role model for teacher persona Access to 'best practice' Coherence of learning experiences Engaging with expert colleagues	Has to be realistic Knowing what it's like in other schools Narratives from other trainees Being observed and getting feedback Specific advice about teaching particular topics Rehearsal, practice
Difficult learning experiences: events, activities, experiences that participants talk about as not supporting their learning	Poor quality observation feeld Having to take part in role- Target-setting that feels like Negative personal interactions	play, rehearsal, practice e box-ticking

Beliefs about teaching: how participants conceptualise (good) teaching

Differentiating between 'adequate' and great teaching

Thinking that 'best practice' exists and is waiting to be tapped into

Teaching requires thinking

Difference between CK and PCK

Reflective practice

'Survival' comes before great teaching. The importance of 'treading water'

Org. and occup. visions of teaching

Good teaching as a journey or a destination

Complexity in good teaching

Judging teaching by evaluating student learning

Teaching as personal: 'what works' doesn't work for everybody

Teaching as something that can be 'copied', replicated

Needs and priorities over the year:

participants' learning, emotional and practical needs, and how these are prioritised across the training year Learning to be 'adequate' as a first goal

The need for comfort at the beginning of the journey - reassurance that you're making progress, doing a good job

Confidence, fear, anxiety, enthusiasm, excitement

Needing protection from being overwhelmed

Having to un-learn early habits as time progresses

Focus on what works now

Learning shortcuts, 'cookie cutter' approaches that can be easily transferred to practice

Wanting 'relevant' input that makes easy sense immediately

Being knackered!

Early anxieties about very practical concerns

Not having time to, e.g., observe other teachers

Having to master beh mgmt before you can move on to other things

Recognising *post hoc* the value of all of the academic learning that didn't feel relevant at the time

Working within the Being 'caught in the middle' TF model: responding 'Gaming' the system to expectations of Learning from exposure to different philosophies school, TF, IOE as three providers Coherence across providers working together Box-ticking (by participant, by provider) Relying on luck, serendipity, personal contacts, 'luck of the draw' versus having carefully planned learning experiences Some content can only be learned in school/context, not elsewhere Impact of assignments on participant (e.g. taking time off to write) Workload, working hours, time burden of being on the programme Significant Mentor relationships and DΙ structures of Tutor **support:** positive and negative relationships Others in school and structures, how TF peers (subj and non-subj specific) they've come about and the impact they've Support plans had PGCE students in same department **Agency:** having Include both where the school controls power, autonomy and where the TFP acts independently to power, autonomy over learning and practice. make things happen including opportunities Does the system account for the individual? to connect TF/IOE Does the individual have to conform to the system? learning to everyday practice Being able to try out new ideas, speak one's mind, make things happen What is given to the Trainee? What is taken by the Trainee? Having to negotiate, adapt ideas The school as a Look for positive and negative context for learning: The impact of dissonance in driving learning - where wider aspects of the

personal views are not aligned with the school

dept, school culture,

Wider relationships within the Trainee's relationships	the school (not specifically
Trainee's respect for their colleagues	
Quality of practice modelled around the school	
How TF as a programme is received within the school	
Expectations of Trainees be school leaders	oy colleagues, managers,
Being seen as a learner / employee	
School's approach to T&L lesson structures, plans et	
School's CPD offer	
Shaping a teacher persona Asking for help	Choosing how to present oneself to colleagues and students
Developing an identity, confidence as a teacher Seeing self as learner, Trainee, NQT, UT Motivations	Commitment to the school, profession, TF ideology
	Relationships with pupils
	Coping mechanisms when things aren't going to plan
Having full responsibility for	or results
Learning to assess pupil p 'guess' this early on)	progress (and having to
Pros and cons of being alone with pupils	
Learning by trial and error	
Not being watched much of	of the time
Finding strategies that wo	rk
Talking about subject	Understandings of being a subject teacher
teacher knowledge	Conflict with dept around
Anxiety around subject specialism	understandings of subject
Teaching a second subject	
	the Trainee's relationships Trainee's respect for their Quality of practice modelle How TF as a programme is Expectations of Trainees is school leaders Being seen as a learner / School's approach to T&L lesson structures, plans et School's CPD offer Shaping a teacher persona Asking for help Developing an identity, confidence as a teacher Seeing self as learner, Trainee, NQT, UT Motivations Having full responsibility for Learning to assess pupil progress' this early on) Pros and cons of being allowed the service of teacher who when the service is a sepect of teacher knowledge Anxiety around subject specialism Teaching a second

Participants discussing their learning: focus on how learning comes about, concepts of teacher learning as a process, the experience of learning to teach

Critical incidents, inspirational, pivotal conversations and/or words of advice

Role of theory in participant learning

Learning as a process, sequence of events that can be coherent, fragmented

Role of CSE as a learning experience

Sensemaking

Role of reflective practice

Learning as copying, adapting from others

Learning to assess one's own progress

Trying things out

Categorising learning

Not knowing what you don't know / need, especially early on. Limited ability to 'see' classrooms

Being able to judge own competence, progress

Valued learning experiences: events, activities, experiences that participants found useful and/or want more of to foster learning

Networking with peers re: how to do things - focus on practicalities

Reading and discussing practice-oriented journals, research, theory

Opportunities, time to think

Observing others - for 'tips', as role model for teacher persona

Access to 'best practice'

Coherence of learning experiences

Engaging with expert colleagues

Has to be realistic

Knowing what it's like in other schools

Narratives from other trainees

Being observed and getting feedback

Specific advice about teaching particular topics

Rehearsal, practice

Difficult learning experiences: events, activities, experiences that participants talk

Poor quality observation feedback

Having to take part in role-play, rehearsal, practice

Target-setting that feels like box-ticking

about as not supporting their learning	Negative personal interactions
Beliefs about teaching: how	Differentiating between 'adequate' and great teaching
participants conceptualise (good) teaching	Thinking that 'best practice' exists and is waiting to be tapped into
leaching	Teaching requires thinking
	Difference between CK and PCK
	Reflective practice
	'Survival' comes before great teaching. The importance of 'treading water'
	Org. and occup. visions of teaching
	Good teaching as a journey or a destination
	Complexity in good teaching
	Judging teaching by evaluating student learning
	Teaching as personal: 'what works' doesn't work for everybody
	Teaching as something that can be 'copied', replicated
Needs and priorities over the year: participants' learning, emotional and practical	Learning to be 'adequate' as a first goal
	The need for comfort at the beginning of the journey - reassurance that you're making progress, doing a good job
needs, and how these are prioritised across	Confidence, fear, anxiety, enthusiasm, excitement
the training year	Needing protection from being overwhelmed
	Having to un-learn early habits as time progresses
	Focus on what works <u>now</u>
	Learning shortcuts, 'cookie cutter' approaches that can be easily transferred to practice
	Wanting 'relevant' input that makes easy sense immediately
	Being knackered!
	Early anxieties about very practical concerns
	Not having time to, e.g., observe other teachers
	Having to master beh mgmt before you can move on to other things

	Recognising post hoc the value of all of the academic learning that didn't feel relevant at the time
Working within the TF model: responding to expectations of school, TF, IOE as three providers working together	Being 'caught in the middle' 'Gaming' the system Learning from exposure to different philosophies Coherence across providers Box-ticking (by participant, by provider) Relying on luck, serendipity, personal contacts, 'luck of the draw' versus having carefully planned learning experiences Some content can only be learned in school/context, not elsewhere Impact of assignments on participant (e.g. taking time off to write) Workload, working hours, time burden of being on the programme
Significant relationships and structures of support: positive and negative relationships and structures, how they've come about and the impact they've had	Mentor DL Tutor Others in school TF peers (subj and non-subj specific) Support plans PGCE students in same department Expectations that Trainees have of mentors
Agency: having power, autonomy over learning and practice, including opportunities to connect TF/IOE learning to everyday practice	Include both where the school controls power, autonomy and where the TFP acts independently to make things happen Does the system account for the individual? Does the individual have to conform to the system? Being able to try out new ideas, speak one's mind, make things happen What is given to the Trainee? What is taken by the Trainee? Having to negotiate, adapt ideas

The school as a Look for positive and negative context for learning: The impact of dissonance in driving learning - where wider aspects of the personal views are not aligned with the school dept. school culture. Wider relationships within the school (not specifically structure of school the Trainee's relationships) building, how Trainee learning valued (or Trainee's respect for their colleagues not), colleagues Quality of practice modelled around the school How TF as a programme is received within the school Expectations of Trainees by colleagues, managers, school leaders Being seen as a learner / employee School's approach to T&L, including standardised lesson structures, plans etc. School's CPD offer **Identity:** becoming Shaping a teacher persona and belonging as a Asking for help teacher - the individual Developing an identity, confidence as a teacher in the process Seeing self as learner, Trainee, NQT, UQT Motivations Choosing how to present oneself to colleagues and students Commitment to the school, profession, TF ideology Relationships with pupils, beliefs about pupils Coping mechanisms when things aren't going to plan Going it alone: being Having full responsibility for results a teacher of record Learning to assess pupil progress (and having to from the outset, alone 'quess' this early on) in one's own Pros and cons of being alone with pupils classroom, within the **TFTP** Learning by trial and error Not being watched much of the time Finding strategies that work Feelings about degree of freedom / oversight from school leaders

Subject specialism:
learning to be a
specialist subject
teacher

Talking about subject expertise as aspect of teacher
knowledge
Anxiety around subject specialism
Teaching a second subject
Understandings of being a subject teacher
Conflict with dept around understandings of subject

Appendix 8: Coding matrix showing cross-coding between themes at the stage of using template 5 in my data analysis

	01. Participants discussing their learning	02. Valued learning experiences	03. Difficult learning experiences	04. Beliefs about teaching	05. Needs and priorities over the year	06. Working within the TF model	07. Significant relation-ships and structures of support	08. Agency	09. The school as a context for learning	10. Identity	11. Going it alone	12. Subject specialism
01. Participants discussing their learning	123	41	6	21	31	18	23	24	26	28	7	17
02. Valued learning experiences	41	113	6	8	21	12	32	10	26	13	2	11
03. Difficult learning experiences	6	6	19	0	1	1	3	1	3	0	0	1
04. Beliefs about teaching	21	8	0	42	4	5	1	2	9	6	0	4
05. Needs and	31	21	1	4	83	15	24	9	9	11	5	7

	01. Participants discussing their learning	02. Valued learning experiences	03. Difficult learning experiences	04. Beliefs about teaching	05. Needs and priorities over the year	06. Working within the TF model	07. Significant relationships and structures of support	08. Agency	09. The school as a context for learning	10. Identity	11. Going it alone	12. Subject specialism
priorities over the year												
06. Working within the TF model	18	12	1	5	15	80	20	6	13	7	2	3
07. Significant relation-ships and structures of support	23	32	3	1	24	20	116	19	18	7	1	8
08. Agency	24	10	1	2	9	6	19	49	18	10	2	4
09. The school as a context for learning	26	26	3	9	9	13	18	18	105	21	4	5

	01. Participants discussing their learning	02. Valued learning experiences	03. Difficult learning experiences	04. Beliefs about teaching	05. Needs and priorities over the year	06. Working within the TF model	07. Significant relation-ships and structures of support	08. Agency	09. The school as a context for learning	10. Identity	11. Going it alone	12. Subject specialism
10. Identity	28	13	0	6	11	7	7	10	21	68	2	2
11. Going it alone	7	2	0	0	5	2	1	2	4	2	21	2
12. Subject specialism	17	11	1	4	7	3	8	4	5	2	2	40

Appendix 9: Table showing how trainees reported learning from different experiences during the Training Programme

Key √

experience mentioned as a positive learning experience but participant explicitly references that this is of limited use / impact on learning

 \sqrt{V} experience mentioned as a positive learning experience

 $\sqrt{\sqrt{V}}$ experience mentioned as an especially positive learning experience for participant

(U) by university tutors only

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
Being observed and receiving feedback	√√ (U)	√√√ (U)	VV	111	VV	VV	111		VV	N	N	Valuable to get micro feedback (Ben - somebody was tapping their pen) and deep thinking feedback from IOE tutors (Ben). Feedback process helps to improve reflection (Hanna). Best in person and said with love (Hanna). Value of practical advice from IOE tutors (Janis), value in general depends on the observer and nature of the feedback (precise examples and ideas very helpful) (Janis), better where there's a relationship with observer (Sue)
Observing others	V V	N	VV	V	N	VV	111	N	N	N	N	This is about looking at teachers (not students). Picking up good practice, exposure to good practice, seeing different teacher personas. Limited if you don't have full context of lesson (Ben). Would like to observe experienced subject teachers to see different ways of doing things (Janis).

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
												Reassuring when others' lessons aren't perfect either (Penny). Feeling more 'on a par' with others (Sasha). Helpful to see own students in other classes (Lottie; Nick). See how colleagues teach particular subjects (Matt). Elaborative interrogation of what's seen (Nick). Can be hard to know what expert teachers are doing - better to see somebody 'mess up' so strategies visible? (Penny). Can be good to coobserve and 'dissect stuff' together (Sasha), reminders/prompts re: good practice (Tim), feeling integrated around the school; understanding wider experience of students (Tim)
Contrasting school experience / primary day	N	N		N			NN	NN	N	N	N	Confidence boost to have things work on CSE that don't work in own school (Janis), helpful to see that there is choice out there (Angela), restored confidence (Penny), gather ideas to try in own practice (Penny), stimulate reflection on what's valued in own job (Sasha), opportunity to try things out that wouldn't work in own school (Tim), gain perspective on what it means to be outstanding (Tim). Nick tried to replicate CSE practice in own school but not

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
												successful because totally different context.
Informal talk with colleagues in department / across school	11	N	1	1	N	11	444				11	Sharing resources and talking about things that works. The value of networking across the school (Lottie). Asking how colleagues would teach topics (Matt), asking why they make the choices they do about teaching - understanding their decision making (Angela); colleagues offering help with planning (Tim), learning from specialists in different subjects (Tim), feeling better for hearing that experienced colleagues also struggle (Tim)
Talking to peers in TF subject cohort	√ √	N		N			V V				V V	Finding out what happens elsewhere; sharing resources, sharing tips for what works, listening to their narratives, sharing learning, solving challenges collaboratively. The power of WhatsApp!
University taught input		V V		111				V	11	11		Relevance (Janis); desire for more practical advice on planning and teaching topics (Penny, Sue)

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
Role-play / rehearsal / modelling with DL	N		111			1		1				'that way it becomes more engrained' (Hanna)
Co-planning with support roles / colleagues					N	N	VV	NN				Only works if mentors have the desire and skill to share their expertise - compare Matt to Nick and Penny. Good because it's before the event rather than observation feedback which comes after (Matt), 'amazing' for Penny - uncovered a process which has previously been hidden to her
School-led CPD	√ √	√	VV	V			VV					Variable - depends on who's leading it and what they can contribute. Best when comfortable with peers so can share openly (Ben). Opportunity to share experiences with peers. Best when content supported with theory (Angela)
School centred learning		V					11		N N	11		Picking up routines, learning about the stamina needed to be a teacher, getting practise in front of students, hear from Teach First peers about their experience

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
Independent reading / studying, including academic assignments	1	$\sqrt{}$		VV			111	111				Assignments push you to read more literature than you otherwise would (Janis). Necessary to move beyond bare minimum teaching, standard set by TF/school. First assignment most impactful for those who mentioned differences.
Talking to peers (new teachers) in school	11		N				11					Hanna - realising that others are sharing your 'horrific' experiences is 'reassuring', advice.
School mentoring meetings			11			11						Useful for co-planning; trainee has to take the lead (Hanna); useful for subject specialism (Matt)
TF taught input									N	11		Not helpful on Saturdays when it felt disconnected from classroom experience (Nick); good as like teaching practice (Sue - talking about summer institute, I think)
Support plan						VV		V				Not helpful for Penny; helpful for Matt as unlocked more observations

Experience	Angela	Ben	Hanna	Janis	Lottie	Matt	Nick	Penny	Sasha	Sue	Tim	Notes
Being given teaching resources						1						
Being sent on a course by TF				11								Helpful to get 'techniques that worked for me' (Janis)
Buddying with a Y2 TF trainee								11				
Co-teaching with colleagues											11	

Appendix 10: Table showing the six main relationships that trainees have, that support them in their learning

	Table key:	Very positive relationship	Positive relationship	Mixed (some positive and some negative), tricky, variable or unimportant relationship	Negative relationship	No relationship mentioned	
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Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
Angela	Negative: didn't allow Angela to observe him, feedback on lessons was about process not quality, slow communication. Believes he's not a great business teacher, not interested in business (no passion) although strong subject knowledge. 'Do I think he wanted to mentor me?	Not mentioned.	Very positive: Wouldn't have got through the year without another TFP in the school. (Hanna) 'was the only one that understood what it meant to be a TF participant in our schoolwe had different experienceso it was nice that I could support herand she could support meSo, the	Very positive: strong focus on improving behaviour management through rehearsal. Very precise instructions. 'She also gave me really good feedback on when I call parents how I need to be very straightforward in what I say'. 'With [DL and tutor] I didn't feel like I had	Very positive: gave Angela agency to select aspects of feedback. Also 'she let meactually talk through why she said certain things' (deconstructing the expertise behind feedback comments so that Angela can fully engage with them)	Positive: have created a business pedagogy network to explore best ways to teach subject. 'I think outside of school I have those conversations. I didn't ever have those with my colleagues'. Subject days very important for discussions with peers 'how things'

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	Absolutely not, No, no.' 'I just definitely think, in terms of the mentoring side from my school, I don't think it could have been worse than what I got because I didn't get much.'		different experience even though we're in the same boat helped us as well.' Value of having 'someone who understands word for word what you're going through'	to pretend because I knew they cared about me being a better teacher. And even if something wasn't good, they weren't going to be judgemental about it.'		are in our school"I tried this. It really works. Perhaps you should try it."'has anyone taught this? How did you teach it?"".
Ben	Positive and negative: 'I think my mentor at school, I was lucky in the sense she's lovely, really supportive, frankly not a good history teacher and this is something that I think hasthat's not been great.'	Not mentioned.	Positive: set up informal network ('absolutely not formally organised. I think that just feels a bit contrived') with other first and second year TF participants. Had a WhatsApp group 'called "Teach First Being Shit" where we just moaned about Teach First.'	Positive: helpful with 'general point[s]' like how to use the board. Not subject specific.	Very positive: inspirational feedback, 'interactions which gave me enthusiasm and excited me', rooted in deep subject expertise. Recognises that this sort of impact depends on the individual.	Positive: networking with peers helped to counter fact that 'I didn't particularly rate my mentor' by talking to colleagues and finding out what happened in their departments, why they teach topics certain ways or choose certain exam boards, recognising that 'it's not like that
	'My mentor, she only is interested in your		Nice because 'allin the same		Discussing Ben's excellent HOD –	everywhere.'

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	essay up to the point that it's doneShe'll never say to you "What did you actually learn?" or "can I read it?"".		boat'. Also discuss wider school issues like marking policy, thoughts on different schools.		thinks own subject tutor is his version of Ben's HOD.	
Hanna	A little positive: Mentor very busy, also HOD. Has lots of knowledge of how things are run but not often available. 'pretty much non- existent'. Few mentor meetings or lesson observations, although meetings were valuable when they did happen, with focus on lesson planning. Hanna had to drive the agenda for these meetings.	Positive: found 'someone in the school with experience that I could trust and that I could ask for help'—assistant principal with office nearby who was more available than her HOD. 'Really helpful having at least one member of leadership who's on your side and makes you feel they're not there to catch you out'.	Positive: (Angela) 'was the kind of person I would run to if I felt I just made a huge mistake and I don't know how to get back from it [laughs]. Or, I have to reflect on something. I'm not quite sure how to do a certain lesson, I'm not quite sure how to deal with certain behaviour, etc.' 'I'd say it's good to place more than one	Very positive: built a relationship from the outset 'she'd give you a strong hug and say 'You're doing so well, keep at it"she made it very clear from the beginning that she's on our sideTeach First is there to support us, and nobody else.' Feedback always felt helpful, not judgemental.	Difficult: perceived tutor as having knowledge and wisdom but also having to 'grade usI don't know, it just creates a different energy, you know. I just remember being so nervous every single time Uni came in to observeyou don't want it to be this daunting experience every single time it happens.'	Not mentioned.
	Hanna started the year with the		participant at one school. From my	one and only support where you	'it kind of led to me really dreading	

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	impression that the mentor is 'responsible for me and everyone else is just going to see my questions as really silly' but over time realised that she could ask questions to others – e.g. assistant principal with office nearby.	'I've actually been able to find a community at my school and find people that I spend time with outside of the school building and I can have really blunt, open conversations about things without fearing they're going to go to leadership or they're going to now think I'm a bad teacher or anything of that sort.'	own experience that's been extremely beneficial.'	can be 100% honest.'	when they came to school and not really being able to take on what they said because I had to put on this defensive kind of coat of"When the tutor comes in just care about not being completely distraught afterwards".'	
Janis	Positive and negative: gave some helpful suggestions about lesson planning and talked through activities. 'He was okay, he was not awful. ButI didn't like him that much as a	Positive: the head of RE and faculty who Janis thought was an experimental teacher and a role model in terms of willingness to try new things and behaviour management. 'And	Very positive: two School Direct trainees in the department were 'massively helpful to have two people in my department who aregoing through all the same things at the same time to	Not mentioned.	Very positive: good advice from tutors at beginning – contradicted mentor's advice but Janis found this worked better. One tutor 'was the font of all knowledge and just really, really	Positive: 'the Teach First trainees have beenwe have a lot more in terms of sharing resources and talking about things that worked with them in the first

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	person and I think that affected how much importance I gave to his advice, perhaps unfairly.' Unhelpfully compared Janis to other new teachers just before half term 'which made me feel really depressed over that first half term.'	healways seemed quite understanding that we weren't going to be perfect at the beginningI liked him a lot as a person and really respected him so it was always useful to go and see him teach and sometimes to ask him about things.'	have those conversations about and to commiserate withthey were my support network throughout my time at the school.' Another TF trainee in a different subject was 'nice, we are friendlybut the geography of the building prevented us from crossing paths more often.'		supportive and always had good ideasgave me really tough criticisms of the things that weren't working but never in a way that made me feel like there was no hope for me becoming a good teacherI felt like he had a good opinion of me'	year than probably my colleagues'
Lottie	Positive but difficult: mentor was younger than Lottie, although more experienced and 'amazing, andan amazing teacher'. Lottie 'always felt self-conscious that she was younger', had	Very positive: worked closely with pastoral teams 'I really leaned on pastoral teams, actually, in my first yearbecause I was so worried	Variable: 'I didn't really work with other Teach Firsters who were in my school because they weren't in my department and we're all in different blocks.' Would only come together for	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.	Not important: described herself as 'fully immersed in the school side of it' rather than relying on TF peers. 'I didn't feel like our individual visions were very aligned.'

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	an idea in her head of an older, wider mentor with different experience. Found it easier to admit queries to DL and tutor as they were older with much experience.	about behaviour of particular students.' Found it helpful having a cohort of teachers new to the school even though others had QTS and were doing NQT year. 'It was really nice having a cohortyou know, just eager to share and talk about our experiences.'	weekly CPD and not really spend time sitting around talking as so much other work to do. Having a PGCE student in the department was nice as 'both trainee teachers at the same time to compare and contrast experiences.' 'We became quite close, which was nice.'			'I don't think I've benefited massively from interacting with theTeach First cohort trainees.'
Matt	Variable: 'he didn't do much on the behaviour management bit but he was very supportive in terms of my subject	Positive: experienced colleague in department would hear commotion from next door and come in to help.	Very positive: three trainees set up own weekly CPD session, looking at topics as advised by the DL. Would go to the pub/for dinner	Very positive: DL was 'amazing'. Weekly visits while Matt was on support plan with lots of modelling and rehearsal with	Very positive: 'She's been amazing. As an individual she has been so supportive and fantastic.'	Not mentioned.

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	speciality.' Was new to mentoring and 'didn't really know what he was doing.' Helpful with resources but not with teaching practice, although gave some helpful advice. Matt was older than mentor: 'I think he found it quite intimidating to be able to turn around and say "actually, you're doing this wrong".' (PDL and DL had no qualms with this!)	'Then I would often say to him "so I was teaching this and I got to here" and he'd say "no". He was very old school and he would show me how it should be taught. But we didn't have the time for me to go to him before every lesson and say "how do you do this? How do you do that?" That's half the problem.'	together. 'we would all have bitching sessions together and we would be very supportiveAnd we would try and bounce ideas off each other.'	specific, explicit guidance. 'Very much focused on classroom practices, and that was always helpful because they were enduring problems throughout.'	'The support from [subject tutor], she has just been phenomenal. Absolutely phenomenal. She has been absolutely phenomenal and I wouldn't mind if you said that, I've just had the utmost respect for her and what she's done.'	
Nick	Very positive: two mentors ('official mentor' and HOD) both expert teachers but with different styles. Exposure to their teaching and their discussions	Not mentioned.	Positive: Other Teach First trainees (year one and year two trainees) in school 'fantastic' and 'really helpfulthey got itI wasn't the only one working	Positive: 'My PDL was fantasticShe's really supportive, really understanding, gave me really good advice. I found that the things that I struggled with were	Not mentioned.	Positive: Had a trusted group of Teach First friends on WhatsApp that he would ask questions about maths-specific challenges he was

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	about teaching helped Nick to 'arrive at my own style'. 'They were both excellent teachers. I think the amount of thought and the time that they both took to support me was genuinely second to none. Like I really couldn't fault it in any way.' HOD worked in the maths office so Nick worked there too and had lots of opportunity to discuss teaching, readings, resources, have lesson planning critiqued by HOD and mentor. Also some collaborative planning. Mentor		late in the same position. They found similar things to me hard. They had advice. There was stuff that they found hard that I didn't that was nice so yes, that was great.'	not the things that a non-subject specialist would pick up onThe people who really helped me progress were the subject specialists. But that's not to saylike [my PDL] was genuinely, genuinely fantastic.'		having – e.g. anticipating student misconceptions or planning a sequence of learning.

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	made connections to help Nick observe others					
Penny	Negative: relationship 'felt really aggressive' at the time, although in hindsight Penny can appreciate pressure mentor was under because Penny 'wasn't performing'. Mentor and tutor had a row about how to grade Penny. Penny felt mentor had 'very innate hatred' of Teach First and didn't think Penny should be there. Mentor would say discouraging things like 'just to let you know, next year will be harder.' Tried to stop Penny discussing	Positive: 'I was really, really lucky because I made quite a few friendsthat I thought were good teacher and that actually I would just go and sit in their classroom and plan. So I could be like, "[colleague], does this make sense?" and so he could just check and almost check my thinking in a way that I wouldn't trust [my mentor] or someone else in the department to do. So that was really good having himand other people in the school	Positive: 'I'm good friends with all the other Teach Firstanother girl We're good friends and she's good to go to for Teach First advice or sympathy.'	Mostly negative: Penny felt DL didn't support her when she raised concerns about mentor relationship or when she emailed him in distress. 'I messaged [him], like, "I'm now sitting at my desk crying for the third time". And he just replied by sending me a helpline number. And I was like, "no, you're the helpline. You know, what is your role if not to help me?".'	Mixed: positive when supporting lesson planning; negative when managing challenges raised with mentor as Penny didn't feel she had the tutor's support.	Not mentioned.

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	department business elsewhere. Penny and mentor disagreed about curriculum, mentor stopped Penny trying a chosen intervention. Penny felt that mentor didn't give feedback in real time about planning, then surprised Penny by putting her on a support plan for planning.	that I could go to and be like "why isn't this quite working?" and that I felt safe learning from because I didn't feel like I was being attacked.' [Colleague] is a Teach First. That's another good thing because he understands the pain.'		of lessons, when he 'gave me some quite good practical advice and then we role-played how to do it That was really, really valuable andbecause he was quite young and he didn't come across massively competent, I felt like I could be moreeasier around him.'		
Sasha	Mixed: Helpful with workload management and prioritisation, but would 'get quite touchy if I wanted to change stuff because it was like his scheme of work and his lessons and stuff. I'm literally	Positive: lots of emotional support from colleagues who shared department office. Head of history (Sue's mentor) would 'check in on me a lot and he gave me a	Positive: 'We'd all have lunch together and moan about everything. We'd give each othertips on tricky students and stuff.' 'I really valued being at a school that had	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.	Not mentioned.

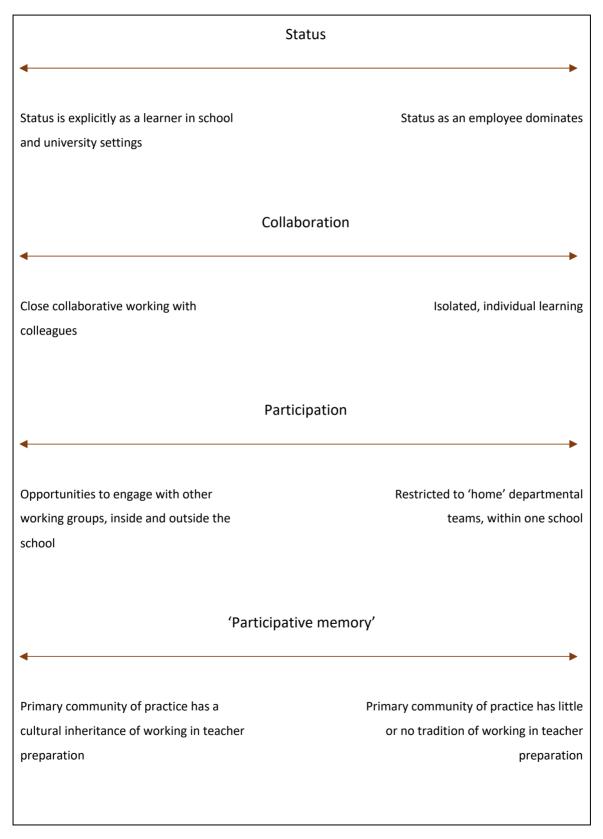
Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	there, I'm being told that I have to redesign this scheme of work for you to just change everything back straight afterwards.'	lot of advice and books and stuff.'	other Teach First teachers going through what I was going through at the same time, yes. It's just nice to have, it's a bit of camaraderie.'			
Sue	Very positive: 'I think my mentor was probably the most importantHe was absolutely brilliant. And I don't think I would be where I am if he wasn't the way that he was.' Mentor was a TF ambassador, HOD, shared experiences as went to the same university as Sue. 'So approachable and so, so positive, which is the biggest thing that you need the people around	Not mentioned.	Very positive: Shared an office with geography team and now 'we're best friends because we went through the experience togetherand we could both kind of support each other because we were both going through better times when the other person was going through the really horrible timeshaving someone there who totally understands	Positive: DL during Summer Institute was 'wonderfulvery sort of maternal, very approachable, which I found I really needed because I was very young and I really felt it' In-year DL also 'greatvery supportivevery, very positive.'	Negative: 'a little bit different [to the DL]. She was quite negative. And to be honest, we had a personality clashI think niceties are quite importantand she would kind of rip straight in with the thing that she didn't like, and that really riled me in my first few months.' Sue's realised in hindsight that this came from wanting her to be better, but 'it was	Not mentioned.

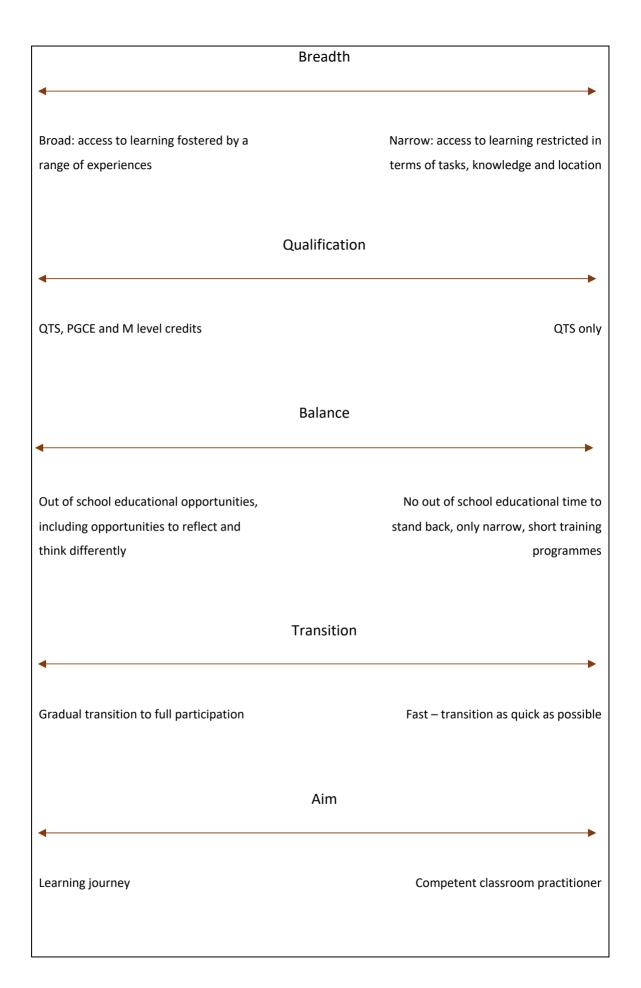
Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	you to be when you're training. I think you always need them to be positive, and he was.' Also comforting when Sue was crying after a bad class, so that she felt 'even if I really screw it up, he's still there to support me and he'll still be on my side even if I feel like I've failed.'		what it's like was so valuable, really nice.' With other trainees in school (one year one and one year two) they organised a weekly Teach First lunch where 'we'd all meet in one of the trainee's classrooms and we'd just meet up and talk about life and talk about teaching which was great.' The second year trainee was like "these are the things about it that are really awful, but next year you'll be at the point where I am where you've really developed" Which		tricky in first year because I felt she was out to get me, which I know she wasn't but you feel very, I don't know, you feel very emotionally kind of out of control in your first year with stuff like that and it can be hard not to be defensive when you're like "I've worked so hard on this lesson and I put my all into it and I've only been teaching for six weeks, please just give me a bit of leeway with this".	

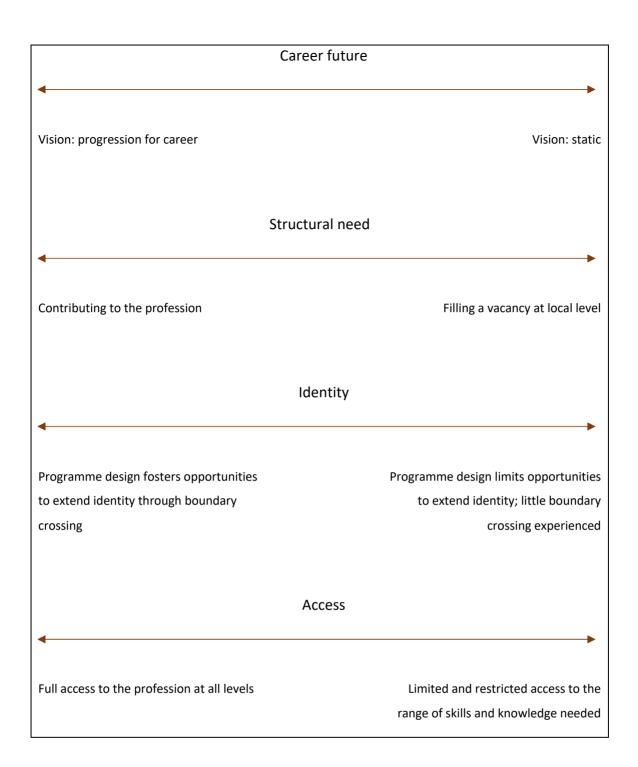
Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
			was definitely true. So that was a really positive thing to share.'			
Tim	Very positive: mentor is lead practitioner. His feedback is always focused on being a maths teacher without getting side- tracked by behaviour issues, despite the challenging school. Has embedded a culture of 'always how to grow, how to be better.' Reads maths books, 'always has ideas always having these conversations.' Constant dialogue and feedback with Tim; very flexible about how he	Positive: could go to others in the maths team for advice or to observe. 'I could just go and say "You seem to have it really down", whatever it is, the marking. Like, "everyone thinks your marking's great. Can I come and see it? Like, can I see what you're doing in your class to help with your behaviour or whatever?". So you just got it from everyone all the time.'	Positive: trainee in another subject and Tim 'got on very well' so would speak, but otherwise very little cross-departmental activity.	Positive: mentor, DL and tutor all got on and had similar attitude to Tim, 'you know, "how can I be better? I want to be better? I want to be better". But also, just try your bestvery relaxedI just always felt there was never any pressure on meAnd I just was always made to feel like I was doing well.' 'the three things aligned perfectly, [DL, mentor and tutor] all together, just became this	Positive: See comment for DL. Tutor part of a collaborative, aligned team.	Positive: 'being able to touch base with other people on the Teach First programmefeeling that there are other people out there who you know are having similar experiences to you. That was a really nice feeling to havefive or six good friends who [you] can just message and go, "I'm having an awful week, what do I do? How do I go and teach this?".' Also hearing from peers

Name	Mentor	Other qualified teachers in school	Other trainee teachers in school (subj and non-subj)	Teach First Development Lead (DL)	University tutor	TF peers in subject cohort
	provides support, led by Tim. Sees mentoring 'as a two- way street. That he also learns from it.'	Very supportive team would cover for each other if unwell etc.		lovely group where we all worked togetherand it was just lovely.'		how other schools work.

Appendix 11: Hyde's modified expansive/restrictive continuum for teacher preparation (Hyde, 2019, pp. 73-74)







Appendix 12: Strategies for mentors to improve their practice (written)

Insight	What you can do to help
Into the lion's den:	Acknowledge that learning takes time
You're habituated to the school environment; it's all new for your	Make it OK to make mistakes and to ask for help.
traineeand it's overwhelming! They don't yet have the conceptual or practical tools to do what you do, and they feel like they're the only person	Let your trainee see that you still struggle sometimes, and model strategies for addressing challenges.
who hasn't mastered teaching yet.	Scaffold your trainee's early learning like you would your pupils'
	Give them lesson plans and resources to use while they're getting the hang of classroom management.
	Give direct advice and models they can copy until they've built up their own mental map of teaching and gained some experience in practice.
	Be mindful of what you assume they know about school life. What seems obvious to you isn't necessarily clear to them.
No time to breathe and think: Schools are so busy, and so focused	Protect your trainee's time and limit their responsibilities where you can
on pupil learning, that both trainees and their colleagues can forget that	Create space for them to reflect and make sense of their experiences.
the trainee is still a learner too. The busier the trainee is as a teacher, the harder it is to protect time for their	Actively recognise and support their twin identities of 'teacher' and 'trainee'
development.	Show interest in their academic studies and support their assignments wherever you can.
	Create opportunities for them to question and enquire, and help them try out and evaluate new ideas.
Realising expertise:	Go with your trainee to observe
Learning to teach requires that trainees develop both a practical repertoire of things teachers 'do' and a conceptual framework for how to use their repertoire effectively. Once	Colleagues Help them make sense of what they're seeing by observing together. If you can't do this, talk to them later about what they've seen and the thinking behind your

colleague's practice.

they've overcome their initial 'practice

shock', trainees need learning

Insight	What you can do to help		
experiences that expose them to	Make your expertise visible		
teachers' thinking as well as their 'doing'.	Talk through the thinking behind your own teaching. Try some co-planning or collaborative marking, for example.		
	Help your trainee to understand the many choices teachers make every day and how expertise informs practice. Introduce them to alternative perspectives and ideas about teaching.		
	Develop your trainee's thinking alongside their practice		
	When you give feedback, focus on the ideas behind their teaching as well as what actually happens in the classroom.		
Travel broadens the mind: Trainees benefit from participating in	Help your trainee to build networks with teachers in different communities		
multiple communities of practice, inside and beyond your school, which expose them to different contexts, ideas and ways of doing things.	Use your contacts to connect your trainee with other departments or age phases in your school, your wider professional community and a contrasting school experience that really targets their learning needs.		
	Encourage your trainee to get out and about around your school, to see how teaching and learning happen in other subjects and age phases.		
	Encourage innovation		
	Help your trainee to try out and evaluate ideas they gather from others, in their own teaching.		
Hard shell; soft centre:	Be proactive with your support		
Managing the twin identities of 'teacher' and 'trainee' can be a conflicting experience. It isn't always	Check in often. Don't assume your trainee will come to you independently when they need you.		
easy to take off the 'hard front' of the classroom and ask for help. Trainees don't want to appear weak, but they really do need support. They can feel	Make space in your expectations and your interactions for them to be a learner as well as a colleague.		
vulnerable, anxious and overwhelmed; having a safe space to work through these feelings is hugely	Advocate for your trainee		

Insight	What you can do to help	
important for their long-term wellbeing and development.	Show that you have your trainee's back when it's needed, even if things aren't always going smoothly.	
	Be a 'safe space' for your trainee, where they can be vulnerable, talk about mistakes and ask for help.	
It takes a village to raise a teacher:	Be a broker	
Insights 1-5 show how trainees need multiple relationships to support their	Help your trainee build their villageacross your school and beyond.	
learning: models of great practice, advice, ideas to try out, feedback, a	Build on individual strengths	
shoulder to cry on, a safe space to let off steam.	Don't try to be all things to your trainee. Know what your strengths are as a mentor and focus on these. Help your trainee connect with a community of others whose strengths complement yours.	
This isn't the work of any one person. Learning happens best within a community; it takes a village to raise a teacher.		

Appendix 13: Strategies for mentors to improve their practice (animation)

While writing up my research I won an Early Career Research Impact Fellowship at UCL. As part of this I was supported to turn insights from my research into an animated video for sharing with school mentors working with Teach First trainees. The video is available on YouTube using the link below or by searching for the title of the animation: 'Mentoring Teach First trainees: insights to help new teachers excel'.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-wvGKeWi0s&t=106s