

*The Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL): a
retrospective, intrinsic case study of the process
of policy into practice and its impact on teacher
participants*

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Philosophy**

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DECLARATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person and that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W Brookes', positioned above a horizontal line.

WINSTON BROOKES

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List of Abbreviations and acronyms

CEDP	Career Entry Development Profile
DfCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfE	Department for Education
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
INSET	In-service Education and Training
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
MA	Master of Arts
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MTL	Masters in Teaching and Learning
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NCL	National Challenge School
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PD	Professional Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PGCE	Post-graduate Certificate of Education
PPD	Postgraduate Professional Development
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SfCC	Schools facing Challenging Circumstances
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TDA	Training and Development Agency for Schools
TES	Times Educational Supplement
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
UCET	University Council for the Education of Teachers

Abstract

The research reported here is a retrospective case study of the recent (2010) introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) as a post-graduate level programme of professional development for teachers. It contributes to the debate and research over the past two decades about the impact of post-graduate professional development and appropriate ways of delivering it. The study is located within an extensive body of literature dealing with the importance of the teaching profession with regard to the success of schools and pupils and the impact of professional development on teaching quality and of teaching quality on attainment. A further relevant context is the ongoing tension between the teaching profession and academics on the one hand and government and political actors on the other, in respect of the approaches to professional development and to the control of educational processes. The research questions which inform the study deal with the perspectives of various participants – policy makers, programme directors, coaches and teachers studying for the MTL – on the extent to which the MTL is likely to have an ameliorative effect on teaching and pupil attainment, their experiences of the process of policy development and their experiences as course participants. The study adopts a case study approach which involves elite interviews with those responsible for the development and implementation of the MTL, questionnaires completed by MTL course participants and a comparison group taking a conventional MA and in depth interviews with participants and coaches.

The results revealed tensions and difficulties associated with the development of the MTL including uneasy relationships between HE institutions and government agencies, ideas about ‘producer capture’, the relevance of the MBA model and concern over the role of coaches. However, while acknowledging various difficulties and some misconceived expectations they viewed its potential to meet its expressed aims positively, given time. Course participants were positive about their experience of the MTL and felt that it had contributed to many aspects of their professional development. Most saw it as a positive experience despite the variable quality of support from their schools, particularly in the form of the school-based coach the concept of which had been heralded as the bellwether of the MTL.

It was striking that the responses of the MTL participants were very similar to those of teachers taking a conventional MA. A finding which would repay further investigation is that while the great majority of course participants felt that the MTL (and the MA) had contributed to their becoming more effective teachers they were much less confident that it had contributed to increased pupil attainment.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Researcher's preface

After a lifetime of teaching in state secondary schools and, latterly, in higher education, this thesis is written with a strong sense of having 'lived through it all' and that, like John Furlong 'education was pretty much in my blood' (2013, p. iv). I was among the last cohort of two-year college trained teachers during whose final year the three-year training programme was introduced. The college training consisted of one main and two subsidiary subjects, which were disappointing, in terms of their rigour, when compared to the A' levels which I had undertaken at school. As I recall, there was little if any reference to educational theory in the lectures, and the approach to pedagogy seemed to place reliance on tips and hints, typified by what has been described as 'jejune traditionalism' (Wilkin, 1996, p. 115). This was to change, post-Robbins, with the development of 'the four disciplines of education' – philosophy, sociology, comparative education and history. None of the students in my 'training college' held a prior degree. Indeed, this two-year route to qualified teacher status produced the bulk of the profession up to the early sixties, which included those who had undertaken the one year post-war Emergency Training Scheme after the 1939-45 war. There was a smaller proportion of trained graduates and some untrained graduates, the latter group persisting in the independent sector until recent times.

My first job at the age of 20 in 1961 was as an English teacher in a recently opened boys' comprehensive school in the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). I recall a palpable feeling of personal and professional enjoyment in those first few years and was only vaguely aware of the dark clouds of doubt being raised by the writers of the Black Papers Ball and Goodson (2002) about comprehensive school teaching and so-called 'progressive' education in general and English teachers in particular. According to Ball, we were decried as promoting 'ideology in children's writing and in discussion ... the new wave of English teachers ... committed to the comprehensive school, to unstreaming (sic), subject integration and team teaching (1990). Much of this discourse went over my head, as I am sure it did with my colleagues at the time, although, in retrospect, it clearly presaged the end of an era. Plaskow observes:

It is fashionable to deride the 1960s as culturally aberrant and wildly idealist. ...Many of us who were active in education in the 1960s look back on a time of optimism, a spirit of shared concerns, and the beginnings of an articulation (in every sense) of an education system which would offer the greatest possible opportunities to everyone as an entitlement, not a privilege. Quoted in (Chitty & Dunford, 1999, p. 22).

Although not aware of this at the time, we were seen as 'the bedrock of the new welfare society' and 'as heroes of reconstruction, as pedagogic innovators, as carers, as partners of and within the public' (Lawn, 1999, p. 102).

The school teaching staff in my recently opened comprehensive school of 1400 pupils typified the national profile in terms of their qualification to teach: less than 40% had degrees. Of those who had either a teaching certificate, like me, or some other non-graduate qualification, several were reading for external degrees. As in my case, these degrees were not necessarily directly related to teaching but were seen as a way of keeping up with more academically qualified colleagues and, more to the point, as a necessary pre-condition for promotion. Indeed, I recall my first headteacher remarking that 'you will need not one but two degrees if you are to progress in the profession'. I took the hint and here I am, fifty odd years later, onto my third – which could be regarded as a bizarre example of what neuro-psychologists refer to as 'perseveration' (Sharon, 2003). Professional development (PD) was not, as I recall, incorporated into school or subject department planning: it was left to the individual initiative of teachers to decide what were their priorities, in which case most in my position chose the acquisition of a first degree as the highest. At the same time, many of us took advantage of the subject centres, set up by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), for the purpose of teachers working across schools to share and develop their practice. Also, the subject inspectors were viewed in a positive light as offering support and guidance to teachers in the development of their pedagogical knowledge and expertise, either individually or at regular residential workshops and conferences. I rated the ILEA highly, like so many who developed their teaching in its schools, for the support given by inspectors, specialist subject centres and, not least, the self-help from colleagues both within and between schools. Sadly, it came to an end in 1990 by political diktat, but the memory of the calibre of professional development it provided lingers on.

From the outset of my teaching career there were, of course, many changes some of which were welcomed and others bitterly opposed. I would argue that the most positive aspect of my early teaching years was the professional culture that encouraged invention, as opposed to intervention, in the classroom, typified by the work of the Schools Council and the Nuffield Foundation, and the sense of self-regard and teacher autonomy that it engendered. We were valued then and we flourished in this so-called 'golden age of teacher control' (Le Grand, 1997, p. 156) when there was 'an absence of ideological intervention' or what has been described as 'the benign indifference' of politicians (Young, 1998, p. 17). Chitty (2011, p. 12) sums up this mood of the time and its aftermath:

...the general mood of optimism and hope that characterised the 1960s gave way to one of cynicism and defeatism in the following decade (particularly after the economic crisis of 1973) and it was a change that affected both politicians and academics. It was now widely agreed among a group of influential sociologists that schools could do little or nothing to improve the life-chances of working-class youngsters, and that education's chief function was to ensure the reproduction of the existing social structure.

Not everything in the garden was rosy: I recall in my early years of teaching that I was allocated a so-called 'Newsom Group' of bottom stream 4th year boys – mainly early leavers - with the responsibility to arrange a programme of community help visits which consisted mainly of doing odd jobs, such as gardening, in the local area. I was given this group because I was not only young, but studying for a degree in sociology at the time – a stroke of either naïve or cynical timetabling, I now think. As far as I recall, this was the school's only interpretation of the Newsom Report (1963) and it clearly exemplifies Lawton's strictures on the limitations of the report and its focus on structures at the expense of curricula:

What has happened in many schools since the Newsom Report has been some effort to set up a curriculum organisation for the fourth year leavers, in preparation for the time when they will be fifth year leavers, which will somehow keep them quiet and prevent them breaking up the furniture...The Newsom Committee cannot be blamed for some of the disastrous programmes now in operation under the title 'Newsom Course', but they are not entirely innocent. The Report is notable for its

lack of any real theoretical understanding of curriculum problems and practical solutions. (1992, p. 115)

Despite these reservations, I never lost my belief, whether naive or not, that schooling could be transformative, as it had been for me, the son of a labourer with ten siblings. Whether the present generation of teachers feels the same is a matter for conjecture – or, indeed, research. How they feel and what they think about a recent innovation in their professional development is at the heart of my research project. Suffice it to say at this point, that the overwhelming majority of prospective teachers whom I have interviewed, both as a head teacher and a teacher educator over the three decades, declare that their main reason for wanting to teach is, indeed, ‘to make a difference’.

My career led to a headship at the start of which I was fortunate to have come under the influence of Joan Dean (1979) who had pioneered the training of secondary school headteachers in Surrey where she was the Chief Inspector, during which time she had earned a national reputation for innovative work. This influence determined me to ensure that professional development would be a high priority in my new school. During this period of my headship Kenneth Baker, the Education Secretary, introduced the five statutory so-called ‘Baker days’ (1988) in order to provide more systematic professional development for teachers, commonly referred to as ‘training or INSET days’, in light of the introduction of the National Curriculum and in order to accommodate the various other changes at that time. This provided the opportunity for schools such as mine to develop a planned programme of staff development to complement the subject provision that the LEA offered. It also allowed for the practice of staff appraisal which was in its early stages and with which I was directly involved in some pilot work. This focus on school-based professional development as I experienced it, alongside the major devolutionary changes required by the Education Reform Act (Gillard, 2011) - Local Management of schools, Grant Maintained schools, City Technology colleges - presaged a dramatic move away from the involvement of local authorities which lead inexorably to some of the problematic issues addressed in this research. On a personal note, throughout my teaching career I liked to regard myself as ‘an extended professional’(Hoyle, 1975): from the outset I continuously sought opportunities to widen my professional horizons, in the later stages as a peer coach with a fellow headteacher and, more widely, by ensuring that I kept abreast of both subject and organisational

developments in education, not least by undertaking an external first degree followed by a conventional Masters in teaching and learning (MA) whilst I was teaching. Prior to my involvement in the development of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) I had taught a mentoring module at Masters level and, before that, had been responsible for the development of the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) in my HEI (Brookes, 2005) – all of which experience provides a fitting personal backdrop to the writing of this thesis. This claim to provide a ‘fitting personal backdrop’ is discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.5) in terms of the researcher’s standpoint and potential for bias.

1.2 Research problem

The post-graduate professional development (PPD) of serving teachers has, over the past half-century, been a story of high aspirations and good intentions which have not been fully realised for a number of reasons which form the basis for this research study. Among these reasons is the political will of successive governments to effect sustained and cumulative change over a long period. Governments are empowered to determine priorities amid a range of often conflicting demands and although education per se has always been high on the political agenda the decisions made, both in terms of funding and political imperatives, have remained persistently problematic. Added to this is the wider issue of the effectiveness of award-bearing teacher professional development as provided by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs): effectiveness is often described, at times contentiously, in the literature as ‘impact’ (Field, 2008). The notion of impact is discussed further in Chapter 2.

It would be naive to assume that change, whether in educational policy or elsewhere, is less than a messy, adventitious and polemical process. Therefore, in order to make sense of the subject of this research a suggested phased progression of significant events leading up to the introduction of the MTL is offered. Although not expressly intended, the significance of these events may be construed in the main as a form of zeitgeist which reflected both the political and the intellectual temper of the first decade of the 21st century. Some writers refer to this tone of the times as ‘the long march of the Neoliberal Revolution’ (Hall, 2011b). Whatever ideological or sociological gloss may be placed on developments in teacher education over this period it is sufficient to say at this point that they were, and remain, contentious. Field (2010, p. 1) takes an optimistic view of the MTL in terms of what he describes as ‘practitioners and participants (individual-led), participating schools (institution-

led), the Government (system-led) and the teaching profession (profession-led)'. In his paper he describes the background to the MTL some of which elements feature in the following indicative timeline or stepping stones which are discussed in Chapter 2, alongside a range of research and other academic studies. As can be seen, imbricated in the MTL is a layer of relevant reports, research studies and statutory legislation – the stepping stones - which are presented on the following page and to which reference will be made, either directly or by implication, throughout this research study.

1.3 Stepping stones to the MTL

Early phase – professional development (PD)

- 1944 Education Act (Gillard, 2011)
- The Robbins Report (1963)
- The James Report (1972)

The onset of change and New Professionalism

- Education Reform Act (Act, 1988)
- New professionalism: teachers: meeting the challenge of change (DfEE, 1998)

Role of Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)

- Report on in-service post-graduate training for teachers (2011)
- The logical chain: continuing professional development in effective schools (2006)

Further outcomes of legislation

- Every Child Matters (2003)
- The Children's Plan – Building Brighter Futures (Ofsted, 2000)

Introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL)

- Being the Best for Our Children (DfCSF, 2008) - introduced the MTL
 - 2008 Consultation with schools and HEIs re MTL proposal.
 - 2008 Tendering process and funding.
 - 2009 Training and Development Agency for Schools – rationale for MTL.
 - 2010 Phase 1 – Programme Development (TDA + HEIs).

Some indicative research and reports

- Leading and managing continuing professional development: developing people, developing schools (Earley & Bubb, 2004)
- The Impact of CPD on teaching (Cordingley, Bell, Thomason, & Firth, 2005).

- McKinsey Reports (Barber (2007); Mourshed (2010)) .
- Mentoring and coaching for professionals: A study of the research evidence (Lord, Atkinson, & Mitchell, 2008).
- Staff Development Outcomes Study Report (Bubb, Earley, & Hempel-Jorgensen, 2008).
- The State of the Nation Study (Pedder, Opfer, R., & Storey, 2010).
- Seaborne Longitudinal Review of CPD (Seaborne, 2010).
- Improving coaching: evolution not revolution, research report. (Lofthouse, Leat, & Towler, 2011a)

Although the brief of the Robbins Report (1963) was ‘to review the pattern of full-time higher education in Great Britain’ it indirectly presaged the early development towards an all-graduate teaching profession and the alignment of teacher training with Higher Education provision. It recommended that by the mid-1970s a quarter of entrants to training colleges should take a four-year Bachelor of Education honours degree. The award covered three years’ general study and the additional year would be ‘advanced’ work in education and in the main subject.

Prior to the James Report (1972) little, if any, attention had been given to the in-service professional development and training for teachers. For example, although the 1944 Education Act (Gillard, 2011) is generally regarded as a landmark piece of social and welfare legislation, as well as being designed to address pupils’ personal and academic development, it did not concern itself with teacher professional development, apart from a brief reference to teacher training. According to Gillard the following McNair Report (1944) did not have much to add to the act, except to recommend the secondment of teachers to training institutions as a means to ‘include some of the most scholarly teachers in the schools and ... thus strengthen the staffs of the colleges on the academic as well as on the practical teaching side’. It was not until the James Report (1972) that the notion of in-service professional development and training for teachers was addressed in detail.

Much has been researched and written since the James Report on the impact of professional development approaches on teaching outcomes, not least in the last decade, yet no one has yet been able, in the adapted words of Shakespeare (Henry V, Act 1 Sc. 1.), to unloose the Gordian knot of it (Bubb & Earley, 2009, p. 9), as Chapter 2 will demonstrate. However, there is a convergence of opinion, both from politicians, researchers and academics, that at

the heart of successful school improvement is a recognition that teachers are fundamental to it. In an earlier seminal and comprehensive text Bubb and Earley (2004) described professional development as:

...an on-going process encompassing all formal and informal learning experiences that enable all staff in schools, individually and with others, to think about what they are doing, enhance their knowledge and skills and improve ways of working so that pupil learning and wellbeing are enhanced as a result. It should achieve a balance between individual, group, school and national needs; encourage a commitment to professional and personal growth; and increase resilience, self-confidence, job satisfaction and enthusiasm for working with children and colleagues.

They envisage this laudable ambition for PD as being delivered predominantly by schools in the person of a CPD co-ordinator for whom they offer a dauntingly comprehensive job description (p.31). It is this model of PD which emphasises the role of the schools and a lesser involvement of the HEIs that is questioned in this thesis in relation to the MTL.

The main stepping stones to the introduction and development of the MTL can be identified by the legislation introduced by the Labour Government in the early part of the 2000s. Against a backdrop of Every Child Matters (2003) and the Children's Plan (Ofsted, 2000), a ten-year plan for children's welfare (DfCSF, 2008) included the introduction of the MTL:

Our new goal will be for all teachers to achieve a Masters qualification as a result over the course of their career. This will represent a step change for the profession that will bring us in line with the highest performing education systems in the world. (para. 4.2.4)

Such a 'step change' lay in the then Labour government's belief that the MTL would provide a catch-all solution to school improvement: professional development in terms of the New Professionalism; locating the responsibility for such professional development more with schools and less with HEIs; and, specifically, raising attainment in those schools identified by Ofsted as requiring improvement.

Governments of every political hue in recent and earlier times have expressed the view that the education system in England and Wales is lagging behind its so-called competitors in the 'global' market. For example, Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education in the recent Coalition government, in moving the second reading of the Education Bill (2011 8 February) declared:

... it is only by radically and fundamentally reforming our education system and learning the lessons of the highest performing nations that we can generate the long-term economic growth on which prosperity depends and that we can produce the level of social justice that is appropriate for a modern liberal democracy.

One radical way of effecting such reform, as initiated by the Labour Government, was to redefine teacher professionalism by calling it the New Professionalism, referred to above, which, as this thesis demonstrates, is a key term that underscores the debate about teacher autonomy in relation to professional development. Beck (2008) cites Bernstein's twin concepts related to the 'recontextualisation of knowledge' to illustrate why some in the academic community react, at times vehemently, to what they perceive to be a neoliberal stratagem to redefine and thus undermine its knowledge base:

We can distinguish between an *official recontextualizing field* (ORF) created and dominated by the state and its selected agents and ministries, and a *pedagogic recontextualizing field* (PRF). The latter consists of pedagogues in schools and colleges, and departments of education, specialised journals, private research foundations.

He (Bernstein) presciently added:

If the PRF can have an effect on pedagogic discourse independently of the ORF, then there is both some autonomy *and* struggle over pedagogic discourse and its practice. But if there is only the ORF, then there is no autonomy. Bernstein (2000)

The McKinsey Report (2007), discussed in Section 2.3, had a conspicuous influence on the shape of so-called 'radical' and 'fundamental' reform, referred to above. However, the McKinsey approach was not without its critics, such as Alexander (2010), who saw it as offering little more than a technocratic and managerial approach to professional development

– in his singular word, it was ‘hokum’. On the other hand, there is ample less controversial evidence contained in several research studies of a recognition that there is a relationship, however construed, between teacher professional learning and pupil attainment, as exemplified in the earlier Halpin Report (1990) and the Staff Development Outcomes Study Report (2008). The same is true for the research evidence on school-based coaching, as recently demonstrated by Lofthouse et al (2011; 2010).

However significant the legislation, the reports and the academic literature may be, what is a key concern of this thesis is how the MTL was realised by those government officials at the TDA: their role is subjected to close scrutiny in Chapters 4 and 5 the outcomes of which are then described in Chapter 8.

1.4 Research aims and questions

This thesis adds to the continuous debate over the past two decades, accompanied by growing research, about the impact of the post-graduate professional development of teachers. The first research question asks:

1. In the perception of those responsible for the introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), does this policy innovation for the professional development of teachers offer an effective model for school improvement in general and teacher efficacy in particular?

Implicit in this question is whether the (MTL) proved to be a well formulated policy that addressed the professional needs of serving teachers and offered a positive contribution to school improvement. The question is explicitly attuned to the avowed aims of the MTL: to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards in schools. Following from this question are two further questions which are designed to seek the views of all those involved about some of the seemingly problematic issues surrounding the development of this programme. Such problematic issues include: the absence of a formal dissertation; the Masters level competency of the school-based coach; and the absence of classroom teaching as part of the MTL assessment. The two further questions are:

2. Do participants, HEIs and other ‘stakeholders’ consider that the MTL provides an appropriate model for the development of an all-Masters teaching profession?

3. At the half-way point in the programme, how do participants view the MTL – in personal, professional and academic terms?

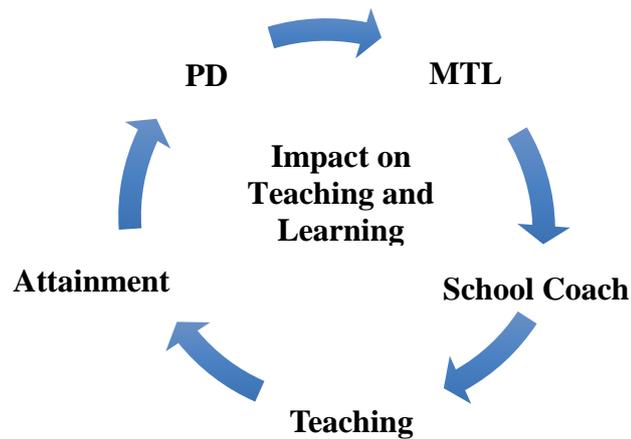
Both the Brown and Cameron governments, in common with their predecessors, declared the need to raise standards in the nation's schools, so it is timely that this research should examine the extent to which improving the formal qualifications of its teachers is likely to realise these laudable political ambitions. It is all the more timely since the funding for such professional development projects was withdrawn from HEIs by the Coalition Government in 2011, so its viability has become uncertain.

1.5 Conceptual framework

Much has been written over the last decade about the nature of professional learning for teachers. From the mid-1970s the emphasis was on how teachers could implement educational innovations and, thereby, enhance their own learning. According to Fullan (1992), where successful innovations have been effected, they have been closely related to teacher development. However, a variety of conditions has conspired against this being a widespread experience, not least because of the lack of time, turnover of teachers, conflicting demands and overload. Nonetheless, he proposes (*ibid.* p.5) a paradigm for understanding teacher development which consists of four elements: the teacher's purpose; the teacher as a person; the real world context in which teachers work; and the culture of teaching.

With such a pragmatic paradigm in mind a very simple conceptual framework (fig.1.1) for this thesis, as set out below, reflects the relationship between the MTL as a major component of PD and its potential impact on the quality of teaching and pupil attainment. This key underlying theoretical concept of professional development will be fully explored in chapter 2.

Table 1-1: the conceptual framework



One of the key requirements that were stipulated for the MTL was that, prior to any possible national roll-out, the MTL be offered only to those secondary schools designated as either ‘National Challenge’ or ‘Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances’ (see Chapter 3), with the exception of a pilot project in the North-West government office region where the offer was made to all schools, both secondary and primary. The overall offer to all these schools applied only to newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and those who had recently taken on a teaching and learning (TLR) responsibility. According to the Bubb and Earley survey (2009) only one in ten teachers and one in eight heads thought that they were very likely to apply to a school facing challenging circumstances in the next five years, because ‘many felt that they simply did not have the experience or skills to cope with the issues they would face’ (p.2). This sentiment is echoed by others as an issue of social justice (Lofthouse et al., 2011) and the need to ensure that the inspection process is flexible enough to support improvement in schools ‘at different stages of development, exhibiting diverse cultural typologies, structures and, perhaps most importantly, differential capacities for change’ (Lofthouse & Leat, 2013).

1.6 Methodology

In the context of a case study, the research methodology is described in detail in Chapter 3. Briefly, it adopts an interpretive paradigm, which is typical of much educational research. Coupled with this there is a quantitative element which features in the analysis of the participant questionnaire. Such an approach can accommodate the other main element of the research, the elite and coaching interviews, and thereby allow for a good measure of triangulation, as described in Chapter 3.

The data were collected in three strands (Section 3.3 – Figure 3.1) which relate to the elite interviews the participant questionnaires and the teacher/coach conversations respectively. Strand 1 refers to the ten elite interviews which were conducted with key policy makers at the Training and Development Agency (TDA) and which included three MTL university programme leaders. For Strand 2, 150 questionnaires were sent during 2011-2012 to both teachers undertaking a conventional in-service Masters course in teaching and learning in the researcher's university and teachers undertaking the MTL course. Of the latter 17 were from the researcher's university, supplemented by participants from two other universities. 69 questionnaires were returned – 34 MTL and 35 MA. As intended, this division enabled the creation of two cohorts across which comparison of the responses could be made, as are detailed in Chapter 6. Following the completion of the questionnaires 6 teachers were engaged in semi-structured 'conversations', which are discussed in Para 3.6.4. Strand 3 focuses on the school-based coaches 7 of whom were interviewed. These three strands form the core of this study (Chapters 4-7) from which the conclusions and insights are drawn in Chapter 8.

1.7 Significance and outcomes of the study

The introduction of the MTL marked a significant change of direction in the provision of professional development opportunities for serving teachers. Chapter 2 presents the argument made by various academics that such a change merely reflects the determination of successive governments in recent times to locate PD in schools at the expense of HEIs for whom it had been a traditional role. The Labour government's vision at the time was that the creation of an all-Masters teaching profession would provide a blanket solution to the perennial problem of school improvement by enhancing the standard of teaching and, thereby, raising overall pupil attainment. With the exception of a small number of papers covering various aspects of the MTL ((Ball (2003); Burstow and Winch (2014); Field (2010); Goddard and Payne (2013); Reeves, 2007; Thomas (2012))), there is only limited evidence of a sustained critique of the notion that there is a direct, positive relationship between a Masters qualification for teachers and pupil attainment. This thesis, therefore, offers an addition to this 'limited evidence' by examining the way in which the MTL was developed in its earliest stages by a contractual collaboration of HEIs and government officials, how it was received by the first cohort and what useful lessons can be learned in the event of any future initiative towards raising the

professional status of teachers. Goddard and Payne, cited above, point out that one of the dangers of courses like the MTL is that they may not be able to achieve the necessary synergy between rigorous criticality and a school's priorities:

To put it baldly, critical analysis is not always welcomed unreservedly, and teachers may be reluctant to air their views if they conflict with their school's official aims and strategies. We make no recommendations about how such misalignments of perspective and purpose might be handled, although we would argue that a masters course in education should always prioritise the claims of independent research over those of educational bureaucracy. We merely observe that these are problems which are bound to arise when academic courses, concerned with developing individual mastery in education, also offer themselves to schools as likely to produce outcomes that will coincide with their administrative and pedagogical plans. (pp 133-134)

Furlong (2005), in what may be described as a non-empirical paper, anticipated the issue of criticality in the MTL well before it got underway: for him it looked like an example of 'managed commitment'. Criticality is a theme that is both implicit and explicit in the findings of this research at the heart of which is the evident tension between a well-intentioned political policy initiative to upgrade the qualifications of teachers in order to address the perceived needs for school improvement and those academics who have misgivings that conventional Masters principles are likely to be undermined. Whether the MTL provides a threat or an opportunity for HEIs and schools is explored and suggestions are made that may serve to inform any similar initiative in the future. In particular, it will raise the question whether an all-Masters teaching profession along the lines proposed by the MTL is a worthy goal for legislators.

1.8 National context

The 1994 Education Act provided for the creation of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in 1998, which was to become a major player in the provision of Masters courses for serving teachers. Several of the key officials at the TTA, then rebranded the TDA (Training and Development Agency), contributed to this research (Chapter 4). The MTL had been prefigured in the Children's Plan (Ofsted, 2000) and was subsequently articulated in the

DfCSF guidance document (2008): to improve the status of teaching by making it an ‘a Masters level profession’ in line with the ‘highest performing education systems in the world’.

The Ofsted Survey Report (2006) on PD provision in primary and secondary schools purports to describe ‘the most effective practice as a ‘logical chain’ of procedures which place continuing professional development at the heart of schools’ planning for improvement. The report concludes:

Although inspectors found much that needed to be improved in schools’ arrangements for CPD, there was also much good practice on which they could draw. The survey schools fully recognised the opportunities afforded by the government’s CPD strategy and other related initiatives, and exploited them successfully through careful planning to raise standards. They had a clear and accurate view of what they needed to achieve, and planned a good balance of varied activities to support whole-school development. Each link in the chain was systematically managed to achieve the intended outcomes. In the very best schools these outcomes were rigorously evaluated to inform the next cycle of planning; the chain was cyclical not linear. (para. 35, p.23)

1.9 Immediate context

This research fieldwork was undertaken during 2011 and 2012 and located primarily in an HEI in one of the nine government office regions. The reason for using the term ‘government office region’ is that the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), the primary focus for the research, was developed and delivered through that official government conduit by means of a consortium network, as set up by the then Training and Development Agency. Government office regions were abolished in 2011 by the in-coming Coalition Government, although the de facto consortia structure remained, albeit in a more loosely federated or networked form. Participants from two other government regional consortia were engaged, to a lesser degree, in the research, specifically in relation to the questionnaire. Since the research also included what may be described as ‘mainstream’ Masters provision for serving teachers for the development of which no regional consortia existed, although abortive attempts had been made by the TDA to establish quasi consortia along the lines of the provision made to oversee

the Graduate Teacher Programme, it is emphasised that this conventional employment-based Masters route is important in the study, particularly for comparative purposes. The initial roll-out of the programme centred on National Challenge secondary schools, with the exception of the North-West government region where the offer on the MTL was made to both primary and secondary teachers in the maintained sector, which explains the exclusion of primary phase schools from the concerns of this research. Following the abolition of the Government Offices in 2011, the Government Office Regions were effectively abolished and re-named, as Regions, for the purposes of statistical analysis.

1.10 National Challenge schools: designation criteria

The National Challenge was launched by the then Labour government in 2008. It provided a programme of support to secure higher standards in all secondary schools so that, by 2011, at least 30 per cent of pupils in every school would gain five or more GCSEs at A*-C, including both English and Mathematics. If there were to be schools still stuck below the target, they would be closed or replaced by an Academy or National Challenge Trust school (2008). In the first year of this research the term ‘national challenge’ ceased to be used, although the wider issue of under-achieving schools remained a dominant priority for both politicians, academics and schools alike. The eight teachers based at the participating sample school, referred to in Chapter 3, typified the lengthy, and at times contentious, eligibility criteria, established by the TDA, for those undertaking the MTL (2010). Briefly, the key criteria were that participants must be:

1. newly qualified teachers (NQTs) starting employment as a school teacher in an MTL eligible school from September 2009;
2. newly appointed heads of department (HoDs) or those who had other teaching and learning responsibilities (TLRs) at National Challenge schools or at a Secondary School facing Challenging Circumstances.

National Challenge schools: main characteristics – see Appendix 10.

The introduction and development of the concept of an in-service Masters degree qualification, the (MTL), for all teachers at an early stage in their professional career began, after a delayed start, as a pilot scheme in 2010. Initially, up to 2600 teachers, mainly secondary, enrolled in 2009-2010. Of these, nearly a thousand subsequently withdrew, leaving a significant shortfall on the expected number expressed by Gordon Brown, the then

Prime Minister, in a discussion document (Piatt, 2006), that there would be between 4,000 and 5,000 teachers participating ‘as the next step to our ambition to make teaching a Masters level profession’. Whether, if at all, the government’s ambition, particularly in the early stages of the pilot, was either unrealistic, misconceived or poorly delivered, forms a major part of this study.

1.11 A Sample National Challenge School (SNCS)

The original research intention to use the SNCS as a separate case study, or a case study within the overall case study, was abandoned halfway through the study due to the pressures the school faced on a day to day basis and the consequent problem of access that the researcher experienced. Therefore, the term ‘Sample National Challenge School (SNCS)’ is used to identify the school which had agreed to provide a picture of a typical National Challenge school that, although it falls short of a case study as originally intended, contributes positively to an understanding of a school context in which the MTL was located. It is for this reason that it is subsumed within the overall case study. Thomas (2006), referred to in the introduction to Chapter 3, distinguishes between several purposes of a case study: intrinsic, instrumental, evaluative, explanatory and exploratory. Of these, the most appropriate description of this study is intrinsic, that is, it is interesting in and of itself as a unique phenomenon. However, by combining exploration and explanation, it will serve to understand and evaluate the impact of the Masters programme as perceived by the TDA, HEI providers, participants, coaches and school leaders. In essence, the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) element, whilst no longer deemed a case study in its own right, provided an insight into one school in the expectation that it would add to an understanding of the context, both locally and nationally, in which the participants were working. To this end, six teachers from one secondary school participated directly in the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) element, both as questionnaire respondents and interviewees.

The Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) was chosen mainly because it typified a National Challenge school and was known to the researcher. Also, the lead coach in the school, an experienced and professional tutor, was keen to be involved, not only as a coach but, unusually, as a participating student in the programme. The school originally recruited 11 participants, but 3 (TLRs) dropped out in the early stages. Of the remaining eight, five were NQTs (newly qualified teachers) and three were TLRs (teaching and learning

responsibility holders), i.e. Heads of Departments. Appendix 11 provides an example of part of the Self-evaluation Form (SEF) which was written by the school in January 2012. Such electronic forms were a standard precursor to Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) school inspections, but have since not been officially required.

1.12 Thesis – overview and chapter outline

The thesis is presented in eight chapters. The research questions are informed by the review of the literature in Chapter 2 and are shaped by ambivalence about the potential efficacy of the model of post-graduate professional development which is discussed there. The literature review covers the broad historical and political background to the professional development (PD), previously termed ‘continuous’ professional development (CPD), of serving teachers. It then considers several models of post-graduate professional development which are presented in the literature, particularly those related to the provision of Masters awards. Finally, it addresses the background leading up to the introduction of the MTL, including the phenomenon of policy borrowing. Chapter 3 describes the principles underlying the research design and methodology and issues related to the researcher’s standpoint that it gives rise to. Chapters 4 and 5 report on and discuss the ‘elite’ interviews with those who are considered to have a strategic view of the MTL and those HEI programme leaders (3) who have the responsibility for its implementation. Chapter 6 focuses on the participant teacher questionnaire in detail and analyses the numerical data alongside the invited responses to each statement. Chapter 7 reports on the views of teachers (6), drawn from their individual ‘discussions’ with the researcher and from the interviews (7) with a sample of school-based MTL coaches. Chapter 8 provides a theoretical discussion of the research outcomes, followed by a brief summary of the thesis and the conclusions and insights referred to in Section 1.5.

1.13 Concluding comments

The introduction of the MTL offered a huge step change in the professional development of teachers: the prospect of an all-Masters profession comparable to, if not better than, any elsewhere in the world. That the vision was only partly realised is the subject of this thesis which forms, in essence, a retrospective case study of the process of policy implementation. An arguably cynical colleague of the researcher once described this research as a ‘study in

formaldehyde’, which implies that since government funding had been withdrawn there was no prospect of the revival of the MTL in the future as an entitlement for all teachers. Similarly, there is a view that the ‘latest government policy on postgraduate professional development for teachers means that the exciting opportunity for teacher development ... has potentially been lost for future teachers’ (Ball, 2003). The findings of this research are, however, more hopeful, as can be seen in Chapter 8. It may be that the Labour Party’s declared intention, had it succeeded in forming a government in 2015, to adopt a Master Teacher standard for teachers as recommended by the ‘Second report of the independent review of Teachers’ Standards’ Coates (2011) would have gone some way to sustaining the momentum for change that was created by the MTL. However, such a proposal was for a conferred title, based on some form of independent assessment of a written report, rather than an academic qualification. The idea of such a conferred title, the Chartered London Teacher (CLT) had proved popular in London: (Bubb & Earley, 2007):

Although CLT is a status and not a qualification, working towards it will be an incentive for teachers to gain further qualifications. For instance, teachers whose PGCE carries M level credits will find that completing a Masters fits in well with CLT. (p.9)

This idea of a Chartered Teacher, was conceived of and introduced in Scotland (Reeves 2007) as early as 2002 one key feature of which was the creation of the M.Ed. in Professional Enquiry which, like the MTL, was conceived as a practice-based learning programme. However, unlike the MTL was the process of prior consultation and its outcome:

In formulating the proposal for the new postgraduate course a partnership was formed, called the Partnership for Professional Enquiry, in which the tutor team worked with a group of teachers, headteachers and local authority representatives to identify the principles that should underpin the development of the programme.

It was agreed that the course should:

- have a clear focus on developing classroom practice;
- provide opportunities for the creation of knowledge;
- make a contribution to the development of the professional community through the use of rigorous but practical evidence-based enquiry to develop learning and teaching;

- make a contribution to enhanced collaboration and team working to assist schools in their efforts to create and sustain learning environments for teachers and pupils;
- support professional creativity and curiosity; and
- provide learning opportunities for both students and the tutor team. The course should build on, and extend, the expertise of both groups. (Reeves, p. 63 *ibid*)

The Coates Review acknowledges that the characteristics of a Masters level degree are those that define a good teacher. The main characteristics listed, in approximate order of respondent frequency, are:

- coaching and mentoring (including sharing good practice);
- reflection;
- innovation and creativity;
- engagement with research;
- leading change and the development of innovative practice;
- higher level communication skills;
- data analysis;
- achievement of higher-level qualifications;
- enhanced use of ICT. (p.52)

A cursory glance at these characteristics demonstrates a close proximity to the expressed aims of the MTL, notably the first four. Thus, it is argued that the outcomes of this research are highly relevant to the debate about the continuing professional development of teachers and the improvement of schools.

Chapter 2 Professional Development (PD): theoretical and research perspectives

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with an historical view of the development of teacher education from the early 1970s to the present day, culminating in the introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning in 2009. Alongside this, it addresses the inextricable and complex political dimension of this background history, including the phenomenon of ‘policy borrowing’. Then, the concept of the professional development of teachers (PD) over the last decade or so in England is described, and the extent to which the claim that it has a positive impact on schools in general and teaching and learning in particular, is considered. Several conceptual models, drawn from the research literature on school improvement, including the contribution made by coaching, are discussed, which include those which emphasise the central importance of teachers themselves, both individually and collaboratively. A notable contributor to this emphasis is Kennedy (2005) whose analysis is discussed later in Section 2.4.

The concepts of PPD (post-graduate professional development) and CPD (continuing professional development) are used interchangeably in various contexts, indeed ‘idiosyncratically’ Turner and Simon (2013) in some of the literature, especially since award bearing PPD is viewed as an aspect of CPD. This conflating or confusing of the two concepts is apparent in the several reports written for the Training and Development Agency by the Centre for Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE, 2009). For example, it argues that ‘PPD has made a difference to the CPD landscape in England over the course of three years’. The confusion is further compounded by the emergent concept of ‘professional learning’:

For the purposes of developing the Masters in Teaching and Learning we have therefore defined teachers’ professional learning as the process of developing knowledge, actions, skills, abilities and values that is embedded in teachers’ practice and experience and aimed primarily at developing and improving children and young people’s learning. (Buckler, Cordingley, & Temperley, 2009, p. 3)

The term is drawn from the theory of ‘transformative learning’ in which, for some, the mentor or coach is seen as entering into a ‘developmental alliance’ with the mentee or coachee (Hay, 1995), whereas for others it is problematic Howie and Bagnall (2013):

The theory seems to be taking over the adult learning world by stealth and inattentiveness, rather than thoughtfulness. It thus becomes the organising framework for a variety of other approaches to adult learning, all of which are assumed to be transformational. When this occurs, the whole theory becomes suspect, because it effectively lacks any real boundaries; without boundaries, it becomes incoherent and meaningless, albeit a beautiful metaphor. (p.830)

Darling-Hammond appears to agree with this sentiment, as is evidenced in the foreword to a *‘Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad’* (Jackson, 2005):

...in education, professional learning in its current state is poorly conceived and deeply flawed. Teachers lack time and opportunities to view each other’s classrooms, learn from mentors, and work collaboratively. The support and training they receive is episodic, myopic, and often meaningless. Meanwhile, states and districts are spending millions of dollars on academic courses disconnected from the realities of classrooms, but little on helping educators find solutions to the day-to-day challenges they face. (pp. 2-3)

Her report concludes that while the US has made good progress in providing induction and mentoring support for teachers ‘the structures and supports that are needed to sustain teacher learning and change and to foster job-embedded professional development in collegial environments fall short’ (p.27).

Evans (2014), in reviewing the literature on the concept of the professional development of teachers, defines professional development as ‘the process whereby people’s professionalism may be considered to be enhanced, with a degree of permanence that exceeds transitoriness’ and concludes:

I conceive of professional development as relating solely to the practitioner; it may indeed have secondary beneficiaries, but they should not, in my view, be

considered integral to conceptualisations or definitions of professional learning or growth or development. (p.190)

In this light, given the obvious conceptual complexity surrounding professional development, and for expediency, the acronym PD (professional development) is used throughout this thesis, except where it is used in other quoted research projects, as it provides an over-arching metaphor for professional learning regardless of whether it be award bearing or not. Finally, this chapter focuses on in-service Masters provision, with particular reference to the recent introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning. Themes and issues that have emerged from this chapter in relation to the research questions are then identified.

2.2 Historical and political context

The historical and political context of the mid-sixties and seventies is centred on a plethora of reports, following from the 1944 Act (2011), which established local education authorities (LEAs) as having the responsibility to discharge the government's function 'to promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose'. The 1944 Act provided the basis, in varying measure, for these subsequent education reports such as the Robbins Report (1963), the Plowden Report (1967) and the James Report (James, 1972). The James Report was commissioned by the then Conservative government. Prior to that, the only full review of teacher education had been the McNair Report (1944) and the Hadow Reports Gillard (2006). The Plowden Report had recommended an enquiry into teacher training, despite the reforms of Higher Education recommended by Robbins which had implications for teacher qualifications. These reports were followed by, among other legislation, the 1988 Education Reform Act which introduced the concept of the market for education: local management for schools (LMS); grant maintained (GM) schools; and city technology colleges (CTCs). It also lessened further the role of the local education authority, now termed the local authority (LA).

Neither the 1944 nor the 1988 acts had much to say explicitly about teacher education as they were more concerned with curriculum content and structures: it was the 1994 Education Act that provided for the creation of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) which was to become a major player in the piloting of Masters provision for serving teachers, as was signalled by the Labour government in 'Being the best for our children':

Our aim is to raise standards, narrow the achievement gap and give children better life chances. Further improving the quality of teaching and learning is key to our ability to do this. We intend to create a new Masters level qualification that will boost the quality of teaching needed to improve the achievement of all pupils. It will also help meet the needs of a 21st century profession working in 21st Century Schools as set out in the Children's Plan. It will rightly further advance the status of the profession making it an even more attractive career option, both for those at university and for the increasing number of those who choose teaching as a second career. (DfCSF, 2008, p. 12)

The role of government in the development of education policy over the last fifty years has been central, not only in the legislature but in the stances adopted by the political right and left. Despite a short period of post-war consensus following the 1944 Act, political involvement has been and continues to be a combination of ideological polemic on the one hand and conscientious disagreement on the other. Nor is it always a matter of opposing political views: for example, according to Macbeath (2011), there is little to separate the three successive governments up to 2011, irrespective of their party ideology, in their approach to education in general and teacher education in particular. He contends that from the early 1980s there had been 'a steady growth in government micromanagement of what happens in the classroom through a National Curriculum which mandated not only content but mode of delivery' (p. 378). The notion of 'delivery' (Ingvarson, Meiers, & Beavis, 2005) was seen, he argues, as the indication of a political desire to wrest autonomy from teachers. An intended consequence of this was to severely constrain the role of Higher Education in teacher education. Groundwater-Smith and Sachs (1983) see the problem as a lack of trust which is characterized by bureaucratic surveillance and which encourages teachers to act as 'entrepreneurial professionals', as opposed to 'active professionals':

We indicate that there are two responses to bureaucratic surveillance: to act as an entrepreneurial professional or as an activist professional. We argue that the latter is achievable when trust is reinstated through the community of professional practice itself. We illustrate our case using issues surrounding the establishment of professional standards for teachers and we develop strategies for activist professionalism in education. (p. 341)

Various other academics have lamented what they perceive to be either a dismissive or a contemptuous response from politicians (Alexander, 2010; Ball, 1990; Henderson, 1976; Whitty, 2006) towards the findings not only of educational research in particular but educational discourse in general. Benn (2012) in her defence of the comprehensive school openly acknowledges that political ideology has played a major part in ‘the war of attrition’ (p.61) that has been waged both from the right and the left over the last fifty years and continues to the present day. Keep (2006) refers to this ideological positioning as ‘ideological continuity’:

‘...the main reason why the broad thrust of E&T policy under New Labour has exhibited many elements of continuity with the policy trajectory developed by Conservative administrations over the preceding 17 years is because underlying ideological assumptions have also remained constant. As a result, the landscape of the ‘assumptive worlds’ inhabited by the policy makers has remained unaltered, and therefore the definitions of E&T policy issues, and the range of acceptable policies to tackle these, has remained similarly static. (p.60)

This open, pragmatic approach is taken by Wilkin (1996) who sees the historical debate about teacher education primarily in terms of ‘a dialogue between ideology and culture’ in which the attitude of the government to the professions can be expressed in three arguments (Peters, March 2010). These arguments are based on Thatcherite principles:

... the ‘market argument’ regards professional groups as representing producer capture against the interests of consumers. The ‘values argument’ opposes professionals because they espouse an anti-commercial ethic of service and universal rights; also because they value authoritative expertise rather than the enterprise culture. The ‘political argument’ sees professional communities as making a special contribution to the maintenance of liberal democracy by balancing the powers of the state. (p. 177)

In essence, Wilkin’s conclusion is that arguments by academics which are based on reason are bound to fail when directed against ideologies irrespective of their political nature: they are, by definition, ‘immune to reason’, although less so to culture. In her view, therefore, it is better to view ideologies as the basis for mutually beneficial dialogue. Similarly, in a recent

paper on the Work of Teacher Education (WoTE) project (2013) Ellis and his research team sensed during the course of their fieldwork what they term ‘a kind of truce’ struck between universities and the state, that has ‘surrendered’ teacher education in the hope that their core research activity would be left alone’ (p.279). Lawton in his preface to ‘Education and politics for the 1990s: conflict or consensus’ (1992) neatly cuts through this apparent dilemma:

Perhaps the way towards a new consensus will be not to ignore political/ideological differences but to recognise their existence whilst trying to get beyond them. (p.x)

Furlong (1992) offers a modification of Lawton’s observation in suggesting that ideologies are best defined as ‘complex intellectual traditions that are integral to the way that each of us understands and interprets the world’ (p.165). By such ‘systems of representation’ we are more able to understand how, as in the case of this present research, educational policy is determined. More recently, Stuart Hall (2011b) adds to this pragmatism by suggesting, albeit reluctantly, that neoliberalism should be embraced as a fact of modern life in the hope that it will provide a positive springboard for the emergence of a social democratic state of affairs:

However, in ambition, depth, degree of break with the past, variety of sites being colonised, impact on common sense, shift in the social architecture, neoliberalism does constitute a hegemonic project. Today, popular thinking and the systems of calculation in daily life offer very little friction to the passage of its ideas. Delivery may be more difficult: new and old contradictions still haunt the edifice, in the very process of its reconstruction. Still, in terms of laying foundations and staging the future on favourable ground, the neoliberal project is several stages further on. To traduce a phrase of Marx's: "Well grubbed, old mole." Alas! (p. 728)

This concept of globalization, coupled with a ‘neoliberal stratagem’, and the extent to which it either informs or misinforms national educational policies, such as the MTL, is explored further by those (Chung, Atkin, & Moore, 2011) who question the effectiveness of so-called ‘policy borrowing’:

Can England borrow policy from a country so different from its own context, educationally or otherwise? Close inspection of the policies in both countries, as well as philosophies in teacher education, do not indicate the possibility of this. We suggest politicians instigated the MTL in order to satisfy the political need for a ‘quick fix’ or borrowed the policy in a ‘phony’ manner, for immediate political impact. (p.271)

However, they do not reject the potential for such policy borrowing where it is carefully considered, such as in the case study of the London Education Authority of Barking and Dagenham’s successful borrowing of Swiss educational practices (Ochs, 2006). Chung et al emphasise that the success of the London borough’s adoption of a foreign system relied on five goals:

1. A strong commitment to improving the school system.
 2. Strong key partnerships to provide support in the process.
 3. Awareness of the challenges at hand when implementing a foreign system into one’s own.
 4. Recognising that the process would require continuous commitment and repetition.
 5. Considering the contexts of both countries throughout the policy borrowing stages.
- (p.265)

Given more time, they conclude, and with a close adherence to these goals, a comparable level of success may have proved the case for the MTL (Section 8.2).

And, despite their aforementioned reservations about a political ‘quick fix’, Chung’s paper acknowledges that a more nuanced interpretation of policy borrowing could be helpful: for example, they point to similarities in the Finnish system, particularly in terms of its ‘multimode’ programme which is provided for unqualified teachers and is similar to the MTL and, indeed, not unlike the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP):

The participants in the programme work full time in schools while undertaking the teaching qualification. The work in schools allows for a deep understanding of the relationship between theory, practice, and study. Working in schools full time also allows for reflective practice and learning from both successes and challenges. The similarity between the MTL’s reflective focus and the importance of

reflection in Finland's research-based teacher education, especially in the multimode programme, indicates that the Finnish policy could have been considered. (p.271)

In this respect, the question remains whether the MTL was introduced on the basis of an informed borrowing of successful policy elsewhere, or is the resemblance to the multimode programme merely a coincidence or a product of serendipity? Despite this conciliatory approach to policy borrowing, there are others Brown (2010) who regard it with scorn:

A fixation with the performance of other countries represents the worst form of cultural cringe. We need to recognise and build on the strengths we have rather than attempting to 'cherry pick' what appear to be recipes for success from vastly different contexts. In the 1990s Japan was a focus of attention because of the strength of the Japanese economy. We were encouraged to emulate the educational and business practices of Japan, and Australian students were urged to learn Japanese. No one talks about copying Japan now. (p.94)

With particular reference to the Masters in Teaching and Learning, Frankham and Hiatt (2011) reinforce the argument that the MTL forms part of a neoliberal stratagem for a utilitarian control of teachers:

The MTL, we argue, represents a deepening hold on education by the State and a growing skepticism about the value of higher education in the CPD of teachers. It also aspires to a changing culture in schools as the workplace becomes the locus for the CPD of teachers. As other authors have described, the national character of education systems in Europe (Hattie, 2003) and in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and Asia (Seaborne, 2010) reflect an increasing instrumentality. The MTL, then, can be seen as part of a global phenomenon; in this case, the policy lever of CPD is employed to support performative and audit policy agendas via a rigid accountability system. The MTL also represents a particular form of neoliberal governmentality where increasing centralisation is 'masked' by a 'simulacra of care'(Fielding, 2006, p. 357).

The notion of teaching as a 'respected profession' is highly contentious in England: teachers feel de-professionalised (Furlong, 1996) and do not have the degree of autonomy that is

claimed for countries such as Finland and their work is closely monitored and ‘externally mandated’ through inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). In recent times the central funding for PD has been discontinued by the Coalition Government, alongside the re-alignment of funding for Initial Teacher Training in order to accommodate the School Direct Programme. Graham (1998) sums up the malaise of a profession in which ‘... teaching is perceived as a profession trapped in government control in a manner quite out of keeping with the international entrepreneurialism pursued by other occupations’.

According to many early commentators, this government control, in the form of Ofsted, is not respected by either teachers or HEIs (Ball, 1997; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2008; Hoban, 2002; Hoban, Butler, & Lesslie, 2007; Lofthouse & Leat, 2013; Woods & Jeffrey, 1998) . Such a lack of respect derives from the belief, under-pinned by research, that the inspection process is not only stressful for teachers but that it does not facilitate school improvement. Research undertaken in Germany (Knight & van Nieuwerburgh, 2012) concludes that no impact on changes in the perception of school quality, particularly in teaching and learning, can be found when comparing inspected schools with uninspected schools. A previous research report (Hoy & Spero, 2005) goes further:

Indeed, although the magnitude is small in absolute terms, significant negative effects of Ofsted visits on school exam performance in the year of the inspection may be found in the data. Finally, it is shown that there exist no significant effects discernible on exam success from prior year’s Ofsted inspections. The data is fully consistent with Ofsted inspections having adverse effects on the current exam performances of schools inspected. (p.150)

Ironically, it was an Ofsted survey (2006, p. 2) that lauded those schools where there was a ‘logical chain’ of procedures to identify individual and whole-school professional development:

They recognised the potential of CPD for raising standards and therefore gave it a central role in planning for improvement. The teachers and support staff in these schools enjoyed high-quality CPD, which had been well chosen from a wide range of possible activities to meet their schools’ and their own needs. Schools which

had designed their CPD effectively and integrated it with their improvement plans found that teaching and learning improved and standards rose.

2.3 School improvement: key reports and reviews

Reporting on the High Reliability Schools project (S. Stringfield, D. Reynolds, & E. C. Schaffer, 2008b) the authors supported the aforementioned Ofsted view that, given the right contextual conditions, gains could be made in pupil attainment. They define the conditions as:

A school-wide focus on a finite set of goals;

The relentless gathering and use of data of all types. Getting the data in the hands of all persons involved in the education of each student: the head, the department heads, the teachers, and the students;

Giving schools existing “good practice” from the academic literature and also helping schools develop relatively high-quality data systems;

From the beginning, the HRS project built on a combination of technical, scholarly knowledge of HROs and various “effectiveness” literatures together in equal partnership with local educators’ knowledge of and skill in working within local educational contexts. The HRS principles and program may have been a catalyst, but the skill and commitment of local educators produced the outcomes. The HRS project was co-constructed from beginning to end;

Working with and through multiple levels in the education environment. This included focusing upon the classroom and the middle-management tier of schools in addition to a focus at the conventional school level;

Building capacity at school-site level to continue educational development after the formal end of the project. (ibid p.424)

Not only did they find improvement in pupil attainment but that it was sustainable over time:

By the end of the formal project, spring of 2000, the Welsh national average had risen to 49%, a laudable gain of 8.3% more students obtaining 5+ A*–C’s. Over

the same 4 school years, including the 3 full years of HRS participation, the 12 HRS schools raised their average percentage of students obtaining 5+ A*-C grades on the GCSEs (weighted by the n of students per school) to 48.1% for a student-mean gain of 14.5 percentages. This rate of gain was fully 75% more rapid than the nation's laudable gains. Note that the HRS school with the least gain had gained more than the national average during those years (8.7% vs. 8.3% nationally) and that five schools made gains that more than doubled the national average gain. At the end of the intervention phase, the HRS project had produced substantial gains in the percentages of students succeeding on the end-of-secondary schooling tests. pp 418-419

In particular, the authors euphorically declare that two schools exemplify their argument that raising pupil attainment is 'desirable, do-able, durable and sustainable'. Before the HRS project, they record, one school had only 13% of pupils in consecutive years achieving 5 A*-Cs, yet in 2005 it achieved 51%. More dramatically, another school went from 28% to 72%. Both these were in catchment areas that had not changed over time. They remark that 'in 1997, neither school's head nor faculty would have said such gains were humanly possible'.

Thrupp (2011a; 1995; 2007) holds a contrary and minority view:

...within education, concern about growing class inequalities comes up against competing and rather more celebratory discourses such as school improvement, educational leadership and teacher quality which also distract from the problem. In these ways, increasing middle class advantage becomes something not mentioned: an 'elephant in the staffroom' if you like. (2007, p. 344)

He has persistently and, and in his own word 'stubbornly', argued that social class is 'an inconvenient truth' that determines academic outcomes: middle class children attend predominantly 'high decile schools' and consequently achieve 'a positional advantage' over those with a lower socio-economic status. In particular, he castigates those academics, such as Barber, Fullan, Hopkins, Reynolds and Southworth, all of whom 'do lots of consultancy and reform work within governments' and 'make an industry of themselves' (ibid p. 266). The extent to which consultancy and reform work has informed policy is explored in the following paragraphs.

Referred to in Chapter 1, it was McKinsey & Company who exercised a considerable influence on the shaping of government policy on school improvement, despite Thrupp's censure of Michael Barber. On its website McKinsey & Company describes itself as 'a global management consulting firm ... the trusted advisor to the world's leading businesses, governments, and institutions'. One indicator of its success is the extent to which it recruits leading figures in its various areas of activity, such as the aforementioned Michael Barber and Michael Fullan. The latter (1992), for example, a long-time leading academic in school improvement with a world-wide reputation, is referenced on the website as advocating, and legitimising, the McKinsey strategic approach. In the foreword to the second report, he describes it as making 'a unique contribution to this critical global agenda'.

The McKinsey Reports (2007 ; 2010) both re-affirmed the notion, contested by some, that the quality of teaching provided the key to school improvement. The fundamental three tenets of McKinsey are: 1. the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers; 2. the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction; and 3. high performance requires every child to succeed. The report concludes that 'Despite substantial increases in spending and many well-intentioned reform efforts, (more autonomy for schools, reduced class size, improved student-teacher ratio, structural reform) performance in a large number of school systems has barely improved in decades.' One of its recommendations, based on the experience of Finland, was to raise the status of teaching by 'requiring that all teachers possess a Masters degree'.

In addition to Thrupp, a number of critics have raised questions about what they consider to be the technocratic, managerial nature of these two reports. Alexander (2010, pp. 801-802) wryly observes:

As a blueprint for educational reform and the achievement of world class schools, the McKinsey report on education was embraced in Britain with a degree of political enthusiasm matched only by the speed with which the same politicians rejected the McKinsey report on health.

An extensive critique of both reports is offered by Coffield (2012). He acknowledges that there are elements, particularly in the second report, that justify serious consideration, although his fundamental charge of over-simplification and a lack of research rigour in both

reports remain. He questions what he considers to be a reductive assertion that teaching lies at the bedrock of school improvement without taking into account many other elements, such as socio-economic status:

Reports which have achieved such global influence within a short time deserve the closest scrutiny. Yet when they are so examined, the first fails for at least four reasons: it is methodologically flawed; selective; superficial; and its rhetoric on leadership runs ahead of the evidence. The second, although it corrects some of the faults of its predecessor and offers a more elaborate explanation of success, still possesses six faults: it has an impoverished view of teaching and learning; its evidential base is thin; its central arguments are implausible; its language is technocratic and authoritarian; it underplays the role of culture in education and it omits – any mention of democracy. (p.136)

Perhaps Coffield's sternest censure applies to the authors' authority: he describes them as 'policy analysts, remote from both the complexities of classrooms and from the discomfiting findings of researchers which pose such difficulties for politicians in search of quick 'transformations' of school systems before the next election' (p.145) Finally, he describes both reports as 'dystopian'. Even so, there is no gainsaying that, whatever their provenance and whatever their perceived research status, these reports have informed educational policy and practice in recent times. As Braun (2008) points out, despite the questionable evidential base of these reports and the absence of any significant reference to pupils' backgrounds, 'it would be hard to argue against the collective necessity of these suggestions'.

By contrast with McKinsey, several research projects and reports provide a less contentious analysis of the impact of PD. The State of the Nation (SoN) Study Pedder et al. (2010) is particularly pertinent to this thesis. Commissioned by the TDA, it focused on 'three core themes' related to schools in England and the PD of teachers:

1. the benefits, status and effectiveness of PD;
2. the planning and organisation of PD; and
3. access to PD.

Briefly, ‘the main purpose of the SoN study was therefore to extend this evidence base in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of prevailing practices in teachers’ PD overall and so to inform future development of the TDA’s PD strategy.’ *ibid* p366

The Executive Report summarises the approach:

Our survey sample consisted of 329 primary and 59 secondary schools. The survey was undertaken between March and June 2008. Surveys were returned by 151 schools in total, which was a 39% response rate; 118 primary schools responded – a response rate of 36% - and 33 secondary schools responded – a response rate of 56%. Overall, 1126 teachers’ surveys were returned by teachers and senior leaders in participating schools. In addition 251 leaders’ surveys were returned by senior leaders in the same participating schools.

Under these headings the report identified the following 11 ‘issues’:

Benefits, status and effectiveness of PD

Issue 1: There is a lack of effective PD in terms of levels of classroom contextualised practice, collaboration with colleagues, and research-informed professional learning.

Issue 2: There is a lack of effective PD practice in terms of both the form and duration of PD activities.

Issue 3: There is little indication that current PD is seen as having an impact on raising standards or narrowing the achievement gap. This is despite the fact that the vast majority of teachers thought that PD would have a positive impact on pupils’ learning and achievement.

Issue 4: Teachers identify a wide range of benefits of PD; however, these benefits vary significantly by school and teacher characteristics.

Issue 5: School leaders report that school-based and classroom-based PD with a clear focus on learning processes and improving pedagogy provide more value for money than PD that takes place outside schools.

Planning and organisation of PD

Issue 6: Relating to school contexts: Strategic planning for PD frequently does not provide for the wide range of professional development needs that exist in schools. Planning and organisation of PD in schools tends not to be strategic and struggles to meet the competing development needs of individual teachers and whole- school improvement plans.

Issue 7: Relating to schools as organisations: organisational choices made in schools about roles and responsibilities do not always support or help to develop PD planning and provision.

Issue 8: Relating to culture change and aspects of New Professionalism: some changes to teachers' perceptions and actions in relation to their roles and responsibilities are evident, in tune with the New Professionalism agenda. Wholesale change has not occurred.

Issue 9 Relating to evaluation of PD and follow-up action: evaluation systems of PD used in schools are insufficiently tied to considering planned outcomes, identifying specific criteria and considering value for money.

Access to PD

Issue 10: Teachers are offered a narrow range of PD opportunities which vary significantly by experience, career stage and leadership responsibility.

Issue 11: Both school-level conditions and teacher perceptions serve as barriers to PD participation.

Of particular relevance to this research is the conclusion drawn by the study on the respondents' view of the importance of accredited PD:

75% of surveyed teachers indicate that accreditation is 'not important' or 'of limited importance' in their decisions to participate in PD.

Distinct differences of view emerged in focus group discussions around status and accreditation, with an overall evenly-spread balance of opinion in both primary and secondary sites. However, in about half of the focus groups accreditation of PD achievement was rated last or somewhere near this point in terms of PD prioritisation.

Opinion was divided as to whether the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) qualification would raise the status of the profession, serve as an attractive recruitment element, or as a factor that would encourage retention. In essence, the findings of the report are bleak: for example, the finding that PD does not have an impact on raising standards or narrowing the achievement gap. This, despite the fact that the vast majority of teachers decided on a PD activity because they thought it would have a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement'. However, the report contends, there is some indication that where schools provide a clear focus on teaching and learning there is a greater likelihood of school-based PD ensuring 'value for money'. Needless to say that this begs the question of what constitutes 'a clear focus' and, secondly, how value for money can be assessed which, in this case, relies mainly on the opinions of school leaders who see it more in terms of school and classroom based activities and less in out of school PD. For them, such PD focuses on learning processes and teaching, as opposed to 'behaviour management, thinking skills and pupil consultation'. Although this report is, clearly, based on an extensive research project, it is also a commissioned report in response to 28 questions set by the TDA (Appendix 12) which could be construed by sceptics as presupposing a governmental view of 'the state of the nation's PD provision.

Contemporaneous with the State of the Nation Study the TDA also commissioned the Seaborne Review (2010) - a longitudinal review of the postgraduate professional development (PPD), referred to as PD in this thesis, of teachers to cover:

- the historical context for award-bearing in-service education and training (INSET) and postgraduate professional development (PPD);
- the evolution in the nature and style of the postgraduate professional development of teachers;
- a critical summary of the evidence of the impact of PPD;
- issues and concerns raised by PPD provision, and an overview of the main evidence of the effectiveness of PPD and the messages that can be deduced for the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) Programme.

This review purported to 'review the available evidence about the effectiveness and impact on teachers, pupils and schools of 10 years of postgraduate professional development for

teachers through schemes funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools'. In pursuit of this objective, it drew on a range of professional and academic literature, including TDA impact reports and less formal teacher testimonies, and concluded that the Professional Development Programme (PPD), as constituted over the decade up to 2010, 'was a beneficial and successful programme that everyone concerned had sought to improve and develop in the light of carefully evaluated experience' (p.1). The extent to which this experience was, indeed, 'carefully evaluated' is questionable. As an indication of the questionable nature of such a conclusion, a previous report on PD (Cordingley, Bell, Isham, Evans, & Firth, 2007) noted that 'It is challenging for researchers to report negative findings when they are also involved in the delivery of the programmes'. This point was picked up during the fieldwork for this research by a TDA Board interviewee (BM1) who observed that the variability in quality of PD and variability of access 'are things that were worrying TDA'.

This TDA longitudinal study addressed not only the history of the growth of the provision for the professional development of teachers in general, but more specifically, award-bearing provision. For providers to gain funding they had to demonstrate, by means of triennial reviews, that they could meet all the requisite criteria, as set out below. Since the report states from the outset that these criteria were being met to a great extent by most HEI providers, it is not pertinent to this research to rehearse the points that lead to this conclusion. However, those elements that were taken from it to form the questionnaire for the research reported in this thesis do require some clarification. They are presented in the form of programme criteria against which the 'impact' of provision is assessed. Provision should:

- have as its main objective the improvement of pupils' performance through the embedded improvement of teachers' knowledge, understanding and practice;
- lead to recognised qualifications at M-level or above;
- respond to identified training and development needs of individuals;
- be informed by the needs schools or groups of schools;

- develop teachers' research and problem-solving skills through the critical evaluation of evidence and research from a range of sources, including academic research and other data available to schools;
- directly involve teachers, schools and other local and regional stakeholders in planning, reviewing and developing provision to meet the identified needs of schools and teachers in the region(s) where it will be offered;
- incorporate up-to-date research and inspection evidence and develop teachers' skills in using research and other evidence to inform their professional practice.

It is in terms of these elements or criteria and the conclusions drawn that the 27 statements in the questionnaire that forms a key part of this research were formulated (Appendix 2). The conclusions were categorised in terms of the impact on participants and, by extension, on children. 'Other manifestations' included impact on the school and beyond and a further category addressed the 'barriers to participation'. The impact on participants consisted of several elements: increased confidence and self-esteem; a 'marked' impact on professional capability; improved understanding of subject pedagogy and, in some cases, a noticeable effect on recruitment and retention. Whether such awards as the MTL have a measurable impact on children's learning goes to the heart of the main question for this research, which receives a cautionary, albeit positive, response from Seaborne:

Teachers' improved ability to create learning situations that allowed pupils to be effective independent learners, to have more autonomy, and to judge their own progress through assessment for learning (AfL). Notwithstanding the attendant difficulties, the evidence from teachers and schools that attributes improvements in pupils' achievements to CPD should not be dismissed lightly. (p.13, para 46)

The review concludes that 'there is ample evidence from PPD that well-designed M-level study, which is carefully matched to individual needs, almost invariably leads to improvements in teachers' professional confidence, competence, knowledge, skills and understanding' and that, significantly, 'the MTL framework offers an excellent opportunity to draw upon and synthesise the collective experience of providing effective M-level

professional development for NQTs, and those in the early years of their teaching careers, through the PPD Programme' (p.22, Section 77).

The review is similarly cheerful about the perceived impact on schools: enhanced praxis; sharing new expertise; links with school improvement priorities; and supporting colleagues by coaching and mentoring. However, such optimism is overshadowed by the finding of the aforementioned State of the Nation Study that PD has a negligible effect on school improvement (Issue 3) unless the conditions in the school are conducive to professional learning. The review recognizes a number of barriers that deter teachers: time to study; lack of support from family or school; lack of relevance; personal insecurity; and, predominantly, workload. Seaborne also acknowledges that although some of the 'evidence' accrued may not be generalisable, but that 'taken as a whole, the evidence was rarely contradictory and confirmed a beneficial and successful programme (of PD) that everyone concerned had sought to improve and develop in the light of carefully evaluated experience' (p.1).

Under the heading 'the future of PPD' the review concludes with specific reference to the MTL which at the time was about to be launched. It speculates that the funding for the MTL may have an adverse effect on the provision for other PPD courses – a speculation that proved premonitory in light of the government's abrupt withdrawal of funding, including that for the MTL, except for 'continuers', with effect from 2011. Although it concludes that there is little evidence that PPD has a direct effect on pupils' learning, the review contends that this could be the case if the MTL provides a personal study programme that 'sets objectives for how these improvements in teachers' capabilities will affect the learning experiences of pupils, the impact on pupils' attitudes, engagement, behaviour and attainment can be significant' (Section 79). It also makes a pertinent comment that PPD providers have 'noted apathy and sometimes hostility from schools that see M-level study as distracting NQTs from the 'real business of getting to grips with teaching'. This had particular relevance for the MTL when in the early stages of its development the problem of headteachers as gatekeepers became apparent.

The review observes that 'such opposition may be widespread, even with the advent of MTL' (Section 82). Another problem identified in the review relates to the qualification of school-based coaches 'where the number of individuals qualified in this way that also have the aptitude and inclination to act as mentor and coach is currently limited' (Section

85). It concludes that in the absence of any substantive research on the effectiveness of mentors without higher qualifications in supporting M-level work, that ‘PPD can offer no evidence for MTL in this matter’ (Section 85). Both the impact on pupils’ learning and the quality of coaching are key concerns of this research which are discussed further both in this and later chapters.

The findings of the State of the Nation Study contrast starkly with the overall euphoria of the Seaborne Review. They also sit uncomfortably with an earlier report by Soulsby and Swain and on the award bearing INSET scheme (2003). This report considered four issues: 1) impact, 2) decline, 3) provision and 4) funding. It is the notion of impact that is most relevant to this research. It concluded:

The evidence on impact shows that the great majority of award-bearing INSET, because of the length and level of study entailed, has a valuable and increasingly demonstrable impact on the teachers who undertake it, on schools and their improvement, and on wider capacity within the profession – not least for leadership, for the training of others, and for responding to change. The effect on pupils’ standards, although more difficult to measure, can also be shown. (p.1)

Conversely, they question the value of short courses and INSET days on the grounds that schools are faced with many complex issues all of which ‘require sustained mental effort, skills in handling data and in persuading staff to commit themselves to change’ (p.39). In their view, it is the focus on problem solving and teaching and learning which is related to their own schools that is likely to prove effective, particularly for mid-career teachers.

An Ofsted report on in-service post-graduate training for teachers (2011) had acknowledged this latter point, despite making clear at the outset its inspection criteria, two of which were focused on raising standards of pupils’ achievements and having a ‘demonstrable and positive’ influence (Section 9) on classroom practice and/or whole-school performance. The demonstrable element, however, relies on testimony from a range of individuals, rather than on any objective data. For example, under the statement that ‘effective provision leads to a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning in schools’ the report states:

There is clear evidence of the impact on individuals as they discuss the taught sessions. They recognise the gains they make and are keen to put into practice ideas on how to teach more effectively. The teachers who attended previous courses were able to give concrete examples of the ways in which their teaching has improved as a result of the course. In one case, the course was a significant factor in developing the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and her subsequent career progression. She is now a Leading Teacher in primary mathematics. (Section Ciii)

This 'clear evidence' is, clearly, not evidence based on rigorous academic research and has to be taken on face value as typical of the often unsubstantiated and generalized judgments made by inspectors. More considered approaches and conceptual models are discussed in the next section.

2.4 Professional development/learning: models and frameworks

At this point a cautionary note is sounded: not all academics view professional development provision positively. For example, Sugrue (2004) describes it as a 'proprietary prescribed prophylactic, the panacea of choice, the prozac of the educational system' (p.67). For him, there is a serious disparity between the ability of teachers to determine their own development and the prescriptions of both government-led dirigiste agendas. That until recent times, there were 'disappointingly scanty' substantive research studies on teachers' professional development Henderson (1976) is echoed in an early study based on questionnaires (199) and a convenience sample of interviews (13) with teachers who had attended part-time courses over the course of a year. The aim of this study was to ascertain teachers' views of the 'possible effects' of their in-service experience – such effects included their perceived impact on their knowledge level, their teaching, pupil attainment and department and school policy. Of particular relevance to this research, is their finding that there is:

... a strong connection between reporting that teaching has improved and that pupil attainment has increased. At least at the level of teacher perception, it is only through direct improvements in teaching (as opposed to improvements in knowledge and attitudes or school policy and organisation) that in-service can impact on pupil attainment. (p.176)

The Halpin study (Halpin et al., 1990) acknowledges the possibility that these claims might be exaggerated, but suggests that independent assessments can also present problems: in their view, teachers are 'best placed' to make judgements of this kind. Referring to a point made by Henderson (1976) that 'in-service training is likely to be more effective if it is designed to involve the school as a system rather than the teacher as an individual' (p.32), they also found that an individualistic, as opposed to collegial, approach to in-service is weak.

Pertinent to this study of the impact of in-service Masters degrees is what Daresh (1987) refers to as the absence of a conceptual framework which could be applied to what was at that time already known about teachers' experience of professional development, the consequence of which was that the (then) current state of research was:

...that researchers seem to be merrily engaged in collecting a good deal of information of apparently limited benefit to the improvement of school practices, the ability of educators to be more successful in their roles, or the condition of staff development and in-service education. (p.9)

Later, Harland and Kinder (1997) had proposed a conceptual framework expressed as a 'hierarchy of (9) outcomes' which drew on a longitudinal study previously undertaken in five case study primary schools over a period of four years to explore the mid to long term impact on teachers, both positive and negative, of PD. This study included classroom observation of teachers and a succession of interviews with teachers, pupils and 'other key participants'. Presented as a 'provisional typology' of INSET outcomes (p.72) in ascending order, the outcomes were described as:

3rd Order

1. Material and provisionary
2. Informational outcomes
3. New awareness

2nd Order

4. Value congruence
5. Affective
6. Motivational and attitudinal

1st Order

7. Knowledge and skills
8. Institutional
9. Impact on practice

The first three refer to access to resource materials, new information about and awareness of, recent developments, such as requirements of the National Curriculum. The second three refer to changes in attitude or confirmation of beliefs brought about by in-service courses: for example, a teacher may have learning experiences which are 'congruent' with their own espoused theories or they may believe that teaching has a moral purpose 'writ large' (Fullan, 2002) which either harmonises or conflicts with the INSET provided. Each of these may have a cumulative impact on teaching and pupil attainment but, viewed separately, the first six are less likely to. The final three refer to 'the development of deeper levels of understanding, critical reflexivity and theoretical rationales' (p.76) which not only have a positive outcome for individual teacher but impact on the school in general and teaching in particular in terms of changes in classroom practice. Using this framework to evaluate the study Harland and Kinder concluded that third order activities (1-3) are least likely to impact on teaching, although they could indirectly contribute towards it. Where the second and first order outcomes are present:

Our tentative conclusion is that in order to maximise the chances of PD leading to a change in classroom practice, all nine 'outcomes' (prioritised in the order suggested above) need to be present as pre-existing conditions or be achieved by the INSET activities. (p.77)

Considerably later, the OCTET Project (Reynolds, Harris, Clarke, Harris, & James, 2006) resonated with the findings described above to the degree that it was based on the belief that school improvement is more likely to be productive if it is located in classrooms and what it terms 'instruction'. Similar in some measure to an extensive project undertaken in Chile (Avalos (2011) over a period of ten years and involving 1300 secondary schools for an average of two years, the OCTET project began as a government initiated three-year 'research and development' programme of intervention and improvement with eight schools that were considered to be facing 'exceptionally challenging circumstances characterised by high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and deprivation' with the aim of extending this to similar schools nationwide. The context of this project has its origins in the conclusion that some researchers had reached (Potter, Reynolds, & Chapman, 2002) that previous approaches to school improvement, described as phases 1 and 2 that relate to the 1970s and 1980s respectively, had proved ineffective, albeit with external support. Phase 3 is described as

‘The Third Age of School Improvement’ which is based on the immediate context of the school and stresses:

- the importance of pupil outcomes;
- the learning level and the instructional behaviours of teachers;
- collaborative patterns of staff development that enable teachers to enquire into practice, and external strategies for dissemination and networking;
- capacity building;
- quantitative data plus qualitative data are used to measure quality and variation in that quality;
- reliability or “fidelity” in programme implementation across all organisational members;
- cultural change in order to embed and sustain school improvement;
- sophisticated training, coaching and development programmes.

Although this project is reported in the form of a discussion paper on the merits of a participative approach to school improvement and its attendant problems, it does claim that over the period ‘the results from the programme have been very encouraging with all eight schools significantly improving their academic results’ (p.435). However, it is acknowledged by the authors that the question remains whether such an effect is sustainable in view of the cost, the unlikelihood of scaling up and, as this project demonstrates, the complex nature of the schools involved:

Unlike effective schools, which have been shown to exhibit similar characteristics, schools in the low-performing grouping may look homogeneous but in practice exhibit very different characteristics. Therefore, it seems important that the school improvement field moves to consider more highly differentiated and context-specific programmes. (p.436)

The authors conclude that ‘initiatives, like OCTET, come and go without knowledge transfer or knowledge building’ and that, despite its relative success, there were no plans to disseminate its findings. As a consequence, ‘achieving context specific school improvement will require a radical shift away from short-term approaches to change, from standardised school improvement approaches, and from externally driven agendas’ (p.437). On the point of sustainability, a telling endnote to this project is that of the eight schools two have subsequently closed, and all eight have been converted into academies for which, according to some (Curtis, Exley, Sasia, Tough, & Whitty, 2008; Machin & Veroit, 2010a) claims for improvement are contested. More recently, the Academies Act (2010) enabled any school regardless of its attainment profile to convert to academy status, thus making it more

problematic to ascertain the performance level of schools that were hitherto either ‘national challenge’ or in current Ofsted language, ‘requiring improvement’. It also enabled politicians to claim that the required school improvement could be made as a consequence of structural changes of this kind which have characterised education policy over the past two decades (Furlong, 2013):

Following the general election in 2010, the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government enacted the Academies Act 2010. This allowed schools to convert relatively quickly and easily to academy status, and by January 2012 over 1000 secondary academies had been established ... accounting for around one-third of all secondary schools; by July 2012, the proportion had increased to 41%.

p.154

Lindsay and Muijs (2008) advance a similar argument to that of Hopkins and Matthews that the measurement of impact requires a more sophisticated approach than is customarily adopted. Evaluation mechanisms do not appear to be in place with respect to the key intended outcomes of most PD: changes in what teachers actually do, resulting, it is hoped, in improved student outcomes and information on value for money (p. 209). They cite the framework created by Guskey (2000) as such an approach: it proposes a hierarchical evaluative framework ranging from simple to complex where ‘simple’, in their view, best describes the customary approach to PD evaluation. The hierarchy consists of five ‘critical levels’:

- Level 1 Participant reaction
- Level 2 Participant learning
- Level 3 Organisational support and change
- Level 4 Participant use of new knowledge and skills
- Level 5 Pupil learning outcomes

Participant reaction is the simplest, easiest form of evaluation and is typical of many course evaluations for that reason Joyce and Showers (2002). Again, typically, questionnaires are used which include a rating scale and an opportunity for extended comment, as in the case of the questionnaire component of this present research. Some researchers refer to this measuring of initial satisfaction as ‘empathy quotients’ (Creasy and Paterson, 2006) which can provide a useful starting point for further evaluation. The extent to which participants acquire new knowledge, skills (Level 2) and, indeed, new attitudes can be ascertained from a

questionnaire, but it may require a rating against the explicitly intended learning outcomes of the programme. At Level 3 the focus is on organisational (school) support and change which presents an even greater challenge to elicit relevant and reliable information. In the case of the impact of Masters programmes on serving teachers there is also a time issue over which impact on teaching can be assessed and, more so, the impact on pupils' learning. According to Guskey, it is possible to judge the extent of the climate of support provided by schools and headteachers through structured interviews and the scrutiny of school documentation, such as teacher assessments inspection reports, that may yield evidence of impact. What is more problematic is how to assess the participants' acquisition and application of new knowledge and skills (Level 4): this requires, in addition to the questionnaires, participant interviews, advocacy of supervisors (school coaches) and lesson observation. Importantly, this aspect can only be addressed over time, as Lindsay and Muijs (*ibid.*) point out:

When a PD programme is directly intended to change practice, it is essential to evaluate whether participants are actually using the new knowledge and skills acquired. Evaluation of this level will have to take place after a reasonable time (which will depend on the complexity of the knowledge or skills to be acquired and the amount of time participants have had to develop and practise these skills), allowing the participants to practise and assimilate the new method or skill (Guskey, 2000; Grace, 2001). It is also important to take into account the fact that most learners go through different phases of implementation, described by Hall and Hord (1987) as non-use, orientation (information seeking), preparation, mechanical use of the skill (day-to-day), routine use of the skill (establishes pattern of use), refinement (varies use depending on context), integration (coordinates use with colleagues to gain greater impact), and renewal (re-evaluates quality of use and modifies to increase impact). (Lindsay & Muijs, 2008, p. 199).

They conclude that without such continuous and extended evaluation it will be impossible to judge the effectiveness of PD and that, as a consequence, 'investing in forms of PD that have little or no impact on the teacher and learner will remain a real possibility' (*ibid.* p. 209). Even so, by happenstance, such seemingly loose judgments can coincide with more considered research (Coates, 2011; McLeod, 2010; Ofsted, 2003; Skaalvik & Skaalvik,

2010). For example, Bandura's concept of self-efficacy underlies his contention that the impact that teachers have on pupil attainment is a function of complex processes:

Teachers operate collectively within an interactive social system rather than as isolates. The belief systems of staffs create school cultures that can have vitalizing or demoralizing effects on how well schools function as a social system. Schools in which the staff collectively judge themselves as powerless to get students to achieve academic success convey a group sense of academic futility that can pervade the entire life of the school. Schools in which staff members collectively judge themselves capable of promoting academic success imbue their schools with a positive atmosphere for development that promotes academic attainments regardless of whether they serve predominantly advantaged or disadvantaged students. (Section 1V, Section D)

Opfer and Pedder (2011), taking up Bandura's thesis, seek to clarify how schools either positively or negatively determine pupil attainment by distinguishing between their different overall performance levels: that is, whether they are high performing or low performing. They acknowledge that such a distinction based on so-called 'performance' is problematic:

Individual school-level achievement scores are not available in a national dataset in England. In determining school-level achievement, the NFER classifies school achievement in relation to other schools and then assigns a 'band' identifier to the school. Thus school achievement is relative rather than absolute. (p.14)

They maintain that this should not be seen as an obstacle to exploring the levels of achievement between schools. Broadly, they conclude that there is both a positive and a negative relationship between teacher professional development and school performance. High performing schools 'engage in practices to support teacher learning – systems and support for learning, creation of social capital conditions and supports for collaboration and networking' (p.21) in contradistinction to the lowest performing schools where performance management is used as a form of surveillance and there is little support for their learning, so that as a consequence, teachers 'turn inward to improve their practice'. The argument presented here has clear implications for this research into the notion of an all-Masters teaching profession, particularly in terms of the target group of schools and participants that

was established for the MTL. In this respect it is ironic, although explicable in political terms, that, according to the Opfer and Pedder study, high performing schools engage in professional development activities that are longer in duration whereas the MTL, which required a minimum three-year commitment, was targeted explicitly at low-performing schools. Regardless of this, Muijs and Reynolds advocate in 'Effective Teaching' (2003) that the future requires 'a more rational, empirical model of teaching':

In this latter model, teachers are skilled to be able to respond to anything that policy or intellectual changes may throw at them. They are not merely ciphers of past approaches, or adherents to what they were once told 'worked'. Developments such as the Masters in Teaching and Learning course to make the entire teaching profession research based are a useful start, but there is much more yet to do to create the teachers that can effectively respond to the challenge of the future by being the excellent researchers of their own classrooms. (p. 316).

Of over-riding importance in the above vision for teacher development is this concept of 'teacher efficacy' and its impact on pupil attainment. It sits alongside, and enhances, Muijs' earlier work on pupil self-concept and its relationship to achievement (2001). On the basis of these findings, it is conjectural that where there is a high level self-belief coupled with a corresponding level of teacher self-belief then achievement will be very high.

An Italian study (Caprara et al, 2006), by questionnaire, of over 2000 teachers in 75 Italian Junior high schools to assess self-efficacy beliefs and their job satisfaction, which also included a comparison with students' average final grades at the end of junior high school, in two subsequent scholastic years, concluded:

Ultimately, our findings suggest a reciprocal influence between teacher's self-efficacy beliefs and students' academic achievement, in accordance with social-cognitive theory that argues that the most important sources of self-efficacy beliefs are experiences of success. (p. 486)

A study conducted by the American Institute for Research Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley (2007) reviewed 1300 studies that were identified as 'potentially addressing the effect of teacher professional development on student achievement' (p.3). Of these, only nine were regarded as meeting the What Works Clearing House criteria – an approach 'modeled

on the review process and rigorous evidence standards of the U.S Department of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse... ..established the relevance criteria for literature searches and the parameters for screening and reviewing studies’ (p.19). That only nine meet these standards attests to ‘the paucity of rigorous studies that directly assess the effect of in-service teacher professional development on student achievement in mathematics, science, and reading and English/language arts’ (p.iv). It is claimed for these nine studies there is evidence that an average of 49 hours of professional development ‘can boost their students’ achievement by about 21 percentile points’.

Kennedy (2005), referred to earlier, proposed a set of ‘dominant characteristics of particular approaches to PD’ which would allow for a framework of analysis of policy and practice as set out on the following page.

Table 2-1: a spectrum of PD models

Model of CPD	Purpose of model
The training model The award-bearing model The deficit model The cascade model	Transmission
The standards-based model The coaching/mentoring model The community of practice model	Transitional
The action research model The transformative model	Transformative



Increasing capacity for professional autonomy

Source: Models of Continuing Professional Development: a framework for analysis, p247

She concludes that the choice for policy makers lies between providing PD is either to ensure that teachers have the necessary skills to implement government requirements – the transmission model - or to inculcate into them with the necessary critical capacity to influence, and indeed transform, such requirements:

These two distinct purposes for PD would necessitate very different models of PD; for example, PD which is conceived of as fulfilling the function of preparing teachers to implement reforms, aligns itself with the training, award-bearing and deficit models discussed earlier supporting a ‘transmission’ view of PD. On the other hand, PD which is conceived of as supporting teachers in contributing to and shaping education policy and practice would align itself more naturally with the action research and transformative models. (pp 246-7)

The dilemma presented here by Kennedy is reiterated by Furlong (2011) in his tribute essay to Susan Groundwater-Smith in which he questions the aims of the newly introduced MTL:

Might England be the first country to find ways of moving practitioner inquiry beyond its traditional position as a relatively small scale, almost 'counter cultural' teachers' movement, available to the few, to becoming a truly national system of professional development, available to all? Alternatively, will the MTL mean that the principles that Groundwater-Smith and others have advocated for so many years, like Alice's Dormouse, are to be uncomfortably squeezed into something else. (p.106)

The answer he proffers is that the Labour government at the time had the best intentions in recognising that in order for school improvement to be effective individual teachers needed to be 'on board', and that without their commitment national targets for raising attainment were unlikely to be achieved. However, in Furlong's view, this recognition amounted to a strategy based on the assumption that, over time, teachers would accept the need to implement government's educational priorities and targets. In effect, this approach represented a revised version of Labour's 'new professionalism' – an example of 'managed commitment' (Furlong, 2005; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2011) or in the words of Beck (2011) 'the overall process is thus arguably one of de-professionalisation in the guise of re-professionalisation' (p.119). A similar view is held by Fraser et al (2007) in their critique of 'a business model' approach to PD:

The reification of 'delivered' professional development activities as the structural components of a politically established framework of professional 'standards' is called into question. A socio-cultural interpretation of teacher learning and change is offered as an alternative; one that relies upon the assumption of individual teacher autonomy within an environment characterised by collaborative, collective decision-making. (p.165)

Frankham and Hiatt (2011) view the MTL in a similar vein:

In respect of teachers, we believe that there is much in the discourse of the MTL to suggest that this is not about a professional-in-the-making but a technician-in-the-making. Ironically, given the talk of personalisation with its connotations of

individualisation, and the emotional appeal of working alongside a trusted colleague (the coach), the MTL represents a monolithic and totalising response to the PD needs of beginning teachers. (p.817)

They conclude that ‘personalisation and coaching are illusory forms of individualised and practice-based solutions’ (p.818). Eccleston (2007) also regards personalisation as a ‘slippery concept’ in ideological terms that is typical of ‘neoliberal attitudes to choice whilst showing compassion by conferring emotional affirmation as the basis for engagement’ (p.463). Whilst it is clearly the case that the idea of a school-based coach is conceptually problematic for some, it remains a practical matter for schools, particularly for those engaged with the MTL, as will be discussed in the next section.

An ‘independent assessment’ of the MTL, undertaken at the initial stage of its development by Hopkins and Matthews (2010) focused on three themes: whether the MTL design was fit for purpose, the practical development of the programme and whether it would have the intended positive impact on teaching and pupil attainment. In essence, these three themes lie at the core of this thesis. Although the authors offered some useful suggestions for the development of the award, two dominant recommendations emerged concerning the teacher participants and their coaches. First, they suggest that the MTL should require independently assessed evidence of effective teaching. Second, and most important, they insist that the capability of the coaches must be ‘the most direct contributing factor’:

The programme must rapidly ensure that all coaches have Masters-level qualifications *and* are excellent, outstanding or advanced skills teachers (ASTs) in order to ensure that the leadership of the school-based component reflects an understanding of what Masters-level performance and mastery of teaching and learning entail. (p.8)

In addition, they argue, the MTL can only thrive in schools there are already professional learning communities, that is, schools deemed ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted. It follows, therefore, that the choice of National Challenge schools as the first participants was, in their view, ill-advised:

By identifying National Challenge and similar schools as the first participants, the DCSF is effectively piloting the programme in the least favourable circumstances.

Moreover, the MTL structure is failing to make the best use of existing staff development expertise in schools where this is highly advanced and well proven. (p.9)

In view of the fact that the MTL pilot phase focused on National Challenge schools (Appendix 10) the Staff Development Outcomes Study Report (Bubb et al., 2008) is particularly relevant. Commissioned by the TDA, the main aim of this year-long study was to find out 'how staff development, if undertaken in a systematic way across the school workforce, could lead to improved outcomes for both pupils and staff'. Initially, it researched PD in 25 'high performing' schools, then extended its scope to include 10 that were deemed, in rather coy terms, 'not so effective' on the grounds that:

Organisations that succeed against the odds are particularly valuable to learn from, so two-thirds (12/25 high and 9/10 less high performing schools) of our case study sample had pupils with high levels of free school meals entitlement. (p.3)

The first of two phases consisted of visits to 35 schools across the nine government office regions during which 198 teachers and 100 pupils were interviewed. The second phase consisted of a questionnaire survey which elicited 1612 responses from the school workforce in 600 schools (senior school leaders, teachers and support staff from primary, secondary and special schools).

Since the main findings from the research are presented under a wide range of headings - ethos, leadership and management, identifying needs, meeting needs, monitoring and impact, and the use of the TDA materials - the following focus is on the findings on 'impact' despite the acknowledged relevance of the other aspects. The findings are:

Training and development were said to be having a profound effect on individuals but schools found it hard to prove that staff development was making a positive difference to pupils.

The survey data show that nearly 70 percent of teachers but only a half of support staff reported that the impact of their training and development was evaluated. Impact evaluation was conducted mainly through discussions with staff, evaluation forms, lesson observation and performance management.

Teachers surveyed said the impact that training and development had on pupils was ‘better learning’ (55 percent), ‘greater motivation’ (38 percent) and greater confidence (28 percent). Only 15 percent thought their training and development had resulted in better test results.

In a summary of findings from several recent TDA- funded research projects including the Staff Development Outcomes Study Report (2008), as detailed in Appendix 13, Bubb and Early addressed the following aspects:

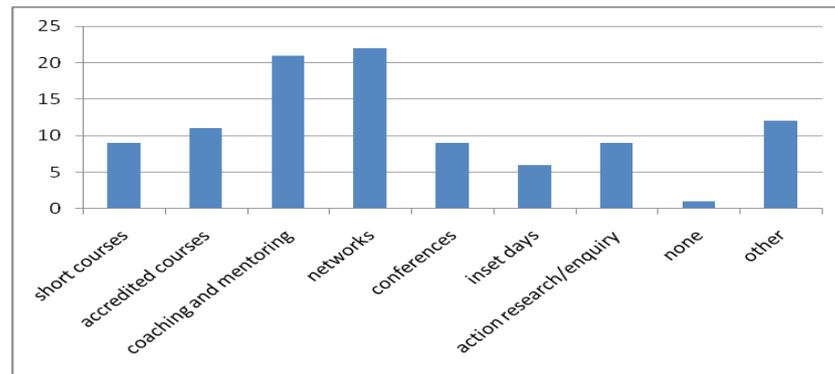
- Importance of staff development
- Leadership and management of staff development
- How needs are identified
- Meeting needs
- INSET days
- Evaluating impact
- Barriers to staff development

The crucial importance of leadership and management is a main finding in all the reports:

Effective leadership and management of staff development were essential. Where staff development was most effective in our case studies, its leaders were experienced senior staff who were well-informed and devoted much time to this aspect, linking it strategically to school improvements in efficient and cost-effective ways. (p.4)

The questionnaire asked senior staff which activities they had undertaken in the last 12 months that had been most useful to them in terms of their development as a leader. The two most popular choices were networks (17 percent) and coaching and mentoring (16 percent) (see Table 11). The next most reported useful PD activity was accredited courses (just over 10 percent). The remaining options: short courses, conferences, INSET days, action research and enquiry were found most useful by less than eight percent of respondents.

Table 2-2: activities most useful for leadership development in the last 12 months



Source: Staff Development Outcomes Study Report 2008 p.26

They cite the State of the Nation Study, discussed earlier, as concluding that ‘teachers do not need to be persuaded of the importance of professional learning for supporting their pupils’ learning’. Teachers include among the benefits: keeping up to date; addressing immediate school needs; having a positive impact on pupil learning; and improving academic achievement. They (75%) do not see accreditation as important. What is notable and pertinent to this research is the finding that responses vary significantly according to the ‘achievement band’ of the schools and, indeed, the afore-mentioned ‘culture’ to which they subscribe:

The Staff Development Outcomes (SDO) study found a positive association between school outcomes and staff development: the high performing case study schools mostly had strong staff development. Staff turnover was low and morale was high at these schools with strong staff development. The researchers could not be certain about whether low turnover and high morale was the result of effective staff development processes but felt that they were a contributory factor. They concluded that school ethos was fundamental to staff development. (p.49)

2.5 Coaching

All the elite respondents, as reported in the following chapters (4 and 5), acknowledged the view expressed by Hopkins and Matthews that the concept of the school-based coach was a key component that would underpin and guarantee the success of the MTL, although they did not expand on their understanding of the term. Indeed, the Executive Director of the TDA expressed this very clearly before the programme was launched in his submission to the

Children, Schools and Families Select Committee (DfCSF), which was chaired by Graham Stuart, a seemingly perplexed Conservative member of parliament:

Chairman: PPD is very successful. Everyone on the street seems to be saying that you are going to dump it in order to expand the Masters programme.

O1: PPD is very successful, and the Masters will be a step beyond PPD. We looked at the PPD experience and saw what was really good in it. MTL is a step beyond that. It develops beyond PPD by doing things such as offering new teachers a coach - PPD does not do that - which will help them to develop their professionalism.

Chairman: A coach?

O1: Yes, an individual coach to work in the school. Under MTL, we have been able to look at the best forms of training in PPD and work with providers to design a national framework for the curriculum so that people will get a more solid offer.

Source: Training of Teachers - Children, Schools and Families Committee Examination of Witnesses (Questions 205-250) O1, Liz Francis, Graham Holley and Dr Jacqueline Nunn 15 June 2009

That there is an inter-dependent relationship between coaching and teacher efficacy is affirmed without question in the MTL Participant Handbook (DfCSF, 2009), which confidently declares:

Your school-based coach is responsible for ensuring that your MTL work is having a positive impact on your teaching and your pupils' learning. They will also help you to communicate the outcomes of your research to support the learning of other colleagues in your school. (p.8, Section3.1)

Further, it is pre-supposed in the DfCSF document 'Being the best for our children: releasing talent for teaching and learning'(2008):

Teachers in schools would act as coaches for each participant and be responsible for providing coaching and for arranging appropriate classroom-based activities – either in the participant's own school, in a partner school or other learning setting. This might build on existing coaching and mentoring roles and should represent a

significant investment in coaching and mentoring capacity in schools, strengthening the support available to all teachers in undertaking PD. (p.14)

These assertions may be understood in terms of noble political aspiration, but the evidence for them is less clear. A skim through the literature up to mid-2000 suggests that although there was, during that period, considerable research evidence on the role of the school-based mentor there was less on the school-based coach as it is conceived of for the MTL. This seeming paucity of relevant evidence is consistent with the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) study which was commissioned by the TDA (Lord et al., 2008). They reported that ‘searching for ‘coaching’ returned a greater number of overall hits than for mentoring (11,231 hits in total). Of these, only three were relevant to coaching in a school context (two websites in total). The overwhelming majority of hits for ‘coach’ at that time related to coach/bus travel and sports related coaching’ (p.57). Notwithstanding that situation, in recent times the number of research papers has increased considerably, as this section will demonstrate.

The NFER study focuses on ‘empirical and practice-based evidence on mentoring and coaching from the five years (i.e. since 2003) in England’. It includes a comprehensive review of the research and other literature drawing on evidence from education and social care, together with a useful working definition of each of the two concepts. Mentoring is defined as ‘growing an individual’, both professionally and personally in the context of professional and career development, whereas coaching is seen as having a narrower remit which ‘relates to specific areas of performance and job outcomes’ (p.12). Despite this distinction, the study is pragmatic:

Whilst there are conceptual differences between mentoring, coaching, co-coaching, co-mentoring, peer support, peer learning, coach mentoring, and the other concepts identified in this study and on the Framework, the overall ingredients of mentoring and of coaching are reasonably similar. This applies to the effective features, the overall skill-set required for mentoring and coaching, and indeed, the types of outcomes that can be gained. (p.70)

The NFER study bleakly concludes that ‘evidence of direct impact on young people from mentoring and coaching within their organisation is rare’ (p.v). It acknowledges that ‘a

culture of mentoring and coaching will, over time, have an impact on young people and their learning'. This is not to say that mentors/coaches do not gain positively from their roles or add to a positive culture within their schools which, albeit indirectly, filters down to pupils. The literature reviewed in this study suggests that mentors/coaches report gains in several respects:

- Gains in knowledge and skills
- Improved psychological wellbeing and confidence
- Increased reflectivity
- Professional and career development
- Better problem-solving skills
- Improved sharing of practice

Equally, the literature generally reports considerable gains for schools where mentoring and coaching form part of a culture of professional development. Such a culture is characterized by an overt focus on research-based learning, reflection and collaboration. It is a professional culture where staff needs and concerns are recognized and where coaching is seen as an integral part of corporate, shared professional development. Cultures of this kind tend to be 'other-directed' and have a range of external links:

A number of the impact areas discussed above link implicitly with the new professionalism in teaching. A commitment to recognising professional and career development, for example, suggests that there may be important synergies to be made with performance management and professional standards. Likewise, the research culture that is engendered, as well improved assessment procedures, may support the evaluation of impact – a key activity now expected of schools and part of school improvement. (p.69)

Drawing on the field of psychology Jackson (2000) takes a less pragmatic view than the NFER study:

Coaching means different things to different people. Definitions are many and varied. While certain features recur, there are significant differences depending on political and theoretical perspectives, and to this body of definitions is constantly added a stream of new slants and nuances. (p.45)

Therefore, in what he considers to be the absence of an unqualified term for coaching he suggests a conceptual ‘grounded typology’ consisting of five ‘dimensions’ which were drawn up from data collected by means of eight semi-structured interviews with randomly selected practising coaches in the UK. From these interviews 58 concepts emerged, which were then reduced to the five dimensions, which are described in Table 2.2. Given the small sample and the reliance on the researcher’s interpretation, Jackson acknowledges that his study is ‘exploratory and looks for meaningful ways of differentiating coaching approaches used by UK practitioners as a way of establishing a more solid foundation for comparative and evaluative research’ (p.48).

Table 2-3: a five-dimensional typology of coaching

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systematic methodology – Flexible personal methodology 2. Explicit foundations of practice – Less explicit foundations of practice 3. Pragmatic competency coaching – Facilitative open-scope coaching 4. Personal presence achieves outcomes – Procedure achieves outcomes 5. Concrete – Philosophical - Evidenced by a general preference to consider activities rather than philosophical underpinnings of practice.

Source: Peter Jackson p.56

Perhaps taking her cue from Jackson, in a recent paper Lofthouse (2014) also employs the concept of dimensions as what she describes as ‘an epistemic tool’. Drawn from an analysis of 27 coaching conversations using what is described as ‘an iterative process’, the dimensions are:

Initiation – recognising which participant was responsible for each new section or unit of analysis in the conversation (usually consisting of several conversational ‘turns’). This is significant in developing a sense of ‘ownership’ within the coaching conversation.

Stimulus – noting what evidence or stimulus was cited to support the conversation. Typical examples of stimuli included video extracts, lesson plans, recall, observation, attainment data and pupils’ work. The use of stimuli helps to root the conversation in practice evidence and can help to challenge the assumptions and perceptions held by the participants.

Tone – rated on a five-point scale from very negative, through neutral to very positive. The tone adopted can suggest a hidden agenda, an emotional state or a learned behaviour.

Scale – rated from one to five in terms of the scope of the unit of discussion: 1 relating to critical moments, 2 to lesson episodes, 3 to the lesson as a whole, 4 to teaching and learning themes crossing lesson boundaries and 5 relating to wide school or societal issues. The use of scale determines the scope of the discussion, and where participants make links across the scales indicates enhanced reflection.

Time – recognising four time references depending on whether the segment referred to the planning of the lesson (past), to the lesson events, to future specific lessons and, finally, to no specific time reference. An indication of relevant time-frames is indicative of the way participants seek links between experiences and planning, and suggest the potential of coaching for future practice. pp.761-2

As can be readily seen, these dimensions provide not only an epistemic tool but practical guidance for coaches themselves or for coach trainers:

The Coaching Dimension ‘tool’ is a means by which the perspective is changed; and these teachers shifted their attention. They were not simply assuming that their engagement in professional dialogue would effect change in teaching behaviours of their colleagues; instead, they became aware of the nuances of professional dialogue, and how the nature of that dialogue was more or less likely to lead to professional development. As such they developed greater metacognitive awareness of themselves in their selected role. The use of the Coaching Dimension tool as a lens, a scaffold, a measure or a frame led to an internalisation of the concepts that underpinned them; thus facilitating not just reflection on practice, but reflection in practice. (p778)

Comparable to this idea of ‘dimensions’ as an ordered method of addressing the constraints that coaches face is the concept of protocols, Based on a five year programme between 2005 and 2010 (Krell & Dana, 2012), the concept, described as ‘a script of prescribed steps’, was developed from a participative study of ‘enquiry coaches’ in America:

These designated inquiry coaches met four or five times during each year to share how their inquiry efforts were unfolding in each individual district, to learn about tools that could be utilized in scaffolding their teachers through each component of the inquiry process (introduction to inquiry, wondering development, data collection, data analysis and sharing work with others) and to plan an inquiry showcase that would bring together all teacher inquirers from across the districts to share their action research with one another. These six inquiry coaches were selected and interviewed for this study, constituting one focus group session. (p.832)

Prior to her paper on coaching as an ‘epistemic tool’, Lofthouse et al (1992) had undertaken a two-year collaborative research project to discover what happens in coaching sessions and its influence on pupil outcomes, how coaches can improve their practice and how coaching impacts on professional development and school improvement. According to the authors, before this project there had been ‘virtually no research in this country to provide a description and analysis of what is happening in coaching relationships and coaching sessions, and what effect this is having’ (p.5). The research yielded 29 coaching transcripts, 23 coaching questionnaire responses, together with notes from 13 school co-ordinators and 8 focus group meetings. The questions that form the basis of the report are:

- What happens in teacher coaching sessions and how does this influence subsequent classroom teaching and pupil outcomes?
- How can coaches improve their coaching practice; did the research project interventions support improvement, and were there any recognisable outcomes?
- How is coaching being utilised within the context of whole school improvement and professional development?

The findings and recommendations of the report are many and varied, chief among which is the emphasis placed on the enthusiasm expressed by the coaches involved:

Despite some minor reservations by some, all the teachers involved were positive. This might be expected as they were essentially volunteers, but in other studies we

have found comparable levels of enthusiasm. This can be partially explained by the fact that coaching matches most of the characteristics identified with successful or effective professional development. There are opportunities for experimentation, observation, feedback, collaboration and dialogue with a strong classroom focus. (p.40)

Since the insights offered by this report have particular relevance for the MTL they are documented here in some detail and will be discussed further in Chapter 8. They are that:

- there is a lack of clarity in the purpose of coaching - models, principles and processes - which creates confusion and tension for all involved;
- school cultures and structures inhibit the development of coaching: fail to allow time and resources; more concerned with short term outcomes and the impulse to manage all aspects of school improvement; inclined to see coaching as an aspect of performance management; lack a coherent, sustainable programme to build capacity;
- The customary model of coaching lacks variety – needs to go beyond question and answer , to ‘create dissonance’ (criticality) and employ a repertoire of learning or pedagogical theory;
- coaching needs a richer language, such as the ‘dimensions’ framework referred to earlier in this chapter;
- coaches need ‘a content guide’ that is informed by the insights derived from the research (as requested during the study and written as an outcome of it. (Lofthouse et al., 2011a).

The report concludes on a cautiously optimistic note:

There is considerable evidence that teachers are being encouraged to think more carefully both before and after observed lessons. Through collaborative planning and reflective analysis new ideas are emerging. The majority of this is what one might term craft coaching – improving the effectiveness and efficiency of their teaching, rather than rethinking the principles on which the planning is based. (p.42)

There are, it contends, obstacles to be overcome, not least for school leaders who are working in ‘high stakes accountability structures’. According to the teacher participants in the research, unless there is a change in this accountability culture coaching may become ‘little more than a gesture or worse, may serve to exacerbate existing divisions within a school’ (p.42). However, they emphasise the importance of regarding the development of coaching

as, in the words of the title of the project, ‘evolution not revolution’. They sound one particularly cautionary note, which is highly relevant to the MTL:

It would seem that that coaching may not be an effective mechanism for introducing rapid change and may not serve any useful purpose until or unless a school is out of special measures or an individual practitioner’s practice is, at least, deemed satisfactory. In this sense, coaching might be seen as prevention rather than cure. (p.42)

This latter point is sharply reiterated by Frankham and Hiatt (2011), referred to earlier, who offer a harsh condemnation of the notion of a school-based coach, as it pertained to the MTL:

In respect of teachers, the MTL represents a monolithic and totalising response to the PD needs of beginning teachers. Personalisation and coaching are illusory forms of individualised and practice-based solutions setting out to engender the ‘emotional engagement’ that Ecclestone (2007) has described in order that participants ‘buy in’ to the government’s vision. It is yet to be confirmed whether these beginning teachers will also be ‘slow to complain’. (pp 815-816)

Indeed, as can be seen in Chapter 6, this research, shows that a substantial number of participant teachers were not slow to complain.

Given the recent introduction of the MTL, there is little specific research on the central role of the school-based coach in its formulation, despite some concerns raised during the development phase and discussed in the following chapters of this thesis. A modest study by two researchers (Anderson, 2013) who were closely involved in the MTL based on case study interviews with two in-school MTL coaches speculated that there were several issues that needed to be addressed, not least of which was the imbalanced ‘tripartite’ relationship between the participant, the coach and the HEI tutor, if any similar project were to be successful in the future. These issues were:

- Coaches were asked to support colleagues at masters level despite not having masters-level qualifications themselves.
- Coaches were not involved in the final assessment, which created an unequal ‘tripartite’ partnership.

- The coach had not necessarily chosen the role. This gave rise to additional pressures of workload and consequent strain on the HEI/coach relationship.
- The individual personality of the coach and, perhaps, motivation for being involved at all was possibly more important than their academic qualifications and time available. It was clear that all involved were short of time and under considerable pressure, especially those working at senior management level in schools, as these coaches generally were.

The authors conclude that, without suitable qualifications, an imbalance of power between coach and HEI tutor was inevitable, added to which the fact that the coach was not involved in assessing the participants rendered the tripartite model ‘fatally flawed’ (p.119). In this regard, they reflect that ‘the MTL model was ahead of its time; the vision of an equal relationship could not be fully realised at this time because too few coaches were appropriately qualified’. They also acknowledge that, without funding, the MTL was unsustainable, although for their part all was not lost:

Taking the practice-based elements and innovative assessment from the MTL, we have validated new modules that will sit within our existing M-level provision, offering further choice to students. (p.120)

Following from the recommendations made earlier by Hopkins and Matthews (Section 2.4), Knight (2012) claims to resolve the surfeit of theorising and modelling, as described above, that is the dominant feature of academic discourse about the nature of coaching for teaching. His approach is through what he describes as ‘instructional coaching’ which is, quintessentially, about helping teachers to improve their practice in the classroom and less about a plethora of fashionable models amongst which are the following:

A number of writers (Creasy & Paterson,(2006); Robertson, (2008) van Nieuwerburgh,(2012)) propose the GROW model (Goals, Reality, Options and Way forward) popularised by Sir John Whitmore (2002) or similar models with different acronyms: LEAP (Looking at goals, Exploring reality, Analysing Possibilities; see Tolhurst (2006)); STRIDE (Strengths, Target, Reality, Ideas/opinions, Decide/commit, Evaluate; see Thomas & Smith, (2005)); and STEPPPA (Subject, Target/objective, Emotion, Perception, Plan, Pace, Act/adopt; see (McLeod, 2010). (p.102)

Both Knight and van Nieuwerburgh question the traditional approach to professional learning – expert and novice – in which the inherently unequal coaching relationship implies a movement from bad to good and deprives the ‘coachee’ of personal agency in the process. The very term ‘coachee’ suggests being on the receiving end of learning. Accordingly, some professional developers advocate that the coach withhold the answers whilst encouraging the learner to find the solutions. Neither of these approaches is effective, in the authors’ view, since they are ‘not designed to help teachers learn proven practices’ (p.103). It is instructional coaching that offers the best solution since it explicitly respects teachers’ professionalism by establishing an ‘authentic partnership’ based on seven principles: equality, choice, dialogue, praxis, voice, reciprocity and goals. Helping teachers to improve their practice is best exemplified in modelling practice, in situ or by means of video, with the teacher and coach working collaboratively

...modelling is an important part of the learning that is at the heart of instructional coaching. Most frequently, this occurs when a coach demonstrates a practice in a teacher’s classroom. Instructional coaches do not teach the whole class. They just show how a particular practice could be implemented, and the teacher observes the coach, sometimes taking notes on a checklist or observation sheet that was developed jointly by the coach and teacher. p.107

Instructional coaching in this manner, they argue, is relatively new in terms of its clarity and simplicity, although it has proved successful in the USA in the dissemination of proven practice. The authors believe that it is well suited for UK schools, presupposing that it is adapted to take account of resourcing issues and what constitutes accepted best practice and the culture of the school. The approach was launched in 2012 and several schools are piloting it. It is also a module of the MSc in Coaching Psychology at the University of East London, a programme led by Christian van Nieuwerburgh.

About the same time as the Knight paper, another study (Sorensen & Velle, 2013) identified what it concluded were the strengths and only a few shortcomings of the MTL. The Sorensen study is particularly interesting in that it posed questions very similar in terms of impact to those addressed in this thesis:

How were the original intentions for the MTL as a distinctive approach to postgraduate professional development, as articulated by the TDA, put into practice?

What impact has engagement with the MTL had upon the three groups of stakeholders engaged with it: the coordinators and tutors in the HEIs, the school-based coaches and the participant teachers registered on the MTL? This impact is to be considered in the light of the relationships between the three different groups and the difference that it made to their professional role. (p.80)

The methodology was also similar to this thesis in one element of its methodology: it was based on semi-structured interviews (19) within one consortium of five universities comprised of HEI tutors (5), school-based coaches (6) and MTL participants (8). In general, the findings proved optimistic, despite some reservations and bearing in mind the limited scope of the research. From the point of view of the HEI tutors, the collegial approach developed between the universities in the consortium proved to be a strong feature, particularly in the shared development of programme content. They also evinced ‘a positive response to the role of the school-based MTL coaches, who were perceived as having a crucial and important part to play in the delivery of the MTL’ (p.82). However, they were divided on whether the coaches should have a Masters degree, whereas the coaches themselves did not consider it necessary. In most respects the coaches held a very positive view of the MTL and their role in it which was reciprocated by the HEI tutors. Both groups believed that the MTL had had a positive effect on the participants’ confidence and self-esteem, but were hesitant to make claims for a positive impact on pupils:

...but there were some early indicators that their engagement with the MTL had had an impact in the classroom. These included a perceived improvement in the relationship between themselves and their pupils and in pupil engagement with learning. When the pupils were made aware of the fact that their teacher was involved in the MTL, and was undertaking research into the effectiveness of certain classroom practices, this created a positive response and engagement with the research. (pp. 86-87)

For the participants themselves, time was ‘of the essence’: some were given time in their schools but others not. All the participants were positive about their coaches, but less sure about the role of their tutors. Overall, the research concluded that the MTL, despite any difficulties, was ‘worthwhile’.

2.6 Concluding comments

It may be useful at this point to sound a word of caution: there is a risk that researchers who report on their own practice may be perceived as engaging in what Ball (2014) terms ‘paradox and fabrication’: that is they present themselves, often unwittingly, in such a manner ‘for the purpose of evaluation and comparison by their peers’. For example, Burstow and Winch (2014) who were both involved in the development of the MTL, describe themselves as ‘participant observers’, as does the author of this thesis (para 3.4). The Castle study (2003) is based on three case studies, deemed by the three MTL lecturers concerned as ‘vignettes’ or single semi-structured interviews on the basis of which they conclude:

We have found that teachers proactively personalise their learning, engage in problem-solving and take a creative approach to curriculum development, whilst at the same time adhering to the commonalities within the structure of the MTL. In our opinion, these teachers are beginning to claim ‘individual professionalism’ (Furlong, 2011). We therefore posit that the MTL is ‘a revolution in teacher education’, but has indeed become ‘a bright light quickly extinguished’ (Burton & Goodman, 2011). (p.37)

Despite the previous note of caution about the danger of self-fulfilment in research reports from HEIs who participated in the MTL, it is reasonable to conclude that as seasoned researchers they report in good faith and, given the short duration of the award, they recognise its shortcomings whilst emphasising its potential to enhance professional learning.

Guskey, in his foreword to the *International Handbook on the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (Flecknoe, 2000), emphasizes the conflicts of opinion, the lack of consistency and the complexity of the arguments that surround the discourse on the professional development of teachers. Authors take diametrically opposed views, as is evidenced in this review of the literature between those who advocate for PD which is

designed to fulfil governmental requirements and those who see it as means to develop ‘a culture of enquiry’. In the teeth of this obvious complexity, he concludes:

Yet regardless of what they bring to the book, it will affect readers in two ways. First, they will see that there remains a considerable gap in our knowledge of professional development, in all its forms, on the thinking, planning and practice of individual teachers, on schools as learning organizations and on the learning outcomes of students. (p.xiv)

Whilst acknowledging Guskey’s view of the complexity of the task in making sense of the literature on the professional development of teachers, it is possible at this stage to identify some emergent themes that relate to the questions raised in this thesis. Clearly, there are different models of professional development of which some are very similar, others contrasting, and a few in various degrees antithetical. At the heart of these differences lies a view of professionalism, sometimes described as the New Professionalism, which is shaped by government, as opposed to an autonomous perception of professional learning which is held by the profession and most academic researchers for whom the notion of enquiry and criticality in this learning process is of central importance. Hargreaves’ analysis (1994) of the New Professionalism is at odds with the view that it undermines teacher autonomy: rather it enhances their professionalism:

Under the continuing impact of reform, in England and Wales as elsewhere, the new professionalism, with its commitment to the synthetic relationship between professional and institutional development, seems likely to spread. Schools and teachers that embrace the new professionalism are sure to challenge those who have hitherto taken the main role in teacher education about its form, content, and ownership. (p. 436)

Even so, both sides of the argument agree that, self-evidently, teachers have a powerful impact on pupil attainment and, in order to be most effective in this respect sustained teacher development is a fundamental requirement if the views of both are to be reconciled. This presupposes that there is agreement on the nature of evidence for raised attainment: whether what may be deemed ‘soft’ outcomes are as equally valid as ‘hard’ outcomes. Not only that, it presupposes that the required evidence can be adduced through one of the several models of

professional development, such as the award-bearing MTL example. A lynchpin of the MTL in achieving the goal of improved pupil attainment is the concept of the school-based coach, which is upheld optimistically by some and detracted by others. As suggested in Chapter 8, this could be an area for further research. In the meantime, the chapters that follow will serve as an evaluation for policy makers and teacher educators of what was seen by some as ‘an exciting opportunity for teacher development’ and ‘a bright light quickly extinguished’, as previously noted, or one which others saw as ‘a cornerstone in the professional development of participating teachers’ (Bryan & Blunden, 2013).

Chapter 3 The case study

3.1 Introduction

This case study sets out to understand how and why those responsible for the introduction and the development of the MTL determined its aims and potential strengths whilst at the same time recognising its limitations. Alongside this, the views of the participants in the MTL – school-based teachers and coaches are sought. At the outset of the project there is no expressed intention to establish a general theory or to generalise to broader populations (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 36). Indeed, it is envisaged that patterns of response will be discerned which will form the basis for the insights recorded in Chapter 8. As can be seen as early as Chapter 4, this process is evident throughout the research: such insights or ‘emergent themes’ are identified through a process of constant comparison, which are developed further in Chapter 5 and then expressed as ‘conclusions and insights’ in Chapter 8.

The adoption of a case study framework for inquiry accords with the researcher’s background and experience, as described in Chapter 1 (para 1.1) and to the issues surrounding the professional development or learning which were discussed in Chapter 2. It is termed an ‘intrinsic’ study in the title of the thesis which Baxter (2008), by reference to Stake (1995), contends is not undertaken because it illustrates a problem but ‘because in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest’ (p.549). Merriam (2002) characterizes this type of qualitative research as ‘inductive’:

...researchers gather data to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than deductively deriving postulates or hypotheses to be tested, (as in positivist research). In attempting to understand the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved, qualitative researchers build toward theory from observations and intuitive understandings gleaned from being in the field. Typically, findings inductively derived from the data in a qualitative study are in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, and even substantive theory. (p.5)

Thomas (2010), by reference to Flyvbjerg (2001), describes this type of case study approach as ‘getting close to reality’ and, more pertinently:

By this he means keeping in contact with the subject of your study and thinking with your own experience and your own intelligence. It is this ‘staying real’ that the case study is particularly good at encouraging, for it eschews methodological formulae and endorses and stimulates a critical, creative approach to problem solving. p.6

The notion of a ‘creative approach to problem solving’ is also expressed in the concept of ‘fuzziness’ (Bassegy, 2001) which suggests an answer to the view that it does not permit generalization, as asserted by Thomas and others:

A fuzzy generalisation is one that is neither likely to be true in every case, nor likely to be untrue in every case: it is something that *may* be true. In consequence it is important for the researcher who enunciates a fuzzy generalisation to endeavour to explore the conditions under which it may, or may not, be true. (p.11)

The argument made by Bassegy is that the use of fuzzy generalisations would be more valuable to teachers and to policy-makers ‘without compromising the researchers’ ethic of seeking truth’ (p.13).

There are others who point up the strengths and weaknesses of the case study at length (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). A powerful defence of this type of case study is made by them in their authoritative analysis of the topic (p. 290):

- it is concerned with rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case;
- it provides a chronological narrative relevant to the case;
- it blends a description of the events with an analysis of them;
- it focuses on individual actors or groups of actors, and seeks to understand their perception of events;
- it highlights specific events that are relevant to the case;
- the researcher is integrally involved in the case, and the study may be linked to the personality of the researcher;

- an attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report.

All of the above points are evidenced in this case study. In particular, the penultimate bullet point emphasises the role of the researcher which is discussed in the Section 3.5.

Although deemed ‘retrospective’ in its title, this case study of the MTL per se is less about historical events and more concerned to examine a particular contemporary event through face-to-face interviews and conversations, and by examination of relevant documentation and recent literature, whether academic or grey. It is by means of this review of the literature that the research questions have been developed and refined in order to provide insights that, in turn, determine the methods used. The study is also exploratory in that it focuses on what Yin refers to as ‘what, how and why’ questions, such as those posed in Appendices 5-6, in order to ascertain operational links over time: for example, why was the MTL introduced, how and why was it developed and what were its strengths and shortcomings?

3.2 Research questions

The research questions (fig. 3.1 below) are:

1. In the perception of those responsible for the introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), does this policy innovation for the professional development of teachers offer an effective model for school improvement in general and teacher efficacy in particular?
2. Do teacher participants and HEIs think that the MTL has had or will have a direct impact on pupil attainment?
3. At the half-way point in the programme, how do participants view the MTL – in personal, professional and academic terms?

The postulate underlying the research questions is that the MTL was problematic: that the problem in this particular case may have had its origins both in political agency and the lack of a consensus among academic researchers as to the most effective way to improve underachieving schools. It also might lie in the strategic problems surrounding the implementation of government policy. Taking a broader view, it has been argued by

Frederick Hess (2009) that educational reform is, *sui generis*, outmoded: attempts to make the existing structure more effective are themselves ineffective because researchers ‘tend to color safely within the lines because those lines are so taken for granted that would-be reformers don’t realize there is an alternative’ (p.10). This may explain the reservations about the MTL that some HEIs displayed in what David Bell, who was the then parliamentary secretary in the government education department, called the DfCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) at the time, described in an interview with the researcher as ‘the kind of warm embrace of the HE quality assurance procedures killing something that was meant to be generally innovative and quite different’. This resonates with Michael Gove’s view Millar (2012) that those who oppose change are ‘enemies of promise’ – in a sense, they are colouring in their own lines. Hess declares that those who adopt this approach and ignore the possibility of new structures, such as suggested by Bassey (2001), are ‘doomed to disappointment’.

3.3 Research design

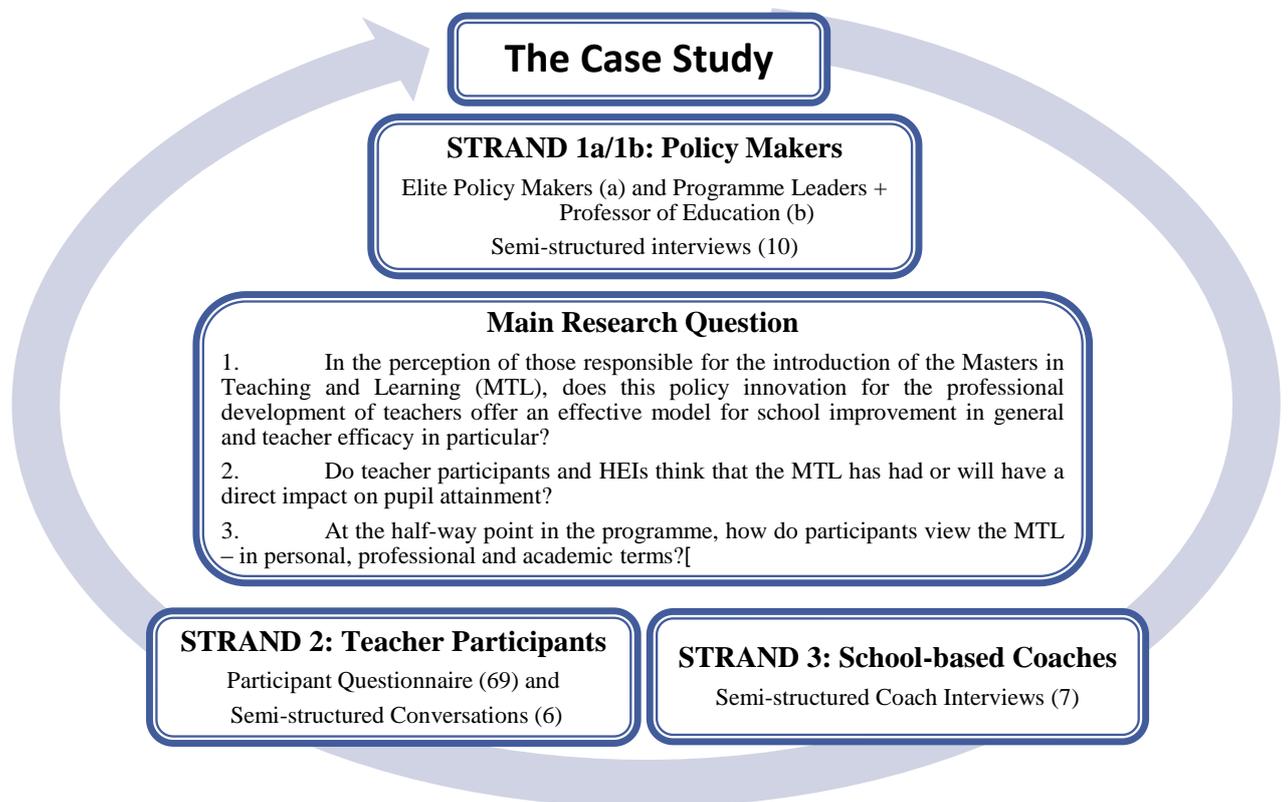
As indicated in the introduction, the research design adopted in this study is a case study which is appropriate to what some research theorists have termed ‘the messy reality’ of the school’. It is predominantly qualitative, that is, interpretive and subjective, although the SPSS analysis of the questionnaire responses featured in Chapter 6 is designed to allow for a degree of quantitative triangulation. Yin (2013), in his seminal book, argues that the case study provides for analytic as opposed to statistical generalization, which is in keeping with the findings of this thesis. Indeed the case study is particularly appropriate in this respect as it:

- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as a result
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (Yin, 2013, pp. 13-14)

The ‘variables of interest’ and multiple sources of evidence’ are conceived of as strands, as shown in Figure 3.1. Each of the strands was not originally envisaged as having any priority

over the others: in the event, however, Strand 1 proved to be a powerful source of evidence in response to the research questions. Even so, Strands 2 and 3 are integral to the design as they offer additional and corroborative evidence on the basis of which the proposition underlying the research questions was analysed, the insights developed and the conclusions drawn. The strands encompass different methods, although it is understood that the case study itself is not a method: rather, ‘it is a wrapper for different methods’ (Thomas, 2010, p. 43), as can be seen from Table 3.2. The instruments used are semi-structured interviews/conversations and a questionnaire. Neither the strands nor the research questions have any hierarchical significance: they simply serve to complement each other and to offer insights from the perspectives of the groups of respondents.

Figure 3-1: the case study - a research design frame



3.4 Data collection

Following Baxter’s argument (Baxter & Jack, 2008) that case study research allows for the inclusion of quantitative survey data in order to understand the phenomenon being studied, Strand 2 – the participant questionnaire data – provides both quantitative (Likert scale) and

qualitative elements (teacher comments) which are compared and contrasted with the qualitative data drawn from Strands 1 and 3:

In case study, data from these multiple sources are then converged in the analysis process rather than handled individually. Each data source is one piece of the “puzzle,” with each piece contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the whole phenomenon. This convergence adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case.
p.554

Thus, in the interest of clarity and coherence the data was collected into three linked and integrated strands with no hierarchical significance, as indicated above. For all strands the agreed ethical requirements with regard to voluntariness, anonymity and the right to withdraw were respected, as set out in Appendix 3. In particular, it was considered important to stress that ‘this project will not have any bearing on the outcome of your masters studies’. Strand 1 refers to the elite interviews as discussed in sections 3.8.1 and 3.8.2; Strand 2 refers to all matters related to the participants: principally the questionnaire, which is described in section 3.8.3. Strand 2 also includes the participant interviews and conversations (3.8.4). Strand 3 refers to the school-based coaches (3.8.5).

Table 3-1: data strands

Strand 1 (a and b) Elites	Semi-structured interviews (10) Transcribed. Analysis of responses by constant comparison in terms of themes and insights arising from questions. Findings.
Strand 2 Teacher Participants	Questionnaire (69) designed by drawing from Seaborne Review (2009). 2 cohorts identified. Data, including comments, recorded on Excel spreadsheet, then transferred to SPSS. Initial analytic categories of response created. Comments categorised and coded. First impressions. Detailed analysis –qualitative/quantitative Findings Semi-structured teacher conversations (6). Transcribed.
Strand 3 School Coaches	Semi-structured conversations with coaches (7). Transcribed. Analysis and Findings as in Strand 2. Synthesis and correlation of all data.

3.5 The role of the researcher

This research project arises from the researcher's immediate experience of the MTL setting in particular and Masters level education programmes in general. Inevitably, this background raises questions about the researcher's 'baggage' and potential for bias. This is particularly relevant in terms of the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) where all the participants were known to him before the study began. In addition, his long-standing engagement with secondary education, as teacher, head teacher, inspector and teacher educator, could compound a putative charge of subjectivity. The idea that the researcher may think that he knows how secondary teachers view their professional world and how schools function could, arguably, undermine the integrity of the data gathered and the analysis and interpretation of it. This issue is, self-evidently, addressed by the choice of a case study approach and, in part, reduced by internal triangulation through a pluralist or mixed-methods, 'qual-quant' approach, as advocated by Olsen (2004): for example, the initial data derived from the questionnaire was analysed, then transformed into topics for teacher conversations in order to ascertain whether what was being found in one context was verifiable in another and, indeed, applicable to other contexts. Similarly, ten semi-structured 'elite' interviews were explicitly informed by the participant questionnaire. Despite this attempt to be impartial, England argues that such an attempt to justify impartiality is to give too much attention to what she describes, grandiloquently, as 'the methodological hegemony of neo-positivist empiricism' (1994) and since the world is an inter-subjective creation we cannot put our common sense knowledge of social structures – in this case schools - to one side. Harding's highly contentious 'standpoint epistemology' (2003), also taken from a feminist perspective, resonates with this view. It is acknowledged by researchers that 'positionality' is potentially an ethical issue that is often overlooked by ethics committees (Hopkins, 2007). He opines that researchers need to make the production, management and negotiation of 'positionalities' and 'knowledges' transparent and continuous according to their context. A similar stance is taken by Cloke (2004, p. 150) who argues that interviewers themselves mutually construct meanings with their interviewees.

The researcher's shared experience of the MTL is demonstrably evident in the instruments used to elicit responses. Such inter-subjectivity, Cloke maintains, is 'crucial and unavoidable, and the data which result are essentially collaborative'. Indeed, the whole argument about

subjective and objective realities goes to the heart of what Robottom and Aistan (2000, pp. 137-156) refer to as the ‘dubious bifurcations’ with which educational research is plagued. Krippendorf (2007) refers to this as ‘the illusion of being able to observe without an observer or to re-search without the cognitive and linguistic histories of the researchers’. Floyd and Arthur (2012) argue that ‘insider’ researchers, in particular, have to confront complex ethical problems of professional and personal relationships which may emancipate or constrain their research role. What this requires of researchers is methodological self-consciousness and a process of ‘reflexive self-analysis’ (Finlay, 2002; Gergen & Gergen, 1991):

Social constructionists draw on the notion of reflexivity to explain how individuals make sense of the social world and their place in it. Three strands of argument about the social dimension of reflexivity can be differentiated:

Mead (1934) considered reflexivity—the turning back of one’s social experience on oneself—central to becoming a person. Arguing from a symbolic interactionist perspective, he understood that individuals gain self-awareness in and through interactions with others.

Giddens (1991), following Harré’s (1983) notion of “identity projects,” argued that identity has become a reflexive project in our postmodern (or late modern) age. He discussed how the construction of self is turned to as a source of both interest and meaning.

Habermas focused on the capacity of humans to be reflexive agents and on how through reflecting on our own history (as individuals and as members of larger societies) we can change the course of history. He argued that the more we can understand how structural forces shape us, the more we can escape from those constraints (Giddens, 1985). (Finlay, 2002, p. 534).

Whilst it is not the intention in this chapter to explore in depth the argument for reflexive analysis it does serve to inform the researcher’s standpoint and to draw his own attention and that of others to an interesting and relevant aspect of phenomenological research as it applies to this thesis. One acknowledged possible constraint on this researcher is the very professional maturity and extensive experience that he had vaunted in the introduction to Chapter 1 as providing ‘a fitting personal backdrop to the writing of this thesis’. It is

recognised that the downside of such a career profile, as described, is the danger that it might encourage an unconscious familiarity with the respondents – for example, he could be seen as an elite interviewer cosily interviewing elites - which could indirectly influence their responses. Equally, although such an explicit attempt was made to establish a non-threatening relationship with the teacher participants, exemplified by the concept of ‘conversations’, it cannot be assured that the researcher’s background would not have some sort of effect on their relationships, particularly where he was responsible for the final assessment of some of them. There can be no doubt that where respondents are well known to a researcher, particularly as a tutor or an academic, there exists a power relationship for good or ill: for example, in the guidance for completing the participant questionnaire it asks respondents to indicate that they ‘understand that completing this questionnaire will have no bearing on the outcome of my Masters studies’ (Appendix 2).

To summarise, the researcher’s philosophical standpoint is best explained as a combination of experience, reasoning and practical wisdom which is informed by a commitment to social justice. Although in some respects a positivist paradigm is not rejected, a social constructivist, voluntaristic (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) way of looking at and researching knowledge – an emic perspective - is preferred within a broad philosophical continuum. This allows for, indeed emphasizes, the effect of human nature on this research: all of the respondents express their individual views which, it is argued, reflect their values, an idiosyncratic example of which is the view expressed by the Executive Director of the MTL (01) that universities are the ‘residues of conservatism’. Indeed, it is also argued that the purpose of this research, and the role of the researcher, is to make sense of this and the many countervailing viewpoints.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Whilst it is clear that the role and position of the researcher, as described in the foregoing section, is ‘embedded in the whole process of research and particularly it has to be in a moral stance taken by the researcher’ (Newby, 2010, p. 49). Nevertheless, it is important to stress the more practical aspects of the proper conduct and protocols of this research, as demonstrated in Appendices 2-4 and at various points throughout the thesis. In this respect it is, indeed, an ‘embedded’, iterative moral process, as described by Kvale and Brinkmann (2008):

Rather than seeing these fields as entailing questions that can be settled once and for all in advance of the research project, we conceptualise them as ‘fields of uncertainty’, i.e. problem area that should be continually addressed and reflected upon. (p.265)

The choice of a conventional qualitative research method based on interviews and a questionnaire was made because of the relative inexperience of the researcher, despite his awareness (Section 3.5) of the potential limitations of such an approach, as suggested by Lee (2000) in his advocacy of ‘unobtrusive measures’:

The presence of the researcher potentially has consequences for the quality of responses, typically shaping them in socially patterned ways. In addition, research based on self-report is vulnerable to the social factors affecting both the availability of research participants and their willingness to respond to researchers’ questions. (p.15)

The customary permissions for this research were sought and granted through the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee (Appendices 3-4) and assurances on such matters as informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity of questionnaire respondents and interview participants were formally stated. On the latter point, the decision to anonymise the respondents was made in advance of the questionnaire and interviews, primarily to pre-empt the anxieties that might otherwise arise. Such an anxiety or ethical concern surrounded the identity of the elite interviewees. As Walford (2011) points out, there is a difficulty in offering anonymity to public figures, so the question for this research is what constitutes a ‘public’ figure: only one of the interviewees, the former Permanent Secretary, gave unreserved permission for his name to be used. The others, arguably less public than him, recognised that they could be identified with relative ease and were happy to be interviewed despite this, and accepted the proffered anonymity. Cohen (2011) discusses these ‘ethical dilemmas’ and ‘knotty problems’ at length, arguing that, for example, where anonymity is required there is a real danger in interpretist research that potentially thick descriptions become sanitized or thin. As it transpired, the responses of both the elites and the teachers proved ‘thick’, candid and unconstrained.

For the elites neither consent nor identity is normally a pressing concern, but confidentiality is a major issue for them in particular and for qualitative research in general (Silverman, 2010, pp. 92-93). Consequently, each elite interviewee was offered and some accepted a copy of the taped transcript of their interview, within the week, so that they could comment on it. Of the elites who requested a transcript only one (BM1) requested, and was granted without question, a change in his transcript where he had named specific universities which, he opined, were viewed with some disdain by the TDA. On occasions other interviewees would say 'this is off the record' and the comment was duly respected. For the other participants, the teachers, confidentiality is much less of an issue but consent is more so, both for the interviewees and the questionnaire respondents (Appendix 4). For example, where applicable, the respondents were assured that, as pointed out earlier (Section 3.4), participation in the research 'will not have any bearing on the outcome of your Masters studies' and that, 'data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used' (Appendix 3).

As an experienced interviewer, both as a headteacher and an inspector (Section 1.1), the researcher's approach to interviewing, the other major element in the fieldwork, may be summed up in the words of Partington (2001):

Many of the factors that contribute to the quality interview, however, can be developed through careful attention to a range of skills such as careful listening and responding as well as skill in the development of rapport and empathy. (p.43)

3.7 The participants

The questionnaire was aimed at participants in two separate cohorts: Cohort 1 (35) was the 'treatment' group drawn mainly from the researcher's own university (17) and supplemented by participants from two other universities (12 + 6) which were located in two separate government office regions, one in the south of England and one in the north: all of whom had completed the first six modules of an eight module MTL. Cohort 2 (34), a control group, consisted of those who had completed the first six modules of an MA in Teaching and Learning, based solely in the researcher's own university. Thus, both cohorts were at a comparable point in their respective degree programmes. Cohort 1 was about to embark on the final two linked modules of the MTL which could arguably be described as a 'quasi

dissertation’, since the term ‘dissertation’ was not used for this programme. Contrariwise, Cohort 2, the MA cohort, was starting on a conventional dissertation. In essence, both cohorts provided a well-balanced treatment and control group. The purpose of using the control group was that it provided an example of established conventional employment-based provision against which the MTL, as the treatment group, could be compared and contrasted and about which there was a substantive body of research and theoretical literature. For example, that the questionnaire was closely based on the Seaborne (2010) longitudinal review provided a control to ensure that the results could be construed as representative of a wider population and were likely to be consistent with a random sample.

Over a period of 3 months 69 participants returned completed on-line questionnaires out of the 150 distributed, which gives a response return rate of 46% with no reminders for Cohort 1 and two reminders for initial non-respondents in Cohort 2. This rate accords favourably with Cook et al. (2000) who found an average 39.6% response rate among this type of study. Although the returns were not individually dated, they were numbered consecutively on receipt which enabled a retrospective wave analysis of the returns from the first to the final week and which, in the event, did not indicate any variation in the responses that might suggest response bias over time. Following the completion of the questionnaire and a provisional analysis of the responses the sample of participant conversations took place, as described in Section 3.8.1.

3.8 Strands 1-3: the individual interviews

The interviews, including teacher conversations, were held between September 2011 and August 2012. Each interview was recorded with the express permission of the interviewee and then transcribed for analysis. They are sub-divided into the following tiers:

Strand 1a	Elite Policy Makers (7)	Strategic
Strand 1b	Elite Programme Leaders (3)	HEI Provision
Strand 2	Teacher participants (6)	National Challenge Schools
Strand 3	School-based Coaches (7)	School Delivery/Support

3.8.1 Strand 1a: Elite interviews (7)

The elite interviewees were known by the researcher either directly (7) or indirectly (3) through his involvement in the development of the MTL: which knowledge afforded a high level of responsiveness from most of the key personnel at this level. Harvey (2010), whilst

acknowledging the problematic nature of identifying elites in his own research, defines them as ‘those business people who at the time the research was carried out predominantly occupied senior management positions and were influential decision-makers for their companies or leading consultants for other firms’ (p.7). In this research elites are defined as those who were responsible for the introduction and development of the MTL at a nationally strategic level. The purpose of these interviews was to gain a close-up insight into the political backdrop to the development of the MTL and, at the next lower tier, to seek the views of those directly responsible for policy implementation on the issues with which they were presented. Since all of the elite interviewees were known to the researcher, ‘getting-in-the-door’ (Goldstein, 2002) was not a problem. However, attempts to ‘study up’ (Dinham, 2013) by interviewing recent Secretaries of State, Michael Gove and Ed Balls proved fruitless. In their stead, an interview with the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DfCSF) during the period of the inception of the MTL, provided an informed political perspective. All of the TDA personnel directly responsible for the detailed development of the programme, including TDA Board members, were interviewed. In addition, two consortium leaders and a university Head of Institute were interviewed. Five of the interviews were by telephone and four – with the former permanent secretary, one TDA Board member, one Head of Institute and the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) head teacher were face-to-face.

Although these elite interviews were, *prima facie*, semi-structured, there was more of an ‘in-depth’ and a more loosely guided element to them than in the other interviews (Appendix 6). This is attributable to the researcher’s deep understanding of the issues relating to the MTL and to his wide experience of school and HEI educational settings. Indeed, it is argued that he would not have gained access to the range of elite respondents had he not presented such a profile. As the researcher had previously worked collaboratively on the MTL with five of the interviewees there was no perceived problem with establishing authentic mutual rapport and trust. An email request was sent to each of the respondents in which the researcher briefly described his own professional background and set out the purpose of the research. At the same time reference was made to the names of other elite respondents he had either already interviewed or proposed to interview – a variation on ‘snowballing’, as discussed by Cohen (2011). A copy of the interview questions was sent to each of the interviewees with the offer of a transcript in due course. None of the interviewees appeared to balk at any aspects of the

interview procedure and only three accepted the offer of a raw transcript, one of whom requested, and was granted, a deletion where he had made a reference with which he felt uncomfortable. In summary, this approach appeared to work well to the extent that most of the interviewees expressed a willingness to be interviewed a second time should the need arise. Such a need did not arise. Harvey's summary comment (2010) is pertinent here:

There is no single approach to interviewing elite subjects and the nature of the research and the personality of the interviewer and the interviewee, as well as the nature of the power relationship, should to a large degree shape individual approaches. p.23

The questions, or prompts for discussion, were designed to inform the three research questions. They were framed in the form of open questions: 'do you think, did you feel and tell me a bit about'. Inevitably, there was an element of Shakespeare's 'by indirections we find directions out' as respondents digressed, changed tack, made 'this is off the record' asides or responded to further probes from the researcher.

3.8.2 Strand 1b: HEI Programme leaders (3)

At an early meeting in the initial period of development of the MTL (26 February 2009) the TDA set out the responsibilities of the various stakeholders:

1. TDA – implementing policy, developing MTL framework, commissioning providers, coach trainers and evaluators, design logistics, manage funding
2. MTL providers (schools & HEIs) - develop and validate MTL, appoint tutors, appoint coaches, deliver programme.

Programme Leaders are defined as those university tutors who developed and directed the MTL programme in their own HEIs. Each HEI was a member of one of the nine consortia within which the national programme was developed regionally and which had an agreed remit to ensure cross-consortia coherence and consistency, both in terms of broad content and delivery. Allowing for some variation, the consortia were required to develop commonly agreed programmes (CAPs) to comply with the requirement that the MTL be a three year (nine-term) programme. Most programme leaders, some of whom were also consortium leaders, were appointed from the outset of the MTL and were well-established academics in

their respective areas of education, so they were well placed to respond to the research questions in general and to particular matters arising from them. They were also at the heart of the national provision to steer and co-ordinate the programme: most were members of either the Programme and Content Development Working Group (PCDWG) or the Coaching Working Group (CWG).

A semi-structured interview instrument, again consistent with the research questions, was used with the programme leaders (Appendix 4). It questioned the leaders about any reservations they or their colleagues might have had leading up to validation and the positive features of the MTL. It addressed any perceived problematic elements, such as drop-out rates (TLRs, NQTs), the nature of student assessed work, the coaching quality and the commitment of schools. Respondents were asked to comment on their view on what distinguishes the MTL from other Masters provision and whether their HEIs were likely to continue with the MTL in view of the withdrawal of government funding. Finally, they were asked whether the MTL was likely to achieve its aims to raise attainment, to improve teaching and to retain teachers. The responses were then transcribed, categorised and analysed as described in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.8.3 Strand 2a: the participant teacher questionnaire

The questionnaire forms the foundation for the research upon which are built semi-structured individual conversations with a Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) of participants about their sense of efficacy in the classroom. The initial questionnaire was inspired by the Seaborne Review (2010) which was commissioned by the then Training and Development Agency (TDA), which in 2011 was renamed the Teaching Agency. This review is discussed fully in Chapter 2.

The first five questionnaire statements referring to the impact on the individual participant focussed on personal understanding, personal and professional development, self-esteem and sense of mission or purpose. It is accepted, of course, that personal and professional aspects often overlap. Professional impact, as categorised for statements 6-8, was understood in terms of improved pupil motivation and attainment and the ability of the teacher to adduce evidence for it. The extent to which the Masters had impacted on teaching was explored in Statements 9-11: teaching efficacy and evidence of improvement through, for example,

performance management. Statement 12 was concerned with the impact on the level of discourse about teaching and learning in each teacher's school in order to establish whether the respondents thought that the MTL was contributing to or creating a climate for positive change in their schools. The remaining statements, 13-27, addressed the impact of studying for a Masters degree through the teachers' evaluation and perception of the programme: for example, the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, problems encountered, personal misgivings and the support offered by both school and HEI. The quantitative data from the questionnaires was analysed using SPSS, alongside the identification and coding of categories within the invited responses, as described below.

Despite some reservations that other researchers have about the efficacy of the Likert Scale Van Nieuwerburgh (2012), particularly in terms of the degree of accuracy it can achieve in measuring respondents' attitudes, it was chosen because of the researcher's previous familiarity with it and for its general popularity and comprehensibility in educational research. In order to allow for flexibility in respondent choice the full range of 1-5 was employed, although for ease and clarity of analysis three measures were used; 1-2, 3, and 4-5, with the exception of three tables (6.5, 6.7 and 6.10) where the full range is presented in the form of bar charts in order both to provide an 'at a glance' picture and to ascertain where there is any notable difference in the results. The Likert Scale also allows for what Cohen describes as 'the freedom to fuse measurement with opinion, quantity and quality' (2011, p. 387). In this respect the questionnaire invited additional comments to each statement which realised 704 comments with an average of 25 per statement. Respondent comments, therefore, provide a rich source of evidence in this project. The comments were initially categorised and coded in terms of impact:

- IS = Impact on participant
- IP = Impact on professionalism
- IW=Impact on whole school
- IP = Impact on pupils
- IT = Impact on teaching
- IM=Impact of Masters

Using the Likert Scale from 1 to 5, respondents were asked to respond to the following categories: strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, strongly agree to indicate their level

of agreement with each of 27 statements: for example, ‘Enabled me to cite evidence of improved teaching’ was Statement 10. In this case, 70% gave a rating of either 4 or 5 – a score that was later followed up, both directly and indirectly in the interviews. Similarly, only 30.4% of the respondents rated the coaching sessions as helpful – as the role of the coach was central to the MTL delivery, this was followed up in the individual interviews. Numerical data from the questionnaire, which preceded all the other research instruments, was analysed using the SPSS package and, as stated, the comments were analysed according to the assigned categories. The outcomes of this blended approach provided the means for an appropriate methodological triangulation consistent with an interpretist paradigm.

In the analysis presented in Chapter 6 the five point Likert scale has been conflated to a three point scale with the categories ‘Strongly agree’ and ‘Agree’ combined and the categories ‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ combined. This is done both for ease of interpretation and because the numbers in some categories are relatively small. However, in the case of a few key tables, as previously indicated, greater detail has been presented and results are also given for the full five point scale. In these cases the results are also presented graphically in addition to the tabular presentation.

3.8.4 Strand 2b: participant teacher conversations (6)

At the heart of the MTL, and indeed other programmes as typified by Cohort 2, is the aim to improve the quality of teaching. The TDA in one of its sponsored ‘reports’ in the Guardian newspaper (Jewell, 19 January 2010) headed ‘Masters of the Classroom’ was clearly asserting an uncompromising belief that this new Masters would improve teaching. Against the background of a rapidly expanding corpus of research on effective teaching Evans (2014) the opportunity to explore in more depth with individual teachers whether they shared this view was taken. Six MTL participants who had completed the questionnaire volunteered for an individual conversation about what it means to be an effective teacher. Four of them were in the selected Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) and two were from another school in the same consortium. The purpose of the conversations was to probe how teachers’ perceive their capability in the classroom: their sense of self-efficacy. There was no presumption that this aspect of the research would do anything more than add several insights to the project, since much more extensive and sustained work, beyond the scope of this project, has been undertaken by others, such as Muijs and Reynolds (2003).

Since the inception of Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education), teachers have become accustomed to seeing themselves in terms of grade criteria or, more recently, according to the performance management criteria which were established by statute in 2007 (Evans, 2011). In light of this, it was decided to facilitate a conversation which, neither implicitly nor explicitly, featured any reference to assessment of performance or capability. In a sense, it would, in the words US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, 'elevate the teacher voice' (2002). Initially, as a pilot, it had been intended that the researcher would observe a lesson, and then embark on a discussion of effectiveness in teaching. However, after one pilot observation, the model of expert observer and observed proved unhelpful as it was too close to the conventional assessment model to facilitate an open-ended and non-threatening discussion; for example, the teachers tended to use Ofsted jargon, such as 'good' or 'outstanding' to assess their effectiveness. Therefore, drawing on research undertaken by Cross (1990), Murray (1985), McBer (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005) and Onderi (2010) a framework for conversation was devised which focussed on teacher behaviours and, separately, teacher characteristics. The McBer findings, based on an extensive research government sponsored project, are particularly relevant here:

Our findings suggest that, taken together, teaching skills, professional characteristics and classroom climate will predict well over 30% of the variance in pupil progress. This is very important for teachers because it gives them a framework for assessing how they achieve their results and for identifying the priorities for improvement. (p.9)

The term 'conversation' was expressly chosen to convey, as far as possible, an invitational mode which was intended to overcome the wariness and self-deprecation that some teachers show when analysing their own teaching. Therefore, for comparison and analysis, a light structure was necessary. So, at the start of each conversation the participants were asked to complete a brief tick sheet (Appendix 7) in which they were invited to rate their teaching since the start of the MTL programme against several statements about teacher characteristics and behaviours, as perceived by school students. 'Characteristics' included enthusiasm, concern for and availability to students, sense of humour and pedagogy. 'Behaviours' included stressing points, signalling transitions, establishing rapport, asking questions and naming pupils. This tick sheet activity was intended to be a 'warmer': no more than a

heuristic device to set the respondents at ease and to provide a starting point for the conversation. The conversation transcripts were then analysed both for their inherent content and its relationship, if any, to other thematic responses made by the participants, namely in the questionnaire (see Chapter 6).

3.8.5 Strand 3: School-based coach interviews (7)

The concept of the school-based coach applies specifically to the MTL (Cohort 1) and not to other Masters provision (Cohort 2). The National Framework for the Masters in Teaching and Learning Rowe (2009) set out ‘the vision of MTL’ in which the role of the school coach was seen as integral. It envisaged ‘a more collaborative approach’ with schools and HEIs working together as equal partners in the delivery of the programme. In the glossary to the Framework, this collaborative approach is one in which ‘each contributes their expertise to these processes and is enabled to do so by receiving a fair share of the TDA funding in relation to each teacher that reflects the equal status and shared responsibilities of schools and HEIs’. Some HEIs viewed this notion of ‘a fair share’ as disingenuous, since the proportion was 2 to the schools and 1 to the HEIs. Even so, consortium representatives reported to programme development meetings convened nationally by the TDA that the greatest misgiving of HEIs, emerging from their validation procedures, was the capacity of the schools to deliver effective coaching and the lack of time to bring them up to speed with the required training.

In view of this key role in the MTL, the research project set out to ascertain the extent and quality of the school-based coaches from the point of view of the teacher participants, the coaches themselves, HEIs, TDA and others involved in the development and implementation of the programme. Coaching in particular and school capacity in general, featured explicitly in the teacher questionnaire, as indicated in the two statements:

S18 The school-based support (e.g. coach sessions) have been helpful.

S24 Lack of support in my department/school has been a problem for me.

Following, and informed by, the questionnaires, seven school-based coaches were interviewed, two of whom were in the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS). One of the problems in interviewing the coaches was ethical: unlike for a conventional ITT

programme where mentors work in the context of a written partnership agreement with an HEI and where routine evaluation takes place and sanctions can be enforced when the agreement is breached, the Collaborative Agreement designed for the MTL had few if any teeth. In consequence, even where a teacher participant reported dissatisfaction with the coaching it was not possible to use this ‘evidence’, either directly or indirectly, in the interview. Some participants did not wish to criticise their coaches on the ground that, as one reported, ‘You can’t diss (disparage or dis-respect) your colleagues’. In the researcher’s own experience one participant, speaking of his coach, said ‘It’s a waste of my time – he bumbles on about everything and nothing’. The coach himself – the participant’s head teacher – was unaware of his colleague’s views. Whilst such selective anecdotes cannot be construed on their own as substantive evidence, what Silverman (2010) calls ‘the problem of anecdotalism’, they do provide vivid snapshots of the lived experience of the participants.

In view of this ethical problem, it was decided to frame a semi-structured interview for an opportunity sample of five coaches who had attended an MTL consortium workshop to share their experiences of MTL coaching and to supplement this with the two SNCS coach interviews from which had taken place earlier. At the conference the five coaches, together with others, had been invited discuss their ‘lived experience’ as an MTL coach using the ‘Diamond Nine’ brainstorming technique which is commonly used in schools, both with teachers and pupils, to facilitate discussion and to order priorities. The group were invited to discuss the challenges faced by MTL Coaches. In this type of activity participants place key words, statements or pictures on nine cards. The group then place them in order of importance, their opinion of what is the most important on the top, followed by a row of two less important below, then a row of three, then another row of two and finally the least important is placed at the bottom, creating a diamond shape. This was followed by a ‘gingerbread’ activity, as devised by Bryan and Carpenter (1995) in which the participants were invited to consider the attributes of the coach, such as knowing how to support participants in their action research. The outcome of these activities was then used to frame the semi-structured interview (Appendix 8).

The previous two semi-structured coach interviews had been conducted in the National Challenge School (SNCS). The structure of these interviews did not differ significantly from those conducted later. Both sets were designed to accord with the three research questions.

Initially, the coaches were asked about their background in coaching, their experience of Masters level work and any preparatory training they had had for coaching MTL participants. They were then invited to reflect on any positive and negative or problematic aspects of their role. More broadly, the questions ranged around their view of the appropriateness of the MTL for working teachers, the demands it made on them and their school and their views about its effectiveness in raising teaching and attainment standards.

3.9 Concluding comments

Thomas (2012) describes in the abstract to her thesis that it is devoted to ‘aspirations for the M-level teaching profession, providing a rationale for the M-level Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), a masters level profession and the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) and providing the perceptions of key stakeholders’. To this end she employs a range of instruments – questionnaires, focus groups, interviews - as part of her mixed methods approach. However, her focus on the MTL, which at that time was in prospect rather than underway, occupies only approximately one third of her study which is based on interviews with deans and tutors in two HEIs and a group of newly qualified teachers in a secondary school in order to seek their views on and aspirations for the envisaged award. By contrast, this present thesis, whilst employing similar triangulated instruments across a wider range of respondents, is focused solely on the introduction and early development of the MTL and provides, as far as can be ascertained, with the exception of a few research papers which are discussed in Chapter 2, the only sustained retrospective case study of the policy perspectives and participant responses at that time. As such, it can reasonably claim to offer a substantive contribution to the discourse on teacher professional learning and to the wider issue of school improvement, as the next four chapters will demonstrate as they consider the elite interviews, the participant questionnaire, the teacher conversations and the coach interviews.

Chapter 4 Elite Interviews

4.1 Introduction

This chapter, and the next, is concerned with Strand 1 of the research design. In Chapter 2 reference is made to those who questioned from the very inception of the MTL whether it represented ‘an immense overhaul of in-service teacher education’ (Burton & Goodman, 2011). The chapter will explore some of the issues raised in the Burton paper by considering the interview responses made by those most responsible for the development and implementation of the MTL. A definition of ‘elite’ is given in Chapter 3 and refers to those non-teaching respondents who were engaged with the MTL at a quasi-political, strategic or managerial level (Level 1), of whom there are ten. The approach is to take each interview separately and to describe the dominant views expressed by the respondents without, at this stage, pre-supposing particular themes, although it is recognised that responses will be, to some extent, framed by the questions. Towards the end of the chapter such themes as do emerge will be summarised and then discussed and analysed in Chapter 5.

Despite the fact that the avowed aim of the thesis was to achieve consistency across the interviews, each respondent brings to bear a perspective that is indicative of their status and position in what can reasonably be described as an educational hierarchy, with politicians perceived to be at the apex and classroom teachers at the base. For example, it goes without saying that had either of the two Secretaries of State for Education (Balls and Gove) accepted the invitation to participate in the research the questions and their responses would have been politically driven, with greater emphasis on principle and policy and less mindful of the details of implementation and practice. This is, by definition and to a notable extent, also true of the elite interviewees for some of whom a theoretical standpoint was strongly inflected through their responses, and for others the practicalities of implementation were writ large. Given these acknowledged complexities, the interviews sought to understand the extent to which there emerged common agreement within the categories described in Para 4.2 which would yield findings that could inform any future enterprise to create a Masters teaching profession. Two examples of the elite interview schedule are attached as Appendices 5 and 6 in order to demonstrate that, while the interviews questions were broadly similar, they were modified not only to accommodate varying perspectives that the interviewees were expected

to bring to bear according to the nature of their elite role but also to afford a degree of latitude for both researcher and respondents.

Since the interviews took place over a period of one year a key concept in this form of interpretative research and analysis is the notion of ongoing analysis (Denzin, 1994). Stage 3 involved analysing the data and revising some of the questions. ‘Analysis during data collection lets the field worker cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new—often better quality—data’ (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 49).

Table 4-1: elite interviewees

	Title/Status	Code
1.	Former Permanent Secretary (DfCSF)	PPS
2.	TDA Board Member 1	BM1
3	TDA Board Member 2	BM2
4.	TDA Official 1 (Executive Director)	O1
5	TDA Official 2 (Programme Director)	O2
6	TDA Official 3 (Programme Lead)	O3
7	TDA Official 4 (Coaching Lead)	O4
8	Professor (Education)	PoE
9	HEI (Programme Lead) 1	PL1
10	HEI (Programme Lead) 2	PL2

4.2 Interviewee backgrounds

The researcher sent all of the ten respondents some details of his own career in education and then, in turn, invited them at the outset of the interviews to do likewise. All of them claimed a relatively recent background in higher education in varying degrees and, as can be seen from Table 1, they represent an appropriately wide range of experience of policy formulation and implementation in the professional development of serving teachers. Not only that, they were all at the heart of the introduction and early development of the MTL, to the exclusion of no others.

The former Permanent Secretary for Education (PPS) had served in that capacity under two governments, three Prime Ministers and four Secretaries of State. Prior to that, he had been

HM Chief Inspector of Schools in England (HMCI) at the Office for Standards in Education and, earlier, an Assistant Director of Education for a local authority and a primary school headteacher. At the time of writing this thesis he is the vice-chancellor of an English university. He has no qualms that his curriculum vitae makes him identifiable and, indeed, agrees that his name be used. However, in the interest of consistency with the other elite contributors, he remains unnamed. What is more important is that his interview offers an insight into political policy making at the highest level during the period that applies to this research study (Appendix 6).

Since six of the elite respondents were either employed by, or served on the board of, the TDA (Training and Development Agency), the following definition of its function at this juncture is necessary:

The TDA is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), established under part 1 of the Education Act 1994 as amended by the Education Act 2005. The TDA came into being in September 2005 and is formed from the merger of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and the National Remodelling Team (NRT). Our functions as set out in the original Act are to fund the provision of teacher training in England, to provide information and advice on teaching as a career, and to carry out such other functions as the secretary of state may by order confer or impose. The new remit, based on part 3 of the Education Act 2005, redefines our objectives as follows:

- to contribute to raising the standards of teaching and other activities carried out by the school workforce;
- to promote careers in the school workforce;
- to improve the quality and efficiency of all routes into the school workforce; and
- to secure the involvement of schools in all courses and programmes for the initial training of school teachers.

The government's white paper *Higher standards, better schools for all* gives the TDA a pivotal role in ensuring that teachers and the wider school workforce have the skills and support they need to face the future. We continue to have responsibility for the initial recruitment and training of teachers. We have also

gained a wider remit for the training and development of the whole school workforce including support staff and PD for serving teachers.

Source: Training and Development Agency for Schools Annual report and accounts 2005–06 (Presented to the Secretary of State pursuant to schedule 13 paragraph 18 of the Education Act 2005)

According to BM2, there were one or two HEI representatives on the Board and one or two other heads just from the school sector to ensure a balance between primary and secondary sectors. In addition, there were two or three ‘not education, but respected business type professionals’. The Chief Executive of the Agency was ex officio a member of the Board and then observers from the Department and an observer or a member from the National College. There was an arrangement that the National College and the TDA had an observer on each other’s boards. In 2013 the TDA merged with the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to become the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). The NCTL is an executive agency within the Department for Education and so does not have its own ‘board’; however, it does have a management team consisting of twelve members. Its remit includes teacher training, continuing professional development, leadership development, and supporting school improvement to address underperformance in the education system.

TDA Board Member 1 (BM1) had been a secondary teacher, secondary Head of History and headteacher, before he moved to higher education. He was appointed to the TDA board in by the Secretary of State for Education (Ed Balls) in 2006. At the time he was head of a School of Education. He is currently a university professor and head of a prominent institute of education in England and is a member of the Advisory Learning Panel at the National Trust. He has served as a Board member at two examining groups – Edexcel and AQA. He has worked as a consultant or adviser to local authorities, OFSTED, the DfE, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the National College for Leadership in Schools and Children’s Services. He was also a member of the RSA Commission on Academies. In the early development of the MTL, he was one of two board members who were attached to the managerial, the office group within the TDA, which was responsible for developing the model. He liked to think, he said, that he ‘remained pretty close to schools, and spend as much time as I can working in and with schools. It gets more difficult’.

TDA Board Member 2 (BM2) had been a secondary school year head and headteacher from 1997 and was appointed to the board in 2003 and served on it for six years: ‘in the last 18

months of that period, I was working as a kind of unofficial champion of MTL from the point of view of the school side ... and working alongside BM1, championing it from the perspective of HEIs'. It transpired during the interview that that BM2 left the board in 2009 before the MTL had got underway and as a consequence 'I kind of lost sight of how it actually panned out in practice, because it hadn't started at the point when I left that involvement'. Nonetheless, he was able to provide some interesting insights into, in his words, 'how the Agency was managing the process'. BM2 has since been a key figure in the National College for School Leadership leading on the London, Manchester and Black Country Challenge before taking on responsibility for the development of Teaching Schools. He is now Managing Director and Director for Secondary Education in an independent trust with the responsibility for the development of academy schools.

Official 1 (O1) was the Executive Director of Teacher Training for The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) who described himself, jocularly, as having 'invented MTL and led its implementation'. He was also, ex officio, a member of the TDA Board. Prior to that, he had been Director of ITT Quality and Funding at the TDA and, subsequently, Director of Strategy. Before joining the TDA, he had, as he describes in a mini-biography, 'worked at the Department for Education and Skills on a range of education and employment policy areas including special needs, post-16 qualifications, putting in place the nursery voucher scheme, and support and guidance to socially excluded young people. He started his career as a researcher, working at a number of universities on social and economic issues'. He later trained as a primary teacher and, at the time of writing, is a professor of education in an English university.

The three other TDA officials had, typically, a range of experience in teacher education to some extent and to policy administration to a greater extent. Official 2 (O2) headed what he described as 'a directorate within the TDA to develop the MTL'. He had previously been director of the Workforce Remodelling Directorate. Subsequently he was part of the team that established the National Induction arrangements for NQTs. He also led the work to reform the award-bearing INSET system into Post Graduate Professional Development. This experience had, in his words, 'probably put me in the frame to head up the work on MTL'. Official 3 (O3) had, prior to being a Regional Partnership Manager in one of the nine government office regions', been the National Manager for Partnership Development

(Schools). Although not involved in the initial creation of a broad framework, she became involved in the bidding process and subsequently, alongside the other two officials, was 'tasked to develop a national model'. Official 4 had, together with Official 2, worked on the induction arrangements, which 'broadened out to my involvement in the review of Teachers' Standards and the publication of the Standards framework'. In addition, he had had a role in the TDA, for coaching and mentoring and this aspect of his experience was carried forward into the development of the MTL.

Unlike Official 1 and TDA Board Member 1, the Professor of Education (PoE) was interviewed solely in his capacity as the head of an education institute within an English university. His early experience was as a secondary school English teacher and Head of Department which has informed his research into what makes a highly effective teacher. In his previous role in the same university several years before, he had experimented with the concept of a school-based Masters qualification based on some models emerging elsewhere at the time. In his view, the focus was not to over-define the model after the manner of university-based Masters degree courses, but to give schools 'a good say in how it was developed'. Therefore, a framework was designed which included three elements which, in total, were equivalent in length to a conventional dissertation: 1) a contextual description of the school, including a proposed action research project that fitted in with the expressed needs of the school; 2) a report on the action research project; and, 3) an assessed presentation. Despite his belief that this concept was interesting and innovative, he concluded that it was 'a failed experiment', mainly because it did not have sufficient commitment from the schools and, indeed, from academic colleagues whose professional mindset was, understandably, more in tune with traditional Masters programmes. Given the relevance of this particular experience, PoE's view of the MTL was likely to leaven the discussion with the other elite contributors.

The two Programme Leads (PL1 and PL2) had direct involvement in the development and implementation of the MTL both at national level and at regional levels as co-ordinators and disseminators of the programme in their respective government office regions, one in the south and one in the north of England. PL1 is the Head of the Department for Professional Development in the Faculty of Education and Director of Masters at an English university. Before that she had been a primary school teacher. Unlike all the other respondents, PL2 was

not a qualified teacher: his early background was in ‘the private sector’ after which he moved into business education where he had created an international MBA (Masters in Business Education). In terms of the MTL, he observed that ‘part of my background that is relevant is, if you like, working with more of a commercial perspective on what needs to be put together, but also leading and managing a fairly large multi-school, as in university departments, schools, teams’. Latterly, he has been leading PD in his HEI and had been chair of a national body concerned with the development and promotion of Masters-level PD, based on an MBA model.

4.3 A revolution in teacher education?

Since Burton and Goodman (2011) had, like the researcher, participated directly in the early development of the MTL, it is pertinent at this juncture to interpose a summary of their commentary on it, particularly since many of the conclusions they make are either implicitly or explicitly explored further in the elite interviews described in this chapter. The fundamental question raised in the title of their paper is whether this concept, and indeed vision, of a heightened qualification for all teachers is ‘a revolution in teacher education or a bright light quickly extinguished’. Although they declare a moderate degree of optimism for this project, they express some serious scepticism about its likely success. In essence, the latter is expressed in terms of several aspects, most of which percolate through this thesis:

- political intent versus professional concerns;
- the provenance of the MTL in the context of standards agenda since the 1980s;
- the recent changes to the training routes into teaching (e.g. School Direct);
- the implications for professional development, particularly to existing Masters provision;
- HEI and school funding in a period of economic austerity;
- enrolment issues – target groups, equity and workload;
- the role of the school-based coach;
- status of the MTL – unclassified (pass only), lack of a core research module;
- hasty and, at times, muddled, planning and preparation;
- tension between ‘personalisation’ and ‘standardisation’.

4.4 Political context

The Permanent Secretary for Education (PPS) at the time of the conception of the MTL had, understandably, little to say about the detailed early development of the MTL, but he provided a telling insight into the relationship between political decision-makers and Higher Education. Chapter 2 (Section 2.1) addresses the notion that over the last thirty years there has been a widening disconnect between politicians and Higher Education. PPS commented at length on the view held by some academics that politicians have ‘some sort of deep and dark master plan to emasculate HEIs’. He emphasised the point that politicians are, in their very nature, driven by an ideological perspective, which is not to argue that they are in any way idle or cavalier in their response to advice and the decisions they take:

People often say ‘Well, ministers should be driven by evidence.’ But of course, as I said at the beginning, ministers look at educational evidence, but they also have political beliefs and values. And I think that it’s not unreasonable, whatever you think about it, it’s not unreasonable for a secretary of state to say ‘I happen to believe that, because of my world view and what I believe about autonomy and the role of government and the power of head teachers, I believe that I want teacher education to be largely driven at school level’.

In the same way as Ed Balls, through the National Challenge Programme, and a pretty tough – that’s an under-statement – draconian set of interventions into schools that were failing. And again he might say – as he did, actually – ‘Ideologically I believe a government should be active and should be strong, and shouldn’t just stand apart from situations of greatest failure’.

Now, you might think ‘what’s the evidence for that?’ or ‘that doesn’t stack up against what Ofsted said.’ I think you do have to allow politicians room for ideology to say – as one of my colleagues used to put it – sometimes politicians just need to say ‘this is what I believe’, rather than to try to always find the evidence. PPS

In response to the suggestion that politicians are, in their attitudes to Higher Education, somehow anti-intellectual, that HEIs are perceived as ‘the awkward squad’ who represent obstacles to change, PPS reiterated his point that it was not about anti-intellectualism, but

about politicians' 'world view': that there was a view of how teachers acquired their skills and knowledge that was better done in schools, or predominantly done in schools, as opposed to HEIs. Both Labour and Conservative ministers would argue, rightly or wrongly, that they had a view of what beliefs and values and approaches to education that were to be found in HEIs and 'they didn't like it'. This may be seen as an ill-informed judgment on their part, especially when seen in light of PPS' own direct experience of Ofsted inspections which, in his view, had improved the quality of higher education over the years:

I think the fact was some HEIs were probably not as good as they might have been when it came to teacher education. And I think inspection played a positive role in that process. PPS

In his judgment, it is very hard to argue that the inspection schedule was some kind of ideological tool: rather, the Ofsted framework, and particularly the inspection schedules, have helped people to corral what it is that represents best practice in teacher education. The advice that officials gave to ministers was for them not to believe that somehow HEIs dominated initial teacher education. HEIs have not dominated initial teacher education for years: what they have done is to work very effectively in partnership. Therefore, there is good evidence of effective higher education and its role in teacher education. Despite this, politicians just shifted their ideological position, by deciding they prefer schools to take an even more predominant role. And in order to consolidate this, they developed a funding approach 'consistent with their belief that schools should have a greater and more prominent role'.

Although not directly involved in the genesis of the MTL, PPS provides a few pertinent insights into some of the early discussions that took place, particularly in regard to the type of degree envisaged. He recalls the concern expressed at the outset that the qualification might be 'cornered' by universities; hence the resolve that it 'wasn't just going to be any old MA in education'. Indeed, the government at the time preferred a Masters degree more in line with an MBA – a point that will be returned to later in this chapter. There was a degree of scepticism about how far the universities were prepared to be creative in thinking about the content of an MTL that would distinguish it from a typical Masters in Education:

... if you weren't careful you would have the kind of warm embrace of the HE quality assurance procedures killing something that was meant to be generally innovative, and quite different. PPS

Officials had expressed similar misgivings to ministers about overstating the capacity of schools, the time available to them and their capability to deliver such an innovation. Even if they were given the money, would it be enough? Was it their core business? That advice was consistent and politicians were mindful of it. It was always a judgement to be made - a political judgement:

...how far you're prepared to push it, and how fast you're prepared to push it. Because some politicians, legitimately would argue there's a kind of natural inertia within the education system. And sometimes you just have to drive through it and say 'we're going to move to this,' and everyone says 'how are we possibly going to do it?' But actually you create momentum to do it. PPS

PPS did not consider that the MTL was, in any respect, a flawed concept. The withdrawal of funding by the Coalition Government was, he considered, largely and almost entirely driven by the difficult choices the coalition government had to make about 'trying to keep and how to protect a better settlement for the education budget as a whole, but still a settlement that wasn't as good as had been enjoyed in previous years'. There was no suggestion that this decision was taken lightly:

A very strong case, to be fair, was made for the value of the MTL by the then Teacher Training Agency. I never heard ministers, as it were – it's probably too early to do this, but I never heard ministers speak ill of this. People weren't saying 'Oh, here's another approach to ideology'. PPS

Indeed, the only ideological difference between Ed Balls, who initially sanctioned the MTL, and his successor, Michael Gove, is that the former was 'quite interventionist': for example, he felt that professional development was one of those good examples of where you could see government playing a role for good. On the other hand, the latter's position was that government should step back and that what government should be doing is creating a 'kind of infrastructure'.

PPS was optimistic about the lessons learned from the MTL, not least in terms of the strong funding given to it, but he saw it as part of ‘the long march through increased professionalism and increased professional pride’. He also saw it, methodologically, as a very interesting concept to try to build a degree that really did emphasise the mastery dimensions of teaching and learning:

But I think it was – this sounds terribly trite – I think it was a noble aim to say that not only should we see teaching as an all graduate profession, but actually wouldn’t it be great if we saw teaching as an all postgraduate qualification. By postgraduate I mean more than just a PGCE. That was a noble aim and ambition, and I think quite a legitimate policy for government to have. PPS

As far as the future of professional development for serving teachers is concerned, PPS hopes that the capacity/capability issue in schools will bring everyone to a position of recognising that there is still a very strong and powerful contribution to be made by higher education. It would, in his view, be a retrograde step to remove higher education from teacher education altogether.

4.5 The TDA officials

4.5.1 Board member 1

The responses of TDA Board Member 1 (BM1) echo some of those of the Permanent Secretary, although the tone is, at times much less tentative and more critical in the detail. In his view, the MTL did not arise directly from politicians, but from a number of TDA concerns in the mid-2000s about the variable quality of PD (2010), the quality of induction and the wider concern about rates of retention. Also, the TDA was belatedly attempting to address the implications of the QAA ruling, following the Bologna Declaration (1999), that PGCEs needed not only to be postgraduate in time, but postgraduate in level. Consequently, the nature of Masters level study – both for PGCE and MTL – dominated the discussion of teacher education at that time (Sikes, 2006). In conjunction with these developments there was, in the words of BM1, ‘some international noise’ around Masters level professions in Finland and elsewhere, as exemplified by the McKinsey Report. Such developments are then harnessed by politicians:

So these things come together. And the way the political decision is, they do get traction from the new Secretary of State (Ed Balls) who I think is looking to centralise that, and sees an opportunity to pull all of this together around a structure which deals with attrition as a result of poor quality support early on. Deals with levelness. Deals with the quality of professional development. And the MTL becomes the vehicle for that. BM1

The point made by PPS that ministers were concerned to prevent HEIs from ‘cornering’ the MTL was enlarged upon by BM1 in terms of what he described as ‘producer capture’:

There are a number of quite early non-negotiables. And some of those lie quite deeply embedded in the way TDA thought about its role. TDA, from certainly as long as I was on the board and slightly before, have an instinctive fear of producer capture. It sees that the Higher Education system is shape-able, but not biddable. And there is a really serious fear that giving another shed load of money across to Higher Education simply does not exercise purchase on practice. BM1

BM1’s analysis is that the TDA formed a view that in the mid 1990’s initial teacher training was not wholly effective, so they employed a variety of regulatory, inspectorial and funding instruments in order to ‘sharpen the quality’. To justify their view, they produced evidence from Ofsted reports that from 2000 through the decade that followed, quality was improving. The overall lesson that they drew from this is that an assertively managed market could generate step changes in quality. They considered university provision of Masters degrees and they started to see some recognisable problems that they interpreted in the same way as they interpreted the ITT problems in the 1990’s: that it was variable in quality, some of it very well focused on improving classroom teaching and learning and some of it was not. From this, they concluded that the model that produced improvement in ITT could be adapted for use in PD, through the MTL. For ITT, there was a national curriculum for initial teacher training that was highly directive and such an approach could be developed for a new Masters. BM1 repeated the view expressed by PPS that the TDA officials had in their minds, not a conventional MA, as the starting point but the business school MBA:

...if you look at an MBA, many of the technical aspects (e.g. how to read a balance sheet) are sub-Masters – you get them in a L3 business studies course as well as

at the Harvard Business School. I think that the MBA influence on MTL at design stage was pretty considerable. BM1

This idea of imposing a national Masters qualification in any form suggests, in BM1's view, not necessarily hostility to universities, but a government quango's frustration about quality issues as they saw them. So, they are explicitly 'hostile' to some universities and some types of university provision. Conversely, they are very accommodating of other universities and other university provision. Several specific examples were offered, in confidence, of such universities. In response to several questions concerning the roles of the school-based coach and the Local Authority (LA), including the concept of a centrally provided Masters degree, and the target group of National Challenge schools, BM1 concluded that 'it looked an undercooked set of issues'.

4.5.2 Board member 2

Board Member 2 (BM2) saw himself as 'a kind of unofficial champion of MTL from the point of view of the school side of the Board'. Together with BM1 he had some concerns about how the Agency was managing the process, initially in terms of the extent to which the TDA had sufficient and appropriately qualified personnel to manage the project:

I mean, we just didn't sit still until we got a grip of it all, so it felt like there wasn't enough strategic and project planning of the process from start to end ... It felt like it was making it up as it went along a little bit. BM2

As a result of these concerns a Programme Director post was created and taken up by an existing TDA official (O2) who had had particular experience of post-graduate professional development (PPD). Although BM2 had left the Board before the MTL was finally agreed, like others he recalls a considerable tension around the choice of a 'one-size-fits-all qualification which is quite top-down determined', as wanted by the Department. In his view that tension was never completely resolved in terms of, 'what's this meant to look like?' and, 'how does it review?' A similar tension in the Board centred on the purpose of the proposed MTL, exemplified by a secondary head who, after making a formal presentation remarked 'It's all about results, it's all about raising performance and improving teachers and, therefore, you cannot miss that (assessment of teaching component) out.' Although he

acknowledged that practical teaching per se was not part of the original brief to HEIs, as a secondary head himself at the time, he considered it ‘a missed opportunity’.

4.5.3 The Executive Director (O1)

What in the eyes of the Executive Director (O1) proved undoubtedly to be a missed opportunity was his preference for a qualification very much akin to an MBA, if not an actual MBA, in light of the fact that that he had originally ‘pitched a notion’ to a former chairman of the TDA, Brian Follett:

(He) was very keen that we should move PPD on, and move the Masters on, from an academic notion to an MBA notion. He thought, and it was a really solid input, that the qualification should look much more like an MBA, be an MBA for teachers, rather than be a traditional Masters qualification for teachers. O1

Such a notion of building an MBA style qualification, for teachers, rather than the traditional Masters, had proved successful at one university in particular, although very few others understood it initially, he believed, and it would a huge amount of training to try to change people’s thinking in this respect:

The Head of Department for Professional Education (PL2) got it immediately, because of course he worked in a business school before he worked in education. So he came into education very much from the viewpoint, of somebody who was absolutely au fait with the whole notion about what professional development should look like. How MBAs could be constructed. How you built work based, workplace qualifications. So he was somebody who was really good to have on board, in the early stages, because he was one of the team of people who actually understood, intrinsically, what it was we were trying to achieve, and was very happy to go out there and promote it with colleagues. O1

O1 acknowledged the influence of the Mckinsey Report on the origins of the MTL and his own belief in the Barber concept of ‘deliverology’ (2011). Equally, the data available to the TDA suggested the need for radical change. For example, completion rates on PPD were not good: teachers really liked the taught elements, but they did not want to do the dissertation which formed a third of the traditional qualification. Also, most universities had a very old

fashioned view about what a Masters programme was about: preparation for doing a doctorate, rather than a Masters as a practice based qualification to improve practice. These universities were at one end of the extreme and (named university), a former polytechnic, was at the other: the latter believed that what the TDA was proposing was impressive: they were giving teachers a practice-based Masters qualification to certify the fact they'd done this 'fantastic professional development'. Scrutiny of the data by the agency about who was doing PPD, indicated that a large proportion of PPD money was being spent on people in the first five years of their career:

So I thought.... why don't we think about how we can integrate the money we're spending in the PGCE for Masters, with the money we're spending on PPD for Masters, and actually just create a Masters level programme for teachers? Combine the whole thing into a combined pot that would fund all our PGCE people to get to Masters in an integrated programme, rather than trying to run two separately distinct programmes. So, when I did the costing, the basis of the cost of the Masters qualification, it would be reduced by the fact that people had already got their 60 credits on the PGCE. O1

For O1, the important part of it was that it was possible, since several (named) universities were doing what was tantamount to this already: awarding 60 credits in a PGCE toward say 20 credits at induction, and then using PPD money to award the rest of a Masters qualification. So, he argued, if some universities had already got into that market of linking the programmes together, by year three of a teacher's career they would have got to Masters level. This idea he 'sold to the TDA Board... and the agency signed it off'. The next step was to seek advice from Michael Barber, head of McKinsey's Global Education Practice, 'who was known to all of us anyway, because we'd worked with him in the department':

He built a team in McKinseys of people; two of the more junior people had worked on Teach First. So they had been trained on Teach First before they'd gone back to McKinsey. The two lead people had both done MBAs at Harvard. So they brought that solid MBA experience that they'd been through at Harvard, to thinking about the programme. O1

The brief of this team was: to consider the original data that had been accumulated ‘about the world’s best performing systems, where often you’ve identified that Masters qualifications are an intrinsic part of that’; and to advise on ‘those programmes that are really effective and can be applied to England’. Responding to the question whether he had considered approaching the HE sector for advice of this kind, O1 observed:

I think, as well, that we were very conscious that we wanted to move the world on from where we’d got to on PPD. This was the next step on. Being a bit arrogant about it, universities are not necessarily the hotbeds of innovation. Universities are the residues of conservatism. O1

He stressed that there was no pressure from ministers to consult with the McKinsey Organisation rather than the HE sector. The question they asked was ‘Where do we go to consult with people, who have a wide international experience of what makes for effective teacher development? Because the McKinsey Organisation ‘had done this world leading research, they were an obvious body to help us do that work’. Ministers were subsequently informed of the outline programme as devised with the help of Michael Barber and his team and they, particularly the Secretary for State, were ‘very keen’. Not only were ministers enthusiastic about the proposition, but so were HEIs, with the exception of a few:

We got loads of tremendous feedback. We got a pretty green light although, as you say, some universities, particularly some of the new universities, got rather twitchy about was this undermining their academic standards. Not a response we got from the Russell Group actually, quite the opposite. They, in general, were very happy with it, because they were confident that they could deliver it I think in an academic way. Oxford thought it was a ‘fantastic idea’, especially in view of their experience of the internship model. O1

Not all the Russell Group signed up to the MTL and, ironically, Oxford dropped out before the programme development stage got underway. O1 explained this in terms of what he considered was the paradox of ‘producer capture’: that is, HEIs responded positively to the MTL in the expectation that they would be able to adapt it to their own ends:

We saw it exactly in the North West where they all got together, created this cartel, be it jointly, and because they presented a coherent and a picture of how

they would cover MTL across the region, we went with it. If you said to me now, ‘Would you go with it again?’ I’d say, ‘Absolutely not.’ We should, I think in my view, have from the outset prevented basically a UCET inspired manoeuvre, to outmanoeuvre the agency and the department by cartelising the programme. O1

According to him, the Agency had unwittingly facilitated this ‘cartelising’ process by adopting a consortium model for the delivery of the MTL based on a de facto model the foundations of which they had already built in the North West of England. O1 described this region as one in which providers were much more strongly organised than they were in any other region. The TDA have previously enabled that circumstance by providing funding for the creation of a network there. However, by adopting the consortium model, which ‘kept people on board and brought in capacity’, the Agency forfeited several of the Russell Group universities, including the previously enthusiastic Oxford. O1 concluded:

We should have prevented that: we should have said, ‘we’re only interested in choosing one high performing provider, who can deliver the programme in that particular region’. O1

Contracting for the pilot phase of MTL with the North West region as a model consortium, O1 conceded, was ‘the biggest mistake that was made’, alongside the inclusion of schools in special circumstances as a priority target, which is what ministers decided they wanted to do, despite strong advice from the Agency to the contrary. Also, there was a failure to convince sufficient people of the merits of an MBA for teachers that would have created sufficient momentum for the change they sought to effect. The notion of a school-based coach as a pivotal role in the MTL was, conceded O1, another ‘fraught area’. He attributed this to what he considered to be a problem of the lack of commitment from head teachers, and other education leaders to deploying experienced, high quality teachers to ‘bring on the next generation of the profession’. He contrasted this with the medical profession where there is a clear understanding of the importance of leading consultants working with trainees:

In education we don’t do that. So we endlessly get into this problem that schools don’t create the time for master teachers, if such things exist, to actually train the next generation. Education doesn’t take that responsibility for inducting and

developing the new professionals, within the sector that a lot of other sectors do.

O1

Asked to reflect on the MTL project overall, O1 was characteristically bullish. He considered that there was a clear vision of what the TDA was trying to achieve with it, despite being ‘blown around by the realities of having to position within an existing context’. There was no clean piece of paper to write on. They had to work within a whole series of relationships between schools, providers, attitudes, etc.:

But we did try to hold to that basic notion of an early professional career MBA that gave new teachers the knowledge of schools they needed to be really effective teachers within the first few years of their career... We had to keep tweaking the reality. People nit-picked a lot of aspects of it. O1

O1 concluded that what is needed for the future is ‘a training programme’ which will help new teachers gain all that knowledge, rather than having to find it out for themselves the hard way by making all sorts of mistakes and having to do all sorts of research themselves. He likened it to learning to drive:

...actually we know that doing a PGCE course, and getting your QTS, is like being a beginning driver. You might just have passed your driving test, but you’re by no means ready to be given a high performance sports car to drive around the track or something. There is an awful lot more development that you need before you’re going to be a fully effective teacher... So I think we had a vision of what it was about. O1

4.5.4 The MTL Programme Director (O2)

O2, the Programme Director, proved less concerned with ‘the vision thing’ and more focused on getting a programme up and running. He recalled that when the TDA, as a whole, realised that MTL was going to be a major undertaking and, therefore, needed more resources than had been hitherto given to it, he was brought into establish what eventually became a de facto directorate within the TDA to develop it. He described the origins of the MTL much less in terms of a broad agenda for change, as the three foregoing respondents had, but as what he called ‘an iterative process’:

...the MTL development as a project was that we were developing it as we were delivering it.... A lot of the detail in terms of how the modules interact with each other and all those sorts of things, and certainly about credit transfer, were actually still being developed through the development of the process.... And so we were, I think, settling rules and things, right up to virtually the last sets of discussions with the actual consortia, with the providers, before we launched the programme. O2

The basic modular structure and idea that the degree would be practice based were very high level things, agreed before he joined the TDA, and ‘came out of a couple of conferences and conversations on the margins of those conferences’. In his view, the notion that a conventional dissertation was expressly excluded in the modular framework was ‘a wee bit of an urban myth’:

The drive was all was always to encourage people to think of new and different ways to assess, and not to – put it this way, not to assume it must be a dissertation, and maybe that came out assuming it has to be something else than a dissertation.

O2

Similarly, O2 rejected the view that the TDA had insisted that the MTL should be established as an unclassified qualification from the outset. His line was always that the TDA did not have a particular position on this aspect: it was something that the provider community could and should work out for itself. However, there had to be a consistent line, bearing in mind that the MTL was conceived as a national programme:

So certainly the fact that it wasn’t a classified Masters from the start was, I think, one of those things that simply happened in the drafting almost, rather than being something that was very carefully thought through, and certainly wasn’t something that we were given as part of, you know, the initial brief. O2

O2’s biggest misgiving was the timescale, because a lot of what they were trying to achieve would have been better achieved, in his view, if there had been more time to develop the model beforehand, which would mean a lot more people could have been involved in developing it before contracts were let out:

If you and colleagues in the universities and the schools you work with had had more time to talk to us about the model and what we were trying to achieve before you had to start actually making things happen and develop content and start recruiting people and so on. I think that was always my biggest misgiving. O2

Not only was there a big problem with the timescale, but a problem of mixed messages in the dialogue with the Universities: TDA officials felt that there was one set of conversations being had with the people in the education department, who were directly involved with us in developing the programme and who attended the various planning meetings, and then another set of conversations, ‘usually kind of by proxy from our point of view’, with those education departments, and with the universities as institutions. The TDA understood that those who attended these planning meetings had been granted plenipotentiary power to make or agree decisions – an understanding which some universities did not either understand or wish to implement.

As it transpired, there was a major problem at the outset when only four out of the nine planned regional contracts were ‘let’ on time as a consequence of which the launch of the programme was delayed by a year. O2 questioned whether the five unsuccessful consortia had ‘really had done the thinking and had done the work.’ For him, it was not clear in the bids that were submitted that they really understood the model, the MTL model. And, specifically, they had not understood the idea of the partnership between universities and schools, including the participant coach/tutor concept – a point emphasised by O3 later. In summary, they failed to understand the overall concept of the MTL and what it offered:

...what was being offered was - not wanting to be pejorative (sic) - but it was a kind of an ‘off the shelf’ Masters programme. We thought we’d been very clear; we certainly wanted to get across the idea that we were looking for something innovative in terms of the way the universities and schools would work together.

O2

O2 did not explicitly concede that the HEIs’ ‘failure to understand’ was, possibly, born of the TDA’s own failure to be ‘very clear’ in the first instance, particularly in its expectation that the programme would be an MBA-style qualification, which compounded by the lack of time they had to consult fully. He did acknowledge however, that following feedback, the second

round bids were very strong. The perception from the TDA was that the consortia ‘had used the time in between really well, and we felt we got a better product in the end, although not necessarily in the way we’d have liked to have done it. But we thought it actually turned out for the best in the end.’

O2 was ambivalent about whether he considered the MTL project a success:

So I suppose, in summary, as a project purely in terms of getting things done and the way people work together, it was very successful. In terms of the long term impact on teachers’ experience and the relationship of schools and universities, it’s still an open question. O2

He repeatedly referred to what he described as the tension between ‘progress’ and ‘process’ amid the huge constraint of time: ‘people at the centre’ – ministers and civil servants – for example, they did not understand the mechanics of a university getting a programme accredited. They wanted progress whereas the TDA officials were attempting to establish processes, with limited staff resources. Even so, there were no other constraints, except perhaps from the universities:

There was, if I’m honest, some of that from the other side, from you guys, the universities. I think we often felt that we didn’t have time to really explain to you why we were pushing for something. ... There was sometimes a feeling that we were just telling you what to do and we did not understand the pressures you were under. So that sometimes got into a bit of a sort of head-butting competition. O2

Despite some mistakes along the way, such as having to ‘roll back from’ the notion of participant ‘entitlement’ for legal reasons, the ‘three false starts on the coaching’, the general problem of coherence between the two key elements of the programme (content and coaching) and the ‘speculative’ costing, O2 maintained that, had there been time and the benefit of two or three cycles the MTL would have proved its worth:

I think it probably was over ambitious to try and achieve all of those things: the level of recruitment, the coverage of schools, certainly that sense of entitlement. To get all that up and running, in the time available, was over ambitious, because a

lot of those things would have been more realistic to achieve over a greater length of time. O2

4.6 The TDA development officials

The two TDA officials (O3 and O4), who were assigned the task of developing in detail the MTL programme, reiterated several of the points made by O1 and O2 as they applied to their particular contexts and briefs. Once the framework had been agreed (Rowe, 2009), their brief was to assist in the process of creating a national model and to develop, respectively, the content and coaching elements in consultation with the HEI consortium representatives as a group. Although some of the wider views of O4 are included in this chapter, a school-based perspective is provided in Chapter 7, which addresses the concept of the school-based coach as a fundamental aspect of the planned provision.

4.6.1 Official for partnership development and programme content (O3)

O3's previous role in the TDA as the National Manager for ITT Partnership Development (Schools) seemed an appropriate precursor to her role in establishing a national partnership for the MTL. She had not been involved in the creation of the framework: her initial task was to follow up on and to feedback to the five regions that had failed in the initial bids. Echoing O2's point, she repeated that there appeared to be a lack of understanding of what was required for a successful bid, particularly in respect of the part to be played by partnership schools:

I can say that overwhelmingly what weakened the bids was the lack of school buy-in in terms of partnerships. ...that wasn't to say that the providers weren't already developing and had good relationships and partnerships, it's just that in the bids it wasn't made absolutely explicit how they would work and how they would build upon those. So, you know, it was a classic example of you knew providers had got excellent working practices; they just didn't put it in the bid. So what you actually say and how you say it in a competitive bid is crucial. O3

O3 did not see the choice of the North-West to include both primary and secondary teachers as a big mistake, as did O1. She accorded with his view that it did not make the 'management of the whole initiative easy'. She would have preferred a competitive process consistently across all regions because it would not have then 'accentuated' the North West's position. In

terms of the model, O3 insisted that it was informed as a consequence of ‘stakeholder’ engagement – the outcome of numerous consultations. Despite some qualifications, she viewed the MTL positively:

I think the project was immensely ambitious and I think, I would say, overall some of the outcomes would mean that it has been, I think, a significant success both in terms of provider to provider collaboration – I think it was second to none in terms of the way universities worked together. It was unprecedented, I’d say. And in terms of providers working with schools, I think it’s one of the nearest things, ironically, to the school led, school-based vision of the current Administration.
O3

Her qualifications to this sanguine assessment were several. As an ‘immensely expensive’ project she foresaw the difficulty of maintaining the level of funding:

And I sometimes think perhaps a contribution towards that might have increased its value amongst some of the participants or schools. It’s that issue about, you know, if you get it for nothing you can always sort of throw it away, if you have to pay for it you look at it through slightly different glasses. O3

The issue of the balance of funding between HEIs and schools should, in her view, have been worked out before the original bids went in, alongside a clear definition of partnership. Discussions about funding have traditionally always favoured universities and that was ‘not without its problems’. Contrary to PPS’s assertion that the funding approach was ‘consistent with their (politicians) belief that the schools should have a greater and more prominent role’, O3 asserted:

It’s up to the consortia to have worked out the divvying up and the distribution of funds according to the roles that were asked. But if you talk about partnership in terms of senior partners and junior partners, I think you’re missing the point about the vision. This wasn’t about HEIs calling the shots, this was about a totally new model of working and it was bound to have a bit of teething problems but it seemed to me absolutely right and proper, if you sorted out everybody’s roles, then the money should follow the activity. That was something every consortium had in their power to do. O3

O3 stressed that the MTL was a different project and that that difference was not fully recognised either by the schools or by some of the providers. For HEIs that had reservations about the proposal, ‘there was no compulsion to be part of a consortium’. Other compromises had to be made, or consensus sought, in order to address the wide range of provision across HEIs, such as the decisions on classification, dissertation, entitlement, coaching, credit transfer, in order to ensure national coherence and portability.

As expected, in view of her professional background, O3 reiterated her view that the MTL was all about developing partnership:

So however school-led, school-based it will be, the role of the university as the accrediting partner is absolutely vital and it’s something that they bring with strength into that partnership, as they do the whole evaluation, reflection and research dimension. O3

O3 went further to say that the universities were not always clear about what they had been signatories to and it was only until they engaged with it that they realised how far they might need to go. And some of them, in her opinion, felt that their provider prerogatives were being challenged in a way that they had not agreed:

However when you look at what they actually signed - and, you know, in every institution there’s a signature – it’s very clear that what they were signing up for was a national programme, was a work based programme and that to make that work required some measure of compromise. And I think through the Programme and Content Development Working Group we were able to retain some checks and balances miraculously. I think it was pretty phenomenal how we were able to manage and come to sort of agreement about those tensions. But, for me, the issue was this was a national qualification and if there were ways in which the portability of participants could be secured from one institution to another, then we’d have done something else. So what I always tried to do was sort of ask – you know, to throw it back and say ‘Tell me how you can ensure this, if we don’t do it this way’. And, if you like, doing this way was always informed by what the providers were saying. So, in between meeting collectively with providers to shape and steer it, I was also meeting individually and taking on board the

criticisms and taking on board the real concerns and trying to broker a way to address them. It wasn't the intention to force universities down a road that they didn't want to go. O3

4.6.2 Official for coaching development (O4)

O4's specific brief was to develop the coaching element of the MTL. As a relative latecomer to the project, he regretted that he was not privy to the initial decision-making process, particularly with regard to the original decision to sub-contract the coach training to the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) and, thereby, to render it independent of HEIs. Whilst he did not know, or was not forthcoming about, the reasons for the reversal of this decision and the subsequent delegation of it to the nine consortia, he acknowledged the unforeseen consequences of it:

But looking back now and looking at how we operate now in the department, I think there was a huge vacuum in terms of policy knowledge and expectation: that those of us who were in the front line would have significantly benefited from if we'd been involved there. O4

The major unforeseen, or perhaps ignored, consequence was the severely restricted timescale in which to accommodate the concerns of a variety of groups, a notable example of which was the Workload Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) which was a body of representatives of teaching unions and government. It was created to oversee the implementation of the Workload Agreement, and is now defunct. The then extant Workload Agreement (2003) was the agreement between the unions, managers and employers and the government in which they sought to identify positive ways to tackle teachers' excessive workload. Clearly, this had implications for the MTL concept of a school-based coach, not least in terms of the time needed and any additional payment required. Most importantly, as O4 pointed out, 'we could only proceed if WAMG agreed'.

Another tension for O4 was the relationship between Local Authorities (LAs) and HEIs. He recalled a pre-meeting with HEIs at which it was agreed that they would lead on the training because they had experience of running coaching courses and coaching modules. And the LAs in that room at that time agreed with that approach:

I then went from there to an afternoon meeting at the same hotel to tell the assembled group of Local Authority people there what the approach was going to be. They hugely disagreed. So much so, that they became very hostile and began throwing things at me. Because they felt that their LA colleagues who had been in that morning meeting had sold them down the river. The view of those people in the room in that afternoon was that they were the best placed people to deliver this, not the HEIs. So there was a huge distrust of HEIs from the Local Authorities. O4

In general, O4 considered the MTL, in terms of the coaching aspect, to be a limited success. For its success, he particularly cited the North West region where the feedback from those who were trained in school-based coaching was that they were so enthused that they looked to develop the coaching culture within their schools. ‘And that wouldn’t have happened if they hadn’t been trained as coaches’. He also believed that the model of the coach working in tandem with the tutor was a sound approach. It was not that the programme was over-ambitious, but that there was insufficient time to meld it together. If it was flawed, it lay in targeting National Challenge schools and NQTs. Before taking on his role with the MTL, O4 had canvassed his network of induction coordinators on whether the NQT year was the right year to start the programme and all them were telling him ‘loud and clear’ that it was not:

To me it seemed flawed that somebody would begin a Masters level qualification when they had yet to qualify and complete their NQT year. And if they’d been able to start at the start of their second year of teaching, that would have given us an extra term to get all the building blocks in place, and it would have meant that they would have had that under their belt, the NQT year, and they could begin, you know, they could look forward to their Master level studies from year two. O4

Even before he was involved directly with the MTL this was ‘the concern that I was flagging (to senior officials) consistently’. His concern was shared by schools and HEIs alike. He concluded that the decision to proceed with this target group was ‘a political decision rather than one borne out of any sort of practicalities’. Similarly, the decision to target National Challenge schools – one of BM1’s ‘non-negotiables’ - proved problematic:

I think National Challenge schools were the wrong schools to include here as well, because the teachers in those schools had been recruited by the headteachers of the schools for their experience, their calibre, and for their ability to deliver and to cope with those very challenging environments. So quite understandably, they weren't keen to release those teachers for coach training, to be substituted by a less qualified supply teacher. So that was a huge challenge, to try to find ways to provide coaches with the training that WAMG were telling me was essential, before they were judged to be fully trained. O4

Despite his view that the MTL had 'an image problem', O4 concluded that it was unique and 'ground breaking' but that it was not marketed to take that into account. As far as his responsibility for the coaching was concerned, 'I had got to find a way to make it work'. One of the programme leaders (PL1) considered that it could have been successful if headteachers had been not only consulted but involved in the development of a coaching model that they could take ownership of as part of their school improvement plans.

4.7 Professor of Education (PoE)

As can be seen from the profile of the Professor of Education (PoE) earlier in this chapter, he had a particular interest in the MTL since it resonated with his direct experience of designing and developing a school-based Masters degree:

And there was a period of about – six or seven years ago, when it seemed to me, for a number of reasons, and having seen some good models in other institutions, that we were ready to have a go, and I wanted to develop a full-scale school-based Masters using a sort of cluster or federal model. And in the early stages, I got between eight and ten schools interested and involved; some in a configuration, a sort of loose federation: several secondary schools and a couple of primaries. And a couple of big secondary schools who were keen to do it on their own. PoE

In its rationale and structure his model seemed a precursor to the MTL. It consisted of a 40 credit school-based module which was not 'over-defined', but allowed the schools to develop it according to their own priorities. The important thing was that this module did not suppose a conventional Masters essay or dissertation, but was equivalent to one. In PoE's view, it offered a good combination of three elements: first, participants had to write a contextual

description of their school, and how the bit of research work they wanted to do fitted the school's needs. They then undertook an action research project, which required a report of up to 4,000 words. And they also had to do a presentation of the research at some point; they could either do it at the point when they collected the data and had some early findings, so before they did the writing-up, or after they did the writing-up. In effect, they all did it before the writing-up. The presentation was equivalent to 3,000 words and required two people from the university to visit the school and assess it: for example, one primary school set up an event for the governors to whom they presented the research, whilst the assessors were there with a camera to capture it.

Despite the gratifying originality of this approach, PoE conceded that it proved a flawed experiment, in the sense it had worked well at one level, and a number of the students who did it completed the 40 credits. However, there were weaknesses in it: primarily, it did not get enough 'genuine buy-in' from the senior management of the schools who did not provide a senior colleague, such as a professional tutor, to facilitate, and guide the undertaking:

There were lots of good noises at the beginning, but not much follow-through. Because of that, the participants tended to be as strong as they were strong, or as weak as they were weak. They weren't a great group. And so you're losing one or two quite quickly from it. PoE

Given this background it was suggested to PoE that it could be expected that he would have been a strong proponent of the MTL. Initially, he said, it was the case that he 'took very seriously' this opportunity to teaching a Masters-level profession. In its early stages he was hopeful that it would work:

...when the MTL came along in embryonic form, I was very behind trying to make it work. PoE

His optimistic view changed in the three years or so of its development as, he argued, it consistently moved away from what he thought was a good model, to a very much more problematic model. He identified several problematic elements: first, it became increasingly more like a PD model; and second, it seemed to be displacing what the HEI could provide by what he described as 'a kind of monitoring drip-feed model of input', which meant that there was very little resource in it for the university to contribute to its development. A third

crucial point was that HEIs could neither select the participants nor the coaches. Whilst he could concede the argument for the entitlement of all teachers ultimately, he believed that HEIs should at least be able to select the coaches, and be appropriately resourced, in order to provide them with Masters-level experience of a ‘deep’ kind, such as a summer-school or two-week intensive blocks:

So as the template moved and moved and moved, to my mind, to a fairly primitive model, from what might have been a sophisticated model, I thought we were going to have real trouble making it work. PoE

Funding also proved a big issue:

They (the TDA) were suggesting that, as so much of what was going to happen was to happen in the school, that the school should therefore attract the majority of the funding to make it happen. I think anybody who had undertaken research about what happens to such money would have realised that either you’d have to put a very, very large amount of money in the school for it actually to come down to the point of activity, or you’d have to find another model of making it available to people. PoE

Philosophically, PoE took issue with the term ‘coach’ in relation to a Masters qualification. He described coaching as ‘a skill-based deliberated practice model’ in which the improvement of a teacher’s ‘factor-X’ – such as questioning or assessment, can be achieved by focussing on a sub-skill and then coaching to improve it without their actually understanding, necessarily, what is better or why it is better. That is what happens in sport, but it is not an appropriate approach when seeking to make a teacher have a deeper understanding of what learning and teaching are all about. In this context, the word ‘coach’ is ill-suited: there are better words which have a broader conceptualisation, such as mentor or tutor.

In general, PoE maintained that the MTL was poorly conceived – a product of ‘feeble thinking’. Citing Eraut (2004) and Shulman (2004), he argues that it is not possible to assess the change a Masters-type experience provides solely through the teaching. Any evidence that a Masters has changed a teacher’s practice should demonstrate that it is a highly sophisticated change and it will be two things: it will be subtle, at the level of practice; it

won't necessarily look incredibly different. It will be different, but more importantly, it is different at the level of the thinking about the teaching. It still involves planning, discussions with colleagues, writing materials:

If you look at the Shulman model, not only is he interested in subject-pedagogical knowledge, but teachers' understandings of curriculum materials – how to interpret them. You're just as likely to find evidence that the Masters has improved their thinking and evaluation of material through that kind of activity as you ever will through them just teaching Year Nine on a Friday afternoon. That's what you're looking at changing. You're not particularly looking at behaviour-management, where the kids are quieter or do things more quickly. That is a skill-based model that yes, you can train anyone to do. What you can't get without people really reflecting is changing the way someone asks questions. I mean, you look, and you might do a quantitative measure: do they ask more questions after a Masters? The answer is probably no. They might ask less. But it would be a qualitative interpretation. You'd need a real expert watching that teacher. You'd need an equivalent person watching that teacher to see how they are changing.

PoE

Fundamentally, the introduction of the MTL was characterised by a 'quick fix' syndrome in which, having spent a large amount of money on a teacher to complete a Masters, the expectation is that teaching will, ipso facto, improve and results get better. For PoE, such an approach is a misuse of scarce resources. A much more qualitative, incremental approach would prove more effective whereby a system of random sampling could form the basis for judging the effectiveness of the Masters over a defined period, say five years. By such means, a sophisticated body of knowledge would be accrued:

This is the kind of long-term investment that you have in medicine; that you have, relatively speaking, in architecture, law, you name it, whereby there's a deep sense within the community of the body of knowledge that's been developed. With all the political interferences we've had, endlessly, in education, that body of knowledge is never stable, never settled, always being challenged. And you just don't get, therefore, the kind of qualitative understanding that would genuinely provide absolute evidence of the difference a Masters makes. PoE

Responding to the point that the present research indicated that teachers who had undertaken a Masters degree felt that it had had a positive impact on their classroom practice, PoE acknowledged ‘a reasonable degree of validity’ in their sentiments, because they have not only done it but succeeded in doing it: they feel the difference; emotionally and psychologically. However, they are not representative:

They’re not representative of most teachers, who would say, ‘Yes, doing a Masters sounds great, but I haven’t got the time. There’s no real incentive to do it. It’s not compulsory. I’m not given any free time. I’d rather do X, Y and Z’. PoE

And such teachers might be improving teaching and learning, or improving the curriculum, just as much as someone with a Masters, without being able to reflect on their performance in relation to such a qualification because they have not undertaken one. If a model similar to those in some American states were adopted, where if a teacher does not have a Masters after five years, the licence to teach is revoked; only then, PoE concluded, would there be a full population to rule on whether it makes a difference or not.

The professor was derisive of the idea that the initial target group of participants for the MTL was newly qualified teachers who were working in National Challenge schools:

And why on earth would you choose newly-qualified teachers, of all the people to choose? Yes, by all means, if they volunteer. But why insist that NQTs, in a tough school – talk about a double-whammy! Whoever thought that was going to be a positive intervention? PoE

He expanded on this by suggesting that it is a reasonable generalisation to say that National Challenge schools have a much bigger problem attracting and retaining the best staff. They also have a problem in that they attract more NQTs than is proportional, and they may also attract more NQTs, proportionally, who are not that good, to their schools. The effect of this is to create a problematic teaching workforce in those schools, which could only be resolved by a national approach to the quality of the teachers being employed in those schools – not the other way around. Very good teachers need to be put into those schools in order to change them. He acknowledged that the Teach First programme, which ‘bungs bright graduates into Hackney’ claims to be such a model, although ‘everything I know about it is that it’s not’:

And the cost is phenomenal. Put the two things together and it is another cosmetic, PR...and a complete distraction from the issue, which is certain schools simply require high levels of funding per pupil in order to break the long-tail of underachievement that has been visible for 25 years. PoE

In terms of priorities, a Masters teaching profession is low on the list in his opinion: initial teacher-training will simply be the absorbing 'item one' on the agenda for the next three to five years. The devolution of teacher training to schools, via School Direct is, he claims, 'the highest-risk strategy for affecting the teaching profession' which is what makes the Masters argument even more of an irrelevance.

PoE concluded on a sombre note by reflecting on what he terms 'the cliché of the 21st century practice', which is of a model comparable to that of the Open University, based on a market where it is possible to access on-line tutoring or, indeed, buy an off-the-shelf video on, for example, 'How to Improve Your Teaching from Good to Outstanding', showing it to a group of teachers, and saying, 'Now do it':

My overview is that in an essentially neoliberal ideology, teachers don't matter much, actually. As long as you've got nice kids, in a nice school, teachers are doing all right, and that includes private schools, we're fine. The great mass of the population still basically need teachers who do what they're told, and make sure that things happen in certain ways; keep the kids off the streets. It's a factory model. That Oxbridge thinking about the mass of the population and what they really need is still there, only now, it's predominant again. PoE

4.8 Programme leader (PL1)

PL1 described her first meeting of the consortium in 2009 where there was a positive co-operative mood out of which emerged an agreement by all the HEIs present not to bid against each other. In her case, initial enthusiasm for the MTL lay in her experience of developing work-based programmes of this type and, of particular relevance to this project, there was a significant number of National Challenge schools in the university's catchment area. If she had any concerns at this early stage, it was that she and her colleagues had already developed a flexible model of a Masters for teachers that was underpinned by 'a very clear vision of what we felt Masters work was'. The model was offered as a campus-based twilight model,

or alternatively, and much more importantly, in schools with schools developing their own Masters programmes around school improvement plans. It was thus envisaged as a tool of school improvement:

So we were very concerned that this vision that we had, and the models we developed, were going to be pushed to one side and led by a top down model that, at that time, we didn't know what it looked like. PL1

Not knowing what it looked like is a familiar refrain in several interviews which will be discussed in the next chapter.

PL1 provided a different insight from other respondents as to why the Russell Group of universities, on balance, appeared less enthusiastic about the MTL than other HEIs. For the 'newer' universities, as she termed them, teacher education is their core business and, therefore, they are intrinsically linked to government funding because it is part of their 'raison d'être'. In a sense, it reflects an ideological standpoint which, in many ways, has to be elastic:

For me it's around ideology, and who you are as a university. So I think the Russell Groups were able to pigeonhole Masters level work as 'something that we do' because ideologically it fits with that we want to do. So we have a vision for this, but it's not our core work, so we can take it or leave it because we get significant funding from other areas, research and so on. PL1

In the specific case of Oxford University, as she understood, their initial enthusiasm for the professional development of teachers in general and the MTL in particular, quickly diminished when they realised that they were not allowed to select participants nor were they able to charge college fees over and above the funding that was given by the government. At the time, the consortium had no objection to Oxford's position on the grounds that 'that's simply the market, and that's the way of the world'. Her view is at variance with that expressed by O1 who saw Oxford's response to the MTL as another example of 'producer capture'.

Although she had some reservations about the new degree, such as the notion of 'entitlement' for newly appointed NQTs and new subject heads, she considered that the programme had

been 'extraordinarily fruitful'. Her experience was that individual colleagues in some universities were very committed, hardworking, dedicated, prepared 'to put the graft in and get through to do something significant with schools, and open to working with government'. Some HEIs presented unnecessary obstacles, as opined by O2: there were instances where university representatives were signed up, but found difficulties with their own university; there were complexities with university systems around validation which delayed concerted development; and there were unforeseen problems presented by university and TDA staff turnover. She described the situation as akin to each university being a tribe, with its own customs, rituals and ways of being, language and identity, such that bringing together these many different tribes to write one document was 'amazingly complex'. Even so, PL1 remained optimistic in making a virtue of necessity:

So dealing with such an extraordinary set of factors that were changing all the time; you're at the eye of the storm in many ways. We were making policy as we went, in partnership with the agency and the DfE. It was a really exciting place to be. PL1

The TDA were unrealistic in their estimate of the expected numbers of applicants for the MTL, particularly in the necessary support required from schools. In her experience of recruiting and developing school based groups, or recruiting to campus based models, only a small percentage formally applied:

...we felt that there was a naivete from government, I suppose, that all of these teachers would ever sign up. We didn't believe it. PL1

Certainly, the head teachers, who are central in any professional development model, were not 'courted' sufficiently from the start and their voice was not heard. The heads that she worked with 'could hear us talking about it but that's not the same as listening to government'. They were not consulted at an early design stage and, they told her, they were not convinced by any argument that, given the myriad challenges that they had to address, that withdrawing newly appointed teachers from their schools in order to pursue a Masters would contribute to the improvement of their schools. In a sense, she agreed with the heads and, echoing the words of PoE, felt that teaching is a complex process and that a Masters, of itself, cannot guarantee that pupil attainment will be raised in the classroom.

PL1 understood very well that the concept of a school-based coach was a key tenet in the proposed MTL and recalls how unsettling was the belated announcement that the plan to commission the training of coaches, using the CUREE model, to an outside contractor had been dropped for no apparent reason and that the HEIs would now be obliged to undertake this task. She recalled the announcement vividly:

... we were told completely out of the blue, in a London hotel, we were all sitting in there, ‘You’re going to be developing the coaching model’.. .So there was a shockwave that went across the hotel room, I remember, not because we couldn’t and not because we didn’t want to, but because we didn’t know it was another thing we’d be asked to do. We didn’t know if the funding would be there. PL1

In her view, the MTL was bedevilled by the coaching element from the outset which, she concluded, was indeed ‘an untidy process’. The way to make it work would have been to have head teachers in a room with some designing the coaching model and others designing the curriculum development model:

So that the heads could say ‘Around my school improvement plans I can see that the coach would be extremely important in developing the participant, and I would want them to do this, this and this’. PL1

PL1 placed great faith in some schools in which there were some ‘wonderful people’; had they been directly involved in the design and development of the programme they could have made it viable. Despite this, the imbalance of the funding between HEIs and schools remained seriously problematic and always threatened the sustainability of the project. The consequent implied threat to the overall funding of PD was one to which she was resigned:

We always knew right from the start that there wasn’t necessarily a commitment to anything beyond the first cohort. We knew that, we all went in with our eyes open. PL1

4.9 Programme leader (PL2)

Programme Leader PL2, who was referred to obliquely, early in this chapter, by the Executive Director of the project (O1) as the best advocate for the idea of an MBA who ‘was very happy to go out there and promote it with colleagues’, confirmed that his particular

'history of working on stuff' proved useful to the TDA in promoting its preference for this type of qualification. Indeed, he had met with Brian Follett, the then Chairman of the TDA and a strong advocate of an MBA for teachers, in 2009 in order to discuss how this might be realised. Further, he was commissioned, together with two leading academics, David Leat and Hazel Haggart, to advise on what 'coach mentoring involves, basically what they were supposed to be doing'. Although not a qualified teacher, with his business school background, he regarded himself as 'equipped with experience and confidence in looking at big complex programs, trying to work out where the issues were and then mobilising teams of people'.

Of his meeting with Brian Follett, he said:

I went to have a chat with him, and we had exactly that conversation, this is about it being an MBA. I mentioned to him about my experience of MBAs and stuff like that which went down quite well. I had not met the guy before, but he was talking about the clinical model, of teacher professional development. He likened it to that, so that gave me quite a few clues as to what is going on. I think one of the other things I had developed over previous experience, was a capacity to get a sense of what is not clear yet, what is open for discussion and what is open for influencing. What is the kind of givens we have got to work inside, and what are the things that we can control ourselves. PL2

One of the salient 'givens', also discussed by O4, was the necessity to consult with the 'social partners', WAMG, who were 'kind of like knitting with boxing gloves on... they didn't have a bloody clue about it'. As could be expected, the social partners – the unions – were concerned to safeguard the interests of their members, particularly with regard to what terms and conditions would apply to the school-based coaches. Arguably, the reason that they did not have a clue lay in the fact that, as others reported in their interviews, the coaching element was fraught with problems, both of definition and of detail at that time. Philosophically, this element formed the corollary of the fundamental 'given' that the MTL was designed to be school-centric and run by the school with the MTL coaches having a significant input to it. That was manifested in how judgments were made, especially in terms of how the financial models were prepared, such that the bulk of the money for development was allocated to the schools.

PL2 expressed no doubt that that the government wanted a Masters that was different, and that was not controlled by the HEIs. It presented, he said, ‘a right in your face challenge to universities’:

For two reasons, one is a small one, which is the use of ten and twenty credit modules, which are used in some institutions, but the norm definitely is thirty. The most profound one is splitting the typical dissertation into two thirties; which personally I have no problem with whatsoever. But in terms of validation, and in terms of context dissertations, that is explicitly designed to say to the universities, ‘You are not fully in charge of this; this is a different ball game’. PL2

Personally, he felt that he had an advantage over many of his university-based colleagues working with the model, because he did not feel ‘hooked into this concept of the 60 credit dissertation’, nor were his intellectual or professional sensibilities affronted, as were those of others at the time. In some respects, he regarded himself as a go-between who could mediate and reconcile the views of the TDA and the HEIs. This entailed what he described as ‘a fair amount of behind closed-door conversations with TDA colleagues’ who needed to be assured that the universities were not being ‘bolshie, or defensive’:

One of the challenges in the role I ended up taking...was trying to make sense of what the TDA was wanting and trying to inform them as much as possible that the response from the HEIs wasn’t about us being pedantically defensive on a particular academic model. Part of it was some of the rules that we had to follow to avoid QAA collaboratives, which would have killed it stone dead. They were really pushing its limits, and were reasonably successful in that, but to actually be able to achieve that, to build it in over a period of time a tremendous amount of trust from both sides. HEI colleagues trusted me to go into those kinds of conversations and feedback, legitimate information such that the TDA, wouldn’t view me as, ‘Well he would say that, wouldn’t he?’ PL2

PL2 considered that the MTL ‘was a fair achievement to do it in the timescale, especially in view of the fact that the TDA repeatedly changed things, and in light of some fundamental weaknesses which were typified by pattern fail, the constraints of a national model, and the role of coaches which was wholly new. There was a lack of understanding of the complexity

of the task ahead, and a misjudgement in thinking that reliable information could be obtained from local authorities, such as identifying the National Challenge schools. More so, the TDA were totally naïve about the degree to which they could force schools to fully engage with the MTL: for example, they would not ‘bite the bullet’ of what would be the legal status of the partnership agreement between the school and the HEI:

So I would say, what was the greatest constraint, was the role of a third party, only informed by the second party, and no direct contact with the first party. If the first party is the university, the second party the TDA, the third WAMG. That is a model that doesn’t bloody work. You have also got the DFE floating round in there as well. PL1

4.10 Emergent Themes

A number of clear themes emerge from these elite interviews, some of which will be discussed in the next chapter. They represent either a direct response to interview questions or arise from respondents’ unsolicited observations. To varying degrees, they are:

- Ideology – neoliberal v social democratic dialectic - Producer-capture
- Funding
- MBA
- School-based Coaching
- Organisation – target groups, funding
- MTL and link with teaching and pupil attainment
- Target Groups – national Challenge, NQTs
- Professional development
- Problematic communication
- Structural issues – dissertation, classification, modularity

Chapter 5 Elites: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Whilst the main research question focussed on the primary aims of the MTL which were to effect an improvement in teaching and thereby to raise attainment, one of the two implicit sub-questions permeate the discussions with the elite interviewees. This concerns the extent to which the MTL design and structure provides an appropriate model for the future development of an all-Masters teaching profession. It also questions the rationale and, indeed, the coherence of the model. To this end, the questions addressed both the respondents' understanding of the theoretical basis for the model and, importantly, the basic elements that were put in place by the TDA for its development and introduction. Accepting that political imperatives drive education, ideological differences are evident in some responses: there are those who advocate a free-market approach to education which is described, often pejoratively by opponents, as 'neoliberal'; there are others who adopt what may be described as a social democratic approach. This dualism is evident, to varying degrees, in the TDA responses on the one hand and those of the HEIs on the other and is best exemplified in one of the findings: the notion of 'producer capture'. This and other findings that are discussed in this chapter can only be provisional at this point: they centre on the emergent themes which were identified in the previous chapter (Section 4.10)

Other findings are discussed in Chapters 6 - 8. These draw on the questionnaire and the discussions with MTL participants and coaches. They include:

- Evidence from research on teacher professionalism and professional development
- MTL and link with teaching quality and pupil attainment

5.2 Ideology and producer capture

Matthew Taylor (2008), Chief Executive of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) in the United Kingdom, and sometime Chief Adviser on Political Strategy to Tony Blair, describes 'producer capture' as:

... one of the key concepts imported by New Labour from the nostrums of neoliberal economics. It describes the process whereby the goals of an organisation reflect the interests and prejudices of its employees (the producers)

rather than those it is supposed to serve (the consumers, customers or citizens). More precisely, given that workers in a customer-friendly organisation will see their own interests served by serving the customer, capture is evident when producer interests are not aligned with those of the consumer and it is the former that predominate’.

This is the charge levelled at the universities who, in the view of several of the respondents had ‘cornered’ (PPS), or ‘cartelised’ in ‘an inspired manoeuvre’ the MTL (01); for BMI, it epitomised the TDA’s – and hence the government’s - ‘instinctive fear of producer capture’. Some of the HEI respondents dismiss what they consider to be a market oriented ideology where ‘teachers don’t matter much’ (PoE). Nonetheless, the view of PPS is that ministers of both political persuasions have, by virtue of their elected office, a right to assert their view regardless of any evidence to the contrary, that they want ‘teacher education to be largely driven at school level’. What can be construed from such countervailing, indeed seemingly paranoid, perceptions – a mild form of what psychiatrists term ‘oppositional defiant disorder’ - is that they do not provide an optimistic basis for the kind of co-operative enterprise that all concerned claim to want to achieve. One of the ironies of this notion of producer capture by the universities is pointed up by Thrupp and Willmott (2003) who argue that many educational authors are themselves ‘textual apologists’ who may outwardly present a social democratic posture but whose writing suggests a tacit acceptance of a neoliberal agenda. Given the seeming impossibility of overcoming this ideological impasse it may be wise for all concerned to embrace Lawton’s desideratum, referred to in Chapter 2, that ‘the way towards a new consensus will be not to ignore political/ideological differences but to recognise their existence whilst trying to get beyond them’. Such an approach, as argued by Wilkin in the same chapter, would enable a ‘mutually beneficial dialogue’ to take place between all concerned and thus would avoid the seeming inevitability of conflict.

5.3 The McKinsey effect

Regardless of the various antithetical views of McKinsey which are discussed in Chapter 2, this research suggests the need for HEIs to reach an accommodation between academic theory which is more often than not based on research and the practical desiderata of training (or, if they prefer the term, ‘educating’) teachers. Therefore, since the purse strings are held by government, it would seem prudent for them to adopt a more conciliatory stance than is

suggested by the often contentious responses from both sides reported in Chapter 4. To adapt Lyndon Johnson's famous observation concerning J. Edgar Hoover's seemingly unassailable power, it would be better if government were 'inside the HEI tent' – a point which is returned to in the final chapter.

5.4 School-based coaching – a fundamental concept

All the elite respondents acknowledged that the concept of the school-based coach was a fundamental concept that would underpin and guarantee the success of the MTL. Indeed, O1 expressed this very clearly before the programme was launched in his submission to the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee, as reported in Chapter 2. Despite this optimism, most of those interviewed conceded that it was, ironically, the least well developed aspect of the envisaged programme. O2 explained this in terms of a lack of time to meet 'over-ambitious' targets, whereas O4, who was responsible for the coaching, attributed it to 'a huge vacuum in terms of policy knowledge and expectation' which was compounded by the unforeseen difficulties centred on, initially the Workforce Agreement and then on the unresolved question of who was to be responsible for coach training – HEIs, LAs or a separate contractor. Additionally, and arguably more seriously, O4 opined that to task National Challenge schools with the responsibility to deliver the MTL through a sophisticated coaching system when their priorities for whole-school improvement lay elsewhere was, at best, ill-advised. It was on this latter point that one of the TDA Board Members (BM1) recognised that this, among other things, amounted to such issues being 'undercooked': not adequately explored and resolved before the launch of the programme. However, the Executive Director (O1) was less critical of the programme per se, preferring to see the weakness of the coaching strategy as due to a lack of commitment from some National Challenge school headteachers. On the other hand, he did consider that this aspect of the proposed provision was 'fraught'. Similarly, O2 laid the blame on the HEIs in that they initially failed to understand the nature of the MTL and they seemed to him to be engaged in a 'head-butting competition'. Whilst conceding that the programme had developed in fits and starts, he remained confident that, given time to consolidate, it would emerge as a positive contribution to teachers' professional development.

It is evident that that the TDA had no clear strategy for the development of the coaching element: at best its introduction was inept, partly because the original intention to contract out

the coach training was not realised and, as a consequence, it was belatedly imposed on the HEIs who had insufficient time to develop an appropriate model. Such an appropriate model would need to be derived from a clear understanding of what the role of the coach required and there is little evidence of that, despite the literature offering some clear guidance on which to build, as described in Chapter 2. It also explains why the school-based coaches who formed a part of this research appeared to have only a limited understanding of their role, as discussed further in Chapter 7. In PO1's opinion, if the TDA had consulted with school heads from the outset in order to achieve at least a practical working model for coaching, much of the 'bedevilment' and the heads seeming lack of enthusiasm for the project as a whole could have been pre-empted. Given that 30 million pounds was allocated to the MTL in its first year and the bulk of it to schools, the absence of a clear strategy and a development plan were serious deficiencies that did not auger well for its sustainability. If it were the case that the TDA was worried about the quality of PD in schools, as reported in Chapter 2, then this lack of rigour on their own part, as exemplified in the coaching debacle, amounted to a failure to address such worries.

5.5 Structural issues – dissertation, modularity, classification

Alongside the major concern about the coaching, there were several structural issues surrounding the MTL about which there were mixed messages from the TDA or different interpretations from the HEIs. They remained unresolved. Some HEIs regretted the lack of what they viewed as a conventional dissertation, whereas others, such as PL2, preferred the two 30 credit modules which, in his view amounted to a dissertation, though was not expressly referred to as such. O1, the Executive Director, echoed this view on the grounds that the dissertation was an old-fashioned concept which was out of step with what he considered teachers wanted as a professional qualification:

It was just that notion that universities had this very old fashioned view about what a Masters programme was about: a Masters is a preparation for doing a doctorate...O1

O2 concurred with this while emphasising that the TDA was encouraging different forms of assessment, while not precluding a dissertation. Similarly, O3 stressed that compromises on matters such as this had to be reached in order to overcome variability of provision across

HEIs and to ensure national coherence and ‘portability’. O3’s argument for the need for HEIs to compromise in order to meet national requirements applied to the decision that the MTL be an unclassified award. This decision, which she maintained had been agreed at a meeting of the Programme and Content Development Working Group, was that ‘MTL is to be conferred as a ‘pass/fail’ award with no distinction. There is no in-built provision to enrol on, or to gain, interim or exit awards’. This proved to be a stumbling block in several university validations and supports O2’s comment that decisions made at these meetings were supposed to be binding, but were often either ignored or contested by the universities. Some failed to fully appreciate that in order to create a national, work-based qualification that was portable across all universities concessions had to be made and a binding consensus achieved. Despite this, she maintained that in the circumstances it was ‘pretty phenomenal’ that ‘some sort of agreement’ was reached to ease these tensions.

Since O3, together with her colleague O4, was actively involved in the joint development of the MTL and working closely with the HEIs in a way that the other officials were not, there is no evidence to question the integrity of her position. What it points to is the need for HEIs to look critically at their own collaborative systems, such as validation in this case, to ensure that they are sufficiently robust and flexible to adapt to the political demands to which they are unavoidably subject. Equally, those who act on behalf of government need to be more mindful of the complexity of universities and their innate instinct to question policy initiatives in the light of theory and research, even if it renders them open to the charge of being, in the words of O1, ‘not necessarily the hotbeds of innovation’ and ‘the residues of conservatism’.

5.6 Organisational issues: target groups and funding

It almost goes without saying that most of the respondents saw several organisational issues as problematic. Their concern is also reflected in some of the literature that relates specifically to the MTL (Cordingley et al. (2005); Machin & Vernoit, 2010b; Reeves (2007)) : National Challenge schools, it is argued, are burdened enough with the demands on staff to meet improvement targets, often in the teeth of staffing shortages. Heads also considered that newly qualified teachers had enough pressure on them in their second year of teaching without, as they saw it, the added burden of a Masters, however laudable the intention might be. Offering release time for them would also add to a school’s staffing problems, notwithstanding the considerable demand for one or several coaches, to be diverted from

pressing school improvement responsibilities. PoE's reference to a 'double-whammy' in the previous chapter articulates his view of the folly of targeting inexperienced teachers in challenging schools. Most of the elite respondents, in hindsight, also thought that the target groups, including the nine government office regions that were designated for the dissemination of the MTL were not fit for purpose. Although conceding the point, O1 explained it in terms of 'it's what ministers wanted to do'. For his part, he accepted that it had been a mistake, in particular to direct the project through the government regions: rather, the TDA should have chosen 'one high performing provider, who could deliver the programme in that particular region'. As it was, he regretted that some HEIs and their representative, the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) had hijacked the MTL, as referred to in Chapter 4, and forced the TDA to go in a direction they had not intended: 'because they presented a coherent picture of how they would cover MTL across the region, we went with it'. O1 grudgingly acknowledged that this was 'an inspired manoeuvre'. This exemplifies one of the refrains of this research: that had the TDA been less wary and more mindful of the HEIs, such an outcome could have been avoided. With this in mind one of the Programme Leaders (PL1) suggested the need for a pragmatic, 'elastic' view of how governments operate in this respect, as referred to earlier (Section 4.8).

One of the TDA Board members (BM1) also adopted a wider view in that he understood the funding policy in terms of the TDA's anxiety about producer capture. They were, he argued, reluctant to hand contracts for MTL to regional consortia that included all HEI's in the region. They thought that was giving them the status quo, and that was not what they wanted: they wanted to create something that was different - the prospect of a publicly funded Masters degree. O3 saw the issue of funding as one of partnership: a definition of partnership should have been worked out before the bids went in since discussions about funding had traditionally always favoured universities and, as such, had been problematic. Although there is no evidence to support her view – rather the contrary – she maintained that it was 'up to the consortia to have worked out the divvying up and the distribution of funds according to the roles that were asked':

This wasn't about HEIs calling the shots, this was about a totally new model of working and it was bound to have a bit of teething problems but it seemed to me

absolutely right and proper and the work - if you sorted out everybody's roles, then the money should follow the activity. O3

Despite O3's understanding, it is clear that, as a pilot, the funding was not intended to be evenly balanced between schools and HEIs. BM1 construed the HEIs' situation in terms of what he described as 'the danger of not being on that train, outweighs the danger of being on the train'. HEIs, although unhappy with the existing funding arrangements, were wise to speculate that if the outcome of the pilot were to lead to a fully publicly funded Masters with entitlement for all, then it would open up a potentially very large market.

At the beginning of this chapter, and elsewhere in this thesis, reference has been made to the ideological dimension of social policy which, with regard to the funding for the MTL, is summed up in the response from the Permanent Secretary for Education (PPS) who pointed out that funding is one of most significant levers that politicians have at their disposal and that by 'shifting the money' they can make it more difficult for HEIs. Whilst he did not believe that there was any 'dark master plan' to emasculate HEIs, he held that the funding of the MTL represented a funding approach that was consistent with the government's belief that schools should have a greater and more prominent role in teacher professional development.

5.7 Communication

Manifestly, there were serious problems of communication between the various 'partners' in the project, some of which arose from entrenched attitudes which were typified by an 'us-and-them' stance from both the TDA and HEI respondents respectively. On the one hand, there was exasperation from the TDA that the universities could not adapt to change, exemplified by the Executive Director, as reported earlier. On the other hand was the derisive remark from the Professor of Education, quoted in Section 4.7, that the MTL was a product of 'in an essentially neoliberal ideology, teachers don't matter much actually'. Other problems arose from the sheer complexity of the task of introducing and developing such an innovative programme, not least in gaining an immediate and positive response from what PPS described as 'the warm embrace of the HE quality assurance procedures killing something that was meant to be generally innovative and quite different' (Section 3.7). There were also failures by the TDA to communicate successfully with headteachers about the purpose of the MTL, as

a consequence of which, it is argued, the take-up proved disappointing and, perhaps worse, the role of the school-based coach was not clearly understood. Misunderstandings about structural matters, such as a dissertation, modularity and classification, as discussed in Section 5.5, remained unresolved, despite TDA protestations to the contrary. As conceded by the TDA, the idea of developing the MTL through the conduit of government office regions was a mistake, not least because some were unwieldy but also because they did not offer an effective two-way channel for communication and quality assurance. Fundamentally, the problem of communication lay in the lack of time: as acknowledged by the TDA Programme Director (O2), the MTL was ‘over ambitious’ and required ‘a greater length of time’.

5.8 Concluding comments

It seems plain from the conflicting views of those at the highest level of policy development and implementation that the Masters in Teaching and Learning did, indeed, leave in its trail ‘an undercooked set of issues’ which bedevilled it throughout the planning stage. Setting aside the wider vision of a higher qualification for all teachers that would improve pedagogy and raise attainment, there were significant problems of planning and communication that enfeebled it from the outset. The most significant was the concept of the school-based coach that was deemed central to the idea of this new Masters, yet was not thought through to the extent that it was secure. This point will be discussed further from the perspective of the participants and coaches in Chapter 7. Communication, too, was poor, partly because it stemmed from an uneasy relationship between the TDA and the HEIs. There were instances where university representatives were signed up, but found difficulties with their own university; there were complexities with university systems around validation which delayed concerted development; and there were unforeseen problems presented by university and TDA staff turnover. Added to this, although there was a strong sense of partnership between the TDA and the HEI representatives at the various programme development meetings, as reported by O3, there was a residue of mistrust which was evident in some of the disparaging comments that were made, particularly about the HEIs’ seeming reluctance to share the MTL vision. Chapter 6 will seek to ascertain whether these interim findings are substantiated by the participating teachers and their coaches.

Chapter 6 Participant Questionnaire

6.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the outcomes of Strand 2 of the research the details of which are described in Chapter 3. It first addresses the questionnaire responses from the MTL participant teachers (Cohort 1) alongside responses to the same questionnaire from teachers who were following a conventional in-service Masters degree (Cohort 2). Chapter 7 will then similarly address the responses elicited through the teacher participant conversations and the school-based coach interviews (Strand 3) in order to establish the degree of consistency across the written and spoken elements. Chapter 8 will then take account of the conclusions and insights drawn from the elite interviews (Strand 1), discussed in Chapter 5, to ascertain the extent to which the aims and intentions of educational policy makers accord with practice as perceived by teachers and theorised by academics.

6.2 Questionnaire (Appendix 6)

The questionnaire seeks responses to the research questions which address the impact of the MTL on first, teaching and second, learning as perceived by the students, generally referred to as participants, undertaking it. Any such impact is compared with the responses from Cohort 2 who are drawn from a conventional in-service MA for teachers. The statements on which responses are sought are based on both the research question and the aims of the MTL. Where reference is made to individual respondents pseudonyms are used. As the methodological approach is described in Chapter 3, the purpose at this point is to present and describe both the questionnaire quantitative outcomes, expressed through SPSS, and then, alongside the statistical data, to draw on the comments which were volunteered by the respondents in order to ascertain both the degree of consistency between these two components and to illuminate some of the views behind the figures. Intuitively, since all completed the quantitative requirements of the questionnaire and a large percentage made comments following each statement, it seemed likely from the outset that there would be a robust relationship between the two elements. In the event, such a positive relationship did indeed emerge from the quantitative data, which yielded no significant differences between the two cohorts, with the exception of statements concerning self-esteem and access to on-line learning resources (VLE). The statement regarding the effectiveness of coaching also

proved significant, but since it applied only to the MTL cohort it cannot be counted for comparison across both cohorts, despite other evidence presented in this thesis.

Levels of statistical significance for the difference between the MTL and MA cohorts was calculated using the Chi Square statistic and values are presented under each table. In almost all cases the differences were not statistically significant, indicating that any differences between the groups may have occurred by chance. The lack of statistical significance comes about in part because the sample sizes are relatively small, but also reflects that fact that the responses of the two groups were generally similar. In two instances the results were significant and this is indicated in the text. It should be noted that the use of significance tests in the present study is indicative not definitive as the assumptions underlying the use of such tests are not met in the research design. Strictly speaking, the participants should have been allocated across the two groups (MTL and MA) at random in order for Chi square tests to be used. In the present case, as very often in educational research, such random allocation was obviously unrealistic. However, they are included here to give a kind of benchmark of how the magnitude of any differences to occur between the two groups would be interpreted in a true experiment with random allocation. Finally, as previously stated (Section 3.8.3) ‘in order to allow for flexibility in respondent choice the full range of 1-5 was employed, although for ease and clarity of analysis three measures were used; 1-2, 3, and 4-5’. Even so, three ‘at a glance’ examples of the full range are presented as simple bar charts for ease of interpretation. The three chosen examples refer to Table 6.5 (personal and professional development), Table 6.7 (confidence and self-esteem) and Table 6.10 (pupil attainment), all three of which are salient features in the discussion and findings of this strand of the research.

6.3 Respondents’ backgrounds

In addition to the questionnaire per se, a range of background data about the individual questionnaire respondents was collected: title of course (MTL/MA), gender, age range, degree subject, degree class, training, teaching subject, years teaching, additional paid responsibility, assignment topics and grades. The purpose of this background information was, initially, to ascertain whether any of these elements contributed to an understanding of the quantitative data and the accompanying comments. In the event, it proved irrelevant, as can be seen from the data and comments below. 69 teachers responded to the questionnaire:

35 in the MTL cohort and 34 in the MA cohort. The slight imbalance in the numbers was fortuitous.

Table 6-1: participant gender

	MTL	MA	Total
Female count	23	27	50
% within course	65.7%	79.4%	72.5%
Male count	12	7	19
% within course	34.3%	20.6%	27.5%
Total count	35	34	69
% within both courses	100%	100%	100%

As can be seen in Table 6.1, of the total population, 50 were female (72.5) and 19 male (27.5), which is closely commensurate with the national gender distribution at secondary level (DfE, 2010). However, there is a greater representation of males in Cohort 1 which, although not considerable, may be explained, conjecturally, by the five who had either a PE or a business studies first degree. These two subjects were not represented in Cohort 2. The predominant number of female teachers is a well-known feature of all schools in the western world, so this comes as no surprise. Equally, the age range of Cohort 1, as shown in Table 6-2 on the next page, is lower than Cohort 2 by virtue of the MTL explicitly recruiting early career teachers, unlike the process required for a conventional degree. As would be expected, the age range of the combined cohorts is overwhelmingly that of teachers in the early and mid-points of their career.

Because, unusually, the offer of a place on the MTL programme was made as an ‘entitlement’ to teachers in National Challenge schools who met the basic requirements of being either an NQT or a teacher newly taking up a teaching and learning responsibility post (TLR) there was some scepticism, raised at the various preparatory meetings which the researcher attended, about the likely readiness and the academic potential of the intake in comparison to conventional MA applicants who would be expected to follow HEI admission procedures. For this reason the research determined to ascertain whether, based on a comparison of the background data, there was any *prima facie* justification for such misgivings.

Table 6-2: participant age range

	MTL		MA		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21 +	24	70.6	11	35.5	35	53.8
31+	6	17.6	12	38.7	18	27.7
41+	4	11.8	5	16.1	9	13.8
51+	0	0	3	9.7	3	4.6
Total	34	100	31	100	65	100

As can be seen from Table 6.2, there is little difference in the overall age of the both cohorts, although the younger age profile of the MTL can be explained by the entry requirement for this degree being for teachers in either their post induction year of teaching or for teachers taking on their first paid additional responsibilities.

Table 6.3 below offers no discernible evidence of a significant difference between the academic qualifications of the two cohorts, which dispels the notion, held by some either intuitively or implicitly, that the participants in the MTL were in this respect inferior to those undertaking the conventional MA. Such a view was based on the customary requirement of universities for selection procedures and criteria to determine students' academic potential for Masters-level study. Indeed, as of the Executive Director (O1) of the TDA observed in Chapter 4, this was an aspect of what he saw as 'producer capture' where some universities proved averse to changing their traditional admissions procedures. In recent times this longstanding convention of numerically classifying degrees, based on the so-called 'academic infrastructure', has been challenged on the grounds not only that it is 'not fit for purpose' in general, but that it is considered to be over-reliant on a dubious notion of comparability and is, above all, fundamentally unfair. The insistence on a non-classified MTL emanated from the contention that a national qualification for teachers needed to be comparable across all universities which, in the case of conventional degrees is plainly not the case. And beyond comparability in general there is a wider view that assessment practices across universities are inconsistent and in need of radical reform (Brown, 2010; Burgess & Universities, 2007). The argument is based on the contention that, by comparison with American universities, the British system of degree classification is characterised by failures at all levels, it may be a failure to achieve a First-Class degree or the failure to achieve an Upper Second-class degree, or even any other kind of failure, all the way down to the level of complete failure.

Table 6-3: MTL&MA participant degree subject

	MTL	MA		
	Count	Count	Total	Teaching
Art	1	0	1	Art
Business Studies (BS)	4	0	4	BS (2), Ma (1), DT (1)
Dance (Da)	1	0	1	Dance
Drama (Dr)	3	1	4	Dr (3), Primary (1)
Design Technology (DT)	1	1	2	DT (2)
Education (Ed)	1	8	9	Primary
Engineering (Eg)	0	1	1	ICT
English (En)	7	7	14	En (12), ML (1), Primary (1)
Geography (Ge)	2	3	5	Ge (3), Hu (1), Primary (1)
History (Hi)	2	3	5	Hi (2), SEN (1), Primary (2)
Humanities (Hu)	1	0	1	Humanities
Information Technology (IT)	1	0	1	Information Technology
Modern Languages (ML)	2	2	4	ML (2), Mu (1), Primary (1)
Music (Mu)	0	2	2	Mu (1), Primary (1)
Nutrition (Nu)	0	1	1	Ma (1)
Physical Education (PE)	5	0	5	Physical Education
Politics (Po)	0	1	1	Politics
Religious Education (RE)	1	1	2	RE (1), PE (1)
Science	1	1	2	Science
Social Studies (SS)	2	0	2	SS (1), Primary (1)
Undeclared	0	2	2	Unknown
Total	35	34	69	

Table 6.3 shows that the MTL features degree subjects which are not present for the MA: Art, Business Studies, Dance, Information Technology, Physical Education and Social Studies. Conversely, the MA features degree subjects which are not represented in the MTL: Engineering, Music and Nutrition. Beyond happenstance, there is no evidence to explain this aspect. What is clear is that 50 (72%) of the 69 combined cohorts are teaching to their first degree subjects of whom 17 (25%) are teaching in the primary phase, which presents an overwhelming 97% whose teaching is directly related to their initial degree. Of the MTL cohort, 83% are teaching to their degree subject in comparison with 59% of the MA.

All of the respondents completed the Likert scale section of the questionnaire and most wrote additional comments to either some or all of the statements. Overall, 799 comments were made providing an average of 30 comments per statement. Only 4 made no comments on all statements. Broadly, the comments are consistent with the scale ratings and are generally offered as exemplification and illumination. Although there is some variation, mainly in

terms of emphasis, between the responses from the two cohorts there is no significant difference overall, except for the responses to statement about coaching (S18), primarily because coaching was an explicit requirement and entitlement for Cohort 1 (MTL) but not so for Cohort 2 (MA). As described in Chapter 3, the statements (S) were categorised and coded in terms of the impact of each of the Masters programmes in the four broad dimensions or themes which are set out below.

1. the participant's personal and professional sense (S1-Q8)
2. the participant's teaching (S9-S11)
3. the participant's school (S12)
4. the participant's perception and evaluation of the programme (S13-S27)

As explained in Chapter 3, the results from the analysis of the questionnaire are mostly presented in a conflated three category version of the scale. However, for a few key tables greater detail is given and a graphical presentation added.

6.4 Theme 1 Personal and professional sense (S1-S8)

Both cohorts are mainly positive about the extent to which the Masters programme has helped them to understand their schools' improvement priorities (S1) – a key aim of both programmes. As can be seen from Table 6.4 below, 50.7% agree that their Masters study has had an impact on this aspect, 33.3% are not sure, and 15.9% disagree. Those who agree refer to scrutinizing school documentation, such as the School Improvement Plan (SIP), more closely; others emphasise particular aspects, such as 'experimenting with different strategies in my GCSE classes', 'researching vertical tutoring' and 'monitoring and tracking process at KS3'. There are some very subject-specific comments: for example, use of assessment in the English curriculum and implementation of new strategies; use of questioning in the classroom; use of independent learning strategies and critical thinking using P4C (philosophy for children); use of active teaching strategies in the classroom; use of peer and self-assessment to further learning; effective use of scaffolding and modelling.

Various references are made to increased professional awareness, reflective practice, subject knowledge, assessment, research, critical skills, problem-solving, planning and 'relevant theory'. The extent to which these aspects refer explicitly to each school's declared improvement priorities is impossible to ascertain, since many of them refer to the means by

which the respondents believe that their teaching will improve and, ipso facto, determine outcomes for their pupils. Here, Fiona, an English and drama teacher, sounds a note of caution:

My Masters is subject based and I would not consider my school's improvement priorities to be solely focused on my department, but more on numbers and gaining better overall grades in Ofsted, value added, etc. The correlation between good teaching and good results is often overlooked!

Table 6-4: helped me to understand my school's improvement priorities

S1		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	4	7	11
	% within course	11.4%	20.6%	15.9%
not sure	Count	15	8	23
	% within course	42.9%	23.5%	33.3%
agree	Count	16	19	35
	% within course	45.7%	55.9%	50.7%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (3.192); DF (2); Sig. Level (.203) - NS

Notably, the highest positive rating on the scale (89.9%) is related to the direct impact on the participants' personal and professional development (S2), as shown below. With the exception of only one respondent the 'personal' aspect of this statement seems to have been, perhaps unwittingly, conflated with the 'professional'. Respondents from Cohort 1 refer to improved pedagogical knowledge – in the words of one, 'the space to improve'. Another says that reading the theory and writing essays on different topics has made him reflect on his own practice and what he can do to improve his teaching.

Table 6-5 impacted directly on my personal and professional development

S2		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	2	0	2
	% within course	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%
not sure	Count	3	2	5
	% within course	8.6%	5.9%	7.2%
agree	Count	30	32	62
	% within course	85.7%	94.1%	89.9%
	Total Count	35	34	69
	% within course	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.250); DF (2); p = 0.325 – NS

Table 6.5 - at a glance

Cohort 1 (MTL)

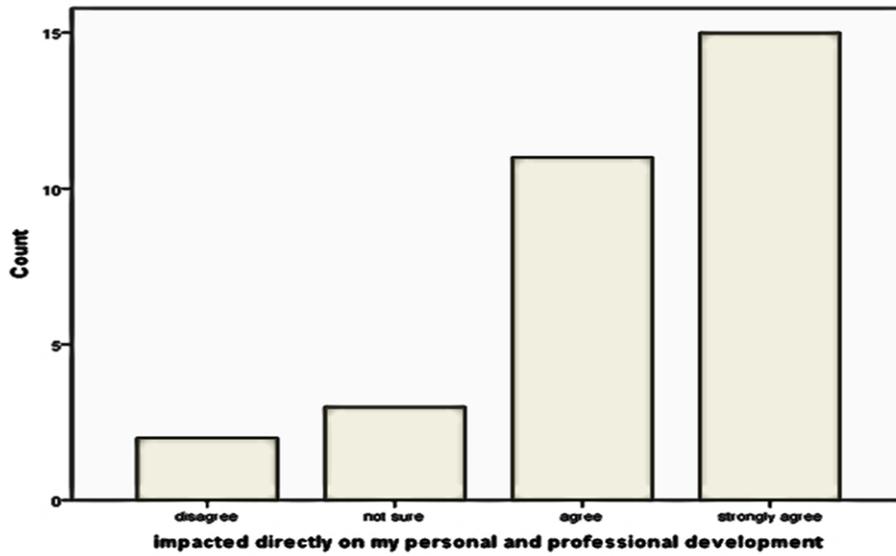


Table 6.5 - at a glance

Cohort 2 (MA)



The results in Table 6.5 on the previous page, show the very clear overall agreement of both MTL and MA participants that their course had impacted on their personal and professional development. This result is emphasised by the more detailed presentation in the ‘at a glance’ figures. In particular, it can be seen that the combined ‘Agree’ category in Table 6.5 is mostly made up of people saying that they ‘Strongly agree’ showing the strength of positive response. This presentation also shows that within the general positive evaluation the MA students are even more positive than the MTL with the only two negative responses from the MTL and an even higher level of ‘Strongly agree’ among the MA.

Influenced by the seminal work of Donald Schon (1983), ‘reflective practice’ is a phrase commonly used in teacher education which is, according to some, in danger of becoming a catch-all title for an ill-defined process (Bleakley, 1999). Even so, Jenny, a PE teacher (MTL), writes ‘I have relished the opportunity to kick-start my mental faculties’. Cohort 2 respondents report an even higher level of positive impact on them: the benefit of keeping up to date with the latest research; a greater need to develop collaboration, particularly through Action Research techniques; keeping up to date with ‘the bigger picture’; an improvement in practice and greater engagement.

As shown in Table 6.6 below, most respondents in both cohorts (78%) believe that they can identify improvement in their subject knowledge (S3). However, there is a difference, although not significant, between the cohorts: 68.6% of Cohort 1 (MTL) record a positive improvement compared with 88.2% of Cohort 2 (MA).

Table 6-6: increased my subject/pedagogical knowledge base

S3		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	5	3	8
	% within course	14.3%	8.8%	11.6%
not sure	Count	6	1	7
	% within course	17.1%	2.9%	10.1%
agree	Count	24	30	54
	% within course	68.6%	88.2%	78.3%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (4.725); DF (2); Sig. Level (.094) – NS

Where those who either disagree or are not sure may be partly explained by the apparent confusion, by some, over the distinction between subject knowledge per se and pedagogical

knowledge, as represented in Appendix 1, which refers to guidance offered by the TDA, circa 2005. Notwithstanding any putative definition, a clear majority consider that their subject knowledge has either increased or been enhanced during the period of their Masters study. Others make more nuanced responses, such as Shelley, an experienced English teacher:

So far the MTL has more reinforced and consolidated knowledge rather than increased it but as we begin to look in greater depth and with more focused it purpose at theories, developments and practice if plotted on a graph the knowledge is likely to incline steeply.

Those who are confident that their subject knowledge has increased refer to particular aspects, such as literacy, AfL (Assessment for Learning), other approaches to learning and dyslexia; several cite either directly or indirectly, enhanced pedagogical knowledge in terms of teaching approaches and styles. Notably, two participants refer specifically to gaps being filled in their subject knowledge that had not been addressed by their GTP training. Comments also include notions such as ‘moving out of my comfort zone’, ‘feeling on board with new practice’, ‘looking at teaching from a different angle’ and ‘having a better overall picture’.

Table 6-7: increased my confidence and self-esteem

S4		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	6	4	10
	% within course	17.1%	11.8%	14.5%
not sure	Count	11	2	13
	% within course	31.4%	5.9%	18.8%
agree	Count	18	28	46
	% within course	51.4%	82.4%	66.7%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (8.927); DF (2); Sig. Level (.012) – S

The confidence and self-esteem of all participants (S4) is 66.7% for the combined cohorts; however, there is a statistically significant difference between the cohorts. 82.4% Of the MA cohort in agreement with the statement contrasts with 51.4% of the MTL cohort. In this case the difference is such as to be very unlikely by chance and reflects a real difference between the MTL and the MA. This difference is also apparent in the comments proffered:

respondents in the MTL cohort are less forthcoming and briefer in their responses and some tend to emphasise the negative consequences of pursuing a Masters degree: for example, worries about academic writing and effect on health. The bar charts below re-affirm this significant difference between the two cohorts and, more to the point, resonate with the findings of the Seaborne Report in Chapter 2 (p.36) and the Tall Report, referred to later in this chapter (p.169).

Table 6.7 - at a glance

Cohort 1 (MTL)

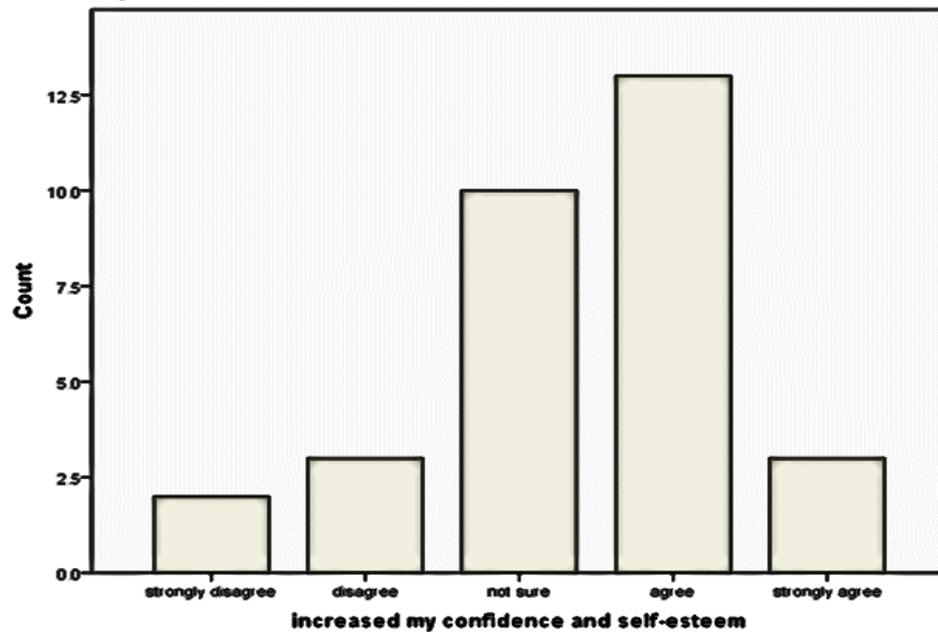
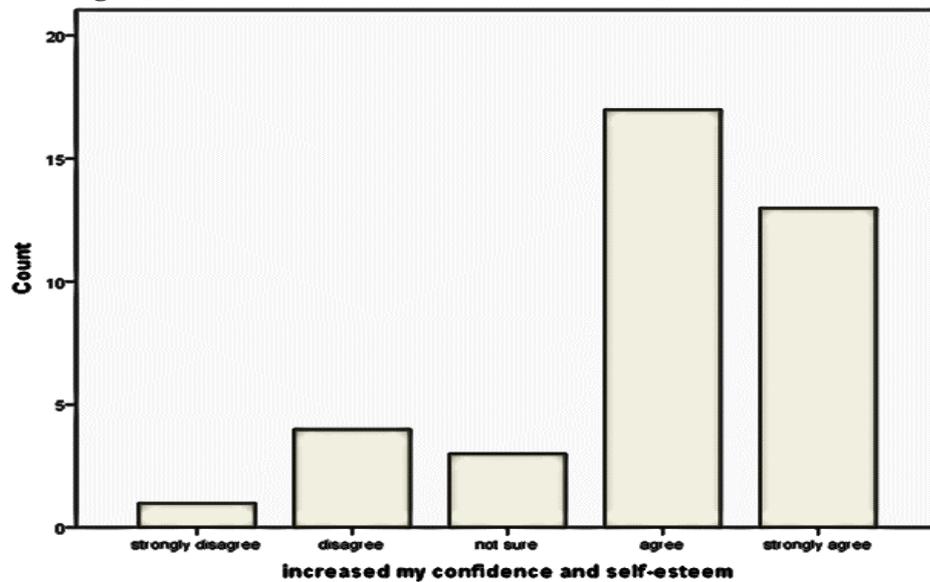


Table 6.7 - at a glance

Cohort 2 (MA)



The data presented in Table 6.7 on Confidence and Self Esteem is one of the very few comparisons between MTL and MA where the difference between the two groups is sufficiently large to reach statistical significance. These data have therefore been presented in more detail in the ‘at a glance’ graphs where the full range of categories is used. This presentation shows clearly how much more positive the MA participants are compared with the MTL participants. The MTL results are much less likely than the MA to be in the ‘Strongly agree’ category and are much more likely to be in the ‘Strongly disagree’ This shows that in addition to the overall more positive response from the MA the differences are particularly marked at the extremes of the scale.

Joe, an experienced teacher and MTL participant, writes cryptically, ‘I feel less confident with what I know now than before I started’. MA participants’ comments appear predominantly positive and their more extended comments feature such phrases as: ‘given me a sound grounding in understanding the link between theory and practice’; ‘feel really good about the habit of learning, enquiry and analysis’; ‘being up to date with the latest research very empowering’; ‘proud of what I have achieved to date’; and, ‘made me feel more confident professionally’. Again Fiona writes, ‘It helps me to feel confident that I have done enough to be better than my very bright A’ level students’. This difference in the responses may be attributable to the greater professional experience of the MA cohort and the insecurity felt by the beginning MTL teachers. More so, it suggests that teachers in lower achieving schools, who are under pressure to improve pupil attainment may, as a consequence, feel inadequate to the task, whereas their peers who work in schools where there is less urgency to raise standards may feel greater self-confidence. Such a causality dilemma – the chicken and egg – has existed since Aristotelian times: it raises the question whether teachers with high self-esteem find themselves in schools where they contribute to heightened organisational esteem and vice-versa.

The notion of a ‘sense of mission’ (S5) in teachers that an improvement in their teaching can have a positive impact on pupils and colleagues reflects resonates with the central question of this research: in essence, teacher aspirants often declare that they want to ‘make a difference’ and some carry that sense of mission or purpose well into their teaching career.

Table 6-8: increased my sense of mission that an improvement in my teaching can have a positive impact on pupils and colleagues

S5		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	5	1	6
	% within course	14.3%	2.9%	8.7%
not sure	Count	2	6	8
	% within course	5.7%	17.6%	11.6%
agree	Count	28	27	55
	% within course	80.0%	79.4%	79.7%
Total	Count	35	34	69
	% within course	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (4.671); DF (2); Sig. Level (.097) - NS

79.7% of the respondents, equally divided across both cohorts, agree with the above statement. The majority of the participants in this research do not differ in their belief that they can improve children's lives, regardless of whether they can produce 'hard' evidence to support it. Only one of the 35 MTL respondents feels it is too early to address this statement; the remainder, either directly or indirectly, comment that they believe they are having a positive influence on both pupils and colleagues by sharing practice and new ideas and thereby enhancing pupils' learning. Some hesitate to state categorically that they are putting their sense of mission into practice by, for example producing hard statistics, whilst others boldly assert that 'I have seen improvement in selected classes' or 'because they meet their target grades'. The MA participants, again, provide more considered and extended responses, three examples of which are:

- Reflection in/on practice is an area not explored before this course, which has led to improvements in the way I teach and led directly to a series of outstanding lesson observations. (Graham – History teacher).
- My close colleagues appreciate what I want to share. I fed back on what I had been studying in relation to ASDs at the time when the whole school was focused on this area. It did change my teaching practice and I do hope that it did have a positive impact on my students and continues to do so. (Barbara – Design Technology teacher).
- This was apparent in my assessment (essay) on raising achievement for low ability learners. I could see the improvement they made via their levels at the end of the assessment and also more qualitatively through their improved behaviour. (Veronica – English teacher).

Despite this, a cautionary note comes from one MA respondent:

Shame that what we learn can't or isn't always put into practice by SMT. (George – Modern languages teacher).

Table 6-9: improved the motivation of my pupils

S6		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	6	4	10
	% within course	17.6%	11.8%	14.7%
not sure	Count	11	11	22
	% within course	32.4%	32.4%	32.4%
agree	Count	17	19	36
	% within course	50.0%	55.9%	52.9%
Total Count		35	34	68
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (4.725); DF (2); Sig. Level (.094) - NS

Perhaps because motivation is an elusive concept, only half of the respondents (Table 6.9 above) considered that their Masters studies had improved it. This is an aspect where the voice of the pupils would have been illuminating (Section 8.1). Nevertheless, the teacher comments reveal the mixed responses. Two MTL participants, Shelley and Tracy, report:

- Specific series of lessons and especially in the approach to group work have clearly shown an improved motivation. For example, greater awareness in the stages of group cohesion has meant that I have been more patient and realistic about results allowing time for a more natural process to take place and therefore better results and increased motivation. (Shelley)
- The variety of modules has meant that the children have gained from many different resources and tried innovative ideas and ways of learning because of the MTL, which has increased their confidence and ability to learn. (Tracy)

Some claim that involving their pupils in their research increases motivation. MA participants are equally cautious about pupil motivation, which is summed up in 'I'd like to think so, but can't quantify'. How, indeed, is motivation measured? Certainly, the cumulative observation and reporting of it, both by teacher and taught, suggests a high

correlation with pupil attainment. (Avalos, 2011; Furrer and Skinner (2003); Hoyle, 2012) Skinner's concepts of 'relatedness' and 'engagement' chime in with the participants' reports of sharing their Masters experience with pupils:

The children involved in several of the projects loved that they were being singled out to help me and it definitely increased their motivation. (Jessica)

This was apparent in my assignment on raising achievement for low ability learners. I could see a significant improvement in the behaviour in what had been a previously difficult group with many SEN. (Veronica)

And:

Pupils have enjoyed being subject to the case studies I have undertaken and enjoyed the variations in lesson delivery. (Peter)

The link between motivation (S6) and attainment (S7) is reflected in the numerical responses which are in line with each other and very similar across both cohorts: for S6, 50.0% and 55.9% agree for the MTL and MA respectively, with an equal measure of uncertainty (32.4%). Similarly for S7, as can be seen from the two versions of Table 6.10 on the next page 56.7% and 51.4% agree for the MTL and MA respectively, and there is a similar measure of uncertainty with 36.7% (MTL) and 37.8% (MA), although neither cohort strongly disagrees. Despite this apparent caution, one respondent argues that if the strategies he uses to improve pupils' motivation work are effective, then it follows that they should have an impact on pupils' achievement. Others are cautiously sanguine:

I think so – but this one is not so easy to offer evidence for. My Poetic Language in Education project cultivated some extraordinary pieces of poetry from some students, but I am not certain if this was solely due to me and my methods. I can add, though, that learning about education at Masters level has definitely begun to make me a more approachable person and that I appear to cultivate very good relationships with my students. That is, working through the processes of the course has made me more disposed to the pedagogical and pastoral needs of my students. (Matthew – English teacher).

Table 6-10: improved the attainment of the pupils I teach

S7		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	2	4	6
	% within course	6.7%	10.8%	9.0%
not sure	Count	12	13	25
	% within course	36.7%	37.8%	37.3%
agree	Count	19	17	36
	% within course	56.7%	51.4%	53.7%
Total Count		33	34	67
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.803); DF (2); Sig. Level (.669) – NS

Table 6.10 - at a glance

Cohort 1 (MTL)

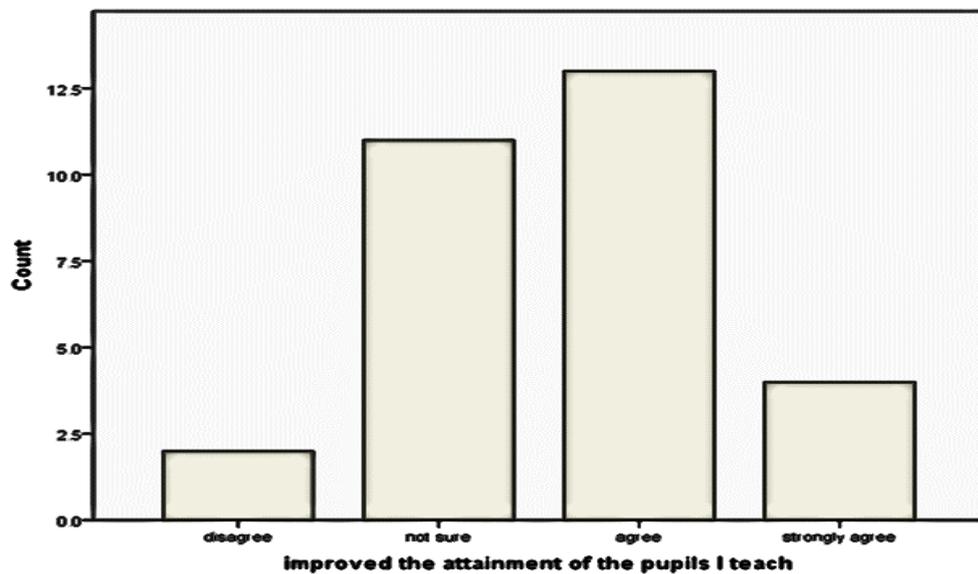
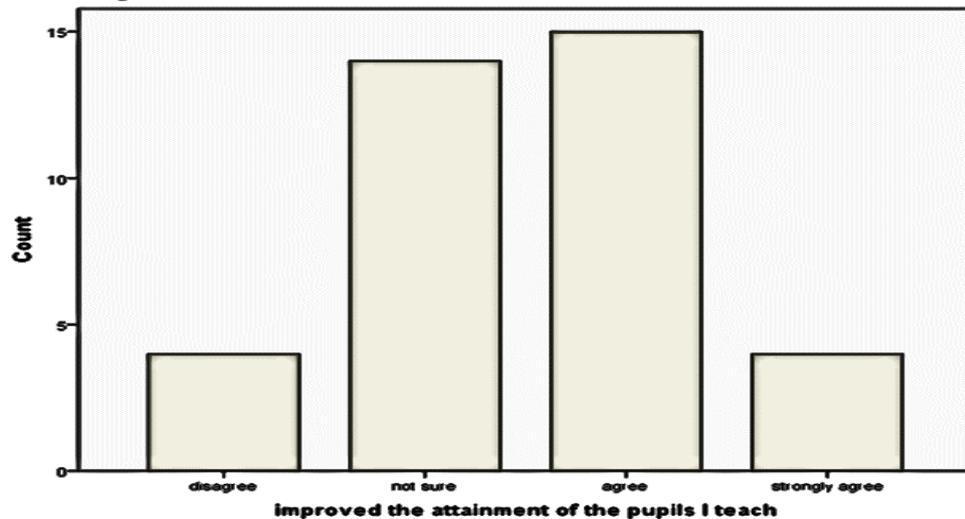


Table 6.10 - at a glance

Cohort 2 (MA)



The question on the perceived impact of Masters study on pupil attainment is a particularly interesting one and is considered in more detail at the end of this chapter. A comparison of the MTL and MA participants' responses is given graphically in the 'at a glance' figures on the preceding page. This shows that, as in the broad categories shown in Table 6.10, the full range of responses shows a very similar pattern across the two groups. The graphs also show that responses to this questions are, to some extent, tentative. Nearly all the responses are towards the middle of the range: no one said that they strongly disagreed that there had been an impact on attainment but, at the same time, almost no one said that they strongly agreed.

Citing evidence of improved pupil attainment (S8) produces the least number of comments (14) – seven from each of the cohorts – and a uniform measure of agreement in across both cohorts (Table 6.11). This raises again the question of what constitutes evidence: for example, whether it is framed in terms of pupils' test results or whether it can reasonably be measured in terms of their personal qualities and skills, disposition or potential. Equally, as can be seen from the table below, a further question is whether teachers' reports on their own teaching are as legitimate as those of inspectors or superiors.

Table 6-11: enabled me to cite evidence of improved pupil attainment

S8		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	6	6	12
	% within course	17.1%	19.4%	18.2%
not sure	Count	17	14	31
	% within course	48.6%	45.2%	47.0%
agree	Count	12	11	23
	% within course	34.3%	35.5%	34.8%
Total Count		36	31	66
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.092); DF (2); Sig. Level (.995) - NS

The cautionary approach, as expressed in the table, to either believing or asserting that the MTL has led or can lead to improved pupil attainment to some extent echoes the State of the Nation Study (2010) which, as reported in Chapter 2, concluded that there was little evidence to support this. Bandura's argument (1994) for the importance of self-efficacy in human agency provides sustenance for teachers' intuitive sense that, like the duck or elephant test, they know attainment when they see it. Reynolds goes further in his contention that there is

‘cast iron evidence’ that the High Reliability School programme ‘improved their academic performance by three times the rate of national improvement, with large numbers of schools literally ‘taking off’ in their performance’ (p.9). Despite this lone view, what is self-evident is the difficulty of showing what Soulsby and Swain (2003) refer to in their report (Section 2.3) as ‘demonstrable impact on pupils’ standards’ over such a short period as the MTL:

The demand for “demonstrable impact” on pupils’ standards is a sound aspiration, and providers are making some progress in ways of identifying it. However, within the timescale of a module or an award it would be unrealistic to expect all, or even most, participants to produce robust, measurable evidence of improved standards. The principle needs to be interpreted with reasonable latitude. Effects on school performance can be demonstrated, but typically over the longer term. (p.13)

6.5 Further commentary: Theme 1

In terms of a heightened personal and professional sense, most of the respondents declare that their Masters studies have had a positive impact. Notably, more of the MA participants say that their course has helped them to engage with their school’s improvement priorities. Similarly, whilst most of both cohorts consider that the Masters has served to develop their subject knowledge, more of the MA (78%) cohort see this as the case than those in the MTL cohort (63%). This suggests a shortcoming of the MTL where the modules are less overtly subject specific than those of the MA. It may also explain, as suggested earlier, the statistically significant greater confidence and self-esteem, born of wider experience, expressed by the MA participants. Uniformly, both cohorts believe that the Masters has given them a very strong sense that their teaching can improve to the advantage of their pupils. Equally, despite a consensus of uncertainty about pupil motivation and attainment, and in the teeth of what they think may be evidence beyond their own intuitive experience, over half of both cohorts maintain that they are making a positive difference, which is attributable, at least in part, to their Masters studies. Again, the MA cohort indicates a greater measure of confidence than is evident from the MTL cohort that there is a positive relationship between their Masters and pupil motivation.

6.6 Theme 2 Participant’s teaching (S9-S11)

The extent to which the Masters has impacted on teaching (S9) is much more clear cut than that on attainment where the overwhelming majority, over 80%, declare themselves to be more ‘effective practitioners’ as a consequence of either Masters programme: respondents repeatedly refer to reflective practice as a key component of this effect, together with increased confidence in their teaching. This confidence is buttressed by wider reading, an enhanced knowledge base, the ability to take risks, to experiment and to link theory to practice. In short,

My ability to use educational theory to inform my practice and vice-versa has been greatly enhanced. (Jason – ICT teacher)

Fewer feel confident enough to cite evidence to support their claims of improved teaching (S10) if judged by the reduced number of comments received: just over 50% claim they are able to do so. Even so, they cite positive feedback from pupils, observations by colleagues and departmental review. Barbara, a very articulate respondent writes:

...an OFSTED inspector who provided training for all school staff has rated me as good with elements of outstanding, citing knowledge of pupils in the form of records kept of ability and progress as the best she had ever seen. It has been a direct consequence of the rigour of looking for evidence which has been part of the MA Course and part of in-service training. (Barbara – D&T teacher)

Table 6-12: helped me to become a more effective practitioner

S9		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	3	1	4
	% within course	8.6%	2.9%	5.8%
not sure	Count	4	5	9
	% within course	11.4%	14.7%	13.0%
agree	Count	28	30	56
	% within course	80.0%	82.4%	81.2%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (1.097); DF (2); Sig. Level (.578) - NS

It is interesting, although expected, that many teachers, like Barbara, measure their effectiveness in terms of inspection criteria, since such criteria, however problematic they may seem, are fundamental to the perceived success of a school.

Table 6-13: enabled me to cite evidence of improved teaching

S10	Course		Total	
	MTL	MA		
disagree	Count	4	4	8
	% within course	11.8%	12.1%	11.9%
not sure	Count	8	13	21
	% within course	23.5%	39.4%	31.3%
agree	Count	22	16	38
	% within course	64.7%	48.5%	56.7%
	Total Count	34	33	67
	% within course	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.123); DF (2); Sig. Level (.346) - NS

One third of the respondents do not think they can provide evidence of improved teaching, which may explain why relatively few added comments on this statement. One said, ‘Proving this has not been my focus.’

Two thirds (68%) of the two cohorts maintain that the Masters degree has provided a useful link to their performance management (S11), as can be seen from Table 6-14 on the following page. Overall, less than 9% disagree. Of the 24 comments only 3 are negative. Most make an explicit reference to performance management, including ‘completing my Masters’. Béatrice, a French teacher, said:

One of my targets in my performance management is to increase boys’ attainment in MFL. Therefore, writing an essay on this topic was appropriate and useful. I have an excellent manager who, time allowing, invites me to share what I am studying or researching.

Another respondent, Sophie, a Design Technology teacher, noted that some of the targets tied into her ‘PM’ were met using some of the knowledge and strategies developed in the MTL. Julie, an English teacher, used her assignments and her MA dissertation as a further development target in different areas of teaching and learning.

Table 6-14: provided a useful link with my performance management

S11		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	5	1	6
	% within course	14.3%	2.9%	8.7%
not sure	Count	8	8	16
	% within course	22.9%	23.5%	23.2%
agree	Count	22	25	47
	% within course	62.9%	73.5%	68.1%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.844); DF (2); Sig. Level (.241) - NS

6.7 Further commentary: Theme 2

The conundrum presented by the questionnaire is that, despite their reservations about the extent to which both cohorts can provide evidence that the Masters offers them the potential to raise attainment, the great majority claim that it has contributed to making them more effective practitioners. The Halpin study (1990), referred to in Chapter 2, offers an answer in suggesting that teachers' views of the impact of PD on their practice are as valid as any other. Bandura addresses this seeming conundrum with his concept of 'proxy control' (1982) which explains why, as in this case, teachers may intuitively believe that they are effective practitioners, but balk at providing evidence for it because they have been, in recent times, conditioned to believe, or prefer to believe, that this is the role of 'proxy' external inspectors, such as Ofsted:

People are not averse to relinquishing control over events that affect their lives in order to free themselves of the performance demands and hazards that the exercise of control entails. Rather than seek personal controls they seek their security in proxy controls – wherein they can exert some influence over those who wield influence and power. Part of the price of proxy control is restriction of one's own

efficacy and a vulnerable security that rests on the competencies and favours of others. p.22

Such an explanation resonates with an Ofsted report (2006), the so-called ‘logical chain’ report, which concluded that ‘schools which had designed their PD effectively and integrated it with their improvement plans found that teaching and learning improved and standards rose’. The same report added:

Teachers who had been involved in PD that was carefully designed, for example to develop their competence in areas such as assessment or ICT, had made gains in their knowledge and understanding. This was beginning to be reflected in their teaching and in pupils’ learning. p.22

Since both the MTL and the school-based MA were conceived of as being overtly based on teachers’ efficacy the question of performance management is relevant to this theme of the questionnaire. Most of the respondents could see a ‘useful link’ between their Masters and their appraisal which relates predominantly to classroom practice.

6.8 Theme 3 Participant’s school (S12)

Half of the respondents think that their involvement in the Masters has raised the level of discourse about teaching and learning in their department or school. As can be seen from Table 6.15 below, 22% disagree and 27.5% are not sure.

Table 6-15: raised the level of discourse about teaching and learning in my department/school

S12		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	8	7	15
	% within course	22.9%	20.6	21.7%
not sure	Count	12	7	19
	% within course	34.3%	20.6%	27.5%
agree	Count	15	20	35
	% within course	42.9%	58.8%	50.7%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.083); DF (2); Sig. Level (.353) – NS

Although both degree programmes were conceived on the proposition that they would have a direct and explicit impact on schools, this is particularly pertinent to the MTL. However, fewer MTL participants offer comments on it. Of the few, only four cite examples of what they interpret as ‘impact’ which, in their understanding, refers mainly to discussion in the subject department. Half of the respondents think that their involvement in the Masters has raised the level of discourse about teaching and learning in their department or school. As can be seen from Table 6.15 below, 22% disagree and 27.5% are not sure. Although both degree programmes were conceived on the proposition that they would have a direct and explicit impact on schools, this is particularly pertinent to the MTL. However, fewer MTL participants offer comments on it. Of the few, only four cite examples of what they interpret as ‘impact’ which, in their understanding, refers mainly to discussion in the subject department.

The comments from the MA cohort, although fuller, are mixed. Several point to a positive impact on either their department or school, mainly through discussion, exemplified by Fiona:

My department is much more receptive to new ideas and keen to hear what ideas my Masters bring. I often get a focus in meetings to share new ideas / practice.

Some refer to practical outcomes, such as developing schemes of work, setting up an EAL focus group and ‘just submitted a new T&L strategy for discussion with senior leadership for next year’. Again, a similar number suggest a lack of interest from their colleagues:

Other teachers have not really been interested in what I was doing, beyond polite enquiry. (Louise)

And,

Negative view from staff – not keen on being ‘taught’ by a younger teacher.

6.9 Further commentary: Theme 3

The fact that more of the MA cohort report a positive impact of their studies on their department or school is not surprising, given their greater experience and professional responsibilities in comparison to the limitations of the MTL cohort. In terms of the Harland and Kinder conceptual framework (Section 2.4), it is argued that the final three components

are less evident in the responses because it is too early in the development of the participants in this study to draw a firm conclusion that their Masters has a direct impact on classroom practice in particular and school improvement in general. The Seaborne Review, whilst not addressing the specific issue of raising whole-school attainment, observed that the MTL was an appropriate vehicle for raising individual teachers' all round competence. The caveat to this is boldly stated in the State of the Nation Study (Chapter 2): that PD in schools as organisations tends not to be strategic and struggles to reconcile the competing development needs of individual teachers and whole-school improvement plans.

6.10 Theme 4 Participant's perception of the programme (S13-S27)

The remaining statements, 13-27 address the impact of studying for a Masters degree through the teachers' evaluation and perception of the programme: for example, the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, problems encountered, personal misgivings and the support offered by both school and HEI. The great majority of participants in both cohorts do not consider that the requirement to undertake some school-based research is a problem (S13).

Table 6-16: the requirement to undertake some school-based research has not been a problem

S13		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	4	4	8
	% within course	11.4%	12.9%	12.1%
not sure	Count	7	1	8
	% within course	20.0%	3.2%	12.1%
agree	Count	24	26	50
	% within course	68.6%	83.9%	75.8%
Total Count		35	31	66
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (4.354); DF (2); Sig. Level (.113) - NS

Of the additional comments on this point, only one of the seven from the MTL cohort expresses a contrary view, citing the school's reluctance to 'give time off'. This problem of time is echoed in the many responses from the MA cohort and is roundly reinforced later in the comment on S22 where nearly 70% of all participants see it as a troubling issue.

As with the MTL responses, the MA cohort presents a picture of positive support from the schools, despite the exigencies of planning, teaching and assessing. As Becca observes:

Before I came to my new school I was being welcomed with open arms as a researcher as well as a teacher. Unfortunately, when I got here things all changed...It is quite taxing try to carry out my day to day tasks and commitments while at the same time trying to generate ideas for a new project.

Two thirds of all respondents on the Likert Scale find the writing of required assignments ‘manageable’ (S14) and this is reflected in the comments, but often with reservations. Some speak of ‘hang-ups’ or ‘getting back into the habit of writing’; others refer to the pressure of deadlines that clash with school demands, as typified in desperate terms by one respondent, Ann:

I don’t think I would have wanted to have undertaken the MA if I hadn’t already gained a year of credits through my PGCE course. It does take up a lot of time that I don’t really have spare! I have just been through Ofsted and am ‘running on empty’ at the mo – in fact I’m so run-down that I am off sick today!

Table 6-17: I have found the writing of the required assignments manageable

S14		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	12	8	20
	% within course	34.3%	23.5%	29.0%
not sure	Count	6	2	8
	% within course	17.1%	5.9%	11.6%
agree	Count	17	24	41
	% within course	48.6%	70.6%	59.4%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (3.981); DF (2); Sig. Level (.137) - NS

Yet others cite the challenges presented by reading the literature, family commitments and, repeatedly, the lack of time. In this light, one cheery optimist writes that she has still not finished her MA and ‘only has my dissertation left to write but no time to research it alongside my job...6 years and counting!’

Despite this mixed picture, over 80% or all respondents consider that the assessment tasks are appropriate to work-based/practitioner learning (S15) – the second highest positive rating, next to 89% for the impact on personal and professional development (S2):

Table 6-18: The assessment tasks are appropriate to work-based/practitioner learning

S15		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	1	2	3
	% within course	2.9%	5.9%	4.3%
not sure	Count	7	3	10
	% within course	20.0%	8.8%	14.5%
agree	Count	27	29	56
	% within course	77.1%	85.3%	81.2%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (1.991); DF (2); Sig. Level (.370) - NS

Most stress the relevance of the topics to their practice, to their schools' priorities and to their personal and professional goals. Some refer to 'suitable rigour', a 'free rein' and the relevance of research to teaching, appositely summed up by Mark, an English teacher:

I have written a totally theory driven essay, which continues to motivate me. I have also written essays, which involved some form of classroom research as well as elements of theory. All of the essays I have written so far are proving to be a foundation, to which I constantly return as source and inspiration for where I think I am currently progressing.

Amid all the responses Miles is only one moderately dissenting MA voice:

Given my NQT status and the availability of staff and courses, I found some repetition and an over emphasis on how to work. I took two very similar modules because they were the only choices and the module on Gifted and Talented was withdrawn. I thought the standard was variable, one excellent and inspiring, one very difficult but useful and one weak, but there was something of value in them all.

Table 6-19 on the following page shows that a similarly high percentage (77.9%) indicates approval of university tutorials:

Table 6-19: the termly university tutorials have been helpful

S16		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	3	3	6
	% within course	8.8%	8.8%	8.8%
not sure	Count	5	4	9
	% within course	14.7%	11.8%	13.2%
agree	Count	26	27	53
	% within course	76.5%	79.4%	77.9%
	Total Count	34	34	68
	% within course	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.130); DF (2); Sig. Level (.937) - NS

Typical comments include reference to the tutor being helpful and supportive, ‘a constant source of positive reinforcement and guidance’ and ‘making the whole process really worthwhile, meaningful and inspirational’. Even so, 8.8% overall were not helped by university tutorials.

The role of the school-based coach (S17) is crucial for the MTL as the coach forms a pivotal part of the programme provision and is, therefore, fundamental to any measure of its success. The relationship between the school-based coach and the HEI tutor is spelled out in ‘The Masters in Teaching and Learning National Training Framework for the school-based coach – Year 1’ (2009a) as follows:

The HEI tutor works from a regional, national and international perspective, supporting the M-level evidencing of MTL participant’s learning and assessing progress against M-level criteria. The school-based coach works from a school and local perspective, supporting the improvement of the MTL participant’s professional practice.

The importance of the school-based coach was also strongly underlined in the TDA Strategic Plan (2008) and in subsequent guidelines, such as the Coaching Strategy (2009b). In view of

this, the responses to S17/18 are illuminating, as shown in the following two tables (6-20 and 6-21):

Table 6-20: the school-based coach sessions have been helpful

S17	MTL	
	Count	%
Disagree	10	32.3%
not sure	5	16.1%
Agree	16	51.6%
Total	31	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (6.113); DF (2); Sig. Level (.047) - NS

The requirement on schools to nominate a school-based coach applied only to the MTL cohort, although its implications for other conventional Masters programmes will be considered later. Of the MTL cohort, 51.6% rate their coaching sessions positively, whereas over 32% hold a negative view and 16% are not sure. Positive comments, which are generally brief, refer to feeling supported, maintaining focus, regular meetings and setting deadlines. Some of the comments are more explanatory or apologetic than negative:

- I have not had any due to capacity issues. (Maureen)
- Yes, but at times difficult to commit to because of teaching commitments. However I cannot see a better way. (Gordon)
- Time factors have been an issue. (Shelley)
- Helpful but quite rare. (Trevor)
- These have been very limited. It would be useful to have more support from the school in terms of allocated time within the school day to meet etc. (Tony)

The negative comments are forthright and occasionally damning:

- Our school-based support was removed because it was considered to be unnecessary. (Jo)
- I haven't had any support from within the school since my coach left a year ago. (Andrea)
- My coach hasn't taken an interest and hasn't been involved at all. (Sue)
- My coach was my NQT coach and she wasn't that interested in helping me. However, she did do the training and attempted to help me in discussion, but I felt she wasn't listening to me. (Tracey)
- No coaching sessions for a year and a half. (Alma)

By contrast, most respondents (over 75%) find the university input sessions stimulating (S18), with only 10% indicating otherwise:

Table 6-21: the university input sessions have been stimulating

S18		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	5	2	7
	% within course	14.3%	6.5%	10.6%
not sure	Count	6	3	9
	% within course	17.1%	9.7%	13.6%
agree	Count	24	26	50
	% within course	68.6%	83.9%	75.8%
Total Count		35	31	66
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.131); DF (2); Sig. Level (.345) - NS

This rating is comparable across both cohorts. Of the very few negative comments the lack of stimulation is attributed to theory sessions being perceived as ‘a bit heavy after a long day’ or ‘interesting but not particularly helpful’. An overwhelming majority ‘enjoy’ the lectures, although Cohort 1 is notably briefer and less laudatory than their MA peers. The overall tone of the responses is epitomised in the following two examples:

- Every tutor brings their own personal style and some are more appealing than others. I found it helped to all be sat round the same table where possible and not be dominated by PPT presentations. (Jane)
- I really enjoyed the weekly classes. I would have loved to have continued with those indefinitely as it really got me thinking about my teaching and exploring new ideas. (Louise)

Table 6-22: I have accessed the VLE (Blackboard) to help support my studies

S19		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	17	8	25
	% within course	50.0%	23.5%	36.8%
not sure	Count	4	2	6
	% within course	11.8%	5.9%	8.8%
agree	Count	13	24	37
	% within course	38.2%	70.6%	54.4%
Total Count		34	34	68
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (7.177); DF (2); Sig. Level (.028) - S

Of the MTL cohort comments 14 claim not to have accessed the VLE (S19), a virtual learning environment and course management system, in order to support their studies, which at 38.2% is reiterated on the numerical scale. Similarly, only 7 of the MA cohort comment on this facility and, as with the MTL cohort, they consider it ‘user unfriendly’ and only used it to access lecture notes. However, the numerical scale shows that 24 (70.6%) they have accessed the VLE.

Although there is a discrepancy between the volunteered comments and the numerical values, there is a statistically significant difference between the MA cohort who access the VLE more than that of the MTL who access it less. Nor is it regarded as an easy option by some academics (Coopman, 2009) who comment that although ‘Blackboard designers structure the course platform for efficiency and profit, instructors and students need a course environment optimized for learning and ‘performative’ teaching’. In view of the current trend towards learning through IT systems, this outcome should give providers pause for thought as they increasingly adopt distance learning models.

The figures regarding the extent to which participants use other university support services (Table 6-23), such as study advice or the library, are equally low: 68% do not use them. There were 18 comments of which only 4 refer to use of the library. Others refer to the need for additional guidance with, for example, library systems, such as Unicorn.

Table 6-23: I have used the University Student Support Services to help with my studies

S20		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	27	20	47
	% within course	77.1%	58.8%	68.1%
not sure	Count	3	1	4
	% within course	8.6%	2.9%	5.8%
agree	Count	5	13	18
	% within course	14.3%	38.2%	26.1%
Total Count		35	38	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (5.585); DF (2); Sig. Level (.061) - NS

As can be seen from Table 6-24 below, most respondents see finding time to study as problematic. Comments include work demands, finding quality time, time for reading, family priorities, mental exhaustion:

Work pressure and finding enough time to fit in the research and study time for some of the modules have been a problem. Some more practical assessment tasks would be more suited I feel – rather than just essay based assessment. (Mark)

Table 6-24: finding the time to study has been a problem for me

S21		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	6	10	16
	% within course	17.1%	29.4%	23.2%
not sure	Count	5	0	5
	% within course	14.3%	0.0%	7.2%
agree	Count	24	24	48
	% within course	68.6%	70.6%	69.6%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (5.987); DF (2); Sig. Level (.050) - NS

In the time when ‘secondments’ were available to teachers to enable them to study for advanced qualifications time was not an issue. At that time – the 1970/80s – there was no requirement that the advanced qualification be linked in any way to a school’s priorities: rather, it was seen by some either as a reward for good service or a means whereby a jaded teacher might be revitalized. Certainly, there was no way of formally ascertaining whether the secondments had made a positive difference to teacher performance. However, in the present climate there is a case to be made for those teachers who wish to improve their academic profile to be allocated some time by school leaders to do that, along the lines of a reduced teaching load or day-release.

Table 6-25: lack of family support has been a problem for me

S22		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	29	32	61
	% within course	82.9%	94.1%	88.4%
not sure	Count	2	1	3
	% within course	5.7%	2.9%	4.3%
agree	Count	4	1	5
	% within course	11.4%	2.9%	7.2%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (2.267); DF (2); Sig. Level (.322) - NS

Despite the pressures that the respondents may feel, nearly all of them (88%) report that their families support them fully. The degree of support felt from school and department (S24) can also be judged by a very positive response of over 75% on the numerical scale.

Table 6-26: lack of support in my department/school has been a problem for me

S23		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	25	27	52
	% within course	71.4%	79.4%	75.4%
not sure	Count	4	3	7
	% within course	11.4%	8.8%	10.1%
agree	Count	6	4	10
	% within course	17.1%	11.8%	14.5%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.605); DF (2); Sig. Level (.739) - NS

This contrasts notably with the findings concerning the school-based coach (S17) where much less enthusiasm is exhibited. However, the 22 volunteered comments, which are equally divided between the two cohorts, are variable and sharply contrast with the individual numerical grading. It is conjectural that where respondents are highly satisfied they do not feel the need to add additional comments. Typical of the positive responses are:

- My colleagues have been very helpful and give me support when I need it.

- School very supportive but there is no available extra time – all work must be completed out of school hours.

The negative view is summed up by:

- At times finding time to do research has been refused – been told to do the work in my own time.
- I would not say I get any particular support but they are not hindering me in any way.

The extent to which respondents feel insecure about their ability to succeed in the Masters is more or less evenly divided on the scale across both cohorts and between those who agree and those who do not:

Table 6-27: I worry about my ability to succeed in the Masters

S24		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	14	18	32
	% within course	40.0%	52.9%	46.4%
not sure	Count	5	2	7
	% within course	14.3%	5.9%	10.1%
agree	Count	16	14	30
	% within course	45.7%	41.2%	43.5%
	Total Count	35	34	69
	% within course	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (1.905); DF (2); Sig. Level (.386) - NS

The 27 accompanying comments reflect this division. Those who are confident say:

- I enjoy learning more and writing my assignments.
- I was very determined to complete the MA - failure was never contemplated.
- Academically confident. Less confident about time available.

The less confident say:

- I find it difficult to find the resources or to access them. Writing in English is a source of stress for me.
- Learning difficulties have always created a challenge especially analysis and evaluation of reading.
- It is a long time since I studied at degree level and I am unsure if my work meets requirements – Each time I submit my work I just hope it passes.

As far as the relevance of the Masters to their personal and professional needs is concerned (S25), 82% equally for each cohort consider it to be very relevant:

Table 6-28: the Masters is relevant to my personal/professional needs

S25		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	2	3	5
	% within course	5.9%	9.1%	7.5%
not sure	Count	4	3	7
	% within course	11.8%	9.1%	10.4%
agree	Count	28	27	55
	% within course	82.4%	81.8%	82.1%
Total Count		34	33	67
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.346); DF (2); Sig. Level (.841) - NS

As with other aspects, there is no noticeable difference between the two cohorts in the reasons they proffer in their comments: 17 of the 21 comments indicate that the Masters will improve their classroom practice: for example:

- I have a strong believe that a well-grounded theory in education supports practice and vice-versa.
- My aspirations have now been aligned to being a consistently good classroom practitioner.
- I feel it has been crucial in my development as a teacher in the first 5 years of my practice: it ensures development and challenge at a time when it could be easy to get complacent and comfortable with satisfactory teaching once uni. (sic) support is gone. It also keeps me up to date with new strategies and reading as well as motivates me to enjoy teaching without getting bored of similar strategies.
- The MTL has been an effective and rapid way of me improving and developing as a teacher without attending courses. Actually getting stuck in to the practical nature of the MTL has really helped.

A comparative few cite the importance of career advancement:

- I want to become an assistant head and also do some consultancy educational work.
- I would like to teach in a 6th form establishment in the future.

Table 6-29: there have been times when I have felt the pressure to withdraw

S26		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	13	15	28
	% within course	37.1%	44.1%	40.6%
not sure	Count	1	3	4
	% within course	2.9%	8.8%	5.8%
agree	Count	21	16	37
	% within course	60.0%	47.1%	53.6%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (1.804); DF (2); Sig. Level (.406) - NS

It is interesting, but predictable, that a higher proportion of the MTL cohort (60%) should feel greater pressure to withdraw in view of the demands made of them in National Challenge schools, which also explains the early drop-out rate for this group (3.1%), reported in Appendix 9, as compared with the lower score (47.1%) for the MA cohort the national drop-out rate for which group in is very low ((3.1%).

Table 6-30: the Masters has met my expectations

S27		Course		Total
		MTL	MA	
disagree	Count	3	2	5
	% within course	8.6%	5.9%	7.2%
not sure	Count	7	5	12
	% within course	20.0%	14.7%	17.4%
agree	Count	25	27	52
	% within course	71.4%	79.4%	75.4%
Total Count		35	34	69
% within course		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square: Value (.596); DF (2); Sig. Level (.742) - NS

Only a few comments are made about whether the Masters course had met expectations (S27), most of which are positive. This is reflected in the high percentage (75%) with 5 individuals dissenting and 12 unsure. Two comments made by MTL respondents are of particular interest:

- I expected more structured university sessions with practical advice linked directly to current research. I did not find the lectures particularly stimulating or useful. I did not expect it to be so academic.
- I did expect there would be observation of teaching.

On this latter point, critics of the MTL have argued that it should have included assessment of teaching if it were to produce so-called ‘Masters of teaching’ – a view that is discussed in Chapter 2. Similarly, the first comment implies that there may be a tension between a conventional ‘academic’ Masters and the MTL.

6.11 Further commentary: Theme 4

Despite all the issues raised in the previous chapters with regard to the conception and realization of the MTL, most participants regard their MTL experience positively, as does the MA cohort. There are frustrating issues of time for both groups and some aspects that will form part of the discussion in Chapter 8. The most problematic aspect of this research in general and the questionnaire in particular is the role of the school-based coach which is summed up in the next section.

6.12 Concluding comments

The direct voice of teachers is heard clearly in this research, as indicated earlier (Section 3.10), although it was less evident in the consultations prior to the introduction of the MTL. Had they been listened to, their concerns would have been made apparent. The most pressing concern was finding the time to study, all the more so for the MTL participants who were employed in unusually demanding schools. Interestingly a similar small study of serving teachers in who were undertaking a Masters (Tall, Upton, & Smith, 1997) echoes these findings, particularly the deep-rooted problem of time:

Despite their difficulties in finding time for travel, attendance, reading and research, this group as a whole have found studying for a higher degree to be a rewarding experience, which has been intellectually stimulating and has enhanced confidence and self-esteem. (p.122)

And, regarding support from the school:

Noticeably, however, support in the workplace has not been all it might have been. Although respondents evidently feel that their studies are contributing positively to their professional knowledge and expertise, and thus enhancing their work, they do not record much effort being made in the workplace to modify or reduce workloads to enable them to take full advantage of opportunities for advanced qualifications. (p.122)

The Tall study also emphasised the enhanced confidence and self-esteem that respondents felt, as a consequence of studying for a higher degree – a significant finding of the MA cohort featured in this current study.

For the MTL cohort in particular, this has implications for school managers who either neglected or were unable to provide sufficient dedicated time for participant research and coach support. If, as in the case of the MTL, any government resolves to shift the responsibility for professional development from universities to schools, then it is incumbent on it to listen to those in the schools who are directly affected, including those who represent them. This is all the more the case in view of the overall approval rating that the participants give to other aspects of the MTL: about 90% see it as meeting their needs and expectations for professional development. In this respect, there is no particular difference between the two cohorts. Both cohorts stress the overwhelming impact of the Masters on their practice, their enhanced subject knowledge and their belief that it had helped them to become more effective teachers, despite their hesitancy to offer evidence beyond this self-avowal.

A significant negative feature is that the school-based coach, both as a concept and a reality, is shown as problematic in the extent to which it has contributed to the expressed aims of the MTL. The questionnaire demonstrates a considerable measure of participant disaffection with the coach: where there is not an explicitly negative view, the responses are empathetic towards colleagues who undertake the role in the teeth of the various demands and priorities of the school that constrain it. In addition, it remains unclear whether all the respondents had a sound understanding of the expected involvement of the coach, particularly in view of the reduced role of the university tutor, bearing in mind their high rating of such tutors. At this point, it is worth recalling that the control group (Cohort 2), who were following a conventional in-service Masters route, could not express a view about a school coach since they have only a university tutor to rely on for supervision and guidance. Like the MTL

cohort, they also rated the university lectures and tutorials highly at 72.5% and 76.8% respectively. This raises a question for further research: whether a coach, school-based or otherwise, necessarily enhances the quality of a Masters degree for teachers and, in addition, whether it places a supererogatory demand on schools. It also raises a wider question of the effectiveness of policy decisions on practice, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 and re-iterated in the next chapter.

As was discussed earlier, one of the key issues with regard to any sort of professional development for teachers is the kind of difference it makes, first to them as practitioners and then to the pupils they teach. Typically it is easier to establish the first of these, the direct influence on the teacher, than it is to establish the second, the indirect influence on the pupils. Arguably, it is this indirect influence which is the most important justification for professional development.

In the current study, as with most studies of in-service provision, there is no attempt to gather performance data on pupils so anything said about the impact on pupils is based on the accounts given by the teachers. It is nevertheless of considerable interest to look at how course participants perceive the impact of Masters level study on pupils taught by those taking such courses and the relationship between what the participants say about impact on them and what they say about impact on their pupils. For the present analysis, impact on the pupils is restricted to impact on pupil attainment. Although this is only part of possible effects on pupils it is a very important part and, probably, one for which it is easiest to find evidence.

In this chapter the responses of participants to a series of questions about different aspects of studying for the Masters are presented. The conclusion to emerge is that the participants are very positive about the difference the Masters courses had made to them and that this is approximately equally true of the MTL and the MA students. A particularly striking result is that, as shown in the table below, 83.6 per cent say that the course has made them a more effective practitioner. However, what is also striking is the difference between this very high figure for becoming more effective and the rather lower level of claims about the courses resulting in higher pupil attainment. Just over half the sample, 53.7 per cent, say that pupil attainment had increased with the remainder saying it had not or being unsure. This

necessarily means that some respondents are saying they had become more effective without being sure of any impact on pupil attainment.

This paradox is examined in more detail in the following table:

Table 6-31: Impact on effectiveness and impact on attainment

Impact on pupil attainment	Impact on effectiveness				Total	
	Yes		No / DK			
Yes	31	55.4%	5	45.5%	36	53.7%
No	25	44.6%	6	54.5%	31	46.3%
Total	56	83.6%	11	16.4%	67	

Here a cross tabulation is presented between responses to becoming a more effective practitioner and responses to impact of the course on pupil attainment. To simplify the analysis and because of the relatively low numbers involved the responses of MTL and MA students have been presented together and the categories 'No' and 'Don't know' have been combined. The marginal cells of the table repeat the results from the earlier analysis for the 67 respondents who answered both questions. The bottom row of the table shows that 83.6 per cent say they had become more effective practitioners. The final column of the table shows that 53.7 per cent say that pupil attainment had increased. The inner cells of the table shows the relationship between the two responses. What emerges is an association between them in the expected direction but of a rather weak nature. While 55.4 per cent of those saying they have become more effective also say that attainment has increased, 45.5 per cent of those who are not confident they have become more effective say that attainment has increased. Perhaps more importantly, a substantial minority (44.6%) of those saying they are more effective are not confident of increased attainment. And a similar proportion (45.5%) of those who are not confident of an improvement in their own effectiveness say that there has nevertheless been an improvement in attainment.

Of course it is difficult for teachers to be sure about what is impacting on the attainment of their pupils, especially over a limited time period. But the results show that, in the minds of many teachers taking Masters level courses, the link between their own development and the attainment of their pupils is rather unclear. Many teachers do not feel that they need evidence

of pupil attainment before they can claim to be more effective practitioners. This may link to the evidence discussed earlier that teachers can look to evidence such as Ofsted ratings as providing appropriate quality judgements, whether by proxy or not. It may also relate to their awareness of the many contextual influences on attainment and perhaps to a sense of the limitations of the impact of teaching.

These results are in marked contrast to those of the Halpin, Croll and Redman study (1990) discussed in Chapter 2. In that study, conducted over twenty years before the present research, there was a much stronger link between teacher perceptions of improvements in their own practice and teacher perceptions of improvements in pupil attainment. In-service work was claimed by teachers to impact on attainment via improvements in teaching. It may be that the emergence of Ofsted in the intervening years, with its consequent conditioning of teachers, has caused them to temper such perceptions.

Chapter 7 Participant (Teacher, Coach) Responses

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will build on the issues raised in Chapter 6 by discussing the responses elicited through the participant conversations and the school-based coach interviews (Strand 3) in order to establish the degree of consistency across the written and spoken elements. Importantly, it will also take account of the conclusions drawn from the elite interviews (Strand 1), discussed in Chapter 5, to ascertain the extent to which the aims and intentions of educational policy makers accord with practice as experienced by teachers and theorised by academics.

7.2 Teacher participants talking

Informed by the research on teacher efficacy and in similar vein to the approach undertaken by the Burn et al longitudinal study (Malmberg, Hagger, Burn, Mutton, & Colls, 2010), as described in Chapters 2 and 3, semi-structured conversations were arranged with six volunteer MTL participants in order to ascertain the extent to which they saw themselves as 'effective' practitioners. In Chapter 3 (Section 3.6.4.) the rationale and method which determined this approach, the 'framework for conversation', are explained in detail. Although the data were loosely coded, several patterns and themes emerged, as set out below, which were consistent with the conceptual framework of this research: for example, it served to elucidate the problematic contention that the MTL would have a positive impact on the respondents' view of their own teaching as being effective in raising pupil attainment. In effect, the responses proved to be of variable quality in the extent to which the teacher respondents were able to articulate and develop their views: this proved especially the case with the school-based coaches, notably Coach 5, where some of the responses were, initially, perplexingly limited. This apparently lacklustre 'evidence' seemed to the researcher at one point to be unworthy of inclusion in the project, but was left to stand as requiring some explanation, which will be offered later in Section 7.4.

The six teachers' pseudonyms are: Barbara, James, Juliette, Matthew, Michelle and Robert. Four taught in the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS) and two from another school in the consortium. All six were known to the researcher. Their teaching subjects were: English, geography, business studies (2), PE and French. Barbara, Juliette and Matthew had qualified

for the MTL as experienced teachers holding a specific teaching and learning responsibility as Professional Tutor, Head of Modern Languages and Head of Sixth Form respectively. James, Michelle and Robert had qualified the previous year, and had no additional responsibilities beyond their teaching subjects which were geography, English and P.E. respectively. The following themes were explicit in the conversations:

- the teachers rating of their teaching and what makes a good teacher
- the impact of the MTL on their teaching
- the impact of the MTL on their pupils
- their view of the coaching they had received

It could be concluded intuitively that the most experienced teachers would provide articulate, reflective and extended responses to the questions asked, and this proved to be the case, despite the occasional cryptic remark. All three rated their teaching highly and were able to provide justification for doing so. Inevitably, they found it difficult to avoid the grading language of Ofsted, but they managed to keep it to a minimum, since the conversations were specifically designed to focus on their own sense of self-efficacy and not on that provided by others, however significant. Equally, they were clear about what makes a good teacher. Barbara, the Professional Tutor, claimed that all of her lessons that had been formally observed in the last four years had been judged 'outstanding'. These lessons were characterised by one example, attributed to an Ofsted inspector, which she gave:

Outstanding understanding of the students, of their learning needs, of their prior learning. Planning for their learning, students made outstanding progress especially, taking into consideration the number of the students that were in the group who can't manage to stay still in the classroom anywhere else in school, and yet were fully engaged for an hour.

She stressed the importance of giving time to individual pupils, and ensuring that their work is marked for the next lesson, and that they have clear learning targets. She said, 'I think they know that I really try my hardest for them'. Asked whether planning provided a key to her success as a teacher, the following intriguing exchange occurred:

Respondent: My reflections are very much from marking. I spend my time marking instead of planning.

Interviewer: Do you really need to plan?

Respondent: No, probably not, because I have got years' worth of resources that I just dip in and out of as necessary.

Interviewer: So you are planning in your head as much as you are reflecting in your head?

Respondent: Yes, yes. So I don't go into a lesson thinking 'What am I going to do?' I go in knowing that I am going to start with this, they are then going to do this, they are going to do this... because I have been teaching it for so long that there is the differentiation there. That I can pull out the resources. So I just don't probably have a formal lesson plan, but it is done in my head, just not on paper.

Interviewer: But presumably you would prefer to be doing a little bit more planning if you had the time?

Respondent: Yes, if I had the time. But I take the view that my marking, I really value written feedback for the students, because that helps me identify far better where their gaps are. Therefore I in my head have planned, 'Right, I need to plug that gap for so and so and I am going to do this.' I would love it to be on a bit of paper so that I could say, 'Oh look'. But...

Although hesitant to pronounce on her philosophy of teaching, she expressed it as 'making a difference to children who perhaps aren't as fortunate as others'. Many of the pupils she works with come from a very different background from those who have the support at home. As she says, 'our students don't have that, so I sort of feel I am giving something back maybe. But that all sounds a bit....' This last phrase suggests a degree of reticence or modesty that characterises many capable teachers, particularly when asked to expand on their expertise: in the researcher's experience some will, enigmatically, reduce it to the old adage of 'I get them in, get on with them and get them out'.

Matthew, the Head of Sixth Form, readily expounded his philosophy of teaching:

We were talking about philosophy a moment ago while off the tape recorder but I've got a very genuine philosophy, like approach to teaching, which is my absolute concern about every pupil is that they are a nice person. I've said it to students more times than I care to remember. I've said, 'I don't care if you leave here with a G grade or a U grade if you leave here as a nice person, a hard-

working person. So it doesn't matter if you get the grade or not, but the most important thing is that you treat others in a way that is the way that humans should treat each other'. And then I apply that fully to myself. So I think I could probably count, I think maybe twice, that I've shouted in the last sort of two years. I just don't like to do it because I don't believe that humans should shout at each other.

He stressed the importance to him of presenting his philosophy as an extension of himself in the classroom: 'I'm kind of still just Matthew in the classroom even though I'm Mr Smith to the pupils'. His view accords with Barbara's, that if 'they like what you are' then they will be a lot more 'amiable' to the teaching and to what is asked of them. He describes his teaching and its efficacy metaphorically:

If you buy a car and you're happy with the car... I've never known anyone feel incumbent to go to the factory and watch every nut and bolt and every screw being put in and to see the car being made. You simply look at your finished car and think, 'I enjoy this car. I'm happy with the way it's performing'.

For Matthew, teaching has to be outcome based: if his pupils are getting high results, (which they are), then the methods by which he achieves them should not be questioned. Whilst for him, this may seem self-evident, it begs the question whether such a proposition applies to those who are not getting 'high results' and, indeed, whether such results include being 'a nice person'. More broadly, it exemplifies the vexed nature of what teachers do and believe as described in relation to the work of Bandura (1994) and Opfer & Pedder (2011) which makes them conclude that they are effective practitioners. As if to resolve this conundrum, referred to in the previous chapter, both Matthew and Barbara found refuge in summarising their teaching in the inspection jargon of 'good or outstanding'. In Matthew's words:

So as far as watching teaching, every time someone's been to see me in the school it's been good or outstanding so...

Juliette, a recently appointed Head of Modern Languages and with less experience (4 years) than either Barbara or Matthew, was more tentative in her conversation:

I'd say I'm very enthusiastic, I love my job. I wouldn't see myself doing anything else. It's very exciting, it's different every day and I think I've made the right choice for this career. But I'm also aware that there's a lot I need to work on and improve. And I think it's a job where you always have to reflect on your practice and move on, because you can easily slip into the same routine and do the same lesson, but you realise that it's important to move on really.

As with her more experienced colleagues, she regarded a positive rapport with her pupils as the most important feature of her teaching together with conscientious marking in terms of assessment for learning. A relative ingénue to teaching, she was reticent in applying a 'score' to her teaching efficacy, remarking that others generally saw her as a promising teacher. At this stage, she had developed an inchoate philosophy of teaching:

It's when I feel that I start somewhere and I – well when the pupils make progress. They arrive somewhere, they start here and they're there – ah it's difficult to describe. When we all work together and when I feel that when they leave the classroom they really have made, well I have made a difference then and you can feel the atmosphere in the classroom as well. Sometimes it's relaxed, then you have a joke with the children, but that's not necessarily when they make the best progress. It's difficult to describe really.

The three recently qualified teachers were Michelle, a mature newly qualified teacher, James and Robert. Michelle's conversation proved the least productive, mainly because it was prolix and seemingly inconsequential. This was evident from the outset in her assessment of her teaching:

I've got innovative ideas which people do take from me and develop in their own way, which is good. And people will come to me for either to share good ideas or they might have an embryo of an idea that they come to me with, expecting me to help develop it, but I guess that's the reputation I've got. And I am quite innovative in the classroom, but that brings me to sort of my lack of understanding of the whole range of pedagogy really, because at the moment we know OFSTED's focus will be under-achieving boys. We know that's an issue in and around the school and the department. My knowledge of really accessing them is,

is just still reactionary, it's not based on any formal understanding, it is just how I develop relationships and trying quirky things in the classroom: a. - to establish relationships, b. -to keep them sitting on their chairs in order to make progress. And for that, some of my ideas have gone around the school. People think I'm either mad or incredibly creative, I don't know.

Michelle's self-deprecation and, as she described it, her 'quirky' manner, which is similar to Coach 5 as described in Section 7.3, did not add significantly to this aspect of the research and both are included as isolated examples of the idiosyncratic nature of teachers and teaching and the pressures that bear on what is expected of them by others and what they expect of themselves. As her responses overall were repetitive and convoluted there will be only brief reference to them, except to conclude at this point on a poignant note:

I reflect a lot. What I don't often do is make changes to my practice. And that is partly, yes I would say I am a highly reflective practitioner, but rather than sort of that didn't work, let's do this, I find myself actually not having enough time to create the resources that I want to create. The planning that I used to do, I just don't do now, for a few reasons. One is I've got a small responsibility within the department and ever since I've had that we have been a teacher down, for one reason or another. So all my free time is spent, well I say planning, but I've had to be trying to keep other classes buoyant in the absence of a main teacher. So it's been quite a difficult post-NQT life for me. Which impacts on my enthusiasm, well just energy levels, which impacts on my planning, on my, you know...

James characterised himself as a good teacher with high expectations who was approachable and saw his role as 'not just someone that teaches, in terms of geography, but someone that maybe guides them through life, I suppose in a way'. He has what he describes as 'a laid-back approach' that encourages his pupils to feel comfortable and to 'stretch the reins a little bit'. He believes that his enthusiasm is reciprocated by those he teaches, especially his older pupils who respond well to his sense of humour more so than the younger ones. For him, the best lessons are where there is 'a buzz', which is acknowledged by others who comment positively on his class management and high expectations, coupled with his good humour. As he says, his teaching has 'never ever been an issue, never been an issue at all', so much so

that he has been commissioned to deliver the local authority training on behaviour management with one of his MTL colleagues. His philosophy is simple:

I'm a local boy so I know, you know, I was one of these students (a former pupil). And I kind of know what their background is and how they work and I think that helps me, because I have that understanding. And yes I think, in a school like this you have to know, know your students, but you need to know them in a society.

Robert's conversation followed a PE lesson observation by the researcher as a trial for the subsequent five conversations. The practice of observing a lesson prior to a conversation was abandoned early in the research process because it proved too close to an assessment and feedback model with which teachers are familiar and which, as in Robert's case, tended to influence his expectations, and shape his responses. Despite this, having discussed the lesson in broad terms, Robert articulated his teaching philosophy:

For me it's not always about the learning, it's more about the relationships because, to be honest, kids are going to forget stuff. You spend so much time teaching them and they're learning things and yes, it's for them to go, but for me is to build relationships and teach them stuff that they can take with them forever, life skills almost, if you like. Even though I still have to present the theory knowledge to them and get them to do stuff and get them to answer exam papers, for me it's more about...a relationship with the kids and get them to learn life stuff in the lessons.

In practical terms he saw his teaching in very positive terms. Again, the importance of relationships, a common refrain in all these conversations, dominates:

...all my file, my portfolio evidence was all outstanding and my lessons overall were outstanding, but one of the key comments that stood out for me was what she said in the end. It was quite nice. She said I've got - not to big myself up or anything like that - but they said I've got a magic touch with the kids. I try to be human to them. I try to be as nice to them as possible. I'm just normal though. I just try to be relaxed with them, that type of thing. I don't want to be the --

The extent to which the MTL had influenced their teaching was discussed with all six teachers. Barbara, referring to distinct modules in the MTL, such as Leadership and Management and Inclusion, found them to be ‘massively helpful’:

Elements of it (MTL) have been very, very reflective for me, and really helped me sort out in my head a lot of things I spent a long time questioning. So for example leadership and management, what I focused on was leadership and management of change within school. That I really battled with and in my black and white way (mentality) had gone and said, ‘Look this isn’t right, this is wrong’. Then (I would) go away and really reflect on it, and research change, and look at it.

She acknowledged that she had not read much thus far on academic research, but pointed to such popular professional texts as Ian Gilbert’s ‘The Little Book of Thunks’ (2007) on creative thinking, Shirley Clarke’s extensive publications on assessment to support learning and Jackie Beere’s ‘How to teach ‘The Perfect Ofsted lesson’ (2006). Barbara understands the need to read journals and action research, but finds it easier to read professional literature and other ‘grey’ documents first, and then use that as a starting point for journals. She appears to have a jaundiced view of academic journals on the grounds that they have ‘nothing to do with what you are doing’. Despite this, she maintains that the MTL has had a positive impact on her:

I think it has had an impact on my teaching, but I also think for the role I do, it has had a bigger impact on my supporting my colleagues as a professional tutor. I think it has impacted on my classroom teaching to an extent, but not as much as leading and managing other people, reflecting on how I am going to manage their changes in practice. So I think it has an impact on more than just my teaching, which is really positive. Because at this stage in my career, with having management responsibility, it would be a bit wasted if it was only to be in my classroom, because I hardly teach now.

Matthew echoed Barbara’s view that the MTL had had a discernible impact on his teaching, particularly in the sense that he had previously found his teaching to be what he described as a linear process:

I just taught a lesson, lesson, and lesson. And then, since starting it (MTL), there has been a much stronger element of review to it and looking on a deeper level at – I suppose it's just that learning is kind of the best way to phrase it. So that's one thing.

Given to metaphor and anecdote for exemplification, he then cited his recent acquaintance with Pavlov and Skinner and how he had related it to his teaching:

One of my year elevens said, 'You look tired, sir'. I said, 'I had a Masters session last night'. And he said, 'What's a Masters?' So I told him. He said, 'What did you learn?' And I thought, 'Well, I'll tell him. I'll say, 'There's this whole theory about operant conditioning'. And I kind of explained it to him. And this kid's kind of like a D to C/D guy, but he was absolutely sort of captivated by it. He then started asking me questions about it and some of his questions were really pertinent. 'That's really good, I said, 'I'm still working out to what extent do I put down the conditions for your learning and...'

Like Barbara, he emphasised the importance of the MTL in its impact on his recently assigned role as Head of Sixth Form. In particular, writing about and reflecting on the challenges presented by a complex and under-performing sixth form which he shared with a neighbouring school, had helped him to become a more reflective practitioner, of the type described by Shon (1983):

I usually find that during the times that I'm initially doing a reading for the assignments, which usually takes about a week and a half of my time to go through all the stuff I want to read, followed by writing it which is usually about a weekend and a half. Usually that's when I find it affecting my practice the most because that's when I'm most sort of in-depth with the theory. And then between assignments I sort of drift back out of it a bit.

Juliette held a similarly positive opinion of the impact of the MTL on her teaching, despite her hesitancy in citing any academic or research sources that she had read, with the exception of Doug Lemov's 'Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College' (2010), an American text provided to all the teachers in her school which describes and recommends a variety of techniques or strategies to employ in the classroom and which,

in her view, 'join theory and practice'. Described in its blurb as 'aimed at teachers who want to improve their students' academic success, this book provides a detailed look at the techniques used by top teachers'; its main ideas are that 'great' teaching can be learned. Beyond this type of 'professional' literature, Juliette valued the opportunity the MTL had provided to address problems she was encountering in her classes and she cited an assignment she had completed on how boys having Asperger's Syndrome perform in French. This topic arose because there was evidence that there were children suffering from Asperger's in most of her classes, some of which included 'intellectually high achievers'. The assignment helped her to refine her approach to such pupils:

I did come up with some ideas of how to help them to interact with other students. So I know that for example the place where they sit in the classroom is very important: it's better to put them at the front. It is probably not a good idea to put them next to a student who is a very popular student among other students. So you put them next to a nice child and then you do some pair work, speaking for example, where you push them to interact. Slowly you try to integrate them in the classroom.

Of the three newly qualified teachers, Michelle proved the least enthusiastic and the least clear-thinking about the MTL: she considered that 'it's raised my cynicism', particularly in respect of how the module on leadership had shaped her view of the management in her own school. Beyond that, as noted earlier, her views were more declamatory than considered. By contrast, James and Robert evinced a clear and positive experience of the MTL. James pointed out that it had made him 'more aware of the literature and more aware of the theory behind it'. In particular, he stressed the relevance of the MTL to his practice:

For example, the module where we were looking at assessment, and I looked at how the students react to different forms of assessment. And that was quite interesting because I used a class profile, again top set year 9, but from last year. And what they came out with after I'd done my research, and what I then mapped in with the reading I'd done, as part of the Teaching and Learning group that I was on last year, I was able to input into marking policy within the school. So it has made an impact.

The discussion with Robert followed the researcher's pilot observation of his teaching, explained earlier, as a consequence of which such observations were abandoned as not serving the interests of the research, since it confirmed the tendency of teachers to assess their classroom performance in terms of inspection criteria. Despite this, Robert's positive experience of the MTL merits inclusion. Asked whether he had a positive experience of the MTL to date, he responded:

The thing is I'm always the glass is half full type of guy so I try and look at the positives in everything. So it's hard for me to think about the negatives and if there are negatives I don't try and focus on them. But I've loved every bit of the MTL. Obviously the stress of handing in assignments and doing an assignment and sometimes feeling inadequate that I'm not as good as the others or things like that, especially coming from my background (South Africa) I've had a lot of catching up to do with the rest. That bit hasn't been nice, but that's when you grow and that's when you learn if you push yourself, if you take yourself out of your comfort zone.

Whether a similarly positive conclusion can be drawn from their opinions of the in-school support provided for them by their coaches will be considered further in the following paragraphs. As discussed in the preceding chapters and earlier in this chapter, school-based coaching had been conceived as a core element of the MTL which, it had been argued from the outset by its proponents, distinguished this Masters from all other in-service, post-graduate and award-bearing qualifications.

7.3 Teachers and their coaches

It can be seen from the preceding chapters that the idea of a school-based coach had proved troublesome from the outset, not only in terms of the rigour with which it had been conceived but in its questionable organisation and development. As can be deduced from the data arising from the questionnaire, 53% of the MTL respondents rated their coach positively and the remainder predominantly held a negative view, including a small number who were 'not sure'. Whereas the positive comments are brief, both in the questionnaire and the conversations, the negative ones are more extended and tend to range from cryptic to dismissive, as in the case of Matthew:

But the few times I've sat down with my coach I've found them to be a complete waste of time; a complete waste of time. Because he hadn't really put in any preparation at all and kind of wanted to waffle his way through it. And at the moment I'm just in a position in my life where I haven't got time to kind of be around people who are waffling on, because I've got so much to do all the time. So I've found it's easier to not have the coaching sessions and surround myself much more with the literature that the university can provide and through the libraries and stuff. I found that more enjoyable.

And James, one of a group of four in the Sample School:

I think the attitude of the school is kind of 'Yes they're (the MTL participants) doing it.' They're kind of pushed to one side. I think to go back to their kind of, you know, when they're done then we'll kind of celebrate. And we're lost as a group, it doesn't feel like there is the support from everyone. And I'm not expecting everyone to put us up on a pedestal and be like 'Yes keep going.' But it would be nice for the work we're doing to be recognised.

Robert attributes what he considers to be a deterioration in the support offered by his coach partly to the pressure brought about by an impending Ofsted inspection of the school and partly by the fact of the MTL being spread over three years. In his words, 'we just seem to have been put in a box in a corner and we'll get dragged out when we all pass, hopefully'. Juliette adds to this bleak picture in her response to the question whether any coaching that has been specific to her teaching, to encouraging and developing and discussing it: Matthew, Juliette and Robert opined that, given their experience, it would have been better not to have had an assigned coach, as is the case for most conventional Masters.

Well my coach for the MTL is my Line Manager, the PE teacher. So no, I don't even think he knows what the MTL is about really. So I think we've been given a coach just to say 'Let's put a name.' But no, and as you know, we haven't had any support from the school at all.

Barbara, the professional tutor and a coach to three others, had a positive view of coaching in general but did not apply it to herself, which raises the question of whether such coaching should apply to senior teachers. Barbara's case is untypical in that she had seen the

opportunity, arising from a recent promotion, to complete a Masters she had started some years before under the umbrella of the MTL and at no cost.

Regardless of the responses of the coaches concerning their own sense of efficacy, which are discussed in the next section, there remains a persistent and nagging question of whether the role of a school-based coach is necessary for the successful completion of a Masters in Teaching and Learning. Given that the cohort following a conventional Masters programme was not provided with a designated coach yet responded broadly in the same vein to all the other questionnaire statements, argues against any case for a coach. Such an opposing case is further strengthened by the mixed responses coming from the MTL cohort and, indeed, the admission of the elite respondents that the concept of the school-based coach was ‘under-cooked’. In addition, issues surrounding the qualifications of coaches, formal or otherwise, were not fully considered in the planning of the programme, although considerable time was spent, to no avail, in discussing this matter, as vouchsafed by the TDA official responsible for coach development (O4). One aspect of this was whether the coaches needed any form of certification: as Brian Clough, a well-known former football manager, once said, ‘Come and see my coaching certificates - they're called the European Cup and League championships’. This clearly implies that coaches are judged by the results they achieve rather than the paper qualifications they possess. Certainly, in some professions, such as medicine, the coaching or mentoring role is assigned on the basis of seniority and experience of the professional activity, so it is no surprise that school heads should adopt a similar practice. For schools the concept of coaching colleagues beyond induction is not firmly embedded and its purpose and value not fully understood. Where it is understood, it would be problematic, as evidenced in this research, for heads of schools in challenging circumstances to deploy their most experienced colleagues in this way, when faced with pressing problems of school improvement in the shadow of external inspection.

7.4 The coaches

Described in Chapter 5 as ‘a fundamental concept’ behind the MTL which was acknowledged by most of those, particularly the TDA personnel, as being at the very least ‘problematic’ from the outset. O4, the TDA official who was belatedly given the responsibility to develop the coaching strand, was forthright in articulating the tangled process in which he was engaged and the other elite interviewees concurred with the substance, if not the detail, of his

argument. As a consequence of this muddled approach to the development of the MTL at the centre, the participants' responses to the questionnaire and during the individual conversations echo this concern in terms of questioning the purpose and effectiveness of their coaches. In order, therefore, to complete the research circle on this aspect the views of a sample of seven MTL coaches were sought and are described in the following paragraphs.

As explained in Chapter 3, the semi-structured coach interviews were designed to seek responses to the research questions in general and, in particular, to understand how they perceived their role in meeting the aspirations for the MTL, as described by the TDA. In the event, whilst some of the interviews proved fruitful in terms of the research question, others were desultory and lacked comparative discernment. However, this latter conclusion may be attributed to the quality of the guidance they had been given on their role in the MTL in particular and to the requirements for coaching in general. For this reason, the 'Diamond 9' activity, as described in Section 3.7.5, followed by a brainstorming 'Gingerbread' activity were used to bolster the understanding of the role of the five coaches in the 'opportunity sample'.

Barbara and Ann were MTL coaches in the Sample National Challenge School (SNCS). Barbara, who had engaged in one of the conversations described in Section 6.8 in her role as an MTL participant, held strong views about her lead coaching role:

I've been mentoring and coaching staff for about eight years now. I don't have any qualifications. I've read a lot of books, so it's all self-taught and through experience. And also I did do 'Leadership Pathways' and 'Leading from the Middle' where we did do sessions on coaching and giving feedback.

In the first year, her head teacher was 'incredibly supportive', made appropriate time for coaching and was very enthusiastic about the MTL to the extent that eight teachers enrolled. His enthusiasm did not last beyond the first year, so she had to make arrangements for coaching in teachers' free time and make other necessary adaptations in order to accommodate the needs of the participants:

We've adapted it. I mean, last year we were far better. We had monthly peer coaching sessions where we all got together. And gradually as the year went on and people got more and more tired and just the pressure of school took over,

people stopped coming. So we didn't put them on this year. And actually because of the workload within school this year, I know people wouldn't have come. But coaching this year, we've got the times on our timetables because I've had them blocked out in everybody's timetables, but most people are so busy...

Barbara's colleague, Ann, was an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) who had undertaken a variety of outreach training activities and had completed a unit on mentoring in her own Masters. She had had previous experience of mentoring and coaching in the school. As she put it, 'having the opportunity to do the practice and actually have the theory at the same time, I think is very important'. Like Barbara, she had undertaken the 'Leadership Pathways' and 'Leading from the Middle' programmes; unlike Barbara, however, she was unable to enrol on the MTL herself because she did not fit the eligibility criteria:

Because I'm on the leadership scale I wasn't allowed to do it. Which I think is a shame, because it might have given me a bit more insight in having to do it, having done quite a lot of reading for it and the work.

This latter remark is a telling point in its implication that coaches might be, like her colleague Barbara, more effective if they could draw not only on their own professional experience, but on their own direct experience, qua participant, of the MTL itself. It may be 'telling' for this sample of seven coaches all the more so because it was also the case with both Coaches 3 and 4, referred to later, although at this juncture in the research there was no way of verifying whether it was a national phenomenon.

Ann saw the MTL as one of several strategic approaches to raising attainment in the school: one example of such approaches was the introduction of a Teaching and Learning Group the purpose of which was to develop the habit of 'learning conversations' among all teaching staff. In her view, this had 'strengthened their practice and strengthened their understanding in why they do things'. The learning conversations 'have kind of spread out across the school.' Ann was more cautious in contending that the MTL had had a direct bearing on pupil attainment:

Well that's a difficult one isn't it? Because you haven't probably got enough, you know you've got your one year of results, you need another year of results to see if there's an improvement there, don't you? I mean they've all had an input into

the drive up in results, so yes we have improved our results. But if you were to track it individually, you'd want to see, on an individual basis wouldn't you?

In addition to these two coaches, five coaches (named as Coach 1-5) were interviewed individually as an 'opportunity sample', which is referred to above and described in detail in Chapter 3. Coach 1, a retired history teacher, had been brought back to her school in order to coach five of the ten MTL participants there, since there were no other volunteers from the full-time staff to take on the role. Despite this, Coach 1, a very articulate respondent, said she had more time, as a recent retiree, than would otherwise be the case to do an effective job with each participant. However, she expressed some misgiving about the role of the HEI tutor:

I hate to say this but, like a lot of university meetings, it was dealing with the academic ethics side of it rather than, I felt, the actual practicalities of it. That is one of the things that my students, my mentees said about me, that I can see the problem and go to it straight away instead of taking ages and ages to get round there and discussing all the academic points to get there.

She expanded on this point by arguing that the universities were not giving enough support to the school coaches:

I know that they always say they are really overwhelmed, they have got lots of marking and students and everything to do at university, but then so have the people at the schools.

Ironically, she did not apply the same criticism to her school where she seemed happy with the role of the school's MTL co-ordinator as facilitative: scheduling her meetings with the participants, but otherwise having 'a light touch'. She agreed that her expectations of support from the HEI may have been due to a lack of clarity about the nature of the intended model: that the weight of the support was intended to come from the schools and not from universities. This was a radical change from the normal expectation that universities have sole responsibility for the guidance of postgraduate students. Even so, she reiterated the point that this was an unreasonable expectation:

I think people at the school really are so burdened by such a lot of work, especially as they have just had a notice to improve from Ofsted, that they have got far more things to do and they haven't got the time to mentor.

Coach 1 expressed her optimism that the MTL was making a positive impact on teaching and pupil attainment. To achieve this she believed that, like her, coaches need to be confident in their role: especially confident in what it means to be a good teacher and capable of delivering a good lesson so that they understand the issues that somebody might be having in a challenging school. Particularly, they need to empathise with schools such as hers:

It took me about a year, much longer than the normal adjustment period you have in a usual school. But I got there in the end. They know that I have actually had to constantly re-evaluate my own work all the time at the school, so there is a level of respect there. So yes, I do think it is making a difference. It is making people think about what it actually means to teach. Certainly I know myself; working in a challenging school, it made me a much better teacher, even though I had been teaching before.

It is obvious to Coach 1 that in a school in challenging circumstances attainment must rise. Again, she cites her own experience of facing the challenge of low attainment:

13% A-C, when I retired it had 82% A-C which is quite incredible really because history is always perceived as a very academic subject. But we had over half the children opting to do it because they knew that my colleague who also is one of the MTL students, that when they came to us they knew exactly what we were offering them and they knew that we would deliver the grades and everything that we promised them.

Without offering any hard data about the school's present attainment profile, it is clear that she believes that, through the type of example and guidance that she gives, attainment will rise.

Coach 2, an experienced IT mentor, although less fluent in his responses, echoed the view of Coach 1 that his three charges have made a positive contribution to raising teaching standards and pupil attainment:

...it certainly has raised standards, but I think that has also been part of the new school, part of the Team-Teaching, part of, you know, getting the students to be reflective learners and taking ownership of that. Has it all been down to MTL? No, but I think, again, it's been a factor.

For him, the coach needs to be able to listen and to communicate effectively. They need to understand and to engage with those they coach if they are to develop them. The coach should be able to distinguish between mentoring and coaching:

And, I think, there's the difference between a coach and a mentor. And I think it's only because I've been, I would say, you know, a very, very good mentor, that I've been able to use those skills in order for me to be a coach, because a coach shouldn't have the answers. A coach should be able to develop that person, have time to do that, and, I suppose, the need and the want to try and make it fit for purpose for them.

Consistent with the other coaches, he was not prepared to give a simplistic assessment on whether the MTL had had an ascertainable impact on either teacher efficacy or pupil attainment. Notwithstanding this reluctance, he suggested that there was a relationship between the impact of the MTL and improvements in teaching:

With or without the MTL is there any difference? I would say, 'Yes.' The three students haven't got below good or outstanding in the observations over the last two years. Without MTL would they have done that? I think two of them would.

Similarly, he contended that, in respect of pupil attainment, 'the data analysis that we now do in the school actually has that activity built into it, but it does give them the bigger picture, and I think, you know, the MTL course has helped that':

Is it all down to MTL? I couldn't say, but they have certainly...we have certainly raised standards, like, key stage 3, that's where they (the MTL participants), predominantly teach.

The interview with Coach 3 was interrupted by pupils on two occasions, but even so it provided some useful insights into 'the messy reality of schools', referred to earlier (para 3.2), and the pressures under which teachers work. Like Barbara, Coach 3 had enrolled on the

MTL programme because not only was he eligible at the time but he considered that it would enhance his coaching role:

I thought it was a good idea because it seemed a simple way, with having a colleague who was languages, of seeing what was happening and keeping up with the course. And automatically having time to discuss, because obviously – well, not obviously, she doesn't drive, so I take her there, I take her back, and we sit and discuss things quite regularly. So there's no problem about contact time there.

In addition to this colleague, he had been responsible for coaching three other colleagues two of whom had subsequently withdrawn due to pressure of work. He was an experienced teacher, approaching retirement, who had had a longstanding relationship with the local HEI as the school's ITT co-ordinator and who, in the 1990s helped it to develop mentoring in secondary schools. As a consequence, he had a good understanding of mentoring which he considered to be concerned with 'some distinct ability to deliver content' in contradistinction to coaching:

Coaching is not about content but to be about form, and trying to widen the discussion possibly, or make suggestions that they may have missed. Because I've got more experience about the school setup than they have for example. I'd like to think that there was a trust element there. We don't want to be critical, because we're trying to be positive, to look for positive outcomes. And that, of course, is the coaching approach anyway.

Coach 3 saw it as a personal problem that he tended to be 'a shaper in these things' with, he acknowledged, a tendency to impose his own attitudes and opinions, despite their being born of his experience. Overall, he presented a positive, reflective view of coaching, believed that it had an immediate effect on teaching, but was 'not sure' of its effect in the longer term. For him, the MTL and its concomitant coaching element formed part of a whole-school strategy to raise standards:

This is not a school that finds Ofsted easy. It's non-selective, so we don't have the bright students here, but we have the same criteria applied. So we struggle. And the fear is always that we could drop below a satisfactory level. And the way of escaping that, clearly, is try and improve teaching and learning. That's very

straightforward. And training the staff through a number of different means: so obviously through the induction programme, the GTP programmes, through the MTL, through coaching programmes like Lilac (a private consultancy). All of those are attempts to provide tools, a toolkit, which will drive up the standard of teaching.

Like Ann, referred to earlier, Coach 4 was one of the two Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) of the seven who were interviewed and both of them had a dedicated qualification in coaching. She had had extensive experience of mentoring and coaching over twenty years: first, as a professional tutor and then, as a senior leader in her school where her role was to coach new heads of departments and other new senior colleagues. She distinguished clearly between mentoring and coaching:

For me, mentoring is if it's a junior colleague, and you're imparting information more, you're guiding them and that kind of thing. You have to tell them as opposed to 'Let's discover it together. What would you like to achieve? How are we going to go about achieving it?' Whereas with a coach, I suppose it's more an equal footing: 'what do you want to achieve? Let's talk through how we're going to achieve it. What are the barriers? How can we overcome those barriers?' That sort of thing.

The school began the MTL with eight teacher participants four of whom withdrew early on, due mainly to the pressure of time in their early careers, and partly because 'they weren't intellectually prepared for it. They weren't robust enough in their own lives to cope with the demands'. Coach 4 emphasised the pressures that the MTL brought with it, born of her own experience of embarking on the first year:

Trying to do all the research and the reading and the essay writing, on top of a full time job, is tough. It's tough for anybody, I think. I did it myself, I thought 'Well if that's what they're doing, I need to walk the talk'. I did the first year of it, and it results in you giving up family time, whole half terms, just to write your essay. You don't have any relaxing days unfortunately.

The main problem for her was that she had no recent experience of researching so she had to rely on her two colleagues who were doing a conventional Masters to supplement her early

experience of the MTL. Little, if any, coach training was provided by the HEI, she contended. Further, she believed that had the school itself selected the candidates for the MTL it was likely to be more successful:

Probably not NQTs, I would say probably Year 2 teachers- you know, people who had been in the profession a couple of years. They've got a broader knowledge base to work on. I think one of the problems is the naiveté of the questions from the NQTS, it makes it difficult for them to write essays that were broad and balanced and discussed and critically analysed.

In addition, she saw problems with the participants' teaching subjects which were evident in academic writing:

If we'd had a historian or an English teacher, we may well be having a very different conversation in terms of the quality of their written assignments.

Despite her clear understanding of the role of a coach in teaching, she felt thwarted by its limitations in practice: open-ended dialogue and autonomous learning proved more an ideal than a realistic option:

But you very often become, what I call a 'housekeeping meeting', facilitating them, getting the time off, negotiating time off for them or 'Why don't you speak to so and so?'

Coach 4 hesitated to produce data-based evidence that the MTL had contributed to an improvement in teaching, but the response she made was, like the other coaches, essentially intuitive:

We have come to a definite conclusion with one small cohort, with such a diverse group of people. Subjectively, I would say that the girl that does P.E and Dance has been advantaged by the process. It's given her the opportunity to talk to some quite senior colleagues in a serious format, and as a result her confidence and her self-esteem has grown and therefore her confidence and her teaching and her value within the school, she feels has improved. Therefore happy staff, happy children - usually quite a successful outcome.

The report of Coach 5's interview is, of necessity, comparatively brief, primarily because he was, as he admitted, underperforming in his head of department role:

I'm, let me tell you this, my leadership, we have just done a personal, we have just done a review, we have just done a SEF. My leadership needs to move on at a bit of a pace. I'm not fast enough: although we can self-assess, the progress we make towards the objective is not quick enough. All right? That is the problem.

His understanding of the role of the coach and his engagement with the MTL participant for whom he was responsible was dominated by his concern for her personal welfare to the exclusion of a firm grasp of her professional development and his role in it. Irrespective of the questions asked, his responses were often rambling and inconsequential:

Well basically she was getting married, and she was with a long-term partner, more organised. And it was last term that it just went completely pear-shaped. Completely pear shaped, so that coincided with the school improvement partner coming in, and then one day she had three or four teachers in the lesson. And I think they graded it, I'm not sure, they made some comments about it, and she was pretty upset. No, Ofsted had given a pretty good. Ofsted had given her a good, and then subsequently they came through and suddenly said it was, "Satisfactory". She felt, "Hang on a minute, no" for that type of thing. Plus she had the pressure from the personal relationship. She got herself in quite a pickle, quite a pickle; in fact she was going to change her job. She had come from a school where they were quite intensive on that, and focused, it was all, be watched, so she didn't like that at all. But she seems now, it took quite a while, she was going to have a different job. But the relationship has obviously finished, she has got settled down now and really focused on what she needs to do.

And again, he was asked whether he thought that the MTL was making any significant difference in terms of the three aims of the MTL: first of all to improve classroom practice, i.e. teaching. Secondly to raise pupil attainment, and then thirdly, to keep teachers in a profession when they were leaving so rapidly at the beginning. He responded:

Well I would agree with those three, being she has got this research, she has got this taste; she is obviously enthused about it. That will keep her in place.

The cumulative effect of such confused responses was for the researcher to consider excluding this interview on the ground that it did not appear to add to an understanding of how coaches see their role as a crucial and peculiar element in the professional development of the MTL participants. However, reference to it is included because it provides an insight into several of the problematic issues raised in this research: despite his 30 years' experience of teaching and extensive responsibility for inducting and mentoring newly qualified teachers, Coach 5 had had only perfunctory training in the role of a school-based coach through attendance at various meetings where he was 'put in the picture'. Even so, he had had no involvement with the HEI personnel and did not know whether his colleague had a tutor. That an underperforming head of a science department in which there were two other unsatisfactory teachers 'on capability', as he described it, reflects the wider concern, identified in this research, that to target struggling schools as the pilot for the MTL was, at best, naive. It also suggests that the senior leadership of the school had more pressing priorities for school improvement than the MTL, which was a side-effect of appointing a teacher who had transferred 'from a local school in which she didn't feel that she had the support'. More to the point, it corroborates, the scepticism expressed by some teachers, both in the questionnaire and the conversations, that a significant number of coaches, for whatever reason, were not meeting their needs. This point and several others will be discussed in the following section. As an endnote to Coach 5's interview, he explained that from the upcoming academic year he would cease to be a head of department or a teacher mentor, but would take on a role as pupil mentor.

7.5 Concluding comments

Given that there are no absolute truths in matters of professional judgement, it can be reasonably concluded that these teachers and their coaches have a mainly positive view of their teaching, albeit based on their sense of their own efficacy. This 'reasonable conclusion' derives, clearly, from evidence that would need to be substantiated by further research with a wider population. Notwithstanding the limitations of the sample size, it is noteworthy that most of the teacher conversations reveal a positive view of the MTL per se and a belief that it has impacted beneficially on these teachers and their pupils. This conclusion is also evidenced by the questionnaire, in the commentary on Theme 2 in Chapter 6, where the great

majority affirmed that their teaching and its impact on their pupils had been enhanced by the MTL, despite the difficulty in presenting ‘hard’ evidence to support their view.

Regardless of the problematic nature of evidence, all the respondents emphasise the importance of personal skills, attitudes and qualities in considering their professional efficacy, as described by Bandura (1994) and others in Chapter 2. Such skills, attitudes and qualities elude easy definition, as in the case of Robert who has ‘a magic touch with the kids’. Barbara, too, is driven by her conviction that ‘making a difference to children who perhaps aren’t as fortunate as others’ is important; and Matthew has an ‘absolute concern about every pupil that they are a nice person’. Similarly, James maintains that his enthusiasm is reciprocated by those he teaches, especially his older pupils who respond well to his sense of humour. He sees himself as ‘someone that maybe guides them through life ...in a way’. Robert reiterates this sentiment in the importance he attaches to ‘relationships with the kids and getting them to learn life stuff in the lessons’.

Regardless of the ‘considerable measure of participant disaffection with the coach’ based on the questionnaire and interviews recorded in Section 6.11, the small number of the coaches who were interviewed appeared conscientious in their efforts to support the MTL participants, both in terms of their experience and qualifications to coach. Like any self-confident professional, they were making a good fist of the coaching role despite the lack of clear guidance on the specific requirements of this new degree. In addition, they were not, for the most part, freed from the constraints placed upon them by senior management in their schools. That three of the coaches were also participating as MTL students themselves and one ineligible who would have wished to be, is an interesting phenomenon. There are, of course, drawbacks to such direct participation in the programme, as are pointed out by Coach 4 in the previous section. Arguably, it could have provided an answer to ‘the fatal flaw’ in the MTL as perceived by Anderson and Gristy (2013) in Section 2.5: the imbalance between the HEI tutor and the coach could have been eased and the coaches would have been in a better position to reverse the hierarchical culture (Lofthouse et al., 2010a) that has plagued the best intentions of effective coaching:

...power and hierarchy affect the organisational context for mentoring and coaching and thus the extent to which they are given status and embedded in school systems and the processes themselves. It is important that protocols create appropriate links with accountability systems at the same time as creating, for

example, confidentiality buffer zones between them and specific mentoring and coaching activities. (P. Cordingley, 2005, p. 1)

At several points in this thesis the concept of the school-based coach has featured as being a highly problematic element in the development of the MTL, not least because it was underdeveloped and failed to draw both on the considerable extant research on coaching and on the potential of senior leaders in the schools to make it work. Further comment on this is offered in the next chapter, together with some summary conclusions and insights on other key aspects of the research.

Chapter 8 Conclusions and Insights

8.1 Introduction

In the introduction to Chapter 3 this research was described as a retrospective case study in which ‘there is no expressed intention to establish a general theory or to generalise to broader populations’, but rather to develop and strengthen what were at the outset nascent insights drawn from the researcher’s experience of and active involvement in the development of the Masters in Teaching and Learning. Despite this avowal, it seems reasonable to suggest that a future research project might draw on these insights: for example, by considering the effectiveness of teachers from the perspective of their pupils, as argued by some (McIntyre, Pedder*, & Rudduck, 2005) who construe the voice of pupils as ‘comfortable learnings and ‘uncomfortable’ (pp 166-167). In particular, there is scope for further enquiry into whether a Masters degree for teachers adds to their effectiveness in raising pupil attainment, as this thesis, like other research and various reports referred to earlier, cannot provide an incontestable answer. Since the government of the time appears to have preferred an MBA for teachers, such an imaginative idea also merits research which could take into account models such as the Chartered Teacher schemes in London and Scotland. Another project could address the whole issue of school based coaching for Masters and the problems encountered in this research and reiterated later in this chapter. It would also be helpful to explore the question of how classroom teaching might be included as an assessed element in a Masters award, as suggested by Hopkins and Matthews (2010) alongside which the role of the school-based coach in this respect could be considered. Meanwhile, the insights gained from this research are not only presented as a contribution to the wider debate about the effectiveness of the professional development and learning of teachers but as an extended critique of what was considered by some, including the researcher, to be a visionary contribution to it.

The researcher’s initial insights were strengthened by the research and academic literature which is discussed in Chapter 2 and which, in turn, determined the research questions. Earlier, in Chapter 1, the problematic nature of the MTL, and thus the purpose of this research, was identified and an optimistic note struck that such awards that advance the professional development of teachers can contribute significantly to not only professional effectiveness and self-esteem but to overall school improvement and pupil attainment.

However, optimism is not enough: of fundamental importance to the success of any such innovatory project is the extent to which it is developed and implemented to the satisfaction of all the participants. In this respect, the MTL did not realise its potential for the reasons set out in this chapter, which have emerged by a process of accretion throughout each of the foregoing chapters and are presented here as both researcher insights and tentative findings.

This final chapter of the thesis presents a synopsis of the research beginning with a reminder of the background to it and some of the early issues that emerged. It also harkens back to the methodology adopted in the research and considers what has been learned about its strengths and limitations. It then continues with a discussion of the academic and research literature related to teacher professional development in general and the phenomenon of the MTL in particular. The axiom that impelled the introduction of the MTL that enhancing the qualifications of teachers at an early stage in their career would bring about school improvement and raise pupil attainment is also discussed, by particular reference to the elite respondents who were, in varying degrees, responsible for advising government on its decision to introduce the MTL and, thereafter, developing appropriate guidance for its implementation. Arising from this are the issues surrounding the role of the school-based coach which, throughout this thesis, have been described in various ways: mainly as an essential prerequisite to the effective delivery of the MTL and the achievement of its stated aims. The role of the HEIs is also re-stated in this chapter, particularly in terms of their sometimes guarded relationship with government and the fears expressed by some that they in particular and government policy in general, as interpreted by TDA officials, were more often than not at loggerheads. Throughout this thesis a number of other significant structural and organizational issues have emerged, notably the government's predilection for an MBA – all of which are re-examined in this final chapter. As emphasized in Chapters 6 - 7, a major strand of this research has focused on the teachers who participated in the MTL, their coaches and those others who were undertaking a conventional Masters degree in teaching and learning who completed the questionnaire. Their contribution to the research is also summarized in this chapter.

8.2 The thesis background: summary

This study arose from the researcher's experience in a UK university of directing the Masters in Teaching and Learning from its introduction in 2010 as a national pilot and during the

early phase of its development. The original intention of the study was to focus on the stated aims of the MTL which were principally to improve the quality of teaching and, thereby, to raise the attainment of pupils. In the pilot phase this referred to teachers and pupils in those schools which were deemed to be, in the words of Ofsted, ‘requiring improvement’ – at that time the so-called National Challenge schools. From the outset, it was envisaged that the participant teachers, including their coaches, would provide, by means of a questionnaire and several subsequent interviews or ‘conversations’, sufficient evidence to respond to the research questions. The elite interviews were, in this light, seen as providing a form of triangulation whilst at the same time offering an illuminating backdrop to the teacher responses. However, it soon became clear that the views and actions of those responsible for the design and implementation of the degree, TDA and HEIs, were of equal, if not greater importance to the project. Consequently, as can be seen from chapters 4 and 5, the elite interviews, Strand 1, led to more weight being attached to the underlying policy decisions and administrative actions that determined the conception and structure of the MTL, without prejudice to the perceptions elicited from the participants both, Strands 2 and 3, before and after these interviews. This entailed, some adjustment to the research questions to reflect this change in the thrust of the research, by foregrounding the role of those mandated to implement the government’s policy whilst retaining the two other questions. Thus, the first question was refined, more in policy terms than originally, as:

1. In the perception of those responsible for the introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), does this policy innovation for the professional development of teachers offer an effective model for school improvement in general and teacher efficacy in particular?

The other two questions remained unaltered because, as described in Chapter 3 (para 3.2), they are consistent with a case study design which allows for ‘multiple sources of evidence’ and the afore-mentioned measure of triangulation. These questions, which emerged from the ‘theoretical perspectives’ discussed in Chapter 2, are:

2. Do teacher participants and HEIs think that the MTL has had or will have a direct impact on pupil attainment?
3. At the half-way point in the programme, how do participants view the MTL – in personal, professional and academic terms?

This shift of emphasis in the research questions in order to achieve a more coherent and at the same time manageable research project entailed the exclusion of two elite interviews, two programme leader interviews and two participant focus groups, for no other reason than that they exceeded requirements.

From the initial stages of the research (Section 6.3) it became apparent that there were several contentious issues surrounding the introduction and development of the award, together with a positive measure of acceptance, particularly from the teacher participants. Indeed, the evidence suggests that there was little difference between the responses of those following the MTL programme and those following a well-established MA in Teaching and Learning, with the one significant exception of the greater level of confidence and self-esteem shown by the MA cohort. This difference in confidence may be attributable to the equally greater professional experience of the MA cohort and the fact that they were in the main self-funded and instigators of their own pursuit of enhanced qualifications. By comparison, the MTL participants were less experienced and their participation in a Masters course was freely gifted as an 'entitlement'. Even so, given the overall similarity between the responses of the two cohorts, it raises a question of the necessity for the MTL. It was argued by some of the elite respondents that the provision of similar extant Masters programmes nationally was variable in content and quality and that, therefore, such provision was not fit for the purpose of a national qualification which, while allowing for local interpretation, needed a common structure and must allow for national portability. It also needed to address the political imperative of school improvement, which required that implementation be within the context of schools nationally and not subject to the disposition of individual HEIs. The tension this created between HEIs and government proved an important feature of this research.

8.3 The three strands

Given the refinements to Strand 1 and to the first research question, described in Section 8.2, the three strands of the research produced a balanced and integrated project from the outset. Initially, the teacher questionnaire and the subsequent teacher conversations (Strand 2a and b) were regarded as the starting point, at least in time, for the research: hence, there was expressly no numerical priority attached to the strands. It was intended that each strand would mutually inform the other two in order to achieve the intended interrelationship. This was particularly evident in the example of the impact of school-based coaching (Strand 3)

which, as referred to several times in this thesis, was conceived as a predominant and vital element in the MTL. Strand 2 (teacher participants) served to provide an axis between, on the one hand, Strand 1 (elite interviews) and, on the other hand, Strand 3 (coach interviews). For example, the shortcomings of the coaching concept which emerged from the elite interviews, were reflected in the questionnaire responses and teacher conversations and were subsequently reiterated in the coach interviews. In this respect, the notion of conceiving Strand 1 as a means of triangulation (Sections 1.6 and 3.8.3) worked well. Similarly, the vexed issue of the relationship between attainment and professional development permeated all three strands, although more by implication in Strand 1. Overall, there was a broad consensus across the three strands that, despite its acknowledged imperfection, the MTL was a promising initiative to enhance teachers' professional development and thereby contribute to pupil attainment. In this respect, the strands cohered effectively and addressed the research questions satisfactorily. Finally, it bears repetition that the strands provided for the researcher a broad-based framework for a case study, as described at the opening of this chapter and in Chapter 3, as an appropriate and productive means by which he could draw inferences and offer insights which were born not only of his own direct experience but given credence by those who were responsible for the introduction and development of the MTL: (TDA officials); HEIs; and those who were intended to be its beneficiaries (schools and teachers). Whilst some of the insights, derived from each of the strands may provide some uncomfortable reading for government officials, HEIs and, indeed, school leaders, they also produced a balanced and heartening overall view that, in the light of this experience, there is much to recommend any such initiative in the future, as concluded at the end of this thesis. Meanwhile, the next section looks back on the research from its inception and reflects on its strengths and limitations.

8.4 The research - a retrospective critique

In his book *Hindsight: The promise and peril of looking backward* (2009) Freeman describes a process that is particularly apposite for researchers:

...through hindsight we can pause, look again, and see ourselves anew, 'unconcealed' by the urgencies of the moment. Looking backward, in hindsight, thus requires mindfulness in its own right. It is thus a vital means of interrogating our lives and, in so doing, learning and relearning, ever again, how to live. (p.15)

These last three words could in the context of this thesis, read ‘how to research’. One of the strengths of the thesis lies in the adoption of a case study approach which, it is argued, proved appropriate to the researcher’s professional background and experience which is based on an interpretist ontological view and a constructivist epistemology, as described by Crotty (2003).

A particularly strong positive feature of the research method was the elite interviews, which developed into more of a central strand in the research than was originally envisaged. In retrospect, this could have stood alone, perhaps supplemented by the coach and teacher interviews, to the exclusion of the participant questionnaire strand. Indeed, given that the questionnaire was largely limited to the immediate, and convenient, locality of the researcher, a different approach could have been to extend the number of interviews, possibly across two or three consortia, without the questionnaire. Alternatively, a balance between the number of interview and questionnaire respondents could have been created, preferably with each interviewee also completing a questionnaire. As it transpired, the questionnaire relied unduly on the Seaborne model onto which the themes and categories were superimposed by the researcher and which resulted in a sense of imbalance between them: for example, Theme 3 (p.155) relied on one statement only (Statement 12) compared with several for each of the other three themes. It would have been better to have devised the themes separately, albeit taking the Seaborne model into account, and thereby to have developed a questionnaire more fit for purpose. None of this critique suggests a loss of faith in the original design of the thesis: rather, it speaks of the tensions experienced by the researcher as the project developed and matured over time.

Whilst the main research question proved more successful than initially anticipated in that it gave an original and illuminating insight into the capricious nature of policy formulation and implementation, whether the MTL offered ‘an effective model for school improvement in general and teacher efficacy in particular’ remains contentious, despite the optimistic note struck at the end of this chapter. Either the research question could have been modified to accommodate this limitation or a sharper approach might have been adopted to focus directly on the structure as well as the purpose, of the MTL.

The issue of professional development and its impact on pupil attainment in particular and school improvement in general is a perennial and elusive problem in the literature of which this study is no exception. Hard evidence is difficult to ascertain, whereas more subtle,

nuanced soft evidence can be found in many of the intuitive responses from teachers and academics in this and in other research. It is interesting that even some large-scale research projects, such as the State of the Nation and the Staff Development Outcomes (SDO) studies appear to side-step the issue of attainment, preferring the term ‘pupils’ learning’. Perhaps the way forward is to track the progress of a selection of MTL graduates over time in order to explore this relationship. Another wider approach could be to investigate further the factors that enable a school to be ‘turned around’, as in the examples of the High Reliability and Octet projects referred to in Chapter 2 (Sections 2.3 and 2.4).

In summary, a critical view of this research project is that it could be seen to have initially been inclined, in the words of Silverman (2010, p.10), to have adopted ‘a ‘kitchen sink gambit’: it proved ambitious in its attempt to cover all aspects of the perceived problem. Arguably, it would have benefitted from a more calculated approach at the planning stage to pre-empt any need for pruning beyond the adjustments already made during the course of the fieldwork and the subsequent writing up, as described in Section 8.2. Nonetheless, despite this critique of the research project, it makes a substantive, and in some respects different, contribution to understanding the relationship between teacher development and pupil attainment by providing a rare insight into how government policy is framed and realised.

8.5 The theoretical and research literature: discussion

Since this thesis has focused mainly on the professional development (PD) of serving teachers it is inevitable that previous and current academic research in this area should be paramount. What emerges clearly is the contentious nature of this research, as declared by Guskey (Section 2.6), and a singular lack of consensus on both the purpose of professional development for teachers and the means by which it can be made more effective. Predictably, this seeming vacuum has been filled by government by their own definition of professionalism as the New Professionalism – a concept which, although clearly, a matter of contention in the literature as shown in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4) (Beck, 2008; Hargreaves, 1994) is at the heart of the MTL. The extent to which the ‘considerable gap in our knowledge’ claimed by Guskey (Section 2.6) is filled or partially filled by the MTL is, and given its short life-span, is likely to remain so unless a similar initiative presents itself in the future.

As explained earlier (Section 6.6), the teacher participants in this research, both MTL and MA, provide the ‘soft’ evidence that their studies at this level have made them better teachers, despite their reservations as to whether this claim relates to a raised level of pupil attainment. Harder evidence of a direct impact is provided by some of the research on school improvement, as described in Section 2.3 (Avalos, 2011; Mourshed, 2010; Seaborne, 2010; Soulsby & Swain, 2003; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). In addition, the research on PD, the prerequisite for school improvement, is compelling in that, despite some hesitant findings and some notable exceptions (Wolff, 2010), the overall view, supported by substantial evidence, is that teacher professional development provides the key to raising attainment. Among the notable exceptions are those who see PD as a neoliberal stratagem by recent governments to micromanage schools and to control teachers (Frankham & Hiatt, 2011; Keep, 2006; MacBeath, 2011; Verschuren, 2003; Wilkin, 1996).

Of those who are positive about the impact of PD some express various reservations regarding the necessary conditions in which the evidence suggests that it is most effective. These conditions apply mainly to the nature of the school environment, as opposed to the individual: whether it is conducive to professional learning (Henderson, 1976). In particular, the argument is made that ‘high performing’ schools are more likely to demonstrate a positive relationship to high attainment and PD (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2008; Opfer, 2011). According to the latter, high performance depends, crucially, on the performance of the headteacher. This argument has clear implications for the present research into the notion of an all-Masters teaching profession, particularly in terms of the target group of schools and participants that the TDA determined for the MTL. In this respect it is ironic, although explicable in political terms, that, according to the Opfer and Pedder study, high performing schools engage in professional development activities that are longer in duration whereas the MTL, which required a minimum three-year commitment, was targeted explicitly at low-performing schools. Since the MTL came to an untimely conclusion any finding based on its endurance is futile. This latter point about the sustainability of so many improvement projects is made by the authors of the High Reliability Project (2008) who declare boldly that ‘research on the sustainability of various educational reforms and their outcomes, let alone continuing improvement on diverse measures post-reform, is extremely rare’ (p.411). They also emphasised the role of external support

...it was the combination of external facilitators and local professional educators that achieved positive results. Co-construction has no meaning if there are not two partners. In every 2006 follow-up interview, the local educators stated that it was the combination of challenging, externally derived principles with local energy and application that resulted in success. p.425

Although the MTL allowed for the possibility of external support through regional groupings and consensual networks, such as TRANSFORM in south-west England, the school-based coach, referred to later, was envisaged as the primary agent for the professional learning of the participants and a central key to school improvement.

8.6 The elite respondents

Several distinctive themes, listed in Section 4.8, emerged from the elite discussions some of which either informed or resonated with the teacher and coach responses. Of these, the notion of ‘producer capture’ in the context of the oppositional debate about neoliberalism and social democracy looms large. Closely allied to this was the government’s ambition to create a Masters degree along the lines of an MBA (see Section 8.81) and the view of its officials in the TDA that such an ambition had been thwarted by the subterfuge of the HEIs. On a more practical level, the much vaunted concept of the school-based coach was either ill-conceived or poorly developed, or both. In terms of the aforementioned ‘subterfuge’, some saw this as a direct consequence of the government’s determination to locate the bulk of the responsibility for the development of the MTL with the schools and, thus in large measure bypassing the HEIs who possessed the required expertise and experience in mentoring and coaching.

Regardless of these tensions, the government’s laudable aim was to enhance the professional qualifications of teachers in order, it believed, to raise the attainment of pupils, particularly those in National Challenge schools who were deemed to be underachieving. This raises several questions, not least of which is the assumption that there is a positive correlation between such a qualification and teacher efficacy, as determined by ascertainable test results. Presented with this quandary, the academic and research literature does not provide a definitive answer, despite a plethora of views on approaches to professional development. The elite respondents were not explicitly questioned about the relationship between

professional development and pupil attainment, although they were asked to reflect on the overall effectiveness of the MTL.

Typically those elites who were government officials tasked to implement the programme, were sanguine about the MTL overall whilst accepting that there were some problems which, given time, could be overcome: in the words of Board Member 1, 'it looked an undercooked set of issues'. They accepted without question that the MTL would serve to improve pupil attainment and if there were any impediments to this being achieved it would be due to the either the inertia or opposition of the HEIs. In this respect, as reported in chapters 4 and 5, some were outspoken in their criticism of the universities and, as the Executive Director saw it, their machinations. Some of the HEI respondents and other academics were very critical of what they considered to be an unworkable model. One of the fears was that a Masters degree which was shaped by government officials, albeit with some input from HEIs, would lack the criticality required of a conventional Masters degree, especially in view of what they understood to be an unclassified award with no requirement for a dissertation.

8.7 The teacher participants and impact on attainment

Three chapters of this thesis have been devoted to the responses of the teacher participants in the MTL and one chapter includes the participation of teachers undertaking a conventional in-service Masters programme at a comparable level. From the outset, the expressed intention was to consider the views of those who are on the receiving end of policy decisions both from their political starting point to the points of delivery both in the HEIs and the schools. Of paramount importance in this regard is the second research question which asks whether the participants think that the MTL will have an impact on pupil attainment. The analysis of the questionnaire data has shown that the teachers in both Masters cohorts were generally very positive about the professional and personal outcomes of their Masters studies: most notably in their overall sense of personal and professional development; their enhanced subject knowledge; and, typically their belief that their higher qualification will 'make a difference'. However, despite this, when they were asked about the impact on pupil attainment, although a majority said that it had improved pupil performance a substantial minority were unsure or did not think attainment had been improved. Clearly this raises the question of the relationship between the positive responses with regard to personal development and the less certain, arguably guarded, responses with regard to the impact on attainment. Whilst the

research literature does not resolve the vexed question of this relationship, there is some compelling evidence, as suggested in Section 6.7, that Masters qualifications lead to higher professional self-esteem which, in turn, can contribute to improved teaching and higher pupil attainment. Certainly, this was the view taken by the Labour government who, drawing on the advice of their school inspectors and extant academic research, conceived of the MTL as a potential solution to school improvement, particularly in those schools which were adjudged to be under performing and, therefore, presented a ‘national challenge’.

As suggested earlier, this problem merits further long term research which, for example, could include an element not included in this thesis which draws on the responses of pupils.

8.8 The teacher participants and level of satisfaction

For the most part, there is a high level of satisfaction across both cohorts as expressed both in the questionnaire data, the invited comments in the questionnaire and the convenience sample of conversations from the MTL cohort. As an afterthought, it may have added to the research to have held similar conversations with a sample from the MA cohort despite the fact that they presented a more mature profile in terms of age and experience and provided more detailed comments in their questionnaire responses. Since the MA cohort was following a subject-specific programme, unlike the MTL respondents they emphasized the gains they made in subject knowledge, in their understanding of their school improvement priorities and in their overall confidence and self-esteem. Particularly, both cohorts gave a combined rating of 89% to the direct impact on their personal and professional development. As reported throughout this research, the MTL respondents’ views of the school-based coach were mixed. That the MA cohort did not require a school-based coach yet expressed a similar degree of satisfaction with their programme raises the question of whether one was necessary in view of the problems it presented.

8.9 The school-based coach

Although coaching was seen as the cornerstone of this unique project the concept of the school-based coach proved undeveloped and inconsistently provided. Only 53% of the respondents to the questionnaire rated their coaches positively. The concept of the school-based coach, an integral feature of the MTL, was viewed positively by some and questioned by others: indeed, it provides the most contentious aspect of this research project and

permeates the thesis. The questionnaire rating was re-affirmed in the subsequent teacher conversations. It was also acknowledged by elite interviewees and others as flawed. One said, ‘the management of the coaching dimension (at planning level) was amateurish at best’. Perhaps the most damning verdict on the concept of the school-based coach was not only that to task National Challenge schools with the responsibility to deliver the MTL through a sophisticated coaching system when their priorities for whole-school improvement lay elsewhere was, at best, ill-advised, but that somehow, in the words of 04, he had ‘got to find a way to make it work’. The teacher participants expressed mixed feelings about their coaches ranging from a measure of satisfaction to serious disappointment. The coaches themselves ranged from being very professional to good intentioned with only one appearing to be unsuitable for the role.

Perhaps the reason for a lack of clarity in the coaching role lies not only in the academic literature on coaching which itself offers a wide range of coaching models and recommendations, but in the failure of the architects of the MTL to be informed by it. What is surprising is that little cognisance seems to have been taken of the various papers and reports authored by CUREE on behalf of the TDA and others (Buckler et al., 2009; Philippa Cordingley, 2005; Cordingley et al., 2007), including the National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching (CUREE, 2005) with which HEIs were very familiar. As previously stated, the researcher was unable to ascertain the reason for this. It is also remarkable that none of the other well-presented, articulate and potentially useful guidance materials and reports were recommended for the MTL (Atkinson, Lord, & Mitchell, 2008; Lofthouse, Leat, & Towler, 2011; Lofthouse, Leat, Towler, Hallet, & Cummings, 2010). Or, one single approach might have been adopted in the absence of any substantive guidelines, such as that of practice-based ‘instructional coaching’, of the kind advocated by Knight (2012), as described in Section 2.5. Some consideration might also have been given to the proposition that external coaching would be a more effective strategy since it could address the phenomenon of ‘fabrication’, a term referred to in Section 2.5, whereby those who are coached by their colleagues are, without guile, prone to ‘strategic silence’ and avoidance in order to present an appearance of competence (Hobson & McIntyre, 2013, p. 356).

In terms of the tripartite model presented for the MTL – participant, school-based coach and HEI tutor – it seems not unreasonable to suggest that a major flaw in it was the omission of an

assessment role for the coach (Anderson, 2013; Hopkins & Matthews, 2010), particularly in the assessment of teaching and, also, participating in the overall assessment of the MTL with the HEI tutor. Another flaw lay in the unresolved issue of what constituted appropriate training for the coach. Similarly unresolved, and in need of further research, was the question which is raised in Section 7.3 of whether a coach was needed at all, especially since it did not apply to conventional Masters (Cohort 2) and placed a considerable burden on schools, particularly those that were under pressure to improve.

8.10 Neoliberalism

Much has been written in the academic literature about the so-called neoliberal ideology and the extent to which it determines education policy, so much so that it has become a predictable dualistic refrain in the discourse: broadly, the argument goes that education academics are on the side of social democracy and most politicians are charged by them with adopting a neoliberal stance which is seen as the polar opposite. A glance at chapters 2 and 5 provides ample evidence of this persistent antithesis. As can be seen from Chapter 2 in particular, the argument is made repeatedly that successive governments set out to micro-manage the education system and only occasionally is a realpolitical note of compromise sounded (Hall (2011a); Lawton (1992); Wilkin (1996)). The irony of this seeming intellectual impasse is that the universities themselves are seen by some as not only accepting but being a part of the neoliberalism that they ostensibly oppose, as argued by Thrupp and Willmott (p.113). This is exemplified in the term ‘producer capture’ which refers to the charge that the universities are only interested in protecting themselves as producers, rather than being concerned about the best interest of the ‘consumers’, their students. In that sense, they are as much a part of a neoliberal stratagem as those they admonish, as Furlong points out (Furlong, 2013) in his recent discourse on what he terms ‘rescuing the university project’:

...a worrying number of government initiatives in education now explicitly exclude universities as contributors to new developments in policy and practice. If university based educationalists believe that they do have something to say to professionals and to policy makers then they urgently need to find new ways of connecting far more effectively than they have done in the past with their various publics. In short, it needs to re-tool by developing more effective strategies for ‘knowledge mobilisation’. (p.191)

Some of the TDA officials were unequivocal in their opinion that ‘producer capture’ was at the heart of the attitude adopted by some of the universities towards the MTL: for example, as explained by O1, one of the Russell Group universities was initially enthusiastic about the new degree, but withdrew once they realized that they would not be able to modify it for their own purposes. Ironically, the government exercised its own version of producer capture by channelling most of the funding for the MTL directly to the schools, which is consistent with other policy changes in education, such as School Direct.

One of the conclusions of this research is that both government agencies and HEIs need to be more mindful of each other’s actual and philosophical position: to recognise that education in general and teacher education in particular is less likely to develop positively, as they both purport to want, if the advice offered by Furlong above remains unheeded and the antagonisms described in this thesis persist over time. Of course, politicians are mandated, given power, to override all others, if they deem it necessary, in a way that teacher educators are not able, so there is every reason to require a more nuanced posture from the latter. Furthermore, it should be recognised more generally that politicians, whatever their ideological hue, can and do disagree with their own colleagues on policy matters, as evidenced by Graham Stuart, the Conservative chairman of the Commons Select Committee, in a report in the Independent Garner (2012), who criticised the rapid pace of Michael Gove’s education reforms and advised him to ‘stop taking the urgency pills and recognise the need to slow down’. In his view, Gove’s ‘rapid agenda for change had led to incoherence with urgent time lines (for implementation) which can’t be done’. Similarly, for all their shortcomings, as described in this research, the TDA officials did advise the politicians of their misgivings over the allocation of funding to the schools and, indeed, the target schools. This research argues that they could have done better.

8.11 MTL or MBA

It is clear that from the elite responses that the government wanted a Masters for teachers based on a typical Masters in Business Administration (MBA), although there is no clear evidence that this was made explicit in any documentation leading up to the launch. Since most UK universities offer an MBA that conforms to the Bologna requirements, the consternation expressed by some seems, on the face of it, either naive or disingenuous, as implied by the Programme Director (O2) who declared disdainfully that ‘universities are not

exactly the hotbeds of innovation' (p.89). According to John Fernandes (Spender, 2007) the president of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), despite the reservations about its relevance for education, 'the MBA is still the most popular, most flexible, and most successful degree in the world that provides graduates with the liberal arts of life'. More to the point, perhaps, is the notion, openly declared by O2, of 'a kind of an off-the-shelf Masters programme'. Such a Masters would deny the universities the academic control and independence that they regarded as their prerogative, so it is understandable that they should fear the worst. Despite such demur, a substantial number of English universities do offer MBAs, so it is equally understandable that politicians should see this route as firmly established and the most suitable route for a higher teaching qualification that would carry comparable kudos.

BM1 repeated the view expressed by PPS that the TDA officials had in their minds, not a conventional MA as the starting point but the business school MBA. Since there was a de facto national curriculum for initial teacher training that was highly directive, he observed, it seemed self-evident to ministers that such an approach could also be developed for a new Masters. At this juncture in the TDA's thinking they bought in the services of the McKinsey Company an added attraction of which was that one of the co-authors of the McKinsey reports, Michael Barber, was head of McKinsey's Global Education Practice at that time. Barber had previously been (from 2001) Chief Adviser on Delivery to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. As Head of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit he was responsible for the oversight of implementation of the Prime Minister's priority programmes in health, education, transport, policing, the criminal justice system and asylum/immigration. It is not surprising, therefore, that with such a compelling curriculum vitae, his advice should be sought and largely accepted by the TDA.

8.12 Structure and organisation

As discussed in Chapter 5 (Section 5.5), the HEIs were not persuaded of the TDA view that, as a new concept, the MTL should be distinctly different from a conventional Masters and its structure needed to reflect such a difference accordingly, especially in view of the fact that the idea of an MBA had become a forlorn prospect. Indeed, given the Executive Director's preference for an MBA, he was reluctant to concede more ground beyond, as he called it, 'tweaking the reality'. The lack of clarity in this regard was evident from the MTL

Programme Director's view that the notion of a dissertation had not been expressly prohibited, but that it was open to each HEI to decide whether they preferred an alternative to the proposed module structure. For him, the problem lay in the HEIs' assumption that they were not allowed to provide for a dissertation, just as they assumed the degree was not to be classified – which assumptions morphed, for them, into a certainty. The fact that his interpretation of this was at odds with those of the Executive Director, who regarded the dissertation as 'old fashioned', compounds the sense of confusion conveyed by the TDA. The TDA official responsible for programme development (03) argued that the responsibility for the purported confusion lay squarely with the HEIs who had 'signed up' to a new kind of Masters degree award without, in some cases, realising the implications of their actions. However, she pointed out that 'it was pretty phenomenal how we (the Working Group which consisted of TDA officials and HEI representatives) were able to manage and come to a sort of agreement about those tensions' (p.107). Other 'tensions' included the necessity for compromise on matters of classification, portability, modularity and content, in view of the need for a coherent national qualification which was designed to be distinctively different from the variable extant provision offered by individual universities.

In policy and organisational terms there was a much greater consensus related to regional grouping, target schools, teacher participants and funding. That is to say, to varying degrees, the elite respondents conceded that these aspects proved problematic. For example, the Executive Director (01) thought that the decision to deliver the MTL via the nine government office regions in order to ensure capacity was a mistake: far better to have had the programme delivered through one 'high performing' provider in each region, thereby avoiding the problems associated with producer capture and ensuring the participation of the Russell Group universities. Further, he regretted that ministers had ignored the TDA's advice not to target National Challenge schools and the TDA's own failure to win the argument for an MBA. Finally, he attributed many of the initial problems to his view that 'people nit-picked' and that, unlike the medical profession, 'education' does not accept responsibility for developing new professionals. Contentious, indeed provocative, though these views are, they were echoed, albeit to a more nuanced extent, by other elite respondents, such as the TDA Board member (BM1) who recognised that the TDA was 'hostile' to some universities which he named on the understanding that it was in strict confidence and not for publication. For

the programme Director (O2), the biggest problem was less with the universities than with his regret at the lack of time to develop the programme coherently.

The HEIs themselves expressed mixed feelings about the MTL: those who wrote early papers about it, based inevitably on limited research, foresaw some of the problems encountered in this thesis. From the outset, some were optimistic that the project would enhance teacher professionalism: as observed by PL1, the development of the programme was ‘a really exciting place to be’. However, doubt and despondency quickly began to emerge at the realisation that what appeared to be, or could be, ‘a revolution in teacher education’ (Burton & Goodman, 2011) was likely to be short-lived.

8.13 Communication

It is understood that governments seem often to want policy decisions implemented immediately and they leave it to their officials to determine the means by which this can be achieved. It is acknowledged by these officials that, in the case of the MTL, there was insufficient time to resolve the issues with which they were presented. This may be true for some circumstances, such as the sudden change in the original plan for the coach training to be undertaken by an external contractor and for it then to be abruptly foisted on the HEIs, as described by PO1 (Sections 4.8, 5.4). However, the TDA offered no explanation for this volte-face, so it was left to speculation and certainly compounded the problems already being encountered. Other aspects were also left to speculation, as revealed particularly by the MTL Programme Director (O2). He acknowledged very frankly that such matters as whether the proposed award could be classified or a dissertation permitted were for the HEIs to decide, despite the understanding given to them that this would be contrary to the requirement for national coherence and portability. This understanding he regarded as ‘an urban myth’ (Section 4.5.2) which, no doubt would be a matter of serious consternation for all those HEIs who had sought validation for the MTL on this basis, all the more so where validation committees had not approved a submission. A similar startling failure in communication is evident in O3’s assertion that the consortia had the power to allocate the funding for the MTL which ran contrary to the reality and was at odds with her other assertion that ‘this wasn’t about HEIs calling the shots’ (Section 5.6).

8.14 Concluding remarks

In the introduction to this thesis the question was asked whether the MTL presented a threat or an opportunity to HEIs and schools and what lessons can be learned should such an initiative be taken in the future. As far as the participant teachers were concerned, there was much room for optimism, especially in the heightened professional self-esteem that studying for a practice-based Masters engendered. It also encouraged them to believe that such an award would make them more effective teachers despite the lack of incontrovertible evidence to support their view, both in their own practical experience and in the literature. The policy makers also believed that, despite its acknowledged shortcomings and given time, the MTL could become an established feature of the professional development and learning of all teachers. Since the funding for this award was abruptly discontinued there is no way of knowing whether this would have been the case. However, there are some lessons to be learned, not least those that are addressed in this chapter: among these, a prominent feature is the wariness, amounting at times to mistrust, in the relationship between government and Higher Education as expressed by some of the TDA officials and evident in some of the academic literature. There is a palpable need for both sides to adopt a less predictable and more invitational approach to such enterprises, as was beginning to happen at the early joint planning stage, despite the obvious fact that politicians will, if they see fit, always have the upper hand: in the words of the former Permanent Secretary for Education, ‘ministers of both political persuasions have, by virtue of their elected office, a right to assert their view regardless of any evidence to the contrary, that they want teacher education to be largely driven at school level’ (Section 4.4).

Whilst accepting that politicians do have ‘the upper hand’ in the formulation of policy on education or elsewhere, it behoves their officials first to advise them judiciously and then, regardless of whether the advice is accepted, to implement the policy proficiently. If, for example, in the case of the MTL, the TDA had consulted openly with both headteachers and HEIs on their intention to introduce the equivalent of an MBA for teaching, they might have achieved a positive response, especially in view of the experience of conventional MBAs that most universities have. They might also have considered the extant research on the MBA, such as that undertaken in the US by Navarro (2008) if only to obtain a broader view of such programmes and their implications for the professional development of teachers. Instead,

according to Programme Leader 2 (Section 4.5.3), they chose to indulge in behind-the-scenes consultations with him as an HEI representative, a self-styled ‘go-between’ who had no direct experience of teaching in schools but with experience of establishing an MBA in his own university, in order to present what he described as ‘a right in your face challenge to universities’. Similarly, the *gaucherie* displayed by the TDA in initially allocating the responsibility for coach training externally and then, abruptly re-allocating it to the HEIs without explanation was symptomatic of an untidy approach to the management of the project. Simply to foist this problem onto the HEIs peremptorily undermined the Programme Director’s assertion that ‘we were looking for something innovative in terms of the way the universities and schools would work together’ (Section 4.5.2). Finally, a prominent academic, who prefers to remain anonymous, remarked during the course of this research that ‘if you were looking for a case study of the mis-management of a national educational initiative you would find it difficult to find a more striking one than the MTL’.

In the introduction to this thesis another prominent academic, John Furlong, was cited as having education ‘in his blood’, so it is fitting to conclude with his prescient observations about the MTL before its launch, by reference to *Alice in Wonderland*:

But if it is a success, then we will have moved, not to teacher professionalism ‘in an age of compliance’, to borrow a phrase from Susan Groundwater-Smith’s most recent book, but teacher professionalism as ‘managed commitment’. My own guess though is that, before it is pushed into the teapot, the Dormouse will wake up and protest; we will see. (Furlong, 2011)

As he predicted, the Coalition Government of 2010 gave the Dormouse a rude awakening.

Whether such an enterprise as the MTL comes to pass or not in the future, it proved to be an exciting challenge to those involved in teacher education, not least for the participant teachers who, in the main, viewed it positively and those HEIs who committed themselves to it in good faith. The TDA officials who, constrained by the trammels of political expediency, were thwarted in their efforts to bring the introduction of the award to a successful conclusion. According to Chung et al (2011), what the MTL required and what the TDA was denied the time to develop were ‘the stages of interpretation, revision and repetition that would transform a blueprint for improvement into a qualification truly fit for the purpose it

was designed to fulfil' (p.272). As questioned at the outset of this thesis (Section 1.7) and bearing in mind Chung's observation, an all-Masters teaching profession along the lines proposed for the MTL could well be a worthy goal for future legislators.

Appendices

Appendix 1: subject knowledge - a definition (Training and Development Agency)

Subject knowledge per se
The key concepts, language, skill and topics that define a subject or curriculum area.
Progression in a subject or curriculum area.
The relevance of a subject.
Connections across subjects.
Relationships within a subject.
Assessment of achievement.
Pedagogy
Range of teaching skills and strategies to promote learning.
Ability to plan lessons and sequences of lessons.
Ability to make use of a range of resources including ICT
Skills in the assessment of pupils' learning and the ability to use the information to inform planning.
Ability to make a subject accessible to pupils at different stages in their learning and to provide a supportive learning environment.
Ability to reflect on and improve teaching and learning.
High expectations of all pupils and skills in working to overcome barriers to learning.
Pupils' development
How pupils' learning in the subject is affected by developmental, social, religious, cultural and linguistic influences.
The range of ways in which pupils learn.
How pupils develop as learners within a subject.
How a subject needs to be adapted to meet pupils' individual needs and contexts.
How parents and carers contribute to their children's learning and development.
Attitudes
The inclusion, achievement and well-being of all pupils.
Enthusiasm for a subject and for teaching it.
Being creative in developing learning opportunities for all pupils.
Continuing professional development.
Working as part of a team, learning from others and contributing to the learning environment.

Appendix 2: participant questionnaire

Dear Student

Many thanks for agreeing to take part in my current research into the impact of your Masters studies on your classroom practice and the attainment of your pupils. The following notes are: 1) to ensure that you are clear about the process and 2) to provide some details of your academic and professional background which will provide a helpful context.

Winston Brookes

N.B. By completing this questionnaire you agree to its use for research.

It may also be used as part of the continuous evaluation process of your Masters course.

Please tick as appropriate	YES	NO
I permit this questionnaire to be used for research.		
I do not permit this questionnaire to be used for research.		
I understand that completing this questionnaire will have no bearing on the outcome of my Masters studies.		
I understand that, unless I complete the Final Section of this questionnaire, my responses will remain anonymous.		

Background information

Status	Comment – if required
Gender (M or F)	
Age range:	
22-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51-60	
Teaching experience in years	
GTP	
PGCE	
Other	
Degree subject	
Degree class	
Teaching Subject	

Responsibility: e.g. HoD, HoY, None	
Title of Masters programme: e.g. MA (Education), MTL	
Number of assignments completed	
Number of assignments re-submitted	
Average mark:	
50+	
60+	
70+	
Assignment topics – in brief: e.g. AfL, Behaviour, G&T, Literacy	

Statements

Please encircle, tick, underline or highlight the number 1-5 of each statement that most approximates your experience of the Masters so far. Add evidence or comment if you wish.

The Masters has:

1. helped me to understand my school's improvement priorities;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

2. impacted directly on my personal and professional development;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

3. increased my subject/pedagogical knowledge base;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

4. increased my confidence and self-esteem;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

5. increased my sense of mission that an improvement in my practice/teaching can have a positive impact on pupils and colleagues;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

6. improved the motivation of my pupils;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

7. improved the attainment of the pupils I teach;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

8. enabled me to cite evidence of improved pupil attainment;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

9. helped me to become a more effective practitioner;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

10. enabled me to cite evidence of improved teaching;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

11. provided a useful link with my performance management;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

12. raised the level of discourse about teaching and learning in my department/school;
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

13. The requirement to undertake some school-based research has not been a problem.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

14. I have found the writing of the required assignments manageable.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

15. The assessment tasks are appropriate to work-based/practitioner learning.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

16. The university tutorials have been helpful.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

17. The school-based support (e.g. coach sessions) have been helpful.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

18. The university input sessions have been stimulating.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

19. I have accessed the University VLE (Blackboard) to help support my studies.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

20. I have used the University Student Support Services to help with my studies.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

21. Finding the time to study has been a problem for me.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

22. Lack of family support has been a problem for me.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

23. Lack of support in my department/school has been a problem for me.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

24. Personal insecurity: I worry about my ability to succeed in the MTL.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

25. Perceptions of relevance: the Masters is relevant to my professional needs
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

26. There have been times when I have felt the pressure to withdraw.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

27. The Masters has met my expectations so far.
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (not sure) 4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

Example of Evidence/Comment

End of questionnaire

Final Section

Thank you for your help by completing this questionnaire. If you would like a copy of the findings in due course, please print your email address here:

Email:

If you are willing to be contacted for an interview or to take part in a focus group, please print your name and email contact details below:

Name:

Email:

Winston Brookes

Researcher

For further information or clarification, contact me: w.a.brookes@reading.ac.uk

Appendix 3: research information sheet

Researcher:

Name: Winston Brookes
Phone: 07584416915
Email: w.a.brookes@reading.ac.uk

Supervisor:

Name: Professor Paul Croll
Phone: 0118 378 8875
Email: emscroll@reading.ac.uk

You have been asked to participate in a research study and selected to be a possible participant because of your study experience within either the MTL or the MA (Education) programme within your university. A total of approximately 100 people will have been asked to participate in this study, including 70 students, 10 teachers and 10 education officials. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of a Masters programme on classroom practice and on outcomes for school pupils. The results of this study will be used for research purposes, within my thesis and as part of any external research publications in the future. It may also be used to contribute to Masters programme evaluation.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire. The information gathered will be used by the student researcher for data analysis. In addition, you may be invited to:

Either,

- a) form part of a focus group, the purpose of which will be to consider some of the general, not individual, issues arising from the questionnaire;

and/or,

- b) be interviewed individually, the purpose of which will be to expand on your responses to the questionnaire.

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. Your interaction with the project interface is assigned an identification number (ID) only to distinguish your responses from those of other participants. This ID is in no way associated with your name. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the student researcher, Winston Brookes, and the researcher's supervisor, Professor Croll, will have access to the records. Winston Brookes may also send the results of this research to you electronically if you wish to have them. Finally, your participation in this project will not have any bearing on the outcome of your Masters studies.

Your decision to participate is entirely voluntary. Also, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time, without giving a reason, by contacting the student researcher, Winston Brookes, on 07584416915 or e-mail w.a.brookes@reading.ac.uk if you wish to withdraw from the study.

This project has been subject to ethical review, according to the procedures specified by the University Research Ethics Committee, and has been allowed to proceed.

If you have any queries or wish to clarify anything about the study, please feel free to contact my supervisor by emailing emscroll@reading.ac.uk

Signed: (Researcher)

Date:

Appendix 4: research participant consent form

Project title: Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL)

I have read and had explained to me by Winston Brookes the Information Sheet relating to this project.

I have had explained to me the purposes of the project and what will be required of me, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to the arrangements described in the Information Sheet in so far as they relate to my participation. In particular, I agree to the following:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| <input type="radio"/> I agree to complete a questionnaire | YES/NO |
| <input type="radio"/> I agree to take part in a follow-up interview | YES/NO |
| <input type="radio"/> I agree to this interview being recorded | YES/NO |
| <input type="radio"/> I agree to take part in a focus group which will be recorded | YES/NO |

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the project any time, without giving a reason and without repercussions.

I have received a copy of this Consent Form and of the accompanying Information Sheet.

Name:

Signed:

Appendix 5: elite interview sample 1

1. Tell me a bit about your own background leading up to your role in the development of the MTL.
2. Who developed the MTL model in the first instance – with its 30+10+4x20+2x30 credit structure and the possibility of APEL.
3. Looking back, how do you view the overall project – a success, a limited success, etc.?
4. Did you have any misgivings about it?
5. Did you feel any constraints on your own role: from ministers, TDA colleagues, social partners, HEIs?
6. Do you think the partnership model worked well – TDA, HEIs, consortia, others? Any sleeping partners? Tension between central demands and regional autonomy?
7. Would you agree that the concept of a classified MTL from the outset would have raised its status and meaning?
8. Would you agree that the expectations of the MTL were over-ambitious from the outset: recruitment, target schools, demand from schools, notion of entitlement, coach numbers?
9. Some (Matthews and) argue that successful completion of the MTL should require evidence of improved effectiveness as a teacher, which successful graduation does not require. For these, ‘the MTL does little to create and assess teachers who exhibit mastery in their craft. This could be derived from the performance management system or independent assessment of the sort applied to excellent and advanced skills teacher status’. Do you agree?
10. What do you think of the much criticised concept of the school-based coach as a key component of the MTL? Was there insufficient time to develop the coaching model beyond what Hopkins and Matthews described as ‘an untidy process’ that began with the ‘withdrawal’ of CUREE from the project.
11. Would it have been better to have joined up the two strands – programme content development and coaching – to achieve greater overall coherence?
12. What do you think of the identification of National Challenge and similar schools as the first participants? Do you see any problems with it?

13. Some say that the introduction of a classified Masters degree would have raised its status and meaning. One way in which this could have been done might have been through the independently verified recognition of an excellent, advanced skills or outstanding practitioner through the retrospective award of MTL with distinction. Why didn't classification happen?
14. It has been said (Hopkins and Matthews again) that the current approach is HEI-dominated and reflects good 20th century rather than 21st century practice. They argue that there are good models of school-based Masters programmes in most or all regions and the MTL offers an opportunity to capitalise on this experience. Further thought, they propose, should be given to delivering the MTL through a SCITT model based around training schools on a sub-regional level, or a move to national validation, with a licence given to a restricted number of HEIs to validate programmes – say one in each region. This now seems the direction of government policy. What do you think?
15. Do you think that the goal of an all-Masters teaching profession is realistic? How might it play out in the future, if at all? For example, in view of the major changes in ITT provision currently underway, is this type of PPD destined for the 'back burner'?

Appendix 6: elite interview sample 2

1. Tell me a bit about your own background during the period of the lead up to the development of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL).
2. In your roles as Chief Inspector and Permanent Secretary, are you able to give me a flavour of the kind of advice that you gave to ministers about teacher development that was either heeded or unheeded – or both?
3. Do you not think it ironic that at the very time that Michael Gove was announcing the move away from HEI-led ITE that Ofsted declared that 94% of them were good or better?
4. From a political perspective, do you think that the abandonment of this funded project was inevitable?
5. Regardless of ‘austerity’, what do you think of the government’s recent decision to withdraw PD/PPD funding?
6. Do you think that recent politicians, both labour and conservative, don’t trust HEIs to deliver policy decisions: that this lack of trust is reciprocated? Hence, the attempt by the last government to ‘own’ the MTL.
7. Is there a macho element in the approach of government to schools and HEIs and the language or ‘sorting out’ that is sometimes used – what Ball calls ‘the discourse of derision’?
8. Do you have a view of so-called ‘policy tourism’ or ‘education borrowing’? e.g. University Training Schools, Training Schools, etc.?
9. Are schools up to the task of ITT education and training – is there sufficient evidence that that is what they want?
10. It has been said (Hopkins and Matthews, 2010) that the current approach is HEI-dominated and reflects good 20th century rather than 21st century practice. They argue that there are good models of school-based Masters programmes in most or all regions and the MTL offers an opportunity to capitalise on this experience. Further thought, they propose, should be given to delivering the MTL through a SCITT model based around training schools on a sub-regional level, or a move to national validation, with a licence given to a restricted number of HEIs to validate programmes – say one in each region. This now seems the direction of government policy. What do you think?
11. Would you agree that the expectations of the MTL were over-ambitious, or indeed naive, from the outset: recruitment, target schools, demand from schools, notion of entitlement, concept of the school-based coach?
12. What do you think of the identification of National Challenge and similar schools as the first participants? Did you see any problems with it?
13. Do you think that the goal of an all-Masters teaching profession is realistic? How might it play out in the future, if at all? For example, in view of the major changes in ITT provision currently underway, is this type of PPD destined for the ‘back burner’?
14. James Noble-Rogers (UCET) asks the question ‘Who will defend teacher education?’ Do you think it needs defending?

Appendix 7: teaching conversation preparatory tick sheet

On the basis of these three **dimensions of effectiveness**:

pedagogic 2. inter-personal 3. student performance

1. How do you rate yourself?
2. How do others rate your effectiveness as a teacher?

	Teacher Self-Rating		
Self	High (1)	Medium (2)	Low (3)
Pedagogic			
Inter-personal			
Student performance			
Others			
Pedagogic			
Inter-personal			
Student performance			

What did you do in this lesson, in terms of teacher behaviours, that typify your teaching?

	Teacher Self-Rating		
Teacher behaviours:	High (1)	Medium (2)	Development (3)
1. Stress important points			
1. Have multiple examples			
2. Signal the transition to a new point			
3. Establish rapport with students			
4. Encourage student participation by asking questions			
5. Always address students by name			
6. Vary teaching approaches/methods			
7. Use ICT for teaching extensively			

What other teacher **behaviours** typify your teaching?
 How would you sum up your strong **characteristics** as a teacher?

	Teacher Self-Rating		
Teacher characteristics:	High (1)	Medium (2)	Low (3)
1. Subject knowledge and pedagogy			
2. Enthusiasm in teaching			
3. Concern for my students			
4. Awareness of students' prior learning			
5. Assess students well			
6. Prepare lessons effectively			
7. Reflect on practice and make changes			
8. Consciously apply theory to practice			
9. Stimulate interest			
10. Always available to students			
11. Encourage discussion and collaboration			
12. Explain things clearly			
13. Have a good sense of humour			
14. Have a clear philosophy of teaching			
15. Am professionally confident			
16. Other			

Notes

Appendix 8: coach interview transcript sample

- Interviewer: Shall we start with your own background, if you can tell me a little bit about it? What involvement you've had with either mentoring or coaching, prior to the MTL?
- Respondent: Well I've been coaching for the last 10 years, and mentoring for about 20 I suppose; initially with trainee teachers and helping out NQTs etc. in the department. Then moving onto departmental staff, as I've become the Head of Department, after colleagues in that respect. Then as I moved into senior leadership it was more along the lines of mentoring new Heads of Department – coaching them, or senior leaders moving into a new role.
- Interviewer: So you're Assistant Head, are you?
- Respondent: I was an Assistant Head, about four years ago in the school restructure I became an AST. And so I did my assessment in science and initial teacher training. There's quite a big element of coaching and things that go on as an AST. The professional mentor for the GTP course- I'd look after the NQTs, and the PGCEs in school.
- Interviewer: So it seems like it's almost a full time job for you?
- Respondent: Well it seems like it, but it's a day off my timetable.
- Interviewer: Oh right. Do you make a distinction yourself between coaching and mentoring?
- Respondent: Yes.
- Interviewer: And what would it be? Just broadly-
- Respondent: For me, mentoring is if it's a junior colleague, and you're imparting information more, you're guiding them and that kind of thing. You have to tell them as opposed to "Let's discover it together. What would you like to achieve? How are we going to go about achieving it?"
- Whereas with a coach, I suppose it's more an equal footing, "What do you want to achieve? Let's talk through how we're going to achieve it. What are the barriers? How can we overcome those barriers?" That sort of thing.
- Interviewer: And how did you get into the MTL? Did that come naturally as part of what you do?

Respondent: That was purely accidental because there were eight NQTs that were offered encouragement in doing the Masters programme, and we wanted to give them some coaches. Eight was too much for me to take over, so we had four coaches come forward. Very rapidly, four of our NQTs dropped out. I think the main reason for that, on reflection, is that they saw it as an entitlement and a quick way to get their Masters, and actually they weren't intellectually prepared for it. They weren't robust enough in their own lives to cope with the demands.

Interviewer: Do you also have TLR holders as well?

Respondent: Looking after the coaches?

Interviewer: No, not as coaches, as also participants.

Respondent: We only have NQTs; we only have eight NQTs. We don't have any of the middle leaders.

Interviewer: Is there any reason for that? They didn't catch onto it?

Respondent: No, I think a lot of- we've got quite a good PD program in schools. Those that were interested and felt that they could give the time to doing their Masters are already on the program at various places. So that's the main reason.

Interviewer: You mentioned giving the time, and I just wonder whether that's one of the problematic elements of MTL in general? Both your time, and their time.

Respondent: Definitely. Trying to do all the research and the reading and the essay writing, on top of a full time job, is tough. It's tough for anybody, I think. I did it myself, I thought "Well if that's what they're doing, I need to walk the walk." I did the first year of it, and it results in you giving up family time, whole half terms, just to write your essay. You don't have any relaxing days unfortunately.

Interviewer: Any other issues there that I've identified that you would actually agree with? The school's demands on them seems to be one of the reasons why four of them probably dropped out.

Respondent: For the NQTs that dropped out, I would say that for some of them it was personal issues. Some of them was that they didn't manage the step up from a reduced timetable when they're trainees, to the full timetable. It might only seem like one extra class but it's all the extra

marking that goes with it, all the extra meetings that they're attending...

- Interviewer: I wanted to actually ask you a little bit about any of the other themes that came up on that day of the conference? I think we touched on time, what about the relationship with the University.
- Respondent: Myself personally, I attended one meeting at the beginning where the programme outline was set out. That's it.
- Interviewer: And did you have a coaching session, a training session in addition to that?
- Respondent: No.
- Interviewer: What do you think of that?
- Respondent: It's shoddy, really. I don't know whether there was an expectation that me as the lead coach would coach our coaches. I think that we are just very fortunate that two of the coaches were doing their Masters, and therefore had an idea in their own heads as to what sort of level we were asking these people to work at.
- Interviewer: Did the other coaches get training?
- Respondent: No, no.
- Interviewer: That seems very odd to me, because that was provided-
- Respondent: It's quite a strange situation. I used to get regular communications up to when the days for the trainees, sorry they're not trainees, when the people on the course-
- Interviewer: What do you call them? I don't suppose you have a term.
- Respondent: I quite like the word 'Coachees.'
- Interviewer: Or participants, or students.
- Respondent: (Laughter). Thank you. The participants or the students on the program, sorry I lost my thread now.
- Interviewer: I was saying that it seems pretty odd, you were saying you used to get lots of communication-
- Respondent: For those to attend the university session, or "Can I remind you that the essays are due in at such and such a time?" but we didn't really have much information about "What is this module going to contain? What

are the themes of the module? These are the things they're focussing on in the session, could you follow these sorts of things up with them in your coaching meetings or your discussions." When my students came back to school, they think very unclearly and very muddled. And we spend a lot of time just going through, and me trying to second guess and appropriate what the theme was, and what the failure points of the session were, for them to move forward with it.

Interviewer: I assume you had a university tutor, did you?

Respondent: They did have a visit, and I think he came in and met with three of the four, someone was absent at the time, at school. To be fair, their tutor has given them really good thorough feedback in their essay writing. He's taken in more than one draft and given suggestions for improvement or "No, that's not ready yet" etc. so he has been very supportive of them as individuals. But I haven't had much communication with them.

Interviewer: So there's an issue. They've had reasonable support from their tutor but the coaches, in your view, haven't really been as supportive of this as you would have liked?

Respondent: No, well I think we've been doing it the best that we can.

Interviewer: Are there any other issues that arose on that conference day? From- I think it was called the 'Diamond Nine' activity wasn't it? Where people brainstormed what they thought some of the issues were for coaches.

Respondent: I think, from my recollection of the group on our table and my own experiences, it was to do with having never done research at that level recently. Was I pitching, was I supporting them to the right level? And then I had to defer to two or three other colleagues who were doing their Masters and in their third year. And I've been to them for their advice and guidance, rather than receiving from the University. That's why I did the Masters myself, to try and get my own feel for what was the bench mark, really.

Interviewer: Did you go to any of the central sessions at the University?

Respondent: I was never aware of any. I certainly didn't get any emails or communications about any.

Interviewer: Presumably the students themselves would know when those sessions were?

Respondent: Yes, they had a list.

Interviewer: Were they during the day?

Respondent: They were usually on a Monday, so we gave them release time to go to those.

Interviewer: Right. So that's where I imagine a fair amount of the money went, presumably?

Respondent: Yes, definitely. I mean that was an issue in itself, really. If they went regularly on a Monday, we'd need to pull them off the timetable and timetable them four days a week which was the initial plan. That then results in lots of missed classes and lack of continuity for the children. If they taught on the Monday then went away, they had to set work before they left. They then were picking up the class and, as usual they hadn't completed everything you would have expected them to complete in that time, so the pace of their lessons were falling behind. They felt under pressure that they had to work twice as hard when they came back for those classes; those sorts of pressures of time became more problematic to them.

Interviewer: When this came up in the school initially, the idea of the MTL, was it an idea that was being put forward by the Principal? Or the Head and then came down to you? Or, how did that work?

Respondent: Yes, the Deputy Head to me.

Interviewer: He said that this seems like a good idea?

Respondent: Definitely. As an institution, we wanted to support it and I think that if we had selected the candidates it probably would have been more successful. Probably not NQTs, I would say probably Year 2 teachers-you know, people who had been in the profession a couple of years. They've got a broader knowledge base to work on. I think one of the problems is the naivety of the questions from the NQTS, it makes it difficult for them to write essays that were broad and balanced and discussed and critically analysed.

Interviewer: So you've now got four, and presumably, are you coaching one or two of them?

Respondent: One.

Interviewer: So tell me a little bit about the one you've got, about the quality, the character, what he or she is doing?

Respondent: She's quite weak. The essays are poorly constructed, and very much a description of what we do as a school. She takes feedback quite well; she's got a clear understanding of what the school policies are. She's aware that there are the National policies running alongside them, but she's not very good at being able to critique what we do in school.

Interviewer: What's her subject?

Respondent: Design Technology.

Interviewer: Could you actually tell me of the eight that you had, what were their subjects were, in your recollection?

Respondent: Yes. P.E, and she's still running; there were three from Design Technology, two are still going; one from Art, and she's continuing and doing quite well; now you've got me.

Interviewer: Do you think there's any relationship at all between the subject of the teachers and their capability?

Respondent: There could be, in that the subjects that I've described don't have a very essay type content in their degrees. In the lessons that they deliver and the skills that they display on a regular basis in the classroom. If we'd had a historian or an English teacher we may well be having a very different conversation in terms of the quality of their written assignments.

Interviewer: Yes. And the art person you have? What's she like? Is it a she?

Respondent: Very well-

Interviewer: She's doing very well?

Respondent: She's doing very well. I do strongly suspect that her coach has had a very strong influence on her, because he's doing his Masters and in his second and third year, and would spend a lot of time discussing with her essay construction and the kinds of critical analysis with her. But he did spend a lot of time with her on that.

Interviewer: This is an aside, really – you mentioned a couple of times yourself doing a Masters and this particular coach doing a Masters. Do you see that as really a good idea, generally speaking? That coaches should have some qualifications, or at least some definite experience?

Respondent: I think experience of that type of learning; without that level of empathy I don't think it's easy to support them and give them the right direction.

Interviewer: So the art person's getting on alright; the one CDT you've mentioned, or Design technology rather-

Respondent: Two of them.

Interviewer: Have any of those three failed on an assignment, had to re-submit?

Respondent: Yes. Well, not re-submit but I think they scraped-

Interviewer: So they've sent in a draft and its come back with... right.

Respondent: One of them is an overseas-

Interviewer: An OTT, yes.

Respondent: She's not an OTT- she's a trained teacher, but she moved here from Nigeria and her literacy level is quite weak. You have to spend a lot of time with grammar construction and such like. The other DT one is highly dyslexic, so again it's more working from that perspective. They spent so much time worrying about those essays that it's actually distracting from what they're doing in the classroom.

Interviewer: Does the University make provisions for dyslexics?

Respondent: Usually, yes. They have always given them extra time, they've given them support, yes.

Interviewer: Right. So there's the three, who's the fourth? There's two DT, one art-

Respondent: Art, and one Dance P.E.

Interviewer: Right, and what she's like?

Respondent: Yes, again she's another dyslexic but she's doing very well.

Interviewer: It's an interesting-

Respondent: That lady has a much broader grasp of the curriculum. She's got quite a good head for how to set up a scheme of work from a set of specifications, because she started the dance course herself. She's got a little bit more savvy about her. She's a bit more pro-active, as opposed to "I work in this department. This is the specification that I work on, and these are the things that I'm expected to do." She's a "No I think

this is a really good course for our children and I think we should move in this direction, and...”

Interviewer: Moving onto the gingerbread activity, I don't know whether you recall that. Again I think that was some sort of brainstorming activity about the attributes of the coach, the broad attributes as you would see them in a school rather than they're there in the theory. What would you say they were, in your view? What do you need to have or be, as a good coach in your opinion?

Respondent: Well first of all you've got to know what the school's priorities are and what the national priorities are. You've got to have quite a good knowledge of current educational issues.

Interviewer: Would you actually say that the MTL was fitting into your school's priorities?

Respondent: Yes, because all of the projects that the participants decided to pursue are all priorities in our recruitment plan. So one did something on assessment on learning, one's done it on AN and inclusion, so there are all big areas in the school and it's certainly raised the profile – in their minds – of the need to improve in these areas of the classroom teacher.

Interviewer: Any other qualities that you think that they should have?

Respondent: Well, I suppose what I alluded to earlier – you need to have a certain ability to critically analyse a situation yourself, it's not always somebody else doing it.

Interviewer: How would a typical coaching session go, from your point of view? What would you typically do?

Respondent: What I'd like to do and what I actually do are quite different. They do end up being more like mentoring sessions; they're certainly about a member of staff coming in, their main focus is “I've got to get this essay done. I don't know much about this.” And they want you to discuss that area with them, as opposed to, say they've done all the reading and coming to you and saying “Right, I've read this, I've read that. You know about it, is that true here?” and debating it. But you very often become, what I call a ‘house keeping meeting’, facilitating them, getting the time off, negotiating time off for them or “Why don't you speak to so and so?”,

Interviewer: So the ideal coach would be doing, what?

Respondent: I think they'd be trying to establish what it is they want to achieve, and facilitating what they're achieving as opposed to sitting down with them and making the links with them, and saying "Right, these are the people you need to speak to. This is what you'll need to do." There's the sense of urgency for them to complete their essay becomes a priority, and so the open-ended dialogue and letting them go away and find out for themselves is not really a realistic option.

Interviewer: How's it worked out - your formal coaching, has that diminished over time? Or is it more or less the same?

Respondent: I would say it's diminished, yes.

Interviewer: Because you would start off, probably with-

Respondent: I was meeting her weekly.

Interviewer: Were you? So that's quite good, really.

Respondent: Yes, weekly. It became fortnightly, and now I would say it's when she has the essays or when she's first starting up her research, or deciding on a questionnaire she wants to put out. She'll come and she'll show me, and we'll go through it, and decide what's the best forum, who would be the best audience, etc. (Cross talk) so it's once every three or four weeks now.

Interviewer: Some of these things you've mentioned are about the skills that coaches have. What about personal qualities, do you think, are desirable in a good coach?

Respondent: (Pause). The obvious, the listening, and - I suppose it's that flexibility really. I call it a mental butterfly, that you've got to be able to flit from one area to the other and see what the connections are, and you've got to be quite curious yourself about education and educational issues in order to motivate them and see that there's real purpose to what they're doing, and to try and enthuse them. It's not easy when you're sitting there and you're trying to find a reference for an essay, and you're saying "Well actually the reference isn't really very relevant, what are we doing with the children?"

Interviewer: What sort of feedback do you get on your coaches? You obviously get under - for PGC and GTP, you probably get a fair amount of feedback on mentors. I was just wondering what the students or participants might think of the coaches they have? Have you any sense of that?

Respondent: I think socially, I'd say two of them have been really enthusiastic and have actually made efforts to come and talk to me about what they've been given by the coach. One of them, it's a need to know basis, but I think it's more because they're their line manager as well, so I think that relationship is a little more blurred. It's difficult to say when they're coaching them and when they're managing them. I think any opinions that they form are not purely of them as a coach.

Interviewer: Again I suppose ideally you would not prefer that? You would prefer that the coach was somebody that they were very comfortable with?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Can I ask you now a few final broad questions about the MTL, which is about the main aims of the MTL. The first one is about improving classroom practice; would you have a view of that, as to whether it has impacted? You did mention one actually, where it was working the other way. Because she was so concerned with getting her assignments done etc., it was perhaps having a negative effect on her teaching. What broad view do you have of that? Because that was one of the explicit aims of MTL.

Respondent: We have come to a definite conclusion with one small cohort, with such a diverse group of people. Subjectively, I would say that the girl that does P.E and Dance has been advantaged by the process. It's given her the opportunity to talk to some quite senior colleagues in a serious format, and as a result her confidence and her self-esteem has grown and therefore her confidence and her teaching and her value within the school, she feels has improved. Therefore happy staff, happy children, usually quite a successful outcome.

Interviewer: But no hard evidence of that at this stage?

Respondent: No, no. She's had really good positive feedback about the moderation procedures for her subject, but is it directly related to her doing the MTL or would she have been like that anyway? I don't know.

Interviewer: And the other one of course was to, in the hope of retaining teachers, if not in the same school certainly within the profession. Do you have any sense of that having an effect on those participants?

Respondent: I think the fact that we've invested time in them and the system has invested a bit of time in them has helped. The four that are keen and that have stuck to it, I think will stick within the profession anyway.

The four that dropped out very early, are also the ones that could drop out of the profession.

Interviewer: And do you have a view of the whole notion of the idea of an all Masters profession for teachers? Can you see it happening?

Respondent: I can see it happening but I don't necessarily agree. It's not really about the MTL aspect, for me it's more to do with recruitment. I have a very strong view about the way things are going in terms of degree qualifications and whether they're funded placements for GTP or PGCE. We've lost, as a school, two really good candidates, because they had 3rd class honours degrees, and yet they have all the personal qualities of teachers that we would like to see in a teacher. They may well end up having the ability to do a Masters, but at the moment they don't have the inclination or the academic rigour to achieve one - but they'd still be really good in the classroom.

Interviewer: So the jury's out a little bit, as far as you're concerned by the sound of it.

Respondent: We do have candidates coming for interviews, being in this county, there's a lot of highly qualified, highly academic and capable individuals being made redundant. They've come on interview, and lovely people, but honestly cannot break their subjects down, cannot get into the heads or the mind-sets of an average hormonal fourteen year old, and have really struggled even on interview to relate to the young people. So I don't think that just because you have a Masters or high qualifications, it makes you a good teacher.

Interviewer: I think a lot of people would agree with that, wouldn't they? It has been said, and I don't know whether you would agree with this, that the MTL was flawed from the very start – the assumption that schools could do most of the work on it and universities less of the work. Do you have an opinion about that? As someone who's very experienced, obviously, with your background and also with your experience with initial teacher training. Do you have a -

Respondent: I don't think - if we wanted to teach at that level, I think we would be moving into further ed. And many of us do, we have a passion for education, we then do our Masters, and then we go on and we try to pass on our expertise to the next generation at that appropriate moment. Teachers who are teaching fourteen or fifteen year old students are happy to - the apprentice model of supporting teacher training, but I'm

not sure many of them are that confident about doing the pedagogy. I don't think they're - they don't have the appetite for it or the expertise.

Interviewer:

Name, thank you very much for your time.

Appendix 9: Freedom of Information data re MTL

Under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) two separate requests were made to the Department of Education for information concerning the MTL. The first requested:

1. The number of teachers in England enrolled on the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) programme in 2009 - 2010, broken down in terms of those holding a TLR responsibility allowance and those who were NQTs at the time. Include percentage of total population of NQTs.
2. The number of teachers in England enrolled on the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) programme in 2009 - 2010 who have dropped out to date, broken down in terms of those holding a TLR responsibility allowance and those who were NQTs at the time. Include percentage for each category.
3. The data requested in paras 1-2 set out in terms of each government region.
4. Separate data, as requested in paras 1 and 2, for the North-West region where the pilot study began.
5. The number of teachers in England enrolled on any PPD funded Masters programme in 2009 - 2010, and the number who have dropped out to date. Include percentage of total population.

This request yielded the following data: the number of teachers in England enrolled on the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) programme in academic year (AY) 2009/10, broken down in terms of those holding a TLR responsibility allowance and those who were NQTs at the time.

Total enrolled on MTL: 2626 NQTs: 2049 (78%) HoDs/TLRs: 577 (22%)

1. The number of teachers in England enrolled on the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) programme in AY 2009/10 who have dropped out to date, broken down in terms of those holding a TLR responsibility allowance and those who were NQTs.
Total number withdrawn: 1103 (42%) - NQTs: 911 (44%); HoDs: 192 (33%)
2. The data requested in paragraphs 1-2 set out in terms of each government region.

Region	Enrolled	Withdrawn (W)	NQT % (W)	TLR% (W)
North East NQT	49	19	38.7	
North TLR	30	13		43.3

Yorkshire & Humberside NQT	237	94	39.6	
Yorkshire & Humberside TLR	233	53		22.7
East Midlands NQT	53	22	41.5	
East Midlands TLR	29	5		17.2
West Midlands NQT	71	29	40.8	
West Midlands TLR	43	7		16.2
South West NQT	42	20	16.2	
South West TLR	15	3		20.0
South East NQT	129	53	41.0	
South East TLR	69	17		24.6
East of England NQT	65	26	40.0	
East of England TLR	48	17		35.4
London NQT	133	47	35.3	
London TLR	67	14		20.8
North West NQT	1270	509	40.0	
North West TLR	43	6		13.9
Totals	2626	954	Av. 37.0	Av. 23.7

3. The number of teachers in England enrolled on any PPD funded Masters programme in AY 2009/10, and the number who have dropped out to date:

28,951 participants undertook a Masters level study as part of the TDA funded PPD programme in AY 2009/10. The flexible nature of the programme is such that this will be a mixture of Cert, Dip and Masters courses. Providers indicated that 909 participants withdrew during 09/10 (withdrawal rate of 3.1%).

A further 30,234 participants undertook study in AY 2010/11. This was the final year where new entrants were accepted on to the programme

Appendix 10: characteristics of National Challenge schools

The main characteristics of National Challenge schools, as defined by government statistics, (Bolton, 2010) are:

The measure used for the National Challenge target, five or more GCSE or equivalent passes at grades A*-C including English and Maths GCSE (level 2 including English and Maths), was introduced into the school performance tables in 2006. This measure added the additional Maths and English 'hurdles' alongside the earlier headline measure (five or more GCSEs or equivalent at A*-C, or level 2). It means that pupils have to pass at least two or more GCSEs to meet it as equivalent qualifications do not count towards the Maths and English part. Pupil attainment is measured at the end of Key 4 (year 11) and includes any qualifications gained in earlier years.

Source: National challenge schools: Statistics. House of Commons Library

Bolton points out that, for 2008, the pupil intake at schools below the 30% threshold was not typical of the country as a whole (p6). He instances rates of Special Educational Need (SEN), both with and without formal statements and, among pupils as 35% compared to 20% across all state funded secondary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at these schools was 28%, double the national rate in secondary schools of 13%. While overall the academic performance of pupils in these categories is well below average, the relationship between pupil intake (on any measure) and school performance is not straightforward. There are numerous examples of schools with a similar pupil intake to those below the threshold where pupils perform much better. Similarly, some schools below the threshold have below average rates of SEN and/or free school meals. Thomas (2012) is more specific: she reports that 268 secondary schools were named in 2007-08 as 'National Challenge' schools – schools where fewer than 30% of pupils gained five or more good General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) passes, including English and mathematics. ('Good' GCSE passes are classed as grades C and above). These schools were targeted for government intervention and additional funding to support improvement, including being some of the first schools to have access to the MTL.

Appendix 11: example of school Self Evaluation Form

The SNCS is a secondary school of average size. The very large majority of students are of white British heritage (865/84.1%) with approximately (163/15.86%) of minority ethnic heritage, which is below the national average. Of these, (84/8.17%) speak English as an additional language, and (2.3%) are at the early strands of language acquisition.

The attainment of students entering the school is slightly below the national average with a smaller proportion of able students than would be expected nationally. This trend continues. Although the location of the school is in one of the wealthier areas of the country, the school's catchment area draws predominately from the two poorest wards. The local authority map of provision (Acorn categories) demonstrates that the school's catchment draws 38% from category four, describing those families as living in moderate means and 12% in category five, described as hard pressed.

The proportion of students with special educational needs is (262/26.9%). Of these (26/2.42%) are statemented; slightly above average. The range of needs includes those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has a Learning Support Centre and an Inclusion Centre to support the needs of these students.

The proportion of students eligible for free school meals (114/11.09%) is broadly average, although the school feels that many more of its students are on the borderline of entitlement.

Since the last full inspection, the school roll has continued to grow both in the main school and in the sixth form, having doubled since September 2005 from 536 to 1028. This has resulted in a growth of teaching and support staff, many of whom are in the early strands of their teaching career, increasing enthusiasm, drive and ambition within the school.

The school's increasing popularity within the area meant that it managed a significant proportion of mid-year admissions which created turbulence within the

school significantly above the national average. The number of mid-year admissions from the 2005 full inspection is (381) and, of these, (34) were permanent exclusions or managed moves. However, since September 2010 the school has stabilised enabling more rapid progress in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.'

Source: SNCS School Evaluation Form (SEF) January 2012

Appendix 12: State of the Nation Study: TDA questions

1. Benefits, status and effectiveness of PD

- (a) What are the benefits of engaging in PD as perceived by teachers and head teachers?
- (b) How important is PD seen to be for retention of teachers? What evidence is there of PD improving the retention of teachers?
- (c) Are there differences in views of PD's effectiveness held by teachers/senior management team in different types of school (e.g. pupil referral units (PRUs), special schools, primary/secondary, academies and specialist schools) or at different career stages (i.e. trainees, newly qualified teachers (NQTs), main scale teachers, senior teachers (STs), advanced skills teachers (ASTs), excellent teachers, deputy heads and head teachers)?
- (d) Which PD activities or resources are evaluated by head teachers to be effective and of good quality?
- (e) How many of the characteristics of effective PD as identified by TDA are commonly present in PD activity in schools?
- (f) What kinds of PD activity are perceived to be value for money? How is value for money measured?
- (g) How is PD seen to be having an impact in terms of raising standards and narrowing the achievement gap?

2. Planning and organisation of PD

- (a) What is the role of local authorities (LAs) in PD?
- (b) Is there inter-professionalism in PD planning in schools (e.g. to support the extended schools agenda)?
- (c) Is PD in schools determined consistently by the priorities for school improvement (i.e. is PD approached strategically, how are the needs of the individual balanced with the needs of the school in PD planning, and how, and by whom, are the PD activities agreed)?
- (d) How does PD feature in performance management (PM) reviews?
- (e) Do plans for PD link to career aspirations as well as immediate needs?
- (f) How are PD choices influenced and informed by the professional standards?
- (g) What resources and sources of information do teachers use and how helpful do they find them?
- (h) What are the mechanisms used for the evaluation of PD activities?

- (I) How, and why, are external experts used in PD? What is seen to be the impact of this?
- (j) How are advanced skills teachers (ASTs) and excellent teachers used in PD in schools?
- (k) What are the roles of other players in schools' decisions about PD (e.g. governors, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), subject associations)? Are these roles different in different contexts?

3. PD access

- (a) What proportion of teachers engage in which types of PD (e.g. take-up of external courses, proportion of teachers involved in mentoring and coaching as a part of their daily work, proportion of teachers engaging with national strategies resources, etc.)?
- (b) How accessible are different types of PD activity?
- (c) What are the barriers to teachers engaging in PD?
- (d) Are there differences between the needs and requirements of teachers in different types of school or at different career stages?
- (e) In what area are there gaps between demand and supply?
- (f) How much time is spent on each form of PD, during and outside working hours?
- (g) What proportion of the school budget do senior management teams believe is spent on PD (i.e. cost of courses, cost of supply cover, cost of resources, etc.)? How is PD defined in this context?
- (h) What are the most commonly identified PD foci (i.e. how much PD is accessed to support curriculum, how much to support assessment for learning, to support leadership, etc.)?
- (i) Are there differences between the PD accessed at different career stages or by different types of school?
- (j) What kinds of delivery modes are utilised (e.g. professional networks, courses, e-learning, etc.)?

Appendix 13: Summary of recent TDA research projects (2005-08)

Project reports can be found at www.tda.gov.uk/about/research.aspx

<i>Project and contractor</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>What</i>
Staff Development Outcomes study (SDO), Institute of Education	Feb-Jul 08 Sep-Oct 08	Case studies of 35 schools: interviews with 198 teachers, 181 support staff ,100 pupils, 6 governors Questionnaires from 397 senior team, 466 teachers, 749 support staff
State of the Nation (SoN), Cambridge & Open Universities	Jan-June 08	Questionnaires from 1,126 teachers Focus groups and interviews with 129 teachers in 12 schools
Teachers Omnibus (TO 07), Ipsos/MORI	Nov 07	Telephone interviews with 1,000 teachers
Teacher Voice Omnibus (TVO 08a), NFER	June 08	Questionnaires from 1,479 teachers
Teacher Voice Omnibus (TVO 08b), NFER	Nov 08	Questionnaires from 1,361 teachers
CPD Leadership project ,NFER	Feb-Mar 08	Questionnaires from 1,509 CPD leaders
Mentoring & Coaching for Professionals, NFER	Oct 08	Literature review
Stakeholder Tracking Survey Wave 3, BMG	Jan-Feb 08	Telephone interviews with sample of 2,529 schools, 208 LAs and 82 ITT providers
Support Staff Experiences of Training & Development, NFER/Ipsos MORI	Autumn 06	Telephone interviews with 3,156 support staff in 366 schools A desk study of 17 relevant documents
Evaluation of the HLTA Training & Assessment Prog, Pye Tait	Feb-Nov 05	Telephone interviews with 272 candidates from 36 providers Focus groups of 65 HLTAs Interviews with 15 HLTA training providers
Developing the Whole School Workforce: an Evaluation of the Testbed Programme, Sheffield Hallam Univ	Spring 06- Summer 07	Case studies of 45 schools involving 3 visits per school (included interviews, documentation and other sources) over 4 terms
Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances, Jigsaw Research	Mar-May 08 May 08 June-July 08	Case studies of 16 schools – approx. 60 staff 6 focus groups: 2 with experienced teachers, 2 NQTs & 2 trainees (numbers not specified) Telephone survey of 154 heads, 253 teachers and 72 trainees

Source: (Bubb & Earley, 2009)

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