

**Becoming a Further Education and Skills teacher: trajectories
through practicum learning**

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Abstract

Teachers' practicum learning is a central yet complex aspect of initial teacher education (ITE) which shapes emerging teacher identities and influences career orientations. The diversity of the Further Education and Skills sector, mirrored in its teachers, is also reflected in teachers' variable practicum learning experiences. Through an examination of teacher educators', teaching mentors' and teachers' conceptualisations of practicum learning, this thesis maps learning trajectories experienced through the practicum and analyses enabling and constricting factors influencing teacher learning. Viewing learning to teach as a social practice, this collective case study used 17 artefact-mediated synchronous online interviews to create a window on practicum worlds in a period of restricted social contact. The use of practice artefacts enabled the vivid retelling and re-enactment of practicum learning. From these accounts, six trajectories of practicum learning, some enhancing and some restrictive, were developed.

The study makes an original contribution to learning by mapping the variation in practicum journeys experienced by teachers and identifying the confluence of presage and process factors around teachers, practicum settings, ITE programmes and supporting professionals which enabled more enriching or more impoverished practicum experiences. Time to engage in learning activities with others, aligned views of teacher learning and relational work in teaching settings led to optimal practicum experiences, where learning was co-constructed and diverse practice influences were synthesised through material mediation. These conditions created emerging teacher identities which encompassed and valued pre-teaching academic and vocational identities. The study's recommendations include a policy level and sector-wide reconceptualisation of teacher practicum learning to reflect its social and

collective actuality, a structural reconsideration of in-service teachers' conditions to enable sustained learning with others and a renewed awareness of the resources new teachers bring to the sector, evidenced through the practice artefacts they co-create.

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List of Abbreviations

ACE	Adult Community Education
AOC	Association of Colleges
BERA	British Educational Research Association
BIS	Department for Business, Skills and Innovation
CBHE	College-based higher education
CHAT	Cultural Historical Activity Theory
DfE	Department for Education
ETF	Education and Training Foundation
FE	Further Education
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IPA	Interpretative phenomenological analysis
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
ITE	Initial teacher education
ITP	Independent training provider
LA	Local authority
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
SEND	Special educational needs and/ or disabilities
UCET	Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

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Table 5.1 Key presage and process themes

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Author's declaration:

This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for any other degree or diploma.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Very little is known about how teachers' experiences of the practicum within Further Education and Skills initial teacher education shape their emerging teacher identities. This thesis makes an original contribution to the field by seeking to outline and account for variations in practicum learning. Drawing on the insider accounts of teachers, teacher educators and teaching mentors, it maps teachers' learning trajectories and analyses the confluence of factors leading to more enabling or more constricting practicum experiences.

Before embarking on an empirical examination of teachers' journeys through the teaching practicum, this chapter situates the study by first establishing the nature of the English Further Education and Skills sector and its workforce, then outlining a brief policy history and summary of key debates around initial teacher education (ITE) for the sector's teachers. My positioning as a sector teacher educator precedes a rationale for the study's focus, how the teaching practicum is experienced by sector teachers.

1.2 The English Further Education and Skills sector and its workforce

The Further Education and Skills sector is a poorly understood part of England's educational landscape. Its relative invisibility (Hodgson, Bailey & Lucas, 2015) is evident in descriptions such as 'disadvantaged middle child' (Forster, 2005, p. viii) squeezed between schools and universities, or the Cinderella sector (Randle & Brady, 1997; Crawley, 2016) providing education for 'other people's children' (Orr, 2018, p. 253). Its research base too is overlooked, for example by former head of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Amanda Spielman, despite the career-long efforts of researchers investigating the sector (Exley, 2019; also Staufenberg, 2022). There is, however, agreement that a lack of funded, large-scale FE and Skills sector research has restricted its research base (ibid.), including that of its ITE provision.

The English Further Education and Skills sector has multiple purposes: to improve the nation's employment skills, to provide curricula for future workplaces, to encourage adult learning and to develop social cohesion and wellbeing through continued learning (Crawley, 2012; Nash & Jones, 2015; Orr, 2018; Alison, 2023). Various organisation types are funded to provide education and training to young people and adults over the age of sixteen, with limited provision for younger students. These include 'colleges, Independent Training Providers (ITPs), Local Authority (LA) providers, employer providers, third sector providers, and Adult Community Education (ACE) providers' (Education and Training Foundation, 2020, p. 7). Positioned between the secondary and university sectors, there is curricular overlap with each of these. Around 7% of UK higher education takes place within FE settings (Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA], 2022), including the sector's ITE provision. Teachers undertaking ITE are also part of the sector's student population (Simmons & Walker, 2013; Machin, 2016). During ITE, teachers navigate multiple identities, simultaneously students on ITE programmes, members of sector teaching staff or completing teaching practice within the sector, with often, a third identity as a vocational professional.

The sector too has had multiple identities. Currently described as the Further Education and Skills sector (Ofsted, 2024), its professional body, the Education and Training Foundation [ETF] (2024) often refers to it as the Further Education and Training sector, a previously preferred name. Since 2000, it has also been labelled the Post-Compulsory Education sector and the Lifelong Learning Sector (Burnell, 2017; Allison, 2023). As Orr (2018, p. 255) comments, 'if the name of the sector is not fully resolved, its purpose is even more uncertain.' Name changes coupled with its broad range of provision and multiplicity of purposes make the sector hard to promote (Crawley, 2012; Lahiff, 2015; Allison, 2023). Uncertainty of naming and purpose has also affected the sector's ITE, with changes in qualification naming conventions, which in turn affect the identities of the sector's teachers.

The FE and Skills sector is large and diverse. In 2023-24, English FE colleges attracted 1.6 million students across 225 institutions. Of these, almost a million

were adult learners, with an average age of 28 (Association of Colleges [AOC], 2024). Students study a range of courses, mainly vocational in nature, including apprenticeship provision, from pre-entry to post-graduate level (Bailey & Unwin, 2014). Although the sector has many middle-class students, its institutions are mainly working class (Orr, 2018; also Thompson, 2009; Flemons *et al.*, 2024), contributing to their 'lower cultural status' within the English education system (Orr, 2018, p. 256). 16–18-year-old FE students are twice as likely to have accessed free school meals at 15 as those in maintained schools and academy sixth forms. The sector's size, its large workforce, social remit and stated importance to the UK economy make the supply, training and sustaining of the sector's teachers a topic of significance.

The sector's workforce exceeds 100,000 (ETF, 2023). Reflective of its varied curricula and history, there are many terms for those employed in teaching roles, including tutor, lecturer and trainer as well as teacher (Orr, 2018). In this study, the term teacher encompasses those roles. Because of its vocational orientation, teaching is often a second career for sector teachers, with new staff assuming teaching roles direct from industry (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Orr, 2018; Flemons *et al.*, 2024). Consequently, the average age of those undertaking FE ITE is 37 compared to 24 for those commencing school sector ITE (ETF, 2022a). New teachers come to the sector with significant professional and life experience, therefore. Older applicants who join the sector from other careers are more likely to undertake ITE in-service and part-time, often alongside new teaching roles. A younger, generally graduate population of teachers undertakes pre-service and often full-time ITE courses (*ibid.*). Both of these qualification routes to becoming a Further Education and Skills teacher are explored in this study.

The sector's positioning affects its staff, their conditions and professional identities. Vocational education and its workforce have a low position in the 'academic value system' (Randle & Brady, 1997, p. 122, citing McGinty & Fish, 1993). FE and Skills sector staff experience a combination of higher workload and lower pay than in other parts of the English education system (Orr, 2018; ETF, 2022a; Flemons *et al.*, 2024), which in turn impacts the recruitment and

retention of new teachers (ETF, 2022a; Flemons *et al.*, 2024), particularly in areas such as engineering, construction and digital skills. Support in the early stages of teaching careers together with workplace culture, areas closely intertwined with teachers' ITE experiences, may increase teacher retention (Flemons *et al.*, 2024). Through ITE, and particularly its practicum, it is desirable for teachers to introduce and be introduced to new practices via sharing and collaboration within a community of teaching professionals (Crawley, 2015; also 2016).

1.3 Standardisation and policy intensity:1999 to 2012

Two perennial debates exist and shape the sector's ITE policy: whether FE and Skills teachers should undertake teaching qualifications and the form these qualifications should take. Prior to 1999, there was a 'multiplicity of arrangements' around FE and Skills ITE (Lucas, 2004, p. 36; also Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Simmons & Walker, 2013; Machin, 2016), with models including apprenticeship and higher education institution-led postgraduate teaching qualifications varying significantly across English regions (Lucas, 2004; Machin, 2016). Neither a statutory requirement to gain a teaching qualification nor a body responsible for initial teaching qualifications existed. The development of the first set of teaching and learning standards for the sector by the Further Education National Training Organisation [FENTO] (1999) marked the start of a new era of policy attention and standardisation. Since 1999, teaching qualifications for the sector have been revised four times in response to successive rounds of teaching standards and qualification guidance. Despite repeated moves towards standardisation, a variety of provision and providers is still evident (Simmons & Walker, 2013; Allison, 2023). The complexity of the sector may preclude or elude standardisation.

FENTO (1999) standards were an ITE-specific example of an era of political monitoring and control of the sector (Bathmaker, 2000). They adopted an approach of 'codified criteria' (Machin, 2016, p. 28), following a National Vocational Qualification model common in the FE sector (Lucas, 2004). More than 300 descriptors micro-specified teacher roles and functions across

'professional knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes and key areas of teaching' (FENTO, 1999, p. 4). These tended to be reverse mapped to existing courses (Lucas, 2004; Holloway, 2009). The FENTO standards were unpopular, criticised for their notion of achievement (Bathmaker, 2000), their unwieldiness (Nasta, 2009) and lack of reflection of the sector's diverse contexts (Lucas, 2004). Additionally, they individualised teacher learning. Their demise was brought about by a survey by Ofsted (2003) which concluded that they did not build a satisfactory foundation for the professional development of new sector teachers (Holloway, 2009; Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Machin 2016). These conclusions have been challenged as based on the misapplication of assumptions from secondary teacher education to the FE and Skills sector (Holloway, 2009). Nevertheless, a standards-based approach to ITE which paid little attention to the process of practicum learning, despite acknowledging its centrality within teacher education, continued.

The drive towards programme standardisation though uniform and 'highly prescriptive' (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012, p. 679) qualifications intensified. FENTO was replaced by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), a second employer-led body (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Machin, 2016). LLUK's remit was predicated on a perceived deficit across the FE and Skills sector, where raising standards and improving teaching quality were deemed necessary (Department for Education and Skills, 2006; Burnell, 2016). LLUK national standards for teachers were produced (Holloway, 2009; Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Machin, 2016), accompanied by an array of documentation to underpin ITE: learning outcomes, units of assessment, credit frameworks and qualification structures (LLUK, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). ITE providers were also accredited (Lucas & Nasta, 2010) and a series of nested qualifications at levels 3, 4 and 5, with a 120-credit framework for full teaching qualifications produced (Holloway, 2009; Machin, 2016). This period of intense ITE standardisation was presented as part of an agenda of enhancing teacher professionalism and professional development (Holloway, 2009). It can alternatively be read as deprofessionalisation: imposing notions of teacher quality to support an agenda

of 'reforming... a failing service' (Machin, 2016 p.29, also Holloway, 2009) through a regime of intense assessment and regulation (Lucas & Nasta, 2010).

The LLUK standards and frameworks proved unpopular, criticised for their portrayal of a teacher's role, their lack of consideration for how teacher learning occurs, complexity of qualifications, and the positioning of teaching as professional rather than vocational, which decoupled teachers from their backgrounds (Lucas & Nasta, 2010). Teacher learning focussed on evidencing competencies within a controlled curriculum (Maxwell, 2010), failing to consider the sector's contextual diversity. This view of teaching as 'a skills-based craft' (Simmons & Walker, 2013, p. 354) rather than a professional practice underpinned by a body of principled, coherent knowledge deemphasised ITE's theoretical underpinning. ITE provision in this period was further fragmented due to its three-tier qualification structure and parallel programme development and delivery by both awarding bodies and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Holloway, 2009; Simmons & Walker, 2013). The full teaching qualification in this period, DTLLS (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector), was offered at levels 5, 6 or 7, and could also be named a Certificate of Education or a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (Holloway, 2009; Simmons & Walker, 2013). A decade of policy intensity resulted in a confusing qualification landscape with a variety delivery models, some more holistic and research-underpinned, and others more focussed on evidencing skills (Simmons & Walker, 2013).

1.4 Should FE and skills teachers be qualified to teach?

From 1999, policy changes around a statutory requirement for sector teachers to hold a full teaching qualification were mooted (Crawley, 2016; Orr, 2018). Mandating ITE was justified by the New Labour government as professionalising the workforce (Simmons & Walker, 2013). However, even before this stipulation, over 70% of full-time FE teachers were fully qualified (LLUK, 2005). Compulsory ITE qualification briefly existed between 2007 and 2013 (Machin, 2016). This legal requirement was removed following the pivotal Lingfield report (2012), despite much sector opposition. Lingfield (2012)

concluded that the 2007 LLUK frameworks were not fit for purpose and that choice around how and what training was required for sector teachers should rest with employers (Lingfield, 2012; also Machin, 2016; Allison, 2023). This conclusion was reached without reference to the growing research base around FE ITE (Crawley, 2012). The revocation of the ITE qualification requirement, described as facilitating the recruitment of industry professionals to teaching, resulted in further fragmentation of FE ITE which may have had the opposite effect on teacher supply (Wolf *et al.*, 2019; Allison, 2023).

The revocation of the qualification requirement for teachers caused considerable unease (Crawley, 2012; Aubrey & Bell, 2017). Although qualification frameworks under FENTO (1999) and LLUK (2007) had been widely critiqued (Bathmaker, 2000; Lucas, 2004 and 2007; Maxwell, 2010; Simmons & Walker, 2013), access to teacher education programmes for sector teachers was strongly supported (Bathmaker, 2000; Lucas, 2004 and 2007; Simmons & Walker, 2013). After 2013's transferral of responsibility for ITE to employers, the status of qualifications was lessened and access to theoretical and practical development opportunities for teachers was limited (Aubrey & Bell, 2017). This return to voluntarism was motivated by both the cost of ITE and ideological objection to the regulation of the labour market (Simmons & Walker, 2013; Wolf *et al.*, 2019; Allison, 2023).

1.5 Deregulation and policy neglect: 2013 to 2024

From 2013, Further Education and Skills ITE experienced a decade of relative policy neglect, reflecting Lingfield's (2012) emphasis on deregulation and assumption of employer control. Limited remodelling and renaming of teaching qualifications occurred, and their three-tier structure was retained (Machin, 2016). A single sector employer-led professional body, the Education and Training Foundation [ETF], was created, but the ownership of units of assessment which constitute sector teaching qualifications were 'transferred' (Machin, 2016, p. 31) to awarding bodies and HEIs, to develop into appropriate programmes. Lingfield's stated aim was for ITE to be employer-regulated and market-led (Crawley, 2012), yet much previous criticism of ITE programmes

had centred on the lack of support from sector employers for teachers undertaking ITE, arising from the sector's working conditions (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Maxwell, 2010; Crawley, 2012). Teachers' work intensity, staffing pressures and managerialist cultures adversely affected learning, particularly practicum learning, within ITE (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Maxwell, 2010).

Recurring descriptions of current FE and Skills ITE provision from researchers, the UK government and the sector's professional body conclude that provision and routes into teaching are fragmented and difficult to navigate (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers; 2012; Department for Education [DfE], 2021; Allison, 2023; ETF, 2024). The ETF's website (2024) cautions: 'teaching qualifications for the FE & Training sector: there are no two ways about it: this bit can be confusing'. The impact of deregulation on teachers' professional aspirations and on ITE provision fully subject to marketization are hard to assess (Aubrey & Bell, 2017). Despite an initial drop in teachers studying towards full teaching qualifications in 2012, the number of enrolments stabilised between 2012 and 2015 (ETF, 2018) By 2016, around 75% of FE and Skills teachers held a teaching qualification (Frontier Economics, 2017). Data on FE ITE between 2015 and 2018 was granular, through ETF-commissioned reports. From 2020, however, the responsibility for gathering workforce data was transferred to the Department for Education, and sector data contains little detail on ITE (DfE, 2024a).

September 2024 brought a new qualification framework for the Diploma in Teaching (Further Education and Skills) (DfE, 2024c), based on the apprenticeship standard for learning and skills teachers (Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, 2019) and developed in consultation with a consortium of named sector employers, mainly further education colleges. This framework perpetuates the long-criticised competency-based model of ITE (Bathmaker, 2000). The development of the Diploma in Teaching qualification guidance is opaque, occurring under the auspices of the ETF (DfE, 2024c), overseen by an ITE Forum of largely unnamed stakeholder representatives. Representation from current ITE programme providers and developers within HEIs is unclear, as is the role existing research played in

programme design. This is somewhat ironic, given that currently, only HEI-validated ITE provision is eligible for support through ITE bursaries. Allison (2023) notes that this latest qualification reform may have the potential to enhance FE ITE, but may equally prove ineffectual due to systemic factors within the Further Education and Skills sector.

Within the Diploma in Teaching (Further Education and Skills) (DfE, 2024c) specification, the teaching practicum assumes greater significance than previously. The minimum number of practicum teaching hours has increased from 100 to 150, and for the first time in sector ITE qualifications, minimum time spent within the practicum setting, 250 placement hours, is stipulated (ibid.). The purpose of placement hours is to understand the wider responsibilities of a teacher (ibid.). The terms ‘trainee teacher’ and ‘placement’ strongly presuppose a pre-service model of teacher education, which belies the reality of the sector’s ITE, where the majority of teacher education provision is delivered in-service to new sector teachers (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Orr, 2018; Flemons *et al.*, 2024). The existence of in-service routes to teacher qualification remains unacknowledged within qualification guidance. There is a pressing need for the varied routes to and through FE and Skills ITE qualifications to be reflected within policy guidance and in research. One of the aims of this research is to represent the variety of routes and trajectories through ITE, and for these journeys to be recognised and better understood.

1.6 ITE: an individual or collective responsibility?

A key de facto effect of the removal of the requirement for Further Education and Skills teachers to hold a teaching qualification (Lingfield, 2012) has been to shift the responsibility for teacher qualification to individual teachers. ITE qualification comes at considerable cost. Following deregulation, employers are less likely to support employees either financially or in other ways to gain teaching qualifications (Terry, 2019). Indeed, within training providers, the responsibility for ITE has long rested with teachers (Thompson, 2010) whilst across the sector, the structured nature of ITE qualifications is not reflected in the support within workplaces to achieve them (Terry, 2019; also Maxwell,

2014). Many new sector teachers are career changers, with an average age of 37. The cost of becoming teachers impacts them and their families. Vocational teachers often undertaken ITE part-time whilst working in order to be able to fund their studies (Greatbatch & Tate, 2018). Alternatively, prospective teachers face a year-long career break and considerable debt via a loan from Student Finance England to fund full-time study (Allison, 2023), with fees exceeding nine thousand pounds. Currently, much of the burden of support, financial and otherwise, for the sector's ITE sits with its new and future teachers.

Repeated concerns have been expressed over Further Education and Skills teacher recruitment over the last decade (Greatbatch & Tate, 2018; Orr, 2018; ETF, 2022a; Allison, 2023; Flemons *et al.*, 2024). A feature of successful international ITE provision is the financial support of teachers through ITE, valuing entrants to the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Since 2012, there has been government investment in future FE and Skills teachers through ITE bursaries (Department for Business, Skills and Innovation [BIS], 2012). Initially, these were small: one thousand pounds for most teachers (BIS, 2012; DfE, 2012) and compared unfavourably with secondary sector bursaries (FE week, 2012). Bursary amounts increased significantly, then substantially, and the range of bursary subjects widened, reflecting policy priorities and national shortage subjects (Flemons *et al.*, 2024). By 2024, bursaries of £15,000 for potential teachers of English and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and £30,000 for teachers of mathematics, science, computing, engineering or manufacturing were available to pre-service teachers (DfE, 2024b). Prospective teachers of most vocational subjects offered within the sector are not eligible for bursaries, and most bursary subjects require a degree to teach them, meaning bursaries are largely inaccessible to non-graduate ITE entrants (DfE, 2024b) Importantly, FE ITE bursaries, support pre-service teachers to undertake ITE programmes but are not available to in-service teachers, the most common form of entry in hard-to-recruit vocational areas (Flemons *et al.*, 2024).

Limited financial incentives are available for in-service teacher education, benefitting sector institutions. Since 2018, the Taking Teaching Further initiative

(ETF, 2023; also, DfE, 2024d) has offered a grant for in-service ITE to ‘attract high-quality teaching professionals from industry into FE’ (ETF, 2022a, p. 2). In 2024, each successful institution was awarded £21,200 per teacher for up to four teachers per provider per year. Eligibility covers ITE bursary subjects and 16 additional vocational areas. The initiative funds workload reductions for teachers and provides support for practicum development (DfE, 2024d), tacit acknowledgment that these aspects enhance teachers’ practicum experiences. In five years, 1,000 teachers were supported into FE across 250 providers (ETF, 2023). However, compared to an overall sector teaching workforce estimated to be well over 100,000 (ibid.), this initiative is small-scale. Additionally, support for a small number of teachers may result in unequal remission and support between funded and unfunded teachers. There is a pressing need to investigate the impact of FE ITE funding on teachers’ ITE and practicum journeys, a focus of this work.

1.7 Rationale, including personal motivation and biography

Here, the narrative turns to my own biography and motivation for the study. It is intertwined with my role as a teacher educator in college-based higher education (CBHE) delivering FE and Skills ITE programmes in England. Since 2005, the policy shifts outlined above have influenced successive phases of programme redesign, creating periods of hope and uncertainty around the nature of ITE provision, its popularity, its funding and its future. My career in the sector began as a literacy teacher educator, tasked with co-designing a programme to FENTO (1999) specifications. Previously, I was an English teacher, and teacher educator for teachers of English as a second language. When commencing employment in the FE and Skills sector, I was ill-equipped, lacking contextual knowledge and experience of its practices. Almost immediately, I faced programme redesign to meet LLUK specifications (LLUK 2006, 2007a and 2007b) and experienced first-hand the effect of a centralised and highly controlled curriculum (Maxwell, 2010). Subsequently, I have co-designed and delivered subject-specific and general ITE programmes for the sector, across awarding body and university provision and have worked with many pre- and in-service teachers, witnessing their different journeys through

ITE. Through qualification redesign and delivery under FENTO, LLUK and beyond, the teaching practicum component of teacher education programmes has maintained its central position (Wright, 2017) and has had tangible impacts on the identities of teachers I have worked with.

On sector ITE programmes, the teaching practicum, the completion of at least 100 hours of practical teaching, runs concurrently with taught programme components. Through the practicum, teachers develop, apply theoretical learning and become practitioners. Two elements crucial to practicum learning are the teaching experience gained and support from experienced others (Maxwell, 2014), often mentors, who share their experience and practical knowledge (Hudson, 2014; also Anderson, 2007). Effective practicum learning is characterised as ‘dynamic, on-going, dialogical and continually reconstructed’ (Lahiff, 2015, p. 3). Through my lived experience of working with teachers, I have observed very different trajectories through this crucial programme aspect, and it is the nature of these journeys and the factors affecting them which this thesis seeks to shed light on. This study builds on past work (Dunn, 2019) evaluating observation feedback in practicum development and seeks to unravel broader factors affecting teachers’ practicum learning. It enhances the practicum knowledge base (Harkin *et al.*, 2003; Maxwell 2010 and 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017; Page, 2017; Wright, 2017) by firstly, adopting a view of becoming a teacher as a collective endeavour (Boud & Brew, 2016; Ashwin, 2016). Secondly, it explores teachers’ identity construction through the practicum, responding to Lahiff’s (2017) call to make workplace learning practices visible in research. Thirdly, the study’s focus on pre-service and in-service teachers addresses a knowledge gap, as no studies reflect the practicum experiences of both groups of teachers. Lastly, the study combines the voices of the teachers themselves, their teaching mentors and teacher educators on practicum development and foregrounds the resources teachers offer practicum settings and how these resources influence teacher identity formation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In order to analyse the factors shaping experiences of becoming a teacher through the teaching practicum on FE and Skills ITE programmes, it is necessary to establish what is known about teachers' development through the practicum. The practicum's broad purpose is to enable supported teaching skills and knowledge development within a real-life setting. This chapter first characterises and positions the practicum within ITE programmes, highlighting differences according to programme routes. It then explores presage factors influencing practicum learning, how teacher learning through the practicum is conceptualised, leading to the product of practicum learning, how it shapes teachers. This chapter concludes with a summary, after which the study's research questions are outlined, to focus this inquiry. The study's intended contribution to the knowledge base centres on mapping the construction of teaching identities through the practicum, reflecting the variation in teachers joining the sector and the identification of factors which enhance and restrict teacher learning. Inspired by Burton (2020)'s work on the retrospective benefits of ITE, it aims to bring about positive changes for future sector teachers through the examination of this central part of teacher learning.

As there are multiple avenues for exploration around the teaching practicum, it was necessary to be reflexive about the literature review's parameters as the study developed. The topics of the practicum's position and purpose within FE ITE programmes, presage influences on the practicum, the processes and products of practicum learning provided focus and established the study's scope. The literature review was also guided by the underpinning concept of teaching as a social practice, and by themes emerging from initial analyses of research data. Given the specificity of the study's Further Education and Skills location, the particularity of the sector's ITE programme design and student teacher population in comparison with other sectors of UK education, the literature discussed below in the main reflects ITE programmes for this sector in England and the UK.

2.2 The position of the practicum within FE and Skills ITE programmes

Within ITE programmes, the teaching practicum is widely acknowledged to be both a central and a complex aspect of prospective teachers' on-programme experiences (Heinz, 2024). It has a profound and often positive influence on teachers' formation but can also be imbued with emotionality. Despite extensive school sector ITE research (Heinz, 2024; also, Darling-Hammond, 2014; Lawson *et al.*, 2015), many aspects of practicum learning remain elusive and require further study (Heinz, 2024). The process of becoming an FE and Skills teacher through the practicum is even less well understood (Allison, 2023; also Maxwell, 2014). Studies exploring the practicum from the perspective of diverse groups within ITE are crucial to deepen our understanding of how to maximise the needs and potential of new teachers (Heinz, 2024). Within the FE and Skills sector, many factors affecting the practicum inform this exploration: the heterogenous nature of the sector's new teachers, its pre- and in-service routes into teaching, the impact of the sector's working conditions on practicum learning and how teachers work and learn with others in and around practicum settings.

This study uses the term *teaching practicum*, but acknowledges its use is not unproblematic. *Practicum* originally described pre-service teachers who 'went into schools to implement their theoretical learning about teaching in a practical way' (Lawson *et al.*, 2015, p. 392-393). Learning within the practicum is now seen as richer and more complex than the dualist application of theory in a practical setting: sustained ITE experience within a real-life setting, with collaboration and interaction between that setting and the ITE programme.

'...the most powerful programs require students to spend extensive time in the field, examining and applying the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning about in their courses alongside teachers who can show them how to teach in ways that are responsive to learners.'
(Darling-Hammond, 2014, p. 551)

Practicum learning is most powerful when practical teaching and taught ITE components run concurrently (Darling-Hammond, 2014), the model generally followed within English FE and Skills ITE, where the practicum runs throughout the programme. Teachers are supported in their practicum setting by mentors, and by teacher educators within the ITE setting, yet studies which incorporate these three perspectives on practicum experiences are lacking (Lawson *et al.*, 2015). In policy guidance (LLUK, 2007b; DfE, 2024c), the practical teaching element of FE ITE is termed *teaching practice*. This study avoids that phrase due to its association with pre-service teachers' practical teaching, only exceptionally used to refer to that of in-service teachers, for example in Duckworth (2010). Secondly, *teaching practice* is associated with approximations or simulations of real-life teaching and learning (Grossman *et al.*, 2009) rather than the teaching of students in real life settings which constitutes the ITE practicum. Lastly, in a practice-based study, where teaching is conceived as a set of practices which teachers engage in and interact around (Francisco & Boud, 2023), confusion around the word practice is best avoided. Therefore, *practicum* encompasses the practical teaching completed by teachers undertaking FE ITE programmes, this study's focus. It is, though, acknowledged that in-service teachers may perceive this learning through ITE as work-based learning (Maxwell, 2014).

The teaching practicum has remained a prominent part of FE and Skills ITE courses, with the completion of 100 or 150 practical teaching hours running through successive iterations of the sector's ITE programmes (FENTO, 1999; LLUK, 2007b; Thompson, 2014; DfE 2024c). However, the practicum for this sector differs from other types of English teacher education, in the situations of teachers who undertake ITE, the role of subject specialisms within it as well as modes of programme delivery (Powell, 2020; also Thompson 2014).

Assumptions from school-sector ITE are often misapplied to FE ITE (Holloway, 2009; Lucas & Nasta, 2010). The FE and Skills sector's breadth is reflected in its potential practicum settings, spanning up to 200 vocational or subject areas (Crawley, 2005), from pre-entry to level 7 Masters provision, across provider types including FE colleges, adult and community learning and training

providers, delivered to students aged 14 to 70 (Powell, 2020). The majority of sector teaching is vocational, estimated at between 51% (DfE, 2024a) and 70% (Loo, 2020 and 2022).

The sector's breadth of vocational and academic subjects means the majority of its ITE programmes are general rather than subject specific (Thompson, 2014), with vocational pedagogies not particularly foregrounded. Most sector teachers undertake these general programmes, but apply their learning within their own vocational or academic areas (Thompson, 2014; Powell, 2020), assisted within their practicum setting through support from mentors, colleagues and managers (Lucas & Nasta, 2010; Greatbatch & Tate, 2018; Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019). Exceptions are specialist FE ITE programmes for the subject areas of English, mathematics (Lucas & Nasta, 2010; Thompson, 2014) and, following recommendations of the Lingfield review (2012), teaching students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. On subject specific ITE courses, specialist teaching and pedagogical knowledge run through both programme delivery and the practicum (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; also Lucas & Nasta, 2010). However, subject specialist teaching and groupings of teachers is not the norm for this sector's ITE.

Several dichotomies exist around FE and Skills sector ITE (Thompson, 2014), all of which influence teachers' practicum experiences, and some of which intersect. Teachers may undertake ITE pre-service or in-service, full-time or part-time, on ITE programmes situated within the sector itself or within universities. These programme options are attributed to the sector's heterogenous and porous nature (Loo, 2022) attracting teachers from diverse backgrounds. ITE provision is accessed by those who enter teaching as a second career, with established vocational identities and expertise (Crawley, 2012; Thompson, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017) as well as graduates of academic disciplines (Avis *et al.*, 2011; Thompson, 2014; Powell, 2020). The ETF (2022a) identify six additional teacher entry routes: early career professionals, mid-to-late career changers, portfolio career professionals, industry professionals with sector links, teacher transition candidates who move

into teaching from other roles in education and specialist support practitioners moving typically into teaching students with high needs.

Historically, most new sector teachers have undertaken ITE part-time, in-service after gaining teaching employment (Maxwell, 2010; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Maxwell, 2014; Thompson, 2014; Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019; Powell, 2020; Allison, 2023). Employed contractually as teachers, they simultaneously undertake ITE early in that employment. However, teaching qualifications are also offered full-time (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011, Thompson, 2014; Wright, 2017), a route followed by pre-service teachers. Some pre-service teachers, especially those already working in education in other roles (ETF, 2022a), also undertake ITE part-time. The multiple roles teachers have prior to their ITE programmes, their varied backgrounds and professional identities, the impact of these on their ITE learning and their resulting teacher identities are beginning to be recognised, but are currently not well understood. This study adds to that understanding.

Full and part-time ITE programmes follow the same curriculum, adhere to the same professional standards (ETF, 2022b) but have different models of delivery and different practicum arrangements. Full-time programmes are generally postgraduate, delivered for one full day per week over one year (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011; Thompson, 2014; Wright, 2017), leading to Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualifications (Thompson, 2014). Full-time, pre-service ITE provision is restricted to graduates, who can also choose part-time study. In contrast, non-graduates study for level 5 ITE qualifications part-time, over two years. Despite the sector's vocational nature, graduates have more ITE options than non-graduates, can complete ITE more quickly, with a more immersive practicum experience, enabled by full-time ITE students having access to a higher level of maintenance loan funding through Student Finance England (Allison, 2023). Part-time ITE programmes, offered over two academic years, allow pre-service teachers to become qualified whilst remaining in their primary occupation (Thompson, 2014) and in-service teachers to attend alongside their job role teaching within an FE setting. Part-time programmes often take place in the

evening, an echo of FE's roots, when working and lower middle-class students attended evening classes to improve their life chances (Thompson & Simmons, 2013). It is noteworthy that FE ITE provision has retained this historic evening delivery after, and in addition to, the working day. The impact of the experiential differences between pre- and in-service teachers undertaking part-time and full-time ITE programmes are areas which are unexplored in previous studies, particularly the effect of these routes on practicum experiences.

In ITE, the practicum is 'a central feature of the course' (Wright, 2017, p. 76), yet practicum arrangements for pre- and in-service teachers are structurally and experientially different. For pre-service teachers, the practicum is mainly undertaken on a placement basis within an FE and Skills sector provider (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011), although voluntary teaching may also be used (Thompson, 2014). On full-time programmes, teachers spend at least one day per week on placement (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005). Pre-service part-time teachers, spend half of this time. For pre-service teachers who maintain their previous occupation, attending a teaching placement, a part-time evening ITE programme and continuing in their primary role is very challenging to manage. These teachers' stories are not evident within existing research, although this situation is common on at least three of the known routes into FE and Skills teaching: portfolio career professionals, teacher transition candidates and specialist support practitioners (ETF, 2022a).

In-service teachers use the teaching that forms their job as their practicum (Maxwell, 2010; Avis *et al.*, 2011; Thompson, 2014; Powell, 2020). Therefore, on part-time courses, which often comprise pre- and in-service teachers, pre-service teachers undertake a teaching placement, whilst for their in-service peers, their paid teaching is their practicum. Teacher responsibilities around students' learning, care and achievement differ significantly, therefore, for pre- and in-service teachers. Learning practices around the practicum are less visible within research (Maxwell, 2014; Lahiff, 2017). Comparatively little is known about the very different practicum routes teachers take, the impact of these routes on their practicum journeys, and factors which assist and restrict their learning, all areas which this study addresses. Although aspects of the

practicum experiences of both in-service (Maxwell, 2010; Powell, 2020) and pre-service teachers (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Wright, 2017) have been investigated, they have not been considered within a single study, as they are in this project, which seeks to describe and account for the differing trajectories of teachers through FE and Skills ITE.

2.3 Presage factors influencing practicum learning

‘Education is a set of interacting ecosystems. The components in those systems... affect the learning’ (Biggs, 1993, p. 74).

Many components may affect teachers’ learning within practical teaching environments, including the personal and contextual precursors to this learning. Biggs’ systems-form 3P (presage-process-product) model of learning (Biggs, 1993) provides an organising framework to explore the existing knowledge base of becoming a teacher through the practicum, enabling an examination of factors related to teachers, practicum settings and ITE programmes. Within Biggs’ original model (1993), presage factors regarding both the learner and the learning context are outlined. Here, this is extended to include other practicum influences. Presage factors, which exist before practicum learning experiences, are discussed first. These influence the creation, process and outcomes of learning (Biggs, 1993; also Freeth & Reeves, 2004). Process factors describe the nature of practicum learning, leading to the product, or the outcomes of that learning. In this study the product is teacher identity emerging from practicum learning. The structure of the following sections broadly follows a presage, process and product flow (Freeth & Reeves, 2004). However, it is important to emphasise the dynamic nature of learning systems, and the interaction of factors across and between these presage, process and product stages.

Comparatively little is known about how the presage factors of and around teachers influences their practicum learning. The need for a greater understanding of the journeys of vocational professionals into teaching is noted (Greatbatch & Tate, 2018) and the diversity of the sector’s new teachers (ETF, 2022a) is beginning to be recognised, paving the way for an exploration of

diverse practicum experiences which considers teachers' backgrounds, motivations, agency and what teachers offer their practicum settings. Past studies indicate the diversity of the Further Education and Skills sector's provision is mirrored in and sustained by the teachers who enter it (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011; Wright, 2017 and Powell, 2020). Teachers undertake FE and Skills ITE with a wide range of vocational and life experience, previous qualifications, teaching experience and varied past working situations (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Wright, 2017). Most existing studies of FE and Skills ITE focus on either pre-service or in-service teachers, so it is currently hard to gain a sense of the diversity of teachers' practicum experiences, an area this study addresses.

There is a stark contrast between the ITE and practicum circumstances of pre- and in-service teachers, in a rare comparative study spanning England and Scotland (Avis *et al.*, 2011). Across the nations, differences between these teachers' experiences are grounded in the presage factors around them and their learning situations. The two groups are distinct in backgrounds, motivations, perceptions of the sector and pre-ITE teaching experience. Pre-service teachers are graduates, teach academic subjects, experience university centred ITE, with only their practicum in an FE and Skills setting. Attitudinally, they are committed and highly motivated. In contrast, in-service teachers are rooted in vocational areas, dual professionals maintaining vocational currency whilst also becoming teachers, struggling with the academic demands of ITE, compounded by work intensity. Consequently, their view of ITE is negative and instrumental (Avis *et al.*, 2011). The very distinct presage factors of each group affect their ITE experience, with an academic / vocational divide (Orr, 2018) evident across presage factors. Although practicum experiences are not detailed in this study, the strongly different ITE perspectives suggest that practicum differences merit closer attention.

Less is known about the presage factors around pre-service than in-service teachers, reflecting the long-established sector pattern of predominantly in-service ITE. Across pre-service studies, contradictory portrayals of teachers and their experiences emerge. In contrast to Avis *et al.* (2011)'s straightforward

academic pre-service teacher characterisation, Wright (2017) instead emphasises teachers' heterogeneity and varied journeys into FE ITE, but also the commitments they manage around engaging in the teaching practicum. Pre-service teachers are graduates but may also have substantial pre-ITE work and/or teaching experience (Wright, 2017). Exploring feedback within the practicum, Wright (2017) finds teacher educator and pre-service relationship building is a necessary precursor to a developmental dialogue. However, this study also highlights the challenge of maintaining the practicum as a space for formative development rather than summative judgement, even for pre-service teachers. Larger sector conditions, namely the monitoring and control of teachers' practice (O' Leary, 2017), may be a significant presage factor around the teaching practicum.

Earlier work by Bathmaker & Avis (2005) presents a bleak picture of the professional identity formation of pre-service teachers through their practicum placements. Practicum relationships, a positive aspect of Wright's (2017) study, are here absent, impacting negatively on developing teaching identities. Pre-service teachers experience a significant expectation versus reality gap around the FE teacher's job role, as seen through the practicum, a disconnect also noted by Maxwell (2009). They are marginalised within the workplace communities they attempted to become part of (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005). Poor workplace conditions, lack of resources and perceived lack of management support (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005) prevent legitimate peripheral participation within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Challenging sector conditions distance teachers from the community. Both studies (Wright, 2017; Bathmaker & Avis, 2005) highlight relational aspects and sector conditions as highly pertinent to practicum learning, factors worth contemporary exploration, particularly due to the contrast across these studies.

More is known about the factors affecting in-service teachers' practicum learning. Teaching experience and support from others within a positive workplace are crucial factors in new teachers' learning (Maxwell, 2014) but are not available to all teachers. Maxwell (2014) conceives practicum learning as a complex interplay between teacher factors such as previous careers,

experiences of learning, work and life, and workplace factors, namely the affordances offered for learning, and ways in which in-service teachers perceive and engage with these. This portrayal is significant in avoiding the individualisation and problematisation of teachers, instead conceiving practicum learning as both a collective endeavour and responsibility. Maxwell (2014), like Bathmaker and Avis (2005), perceives a mismatch of educational cultures between optimum conditions for workplace learning, namely the provision of diverse and supported teaching experiences, and the prevailing performativity of the FE and Skills sector which often inhibits practicum learning. These conclusions form a starting point from which to improve practicum learning for sector teachers. It is timely therefore, following 2024's major qualification change (DfE 2024c), to revisit these areas and to deepen contemporary understanding of them. The sector still lacks granular primary data around workplace cultures and organisational practices which are integral to learning within the workplace (Maxwell, 2014).

In-service teacher identity is also heterogenous, with varied and extensive work experience prior to ITE, teaching a broad range of subject areas with varied lengths of time within the sector. As their workplace is also their practicum setting, workplace issues affect their teaching development (Orr & Simmons, 2010; Thompson, 2014; Hanley & Thompson, 2021). In-service teachers, often with backgrounds as experienced vocational professionals, are labelled dual professionals (Avis *et al.*, 2011). However, in the teaching practicum, these teachers have a third identity to negotiate: the status of student teacher (Orr & Simmons, 2010). The interaction of student teacher and paid teacher identities can shape and reinforce a conservative understanding of the role of the FE teacher. In-service teachers feel pressure to be fully productive, resulting in concerns around the bureaucratic elements of the job taking precedence over teaching practice development. With little space to engage with pedagogy, their new teacher identity is only acknowledged within the ITE programme. As Husband (2015) also notes, in much of the FE and Skills sector, novice status is simply not recognised. An in-service teacher's struggles with identity are summarised thus:

‘[O]n the one hand you are a trainee-teacher and it’s understood and recognised that you don’t actually really know the job that well and you’re still learning it but, on the other hand, you are a teacher and you’re doing the job of a teacher and you’re paid as a teacher and you have the responsibilities of a teacher’ (Orr & Simmons, 2010, p. 81).

The employment patterns of the FE and Skills sector together with its in-service model of ITE exist uncomfortably within a culture which does not create space for new teachers’ pedagogical development. These conditions adversely affect in-service teachers’ practicum learning and indeed downplay its importance. Orr and Simmons’ (2010) work is valuable in highlighting the multiple professional identities in-service teachers navigate and the lack of space for them to be new teachers due to their employer expectations. As in Maxwell’s (2014) work, the developmental goals of ITE programmes appear at odds with the organisations in which they operate. Both Orr and Simmons (2010) and Thompson (2010) concur that Lave and Wenger’s (1991) conceptualisation of apprenticeship as a linear journey from novice to expert does not reflect the reality of the FE and Skills sector. At a time of ITE qualification change, with a renewed emphasis on practicum learning, it is timely to revisit the sector conditions which enable and construct the practicum learning of in-service teachers, as well as to assess whether the sector has created a space for teachers to be new.

The specific structural factors within FE colleges which serve as barriers to in-service teachers’ practicum development are identified by Olukoga (2018): the time to attend ITE programmes and be supported in practicum learning. A heavy teaching load and limited remission to attend ITE are ‘seemingly restrictive practices... put in place to maximise efficiency at the expense of teachers’ practice and well-being’ (Olukoga, 2018, p. 488). Workplace culture runs contrary to ITE’s goals to enhance teachers’ practical teaching skills. Some teachers and their managers use their agency to find spaces for pedagogical development through ITE, but when more generous support is available, teachers fight for this or managers ‘creatively’ timetable to disguise time spent on ITE programme activities. The responsibility for practicum

support is not shouldered by employers, nor factored into timetabling at an organisational level. Teachers' development and learning is attributed to gaining experience rather than being able to work in a sustained way with others. Olukoga's (2018) work illustrates the intensity of ITE programmes for in-service teachers. Time and support for completion, although sometimes negotiated, was not the norm, and issues with this were organisational and systemic.

Mentoring is an aspect of the practicum which has received a great deal of research attention. Teaching mentors have long been seen as essential to the practicum, influencing teachers' practical teaching development whilst providing on-the-ground support (Tedder & Lawy, 2009; also Ingelby, 2014; Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019; Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). Since Ofsted's (2003) reporting of sector-wide mentoring deficiencies, practices have received increased attention (Cunningham, 2007; Tedder & Lawy, 2009; Ingleby, 2014; Thompson, 2014; Kentzer, Bracey, & Devecchi, 2019; Hobson & Maxwell, 2020; Tyrer, 2023). To be enriching, mentoring must be resourced and supported (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020); because of this, not all teachers benefit from a mentor-supported practicum (Tedder & Lawy, 2009). Due to the sector's breadth, teachers' varied backgrounds and competing contextual and policy influences (Tedder & Lawy, 2009), although integral to the FE ITE experience, mentoring is hard to define. With these caveats, Hobson and Maxwell (2020, p. 185) define mentoring as:

'a formal, one-to-one relationship, usually between a relatively inexperienced teacher (the mentee) and a relatively experienced one (the mentor), which is intended to support the mentee's (though may also support the mentor's) learning, development and well-being.'

Understandings of the processes and product of mentoring vary widely (Tedder & Lawy, 2009), influenced by the practice architectures of organisations (Tyrer, 2023), as well as by external policy and stakeholders. Mentors can be caught between more judgemental and more developmental aims of the mentoring, desiring to help teachers to develop as reflective practitioners rather than to

judge their performance (Ingelby, 2014). Where mentors also line manage their mentees, mentoring practices are influenced by managerial elements of their roles (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020; Tyrer 2023). What Tedder & Lawy term (2009) a 'support and judge' model of mentoring does not assist teachers' professional, personal and pedagogical development. Additionally, within a mainly generic model of ITE, responsibility rests on the shoulders of mentors to develop subject specific and/or vocational pedagogies (Thompson, 2014). Mentoring, therefore, on both structural and individual levels, presents a number of challenges as well as benefits.

Prerequisites for developmental mentoring to fully enhance practicum learning are identified by Hobson and Maxwell (2020) through widespread research. Many precursors are organisational, and their implementation requires investment, but some aspects are more relational. Firstly, an institutional commitment to and ethos of mentoring support, evidenced in timetabling, together with effective mentor induction is recommended (also Ingelby, 2014). A developmental mentoring ethos is enhanced by an expansive organisational culture (Fuller & Unwin, 2003). Careful mentor selection is crucial, with clarification of minimum expectations, regular contact and a close subject/vocational match (see also Thompson, 2014). Moreover, mentors should be well-matched as people and in terms of teaching experience. Generally, mentoring by line managers should be avoided. Longer lasting mentor relationships are the most beneficial, but teachers gain most from mentoring when they have an expansive mindset and actively seek to work together with mentors (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020).

The potential of mentoring to develop teachers' practicum learning is well-understood but a lack of the necessary mentoring pre-requisites means only some teachers experience this first hand through the practicum (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi (2019) found that only half of teachers surveyed experienced developmental mentoring first hand, with mentors and mentees lacking the time, role clarification and relationships to enable supportive mentoring to occur. Teachers who experience little or no mentoring survive their ITE programmes, whereas mentor-supported teachers

are able to thrive. Where practicum mentoring is not in place, this adversely affects teachers' attitudes to the FE sector and their jobs. Equally, the converse is true (Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019). This strengthens the case for investment in a funded, national superstructure for mentoring to enable a commitment to mentoring across FE and Skills organisations (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). Further work is required to understand how mentor and other support relationships within the teaching practicum operate, how these relationships shape teacher identity, how the processes of practice learning operate and the ground level conditions which help bring this learning about. This study adds to that research base.

In summary, the heterogenous nature of teachers undertaking FE ITE is known but not well-researched. At present, a generalised picture of pre- and in-service teachers emerges from the literature spanning an academic/ vocational divide, but this picture is far from complete. More is known about in-service teachers' situations than those of pre-service teachers. All teachers benefit from establishing supportive practicum learning relationships but can be subject to sector conditions which restrict practicum support. The benefits of developmental mentoring are widely known, but not widely experienced. There is a need for a finer-grained understanding of teachers undertaking ITE which moves beyond the pre-service / in-service dichotomy, of what they bring to ITE in terms of resources and how presage factors of and around them interact to create the conditions for practicum learning. This study aims to begin to fill that research gap.

2.4 The process of practicum learning

Over the last two decades, there have been successive attempts to understand the content and process of teacher learning through the practicum within FE and Skills sector ITE (Lucas, 2007; Lucas & Nasta, 2010; Maxwell, 2010; Thompson, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017; Powell; 2020), prompted by dissatisfaction with both the sector conditions around teacher learning detailed in the preceding section and the standards-based approach to teacher learning presented within successive sector qualification frameworks. Lucas

(2007) and Maxwell (2010) both identify a disconnect between current understandings of professional learning and how it is expressed within qualification frameworks, specifically their failure to acknowledge the range of sector teaching and learning contexts, the diversity of teachers' practicum learning, and the situated nature of such learning. The model of teacher practicum knowledge suggested by highly codified professional standards and assessment frameworks is based on a conceptualisation of knowledge as an 'objective, external, fixed entity' (Maxwell, 2010, p. 336). In teacher education, this knowledge is generally exemplified by reference to Shulman's (1986 and 1987) typology of seven categories of pre-service schoolteacher knowledge, culminating in pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), the bringing together of other knowledge domains within the context of a particular subject. This expert knowledge is often seen as the goal of practicum learning (Lucas, 2007). The applicability of such objective and fixed conceptualisations of teacher knowledge to the FE and Skills sector practicum has been seriously questioned (Lucas, 2007; Maxwell, 2010; Thompson, 2014), despite their enduring popularity. In fact, in subsequent work, Shulman's position shifts away from a focus on the individual teacher knowledge towards 'a conception of teachers learning and developing within a broader context of community, institution, polity, and profession' (Shulman & Shulman, 2004, p. 267-269, also discussed by Thompson, 2014).

Lucas (2007) theorised a social view of practicum learning which subsequent empirical studies have begun to investigate. Teacher work-based learning is 'understood as a social process that takes place as trainees "immerse" themselves with different groups of practitioners and different learning contexts' (Lucas, 2007, p. 97). Teacher learning is conceived as an interaction between the individual and the community, participation in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1996). The learning of each teacher is as complex as that teacher's workplace relationships and interactions, which are affected by surrounding multiple activity systems and views of practice, as well as whether learning environments are expansive or restrictive (Lucas, 2007). The effects of restrictive workplaces on teacher learning and their ability to learn with others

are highlighted by Bathmaker & Avis (2005), Orr & Simmons (2010) and Olukoga (2018). To optimise practicum learning, Lucas (2007) envisages a highly individualised, negotiated workplace curriculum accommodating each teacher's needs. To work towards this reconceptualisation of practicum learning, it is necessary to further explore current understandings of the processes of practical teacher learning.

A collaborative and contextually sensitive account of practicum learning which values teachers' personal and professional histories is developed by Maxwell (2010), building on Lucas (2007)'s theoretical work. Maxwell (2010) proposes teacher practicum knowledge develops around three clusters of 'rules', or knowledge resources, through practices, and mediated by teachers' beliefs and values. Subject or vocational area knowledge arises from teachers' prior experiences whilst generic teaching and learning knowledge develops interactively through everyday practices including teaching and ITE attendance. Teaching observations enable individualised learning and ITE course activities develop propositional knowledge and uncover tacit knowledge. Learning about specific groups or individuals is created through interaction with learners. Absent from this study is any concept akin to pedagogical content knowledge, where clusters of practicum learning are combined. Notably, subject or vocational knowledge is individually developed, rather than through interactions with other educational professionals. Although a small-scale study, Maxwell's (2010) work provides a framework of in-service teachers' practicum learning and suggests the interactions through which practicum learning can develop, which will be explored further in this study, in the practicum learning of pre- and in-service teachers. Of particular interest is whether knowledge types develop in isolation or combination.

Dedicated time spent sensemaking with others around the ITE practicum (Lahiff, 2015 and 2017) in post-observation feedback discussions assists teachers' practicum learning; ITE programme activities provide dedicated time to talk about teaching (Maxwell, 2010; Lahiff 2015 and 2017; Powell, 2020). Feedback discussions, Lahiff's (2015 and 2017) focus, assist in teacher identity formation, harnessing in-service teachers' existing vocational identities, and

helping them apply their vocational knowledge for pedagogical purposes, developing their identities as vocational teachers. Lahiff (2015; 2017), like Maxwell (2010), recognises the identities teachers carry into the practicum, and their influence on teacher identity formation. Pedagogical expertise also develops ‘a student-centred, activity-led approach to teaching students’ (Lahiff, 2015, p. 9). Lahiff draws an emergent distinction between more general ‘pedagogical expertise... and pedagogical expertise for vocational practice’ (2017, p. 56-57). Pedagogical expertise for vocational practice requires interaction with teaching mentors with vocational as well as pedagogical expertise. By valuing in-service teachers’ prior experiences within the feedback discussion, an equilibrium between social practice and individual capacity can be achieved. Knowledge is co-constructed, and later recontextualised by teachers within their own teaching setting (Lahiff, 2015). Relationships between in-service teachers, teacher educators and mentors, and the learning culture created emerge as important contributory factors to teacher practicum learning in Lahiff’s work (2015; 2017; also Broad & Lahiff, 2019). Lahiff presents a powerful practice-based model of practicum learning within the feedback discussion (2015; 2017; also Broad & Lahiff, 2019). There is therefore scope to broaden the inquiry into the macrocosm of practicum experiences, investigating learning relationships and teacher knowledge development through informal and ongoing interactions. The role teachers’ resources can play in their teaching identities, and how these may be valued are themes developed further within this study.

Discussion and sensemaking about practicum learning does not only occur in the practicum setting: the ITE classroom enables teachers to combine their dual identities as both teachers and learners (Orr & Simmons, 2010), to ‘put on their bifocal lenses’ (Powell, 2020, p. 15) by unpicking and sharing examples from their practicum teaching, guided by teacher educators. Modelling and deconstructing pedagogical practices can help teachers interrogate their personal pedagogies garnered from the sayings, doings, and relating of past teachers, adjust and develop their personal pedagogies and teacher identities (Powell, 2020). Teacher educators connect learning as students to learning to

be teachers by embedding 'the language of learning to teach' (2020, p. 19) to help teachers articulate their personal pedagogies. In this sensemaking around the practicum, there are parallels with the reshaping of teachers' existing knowledge resources for pedagogical purposes described by Lahiff (2015; 2017). Learning to teach is seen as an initiation into the practice of teaching (Kemmis *et al.*, 2014). However, there are contextual, relational and spatio-temporal differences between Powell's and Lahiff's work. Whereas Lahiff (2015; 2017) explores individual teacher development through feedback discussions in a one-to-one scenario within the practicum context, Powell (2020) unravels the role taught elements of ITE programmes play in this process, not in terms of the transmission of theory but in teacher educators modelling strategies and behaviours, and unpicking practices with groups of in-service teachers within the teacher education setting. Both authors' work suggest there is a space for further exploration of the deliberate unpicking of practices, the consideration of their application within teachers' own settings and learning the language of learning to teach within and through informal interactions within the practicum setting. This study addresses these areas within the practicum itself.

There are few frameworks which attempt to account for the different ways in which teachers on the same ITE programme develop knowledge through the ITE practicum. Lacking sector specific models, Powell (2020) applies Taylor's (2008) theoretical framing of learning to teach, developed in UK school sector ITE. This framework is significant in its acknowledgment of the complexity of learning to teach through the practicum, its attempts to codify perspectives on and experiences of learning to teach, in highlighting that those involved in ITE may all conceive learning to teach differently, and that the push/pull of these competing influences affects the ITE journeys of teachers. Lastly, it allows for relationships between taught elements of the ITE programme and the practicum setting which are and are not in harmony. Taylor (2008) presents four progressively more sophisticated conceptions of the process of learning to teach, which move from surface to deeper learning, and which conceive teacher learning differently: (i) Cascading Expertise, involving the transmission of expert knowledge, (ii) Enabling Students' Individual Growth as a Teacher,

through initiation from a mentor (iii) Developing Student Teaching, involving partnership working across ITE and the practicum and (iv) Student as Teacher and Learner, where teachers are encouraged to think critically. However, neither Taylor's (2008) original framework nor Powell's (2020) later application is able to account for the factors which result in these very different conceptions of teacher learning described and experienced by those involved in ITE. One of the key impetuses for this study, as well as a dissatisfaction with a standards-based mode of teacher education, is to attempt to both codify and account for the different ways practicum learning is experienced by pre- and in-service teachers, and the enabling and restricting factors around that practicum learning. Taylor's (2008) work is foundational in framing if not explaining these differences. This study aims to conceptualise the processes of learning to teach as experienced by teachers within the FE and Skills sector.

Maxwell (2009) develops continua of conceptual and practice development based on teachers' reported changes in practicum experiences which enable the mapping of teachers' practicum experiences. These practice development areas and their order largely echo the findings of an earlier study (Harkin, Clow & Hillier, 2003) and are summarised as:

- 'More careful systematic planning and improved planning documentation (the most frequently mentioned change...)
 - The use of a wider range of teaching strategies and methods.
 - Increased use of participative activities, more facilitative approaches and less teacher 'performance'.
 - Implementation of approaches to cater for individual needs and to differentiate learning.
 - Development of formative assessment practices.
 - Development of more regular, analytical and focused evaluation'
- (Maxwell, 2009, p. 469).

Planning documentation is significant in evidencing these changes in practices, a shift from focussing on teaching to focussing on learning, through the recognition of the needs of individuals and application of student-centred

learning approaches, the same pedagogical shift described by Lahiff (2015 and 2017). Conceptually, teachers move from the largely practical ‘developing awareness of the teachers’ toolkit’ around a range of teaching methods, classroom management techniques and ways of motivating learners (Maxwell, 2009 p. 471) to ‘realising different learners need different approaches’ (ibid.). This leads to a focus on the role of formative assessment, followed by a phase of ‘re-positioning the role of the learner’ (ibid.), encouraging more active learning, finally ‘becoming an autonomous teacher’ (ibid.), where they have developed more sophisticated understandings of methods which link learning and teaching. Alongside this conceptual continuum sits a parallel practice continuum. Teachers establish a skills and strategies repertoire which equates to their theoretical awareness of a teacher toolkit. Notable absences in these continua are concerns with class management in all but the early stages, and vocational and/or subject specific pedagogies. These continua highlight a shift towards a contextually sensitive facilitative approach, with a nurturing perspective around meeting students’ needs. The creation of these continua raises the question of the factors which enable and constrict teachers to journey through them, which this study seeks to address.

In summary, within existing research on the processes of FE and Skills teacher practicum learning, a clear movement is evident towards conceiving this learning as a social practice, which is most likely to occur in workplaces with expansive learning cultures. Teachers also experience a shift towards student-centred practice. Currently, there are conflicting pictures of whether knowledge development occurs in an atomised or synthesised way, and although teacher practicum learning through feedback and within the ITE classroom has been theorised, there is a need for a consideration of how learning with others operates within practicum settings, and to conceptualise the differences in teachers’ practicum learning, as Taylor’s (2008) framework conceptualises schoolteacher practicum learning. This study addresses these knowledge gaps.

2.5 The product of practicum learning

In this section, the literature review moves to explore what is known about the product of practicum learning for teachers. ITE provision is often seen as an entity in itself, rather than as intertwined with the greater FE and Skills sector, teachers' careers, their professional development and their time in the sector's workforce (Lucas & Unwin, 2009; Husband, 2018). When exploring practicum learning, a key consideration is the dispositions teachers develop through the practicum towards teaching and professional learning, and how these may shape teachers' subsequent careers. Although not longitudinal, this study aims to identify teachers' trajectories through the ITE practicum, and the identities carried into the next stages of their careers. Existing perspectives on post-ITE teaching dispositions and teacher identities are explored below.

Across educational sectors, the ITE practicum results in differing paradigms of teacher professionalism: 'the effective teacher, the reflective teacher, the enquiring teacher and the transformative teacher' (Menter *et al.*, 2010, p. 17). The effective teacher paradigm values 'technical accomplishment and measurement... the model for an age of accountability and performativity' (Menter *et al.*, 2010, p. 21). Within ITE, this equates to evidencing competencies. The remaining paradigms offer subtly different iterations of practicum development in combination with other aspects of ITE. The reflective teacher paradigm (Schon, 1984) stresses values and theory informing teacher decision making, and a commitment to practice-based development. This paradigm is the most common counter to resist governmental effective teacher discourse (Menter *et al.*, 2010). The enquiring teacher (Stenhouse, 1975) undertakes systematic practitioner inquiries, while the transformative teacher combines reflection and enquiry with a commitment to social justice. These paradigms may be applied to the purposes of ITE, or to the orientations of teachers.

There are conflicting views on the paradigms available to FE and Skills sector teachers through the practicum. Pre-service teachers may experience a paradigm shift. Although their early practicum focuses on gaining competencies (Gossman & Horder, 2016), with experience, their focus changes to supporting learners rather than evidencing teaching skills. This shift indicates a change in

epistemological beliefs about learning and teaching: the reflective teacher paradigm (Gossman & Horder, 2016). This study raises the question of whether more expansive paradigms are also available to the majority of the sector's ITE population. Orr (2012), in contrast, found more evidence of effective teacher conformity and isolation, with limited contact even with staff in the same department, experienced most acutely by in-service teachers, but also by pre-service teachers. Prevailing sector conditions, combined with an imposed, standards-focussed model of ITE result in a highly restrictive model of teacher professionalism, characterised by 'expedience and technicality rather than autonomy and judgement' (Orr, 2012, p. 58). An effective versus reflective teacher dissonance indicates a tension between models of teaching proposed within ITE and evident in the larger sector (Orr, 2012). Hence, teachers can experience a disconnect between the taught ITE programme and their lived experience of the practicum. Although they see value in their students' education, they are surrounded by the effective teacher paradigm, leading to alienation (Orr, 2012). To counter this, Orr (2012) proposes increasing individual teacher's agency over their development. From these studies, conflicting pictures of available paradigms emerge, indicating a need for further exploration of the teaching identities available to FE and Skills teachers, addressed in this study.

The emerging teacher identities of vocational in-service teachers are adversely affected by the low, class-bound status of vocational education (Boodt, 2024). The portrayal of the FE and Skills sector as offering low status education to working-class students with limited choice and agency (Duckworth & Smith, 2018; also Crawley, 2016; Orr, 2018) impacts the practicum journeys of vocational teachers with working-class backgrounds. These teachers enter ITE with a perceived deficit around their own qualifications and experience, which are seen as non-academic and unworthy in an educational context (Boodt, 2024), influenced by the UK qualifications hierarchy, where academic qualifications are viewed as being of greater value than vocational ones (Payne, 2010). This perceived deficit, theorised by Boodt (2024) as social and intellectual hauntings around teachers' own histories, is exacerbated by

academic aspects of ITE programmes and teachers' role. ITE requires not just engagement with practicum learning, but the documenting of this learning. Teachers must, through ITE, reconcile 'the non-academic self of their past with the teacher self of their present' (Boodt, 2024, p. 1081), resulting in feelings of inferiority, despite much of the sector's provision depending on teachers entering teaching as a second career, with vocational identities and significant expertise (Crawley, 2012; Thompson, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017). Boodt's (2024) work suggests that these teachers merit close attention when mapping practicum learning, raising the consideration of whether teachers can integrate their vocational and evolving teacher habituses as an area of consideration.

The value of ITE learning, and particularly the practicum to teachers' career development may become more apparent through subsequent professional experience. Burton (2020) outlines six in-service teacher-identified impacts of ITE programmes experienced within the FE and Skills sector. This study is notable not just for the positive picture it paints of the value of ITE, but in that it is phenomenographic, informed by in-service teachers' voices rather than by narratives emerging from previous studies. Reported benefits include *Contextualisation*, or awareness of their place within the FE and Skills sector, *Connectedness*, belonging to an ITE community, and a sense of *Externality*, in that they can talk the talk of education, a benefit also noted by Powell (2020). Internally, teachers experience a greater sense of their professional selves through ITE, and note *Skills Development* in '[their] own academic skills, enhancing creativity in teaching and learning, together with general pedagogic skill' (Burton, 2020, p. 346). The notion of creativity suggests a reflective teacher rather than effective teacher orientation (Menter *et al.*, 2010) also found by Gossman & Horde (2016). Lastly, teachers experienced increased confidence and a commitment to future learning. These teachers' post-ITE reflections present a more hopeful picture of the benefits of ITE than Orr's (2012) or Boodt's (2024) work. The sample in this study is, though, self-selecting. Participants are, due to the study's nature, those who chose to remain in employment in the sector, who therefore may be regarded as the success stories of ITE. Nevertheless, Burton (2020) highlights clear benefits of

ITE programmes. His work inspires further investigations of which aspects of ITE programmes, particularly of the practicum, bring about positive changes for current and future sector teachers. Part of that work will be accomplished within this study.

Studies connecting FE and Skills teachers' ITE experiences and subsequent career orientations are rare. However, the synthesis of employment with ITE learning activities can result in positive career trajectories for teachers (Husband, 2018; also 2020). Husband (2018) examines Scottish and Welsh in-service teachers' ITE and early employment to identify factors which enhance their professional learning. The integration of teacher induction and teachers' ITE programme experiences with support through workplace mentoring enabled embedded practicum development leading to post-ITE professional learning. ITE programmes are effective where links between taught and practicum programme elements are pro-actively constructed by employing organisations. Where this does not occur, 'student lecturers were less able to situate their learning in work-based practice and...found less utility and satisfaction in the training' (Husband, 2018, p. 174). ITE is effective when it is integral to rather than peripheral in the functioning of FE organisations. Then new teachers can be valued for their 'rich and varied heritage, skill set, wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the sector' (Husband, 2020, p. 64). Husband's (2018; also 2020) case study highlights the power FE and Skills organisations have to shape the professional learning of their current and future teachers. Husband (2020) also raises the important aspect of the resources teachers carry with them into the sector and their ITE programmes. This theme of teacher resources and their role in teacher practicum learning is explored within this study, and will prove influential in teachers' practical learning and professional identity formation.

Three intricately interconnected themes of teacher identity, validation and community membership are crucial for new pre-service teachers as they join the workforce. Wright *et al.* (2018) examine the transitions from ITE into employment of a full-time, pre-service cohort. Identity, explored by Boodt (2024) and becoming part of a learning organisation explored by Husband (2018; 2020) are here connected. Transitioning teachers position themselves as new

teachers wishing to deliberately develop their teaching approaches and connections with students. Their emerging identities are enhanced and community membership strengthened by praise and validation within non-hierarchical formal and informal mentoring, and sharing aspects of teaching practice (Wright *et al.*, 2018). During ITE, pre-service teachers experience their ITE programmes as supportive and nurturing communities where they gain validation through discussions around practicum learning. This same sense of collegiality and community was also apparent amongst in-service ITE cohorts surveyed by Burton (2020). It appears teachers, in early employment, desire the support and validation of ITE programmes to sustain into workplaces. The power of the sector context, both political and socio-cultural, as well as institutional cultures again prove influential in shaping individual teacher identities (Wright *et al.*, 2018). This study will add to that picture by exploring validation within practicum learning.

The importance of the practicum in teacher identity formation cannot be underestimated: Brown & Everson (2019) found it to be the most significant aspect of ITE in shaping teachers' developing identities: 'the interplay between trainees' feelings of belonging to a placement and their confidence in their ability to make progress as a teacher is significant' (2019, p. 240). By unravelling aspects of pre-service teachers' FE and Skills practicum experience, Brown & Everson (2019) begin to identify elements which assist in the assumption of a teacher identity. Early in teaching placements, teachers focus on building relationships and fitting in. However, in practicum settings lacking support, teachers assume a long-term emotional burden of feeling unwanted. Through ITE, pre-service teachers carry a sense of what it means to be a 'good teacher', their feelings around achieving this oscillate: the 'rollercoaster' narrative of teaching development is common (Brown & Everson, 2019). Trust within the practicum, being able to make mistakes and experiment within teaching settings are necessary for teachers to be able to become more independent practitioners who are confident in their practice. Brown & Everson (2019, p. 244) note a 'transition from enacting the role of the teacher to becoming the teacher' through the practicum. This transition is likely to occur

when teachers gain self-esteem from belonging and feeling valued within their practicum contexts. Other presage factors such as disrupted practicum experiences, absences and/or a rigid personal identity can also adversely affect the move from enacting a role to becoming a teacher. Where supportive relationships with other professionals are absent, positive learner relationships can also contribute the sense of becoming a teacher. Brown & Everson (2019) note the importance of identity work within ITE for all those working with pre-service teachers. The importance of identity work is echoed by Boodt (2024) for in-service teachers, noting an additional set of factors linked to employment status and vocational identities. Given the heterogenous profile of the sector's teachers undertaking ITE, the pre-programme identities of in-service teachers are also likely to shape their teacher identities, an area not explored by Brown & Everson (2019). This study aims to contribute to that research gap. From existing studies, relationships and support within the practicum help teachers assume a teacher role. What is now required is a greater understanding of the practicum journeys of pre- and in-service teachers to gain a more granular sense of the practices which enable and constrict identity development and of the varied trajectories which teachers follow through the practicum.

2.6 Summary, leading to research questions

Overall, the importance of teachers' practicum experiences in shaping their beliefs about teaching and learning, in developing their teacher identities and in preparing them for being part of the FE and Skills sector is evident through the literature scoped. Conditions within the larger sector, specifically performance pressures and a restrictive, standards-based model of ITE generally appear to operate as restrictive factors in terms of teacher development. These pressures are, however, more evident in older studies than more recent ones. Across literature surveyed, there are signs within the sector of more developmental journeys through and learning from the practicum for some sector teachers, particularly pre-service ones. The diverse entry routes to FE and Skills ITE, recently acknowledged, suggest that a study which moves beyond the current generalised picture of pre- and in-service teachers is required. Regarding presage factors, teachers benefit from establishing supportive practicum

learning relationships but what assists and inhibits their formation is less clear. Similarly, the resources new teachers offer the sector are now recognised (Husband, 2018; 2020) but their role in the practicum remains unexplored. Both of these themes are addressed in this study.

This thesis adds to the research base of practicum studies conceiving this learning as a social practice. It also attempts to detail how teacher knowledge development occurs, and whether this is atomised or synthesised. The processes of teacher learning through feedback and within the ITE classroom have been theorised. This study will consider how learning with others operates within practicum settings and attempt to conceptualise the differences between teachers' practicum learning. Different paradigms of teacher professionalism influence and emerge from teachers' practicum learning. There is a need now to examine closely the practices within the practicum which lead to the development of particular teacher orientations. This thesis attempts to address this gap in existing knowledge around the FE and Skills teaching practicum by examining the particulars of teachers' practicum learning from the perspectives of teachers themselves, their teacher educators and teaching mentors.

To contribute to the research base around teachers' learning through the practicum within Further Education and Skills initial teacher education explored in this chapter and to begin to address gaps in that base, the following main and subsidiary research questions were developed, following White (2016).

Main research aim: What factors appear to shape FE and Skills sector teachers' learning trajectories through the teaching practicum on initial teacher education programmes in one college-based higher education institution?

This overarching research aim is broken down into the following researchable questions:

1. How is learning through the practicum conceptualised and illustrated through practice artefacts by teacher educators, teaching mentors and teachers?
2. What trajectories do teachers follow through the practicum?

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3. What factors are perceived as enabling and constricting practicum learning trajectories?
 4. How can learning through the practicum be optimised on Further Education and Skills initial teacher education programmes and within the Further Education and Skills sector and its workforce?

These research aims are descriptive, exploratory and explanatory in nature. The research design developed to achieve these aims is outlined in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to develop accounts of FE and Skills ITE practicum learning within one Further Education and Skills teacher education provider in England during the period of the global Covid-19 pandemic. It intertwined the perspectives of teachers undertaking the practicum, their teacher educators and teaching mentors and analysed the factors which underpinned teachers' learning experiences. Practice artefacts elicited insider perspectives from participants; accounts of the social practices which constituted learning to become a teacher. The global pandemic functioned as a critical incident, enabling the normally taken-for-granted to be revealed. This project conceptualised learning to become a teacher as a social practice, moving beyond the dichotomous theory/ practice split around which the practicum is often described.

This chapter begins by introducing the study's philosophical position, its theoretical underpinnings and the influence of the 2020-2021 Covid-19 pandemic on the project's research design. Ethical considerations are detailed, as is my positionality as an insider-researcher developing an organisational case study. The data generation method developed in the project, synchronous online artefact-mediated interviews, is justified. These were used to explore practicum learning from the perspectives of teachers, teaching mentors and teacher educators, and to give a voice to these three participant groups. To conclude the chapter, the process of data analysis is detailed for transparency, rigour and to inspire confidence in the project's findings.

3.2 Theoretical understandings, methodological orientation and practical influences

3.2.1 Theoretical understandings

This study adopted a practice view of teachers' practicum learning. A practice is defined as:

‘a form of socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doings) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (sayings), and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings), and when this complex of sayings, doings and relatings ‘hang together’ in a distinctive project’ (Boud & Brew, 2016, pp. 78-79).

Therefore, from a practice perspective, teaching is a collective rather than individual enterprise (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015) and becoming a teacher can also be seen as collective. Practicum learning is a complex interaction of social practices and individual capacity from which student teachers develop professional expertise (Lahiff, 2015), a set of practices which participants engage in, and through which they interact (Francisco & Boud, 2023). Practice theories offer a fruitful lens to view learning as contextualised, in relationship with other people and with material objects. Learning is seen as a process of ‘participation, construction and becoming’ (Boud & Brew, 2016, p. 78, also Boud & Hager, 2012). This study’s use of practice artefacts as an elicitation device opened a window into workplace practices.

A practice perspective on practicum learning is at odds with the learning as acquisition discourses evident in three successive standards-led qualification frameworks underpinning sector teaching qualifications (FENTO, 1999; LLUK 2006, 2007a and 2007b; DfE, 2024c). These standards present learning as distinct from the individual, independent of its context and as quantifiable or measurable (Terry, 2019). Metaphors of acquisition of knowledge and skills do not acknowledge the complex nature of learning in workplaces (Eraut, 2004). From a practice perspective, learning is contextually situated and happens through that context and interactions within it. Those involved in learning to teach, the social context for that endeavour and the organisation in which teaching takes place are positioned as ‘mutually produced,’ where knowing and doing ‘cannot be separated’ (Boud & Brew, 2016, p.79, drawing on Gherardi, 2000). This investigation of teachers’ trajectories through practicum learning aimed to make explicit ways of doing, saying and relating around practicum

learning, shedding light on the conscious meanings of actors but also, through the use of participant selected artefacts (Giddens, 1979, p.105), what cannot be or is not expressed discursively. The study builds on the work of Wright (2017) and Lahiff (2017) who apply cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), part of the toolkit of practice theories (Nicolini, 2012), to investigate specific practicum aspects. The conceptual tools applied in this study are outlined below.

Through the practicum, teachers are socialised into communities (Lahiff, 2015). The multiple actors involved, the teachers, their mentors, other professionals, as well as the departments of teacher education and the vocational subject all have subtly different expectations and priorities; socio-cultural and material factors influence and connect their practices. Six partially overlapping practice features offered a loose sensitising frame through which to view accounts of practicum learning: ‘embodiment, material mediation, situatedness, emergence, relationality and co-construction’ (Boud & Brew, 2016, p. 80). ‘Practice is always embodied (and situated) —it is what particular people do, in a particular place and time, and it contributes to the formation of their identities as people of a particular kind, and their agency and sense of agency’ (Kemmis, 2009, p. 32). Embodiment also reflects desires, emotions and values (Boud & Brew, 2016) and highlights the role of affect and agency in practicum learning. But what occurs at micro level also connects to policy, politics and discourse at meso and macro levels: this is conceptualised as situatedness. Studying practice is studying the construction of power (Nicolini, 2012); teachers’ practicum journeys involve navigating the expectations of multiple powerful others (Wright, 2017). Practicum learning is mediated by materials and their arrangements (ibid.), physical and technological (Boud *et al.*, 2018), which can both enhance and impede practice. But practices also generate materials (ibid.). Practices change over time through working with others (Boud & Brew, 2016). Through emergence, practice theories conceptually accommodate individual agency (Nicolini, 2012, citing Reckwitz, 2002). Thus, teachers may assimilate and adopt practices but can also demonstrate creativity in adapting practices contextually. Relationality is also a key consideration, as practices take place in relation to other social actors as well as being influenced by what each teacher

brings to the practicum. Thus, co-construction with other professionals occurs, sometimes explicitly, but also in unarticulated ways (Nicolini, 2012). These loose and often over-lapping conceptual tools provided a flexible framework which imbued the analysis of data in this project with a practice sensibility.

3.2.2 Methodological orientation

Practice theories are not tied to specific methodologies; these depend upon specific research questions (Shove, 2017). Research questions have a symbiotic relationship with the methodological, a 'slippery term' (Pryor, 2010, p. 163) which can be defined around the intersection of epistemology and ontology, practical and micropolitical, macropolitical and ethical. This project adopted a constructionist epistemological position, seeing 'knowledge... as contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context' (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). This view of knowledge, constructed with others in social settings, meshes well with a view of learning as a practice. Both critical and interpretivist ontologies can align with a constructionist stance (Crotty, 1998) and both influenced this project. The macropolitical backdrop of the FE and Skills sector's low positioning in the academic value system (Orr, 2018), combined with ITE's regulatory regimes (Lucas & Nasta, 2010) suggest a critical stance (Cousin, 2009). However, as an insider researcher it was necessary to navigate issues of 'access, intrusiveness, familiarity and rapport' (Mercer, 2007, p. 6). Micropolitically and practically, critical positioning may have appeared intrusive and limited potential access. Whilst an awareness of macropolitical power discourses (Wright, 2017) informed the project, my researcher positioning aligned broadly with interpretivism whilst reflexively acknowledging my personal attraction to a critical reading.

Adopting an interpretivist paradigm meant viewing knowledge as a hermeneutic-dialectic process (Pring, 2015), a method of deciphering indirect meaning, a reflective practice (Crotty, 1998). From this perspective, all 'objects' in the world are constructed and do not exist independently of the researcher.

Therefore, research knowledge is created through interactions between the researcher and the phenomenon studied, rather than existing as an objective truth (Pring, 2015). Indeed, notions of objectivity and subjectivity do not fit with this paradigm, which sees all knowledge as perspectival. In this project, adopting the interpretative turn in research led to the creation of artefact-mediated online synchronous interviews, a method of data generation which was contextually sensitive, and allowed the researcher to interact with the object of study (Grix, 2010), also enabling the messy reality of individual's experiences to be represented.

Researching practicum journeys required a coherent but also practical package of theory and method (Nicolini, 2012) which enabled access to practicum learning practices, was attuned to practical and micropolitical workplace considerations, within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, discussed further below, which precluded immersion in the research setting. Therefore, following Manidis & Yasukawa (2016), I undertook the study using a focused-ethnographic case study research design, which sought to achieve deep researcher involvement in the field (Knoblauch, 2005; Wall, 2015; Rashid *et al.*, 2019) through understanding the positions of different actors involved in practicum learning. My alterity (Knoblauch, 2005) was simultaneously beneficial and a challenge to be confronted reflexively in order to transcend biases (Rashid *et al.*, 2019). Patton's (2015) triangulation of reflexive questions and screens was therefore applied to consciously address reflexivity within this project, within field notes and through the lengthy process of interrogating data.

For practical, ethical, ontological and micropolitical reasons, the project used a single, collective case study (Stake, 2006) to track the practicum learning of a group of teachers on FE and Skills sector ITE programmes within one provider. On ITE programmes, teachers have triadic relationships with a mentor and a teacher educator who support practice development (Dunn, 2019); members of these three groups constituted the research participants, to combine a plurality of perspectives (Meyer, 2001), generate 'rich and particular accounts' (Smith *et al.*, 2009, p. 53) and function as a form of triangulation (*ibid.*). Case studies' contribution to generalisability can be via theoretical inferences developed

through process-tracing and/or comparative analysis (Hammersley, 2012). This project aimed to generate explanatory theory (Meyer, 2001) to address perceived limitations of a case study research approach.

3.2.3 Practical influences

‘Research on education has not stopped. We have just adapted new means to answer our research questions’ (Bulsari *et al.*, 2020).

The data for this project were generated during late 2020 and early 2021, in the Northeast of England, through the restrictions and uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic. This necessitated a reconceived research design in line with restrictions on social interactions which temporarily changed teaching and learning environments. In March 2020, ITE programme delivery moved rapidly to synchronous and asynchronous online and distance modes rather than the hitherto traditional, synchronous, face-to-face teaching. A commitment to continue programme delivery at a distance supported teacher learning through ITE (Moorhouse, 2020; Allen, Rowan & Singh, 2020; Scull *et al.*, 2020). This study mirrored that commitment in its intention to explore how the practicum turn (Cochran-Smith, 2016) was sustained in ITE through the Covid-19 period. In March 2020, ITE teaching practice requirements were reduced in line with national guidance (Universities’ Council for the Education of Teachers [UCET], 2020) to enable successful programme completion. The situation of 2020, with face-to-face teaching practice curtailed at a mid-point in the academic year, created an unprecedented reflective opportunity to capture both adaptations to existing practices and the familiar made strange. That opportunity informed this study’s redesign.

At the point of redesign, the study’s reconceived focus was to investigate how practicum learning was sustained in FE and Skills ITE through Covid-19 interruptions. Given the centrality of practical classroom experience to becoming a teacher (Maxwell, 2014), this appeared to be a research priority: the omnipresence of the pandemic made it difficult to see beyond its effects. However, through piloting, developing and conducting synchronous online

artefact-mediated interviews, a new focus emerged. The Covid-19 interruptions enabled space for considerable reflection around the teaching practicum, and the isolation of that period proved revelatory in uncovering previously taken-for-granted practices. The research use of practice artefacts elicited accounts of practicum learning which enabled the exploration and analysis of learning trajectories teachers followed through the practicum and the enabling and constricting factors which influenced these trajectories. This became the study's focus.

This project's research focus and data collection method of online synchronous artefact-mediated interviews developed in tandem. Online synchronous interviews use conferencing technology to connect interviewer and interviewee in real time but at a distance via digital interfaces such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams (Hanna, 2012; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Chiumento *et al.*, 2018). Artefact-mediated interviews make use of physical and/or digital artefacts as elicitation devices (Abildgaard, 2018) to stimulate recall of past experiences and practices, assisting participants in developing narratives around their use (*ibid.*; also Douglas *et al.*, 2015; Bahn & Barratt-Pugh, 2013). In this study, participant-selected artefacts illustrated and illuminated aspects of teachers' practicum learning. Artefacts stimulated accounts of the practices which comprised this development, within and beyond practicum settings. These aspects of interviews are explored and justified below. First, the ethical considerations around the project are discussed.

3.3 Ethical design considerations

The study was underpinned by a strong ethical framework, for the protection of all parties, to facilitate thoughtful conduct and to enhance the credibility of findings (Cousin, 2009). During the design phase, a major ethical consideration was not to add to the emotional strain of the Covid-19 pandemic period. Therefore, I consulted possible participants who had expressed interest in the project's earlier iteration about participation in online interviews about practicum learning, proposing the use of illustrative artefacts to consciously align with ITE's use of reflective practice. This aspect of interview design aimed to assist

participants in using reflection as learning tool to make sense of their current situations and to promote reciprocity (Trainor & Bouchard, 2013), of particular importance during times of change and uncertainty. Researchers have a commitment to try to offer reciprocity (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012), part of adopting an ethical sensibility (Wiles, 2013). Consultation with potential participants in the design and development phase made the study, to a degree, participatory (Clark *et al.*, 2021). The participatory aspect was sustained through the use of participant-selected artefacts in research interviews. The only way I could ethically proceed with the project redesign and implementation was with potential participants' support.

Gaining ethical approval from Lancaster University and my own institution provoked the systematic consideration of more general and project-specific ethical aspects, as well as the creation of recruitment emails, participant information sheets, consent forms, an ethical checklist and draft data collection tools (*see Appendices One, Two and Three*). An important concern throughout was maintaining the separation of my dual roles within the research site of manager/ ITE programme leader and researcher, and to avoid any perception of pressure to participate in the research project stemming from power dynamics related to my job role (British Educational Research Association [BERA], 2018; also BERA , 2024). Potential participants were from three groups: teachers enrolled on ITE programmes within my department, teacher educators who are colleagues, and teaching mentors. All potential teacher participants I had taught and/or assessed directly were excluded from the study. Many teaching mentor participants were known to me in a general professional capacity but only mentors who had no direct involvement with teachers I worked with participated. Some staff I line managed elected to participate in this study, but they were not directly approached to do so. Equally, I did not want to deny a voice to those who wanted to take part.

Every effort was made to maximise participants' understanding of the project's purpose and to ensure that consent given to participate was fully informed. Consent forms and project information were shared by email, with the offer of a discussion to clarify details. Several potential and actual participants exchanged

messages around participation. Formal written consent was gained ahead of interviews, and was confirmed verbally during the informal, unrecorded, pre-interview phase (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014), to allow any concerns to be expressed. Interview schedules were shared ahead of interviews. Participants were assured that if they wished to withdraw, I would extract any ideas or information (data) contributed to the study and destroy them. No participants chose to withdraw from the project after interview participation, although several potential teacher participants and one mentor participant initially consented, scheduled interviews but did not to respond to pre-arranged calls. Lastly, regarding consent, I gained gatekeeper permission from the research site (BERA, 2018) before approaching potential participants via their organisational or professional email addresses, ensuring compliance with General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] (2016). Additionally, as part of my internal ethical approval application, I arranged for a senior higher education professional with a strong background in research ethics but distant from my department to act as a critical friend and source of independent advice. This was to ensure research integrity around possible conflicts of interest between my researcher and my managerial roles. No such conflicts occurred, but this arrangement reduced risk.

The well-being of participants and teachers' ITE experiences always took precedence over the research project. Several steps were taken to mitigate against distress or discomfort before and during research interviews. The risk of distress lay in the emotional realm for teacher participants, due to interruptions to practicum experiences. To reduce risk, interview schedules were shared in advance and questions on this topic positioned later in interviews. However, most participants raised their experiences of this period early in interviews. Teacher participants in particular spoke of loss of practice, reduced or lost contact with mentors and sadness around these situations. All participants commented on learning becoming more fragmented, asynchronous and less collective as it continued at a distance and discussing this appeared to be cathartic. Participants chose the practice experiences they discussed, arising from artefacts they selected pre-interview. Artefact selection provided an

opportunity for reflection on feelings about discussing the practicum. Difficulty selecting artefacts may have indicated distress around the topic, which could have occurred with interview non-attenders. It was also anticipated that real-life dilemmas around the practicum causing upset may be raised by participants. Therefore, points of referral for counselling were available. As Wiles (2013) notes, good preparation in managing emotional risk is key to minimising that risk but is often overlooked.

The demands of the Covid-19 period changed working patterns and work-life balances. An acute concern, therefore, was not to make excessive demands on participants' time (Brown & Danaher, 2019). Participants responded to interview requests well outside normal educational working hours and suggested interviews during evenings and weekends to suit their changed working patterns and balance additional caring and other responsibilities. Although not entirely comfortable with this, I was led by what suited participants. In instances of non-attendance at scheduled interview times, I offered further opportunities to participate but also expressed concern for participants' well-being and circumstances. If potential participants did not respond, I interpreted this a withdrawal of consent.

An ethical consideration when conducting interviews online is the data security of the platform used. Microsoft Teams, recommended by both Lancaster University (Educational Research Lancaster University, 2020) and my own institution, was therefore selected over alternatives. Organisationally, Microsoft Teams had the additional advantage of familiarity to participants, as during 2020 it began to be used extensively. Mindful that familiarity could blur my researcher and professional roles, I maintained a conscious separation by gaining written consent via email signature ahead of interviews. Within Teams, the recording function is explicit: warnings appear on screen, which minimised the chance of material being recorded without participants' knowledge. To avoid intrusion, when many interviews took place in participants' homes, participants chose whether and when visual and audio or only audio channels were used during interviews. The chosen media often shifted a number of times during interviews, giving them control and agency.

All project participants and educational institutions were de-identified to preserve their privacy and protect their identities. As the data were collected in my workplace, although the organisation is anonymised, it may be identifiable due to my association with it. Therefore, additional steps to protect participants' privacy have been taken. Identifying features of participants, including their roles, the vocational or academic subjects they teach, and the locations and settings of their practicum have been removed from data. All individuals named within interview transcriptions have been de-identified; any markers which could make them identifiable have also been removed. Additionally, all project interviews have been analysed together so that participants' roles, whether mentor, teacher or teacher educator, are not disclosed. This preserved anonymity but also avoided privileging the views of any participant role. Pseudonyms were not used in this study, as they can offer subtle or latent clues to roles and identity (Iphofen, 2009). To respect confidentiality, only information agreed on the project consent form, including verbatim quotations, are shared within findings. Segments of interviews containing personal information or information beyond the scope of the study which were judged to constitute 'off-the-record comments' (Wiles, 2013, p. 50) and were excluded from data analysis. Where video recordings were created as part of the study, these were transcribed, and the original recordings were deleted to protect participants' identities. The social circumstances of this study foregrounded ethical considerations, particularly regarding potential emotional impact. Close attention to ethical conduct assisted the generation of data as well as protecting participants and researcher.

3.4 The research site, sample and engaging participants

This study was situated within the teacher education department of a large college-based higher education (CBHE) provider in the north of England. Within this site, my dual statuses of researcher and teacher educator necessitated the ethical considerations outlined in the above section. Data generation took place during the academic year of 2020- 2021, between October 2020 and February 2021. At that time, the department offered yearlong full-time and two-year part-time ITE programmes for the FE and Skills

sector, delivered to pre-service and in-service teachers intending to work or already working within that sector, together with other shorter, specialist provision beyond the scope of this study. Reflecting the 2013 transfer of responsibility for ITE to sector employers (Aubrey & Bell, 2017), all programmes included in the study were full FE sector teaching qualifications, developed and validated by the CBHE provider and mapped to national qualification frameworks. Full-time ITE programmes led to Postgraduate or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualifications. Part-time, in addition to these post-graduate programmes, a level 5 Diploma qualification was also offered to vocational teachers who did not hold first degrees. All of these qualification routes are represented within the research sample. Mirroring the sector wide pattern, teachers in the study's setting mainly undertook general ITE programmes, applying their programme learning within their vocational or academic subject areas through the teaching practicum (Thompson, 2014; Powell, 2020). However, around a third of the departmental student teacher population undertook specialist PGCE courses for teaching English, Mathematics or students with special education needs and/or disabilities. On these specialist routes, offered full and part-time, subject specialist teaching and pedagogical knowledge ran through programme delivery as well as practicum teaching.

In the study's site, all ITE programmes consisted of two main elements: the taught component, or the ITE classroom and the teaching practicum. Although this study's focus is the practicum, both programme aspects are here briefly situated. Within the study's setting, ITE programmes operated a concurrent delivery model, with both elements running side by side throughout the ITE course, to bring about powerful practicum learning (Darling-Hammond, 2014). Prior to March 2020, taught programmes were delivered face-to-face, in a dedicated ITE centre within the CBHE provider, a large general Further Education college. Pre- and in-service teachers across a range of practicum settings came together for programme delivery. Reflective of the diversity of the sector's teaching contexts, these teachers undertook their teaching practicums in a very wide range of institutions and subject areas. Locations included the

general FE college at the centre of the study as well as other general FE colleges, foundation learning provision, specialist colleges, CBHE settings, adult and community learning and work-based learning, delivering courses to students aged 16 to 19 and/or to adults over 19, across a wide range of learning levels in varied academic and vocational disciplines.

Between March 2020 and May 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in significant changes to ITE programmes' taught delivery and practicum arrangements: these programme aspects shifted medium and mode several times in response to national and local restrictions. From March 2020 to August 2020, programme delivery moved online, synchronously and asynchronously utilising several learning platforms and digital tools. Between September 2020 and December 2020, delivery was half face-to-face but socially distanced and half online via synchronously delivered interactive classes. From January 2021 and to the end of that academic year, all delivery moved online and was largely synchronous with asynchronous supporting resources. These changes in the taught programme also affected the teaching practicum. Prior to March 2020, a minimum of 100 hours of face-to-face teaching constituted the teaching practicum across the centre's ITE programmes. Between March 2020 and May 2021, a variety of practicum teaching methods and modes were in operation, depending on restrictions in place and contextual variation. Through the academic years of 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021, all pre-and in-service teachers on ITE programmes experienced face-to-face and more distanced practicum learning, but the forms of the distanced learning varied significantly across settings, from synchronous online delivery to asynchronous resource creation and assessment of student work. In the study, participants discussed practicum teaching experiences before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, in the academic year of 2019 to 2020.

Around the teaching practicum, teachers undertaking ITE form triadic relationships with mentors within the practicum setting and teacher educators from the ITE programme who support practice development (Dunn, 2019). Members of these three groups were the study's research participants. The inclusion criterion for study participation was to be involved in the practical

teaching development of a teacher undertaking FE and Skills ITE in the academic year 2019-2020, within my own organisation. Those approached to participate were teachers who had undertaken full or part-time ITE programmes, teacher educators who delivered taught programme components and observed and gave feedback on practical assessments and teaching mentors in my own institution and partner organisations, all experienced teachers who supported student teachers in the practicum. All participants were aged over twenty-five at the time of data generation, but age, gender and background were not relevant factors in participant recruitment. As with many researchers utilising qualitative methods, this study aimed to use purposive sampling (Cousin, 2009), intending to represent proportionally part-time and full-time and pre-and in-service student teachers across subject areas within the case study institution (Cook & Cook, 2017).

To reflect the triadic nature of relationships around the teaching practicum, I planned to recruit trios of participants, by first identifying teacher participants, then approaching their teaching mentors and teacher educators to also participate in the project. Overall, I desired a sample size of six triads. Numerically, I anticipated proportionally more teacher participant responses, as this was the largest recruiting pool. Teacher educators, the smallest recruiting pool, might well discuss and have insight into more than one teacher's practicum journey, and this proved to be the case within the project. This recruitment strategy, due the cascading nature of consent, and the circumstances of the study, proved difficult to enact in practice. Therefore, a convenience sample became necessary, as in the work of Lahiff (2017). I had not anticipated how difficult the circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic would make recruitment of student teacher participants. Despite these recruitment challenges, reflected upon below, 17 research interviews were completed:

- 5 student teachers
- 6 teacher educators
- 6 teaching mentors

Data were generated during the academic year of 2020- 2021. Each project participant took part in one artefact-mediated online synchronous interview conducted on Microsoft Teams, of between 45 and 60 minutes. All interviews were planned to take place in October and November of 2020, and 14 out of 17 interviews occurred then. An unplanned researcher leave of absence necessitated the rescheduling of 3 interviews: these took place in February 2021. The limitations of this unavoidable situation are reflected on in Chapter 7. Interviews were scheduled during or often, at the end of, the working day. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the researcher and most participants were homeworking, so interviews were online, but physically in our own homes. Within interviews, each participant discussed the teaching practicum experiences of a pre- or in-service teacher through the academic year of 2019 to 2020, both before and through the initial period of the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviews were framed around participant-selected artefacts intended to elicit accounts of the practices which constituted teacher practicum learning from the perspectives of three parties involved in that learning: teachers undertaking that learning, their teacher educators and teaching mentors. The online and artefact-mediated elements of interview design are justified in the following section. (See *Appendix Four for interview schedule and Appendix Five for Table of Participants and Artefacts*)

3.5 Data generation: online synchronous artefact-elicitation interviews

Online synchronous artefact-elicitation interviews were the data generation method used to explore learning through the practicum. Each interview element, namely the development of interview frameworks, the online synchronous aspect and use of artefacts, is now justified and reflected upon. A key consideration in research interview design is the degree of structure: a guided open framework enabled the exploration of participants' lived experiences of teacher learning through the practicum (Olson & Brinkmann, 2016). In pilot interviews, a semi-structured framework of direct questions was tested, but the iterative work of transcribing interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) sensitised me to the rigidity this imposed. A more open framework of nine to eleven *Tell me about...* prompts typical of guided interviews (Olson &

Brinkmann, 2016) was then developed. This explored practicum teaching experiences, working with others, participant-selected artefacts and what they illustrated about practice. A more detailed version of the framework was used by the interviewer, balancing support for an inexperienced online interviewer with space for participants to develop their accounts. Interview frameworks differed slightly across participant types to reflect their roles, but prompts were substantively the same. Appendix Four contains the interview schedule for teacher participants.

At the time of data generation, the 'gold standard' (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014, p. 604; also Olson & Brinkmann, 2016; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Bryman, 2016; Clark *et al.*, 2021) of conducting research interviews face-to-face was not available. Before Covid-19, online interviews were a pragmatic choice to keep research costs low or to interview a geographically dispersed population (Hanna, 2012; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014) but they have other benefits. Online, power relations can be equalised (Enochsson, 2011). In this study, interviewing online had an equalising effect as participants and researcher shared their developing knowledge of the medium's affordances, particularly around the sharing of practice artefacts. The interviews were a cooperative endeavour of problem solving around issues of connectivity, platform access and audio and/or video quality issues. A researcher/ participant technological power gap (Chiumento *et al.*, 2018) was not evident in most interviews and often, participants' skills far exceeded the researcher's.

Participant-selected artefacts were used within online interviews to combine naturally occurring and elicited data and to enhance the agency of participants. This research design built on previous experience of conducting face-to-face photo-elicitation interviews, noted for empowerment of research participants (Prosser & Loxley, 2008). Participant-selected artefacts brought the field to the researcher at a time when fieldwork was severely restricted. Artefacts represented aspects of the teaching practicum through the academic year of 2019-20 and were mainly digital. They included written teaching observation feedback, lesson reflections, lesson resources of many types, adapted assessment tools, screen grabs from virtual learning environments, online

discussions and chats, IT hardware, video links, documentary data, curriculum plans and schemes of learning, personal reflections but also physical objects such as books. Some artefacts were selected from teachers' online practice portfolios, or from ITE course virtual learning environments. *See Appendix Five for Table of Participants and Artefacts*

The unifying factor in the artefacts' selection was that they 'said' something about teachers' practicum development and were the product of human actions and interactions (Reischauer, 2015), highly significant to those who selected them. All artefacts promoted discussion and storytelling around their creation, their use and shed light on beliefs underpinning them, echoing the effects reported by Rowland *et al.* (2019). Artefact-prompted narratives enabled the exploration of 'the accomplishment of practices' (Nicolini, 2012, p. 213). Participants considered artefact selection carefully, and most shared artefacts ahead of their interviews, often stating or implying they had reflected on experiences connected to these artefacts ahead of interviews. This recall of past events created a type of teaching life history, seen through the participant's own eyes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Artefact-mediated interviews can produce 'enriched forms of data' (Bahn & Barratt-Pugh, 2011, p. 186; also Rowland *et al.*, 2019) by giving participants a sense of ownership of the interview discourse. This was enhanced by participants being experts in artefacts' use, particularly when related to participants' vocational and/or subject areas and experiences. The materiality of artefacts together with their past use aided participants in recounting those uses and in structuring their own narratives (Abildgaard, 2018). Artefacts appeared, at times, to return participants to past instances of their use, evidenced by the re-enactment of classroom dialogues or situations from past lessons. This reliving of learning situations stimulated by artefacts assisted participants in articulating their understandings (Douglas *et al.*, 2015). The online nature of interviews allowed participants to view other digital files and to use these to clarify or emphasise points and thus develop their narratives. On occasion, they chose to share screens and show the interviewer too. These behaviours and participants' willingness to take control of the interview direction

appeared to be signs of comfortableness, that the intention of equalising power relations was realised. Additionally, these interviews constituted rich data. In length, they generally exceeded the planned for 30 minutes, with most interviews between 45 and 60 minutes in length.

Specific aspects of interviewing online appeared to enhance my developing interviewer craft (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In the unrecorded sequences preceding recorded interviews, shared commentary on objects in view in video backgrounds helped build relationships and allowed for the sharing of the personal as well as the professional self. 'Meeting' the researcher early in interviews through shared visual contact appeared to build trust (Chiumento *et al.*, 2018) and reduce apprehension. In most interviews, participants' preferences for audio-only sections of interviews or for using screens to share artefacts discussed rather than participant and interviewer faces freed me up to listen attentively, process contributions, make notes during interviews, reorder questions and thus allow participants to continue uninterrupted. The lack of sustained visual contact meant less self-consciousness and reduced awareness of visual 'impression management' (Chiumento *et al.*, 2018, p. 5). The removal of visual clues such as nods, hand gestures and smiles removed access to these channels of meaning but given issues of time lag, low band width and screen freezing (Chiumento *et al.*, 2018) these paralinguistic features can be very difficult to accurately assess in online formats (Seitz, 2016), particularly at a time when we were less practised at this.

Interviewing participants via their own computers and/or smartphones created both opportunities and challenges. We were no longer solely reliant on memories of recalled situations. Both participants and interviewer could access artefacts discussed within interviews, without this appearing rude or inattentive, and both parties could simultaneously access, for examples, blog activities within a virtual learning environment in real time during a discussion (Rowland *et al.*, 2019). Conversely, the connectivity of the Teams platform and other communication tools means that interviews were not hermetically sealed environments but were interspersed with audio notifications, which caused distraction and irritation. Distractions also occurred around physical interview

locations, which were not free from controllable distractions (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). Increased home working through the interview period made this difficult to achieve in practice. There was a degree of privacy, but this was not total, with other people sometimes audible or visible in the background. Although in the data generation period, there were few available options to generate rich data, it is important to acknowledge lack of privacy as a potential threat to what was disclosed within synchronous online artefact-mediated interviews.

3.6 Reflexivity and researcher positioning

My insider-researcher status and working relationships with project participants necessitated reflexivity around my role from the study's conception, as outlined above in section 3.3 Ethical Design Considerations, through data generation and analysis to writing up. Relationships with each participant type differed. All six teacher educator participants were also departmental colleagues, with whom I had frequent non-research work interactions. The five teacher participants I was aware of only by sight through general departmental interactions prior to this study. Mentor participants spanned a spectrum of professional relationships: three were previously unknown to me, and three were professional acquaintances of number of years, although I had not worked with them directly in several years. Existing relationships and my own contextual knowledge could have led me to neglect building rich description and contextual data within online interviews (Olson & Brinkmann, 2016). Mindful of this, to treat all participants equally, I built research relationships ahead of the online artefact-elicitation interviews, through email exchanges setting up interviews and sharing artefacts. Sharing artefacts created logistical challenges (Douglas *et al.*, 2015) but provided opportunities for exchanges around possible artefact selection and ways of sharing these which in turn created research relationships, distinct from work interactions.

Throughout the research process I was guided by the principles of connectedness, humanness and empathy (Brown & Danaher, 2019). I showed genuine interest in experiences participants shared, tried to remove distance

between myself and participants whilst maintaining professional boundaries by empathetically suspending any judgement within interviews and maintaining a positive demeanour. I endeavoured to build trusting relationships with research participants, to create safe spaces for them to detail teachers' practicum experiences separate from either ITE programmes or the surveillatory culture which often permeates the discussion and dissection of practice in the Further Education and Skills sector (O' Leary, 2017; Page, 2017). On reflection, this attempt at separating practicum learning from the culture in which it occurred was somewhat idealistic; nevertheless, the intention to discuss practicum learning in and of itself, separate from notions of achieving a level of competency, was in the spirit of genuine inquiry.

The interview design detailed above sought to tackle the potential asymmetry of power relations, particularly with teacher participants. The exploration of participants' own educational and professional life trajectories and the centrality of participant-selected artefacts were both deliberate moves to enhance participants' agency. Interview frameworks enabled the valuing of diverse participant backstories preceding ITE to consciously counterbalance the inherent interviewer agency present in early interview phases (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). In the central interview phase, participants brought artefacts and the expertise surrounding these to interviews. Their agency was further enhanced by them determining the order in which they discussed their artefacts, lessening the constrictions of a formal interview (Bahn & Barratt-Pugh, 2011). Finally, to equalise relationships I chose, where I could, to answer questions put to me honestly. This stance led to me sharing a range of reflections on the project with participants towards the end of interviews, a process which also enhanced my own sense-making and the justification for the project.

3.7 Data analysis

This section discusses and reflects on the lengthy process of data analysis. In qualitative research, notions of validity are replaced by the concept of trustworthiness (Cousin, 2009). Transparency around data analysis helps

ensure trustworthiness, thus the iterative phases of meaning condensation, data reorganisation and finally, interpretation and representation are outlined and reflected on, with links to illustrative material in appendices made.

Established theory can be beneficial when adopting a case study approach (Yin, 2009). In this project, two theoretical aspects contributed to making sense of data. The six features of practice outlined above, ‘embodiment, material mediation, situatedness, emergence, relationality and co-construction’ (Boud & Brew, 2016, p. 80) served as sensitising tools through all stages of reviewing data, creating a loose theoretical frame around which to develop accounts of teachers’ practicum trajectories. The second element, Biggs’ (1993) systems-form 3P (presage-process-product) model of learning, was applied in the latter stages of data reorganisation to enable the comparison of cases, to group cases and to map teacher trajectories through the practicum.

Data analysis broadly followed Braun and Clark (2021; 2006)’s thematic analysis framework, moving through stages of data familiarisation, coding, searching for themes, reviewing these themes and finally naming them. The emphasis on reflexivity in their later work informed this choice. Reflexivity was also enhanced by tools from interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and grounded theory, applied at key stages, to assist meaning making.

Familiarisation with data began with transcriptions of all seventeen artefact-mediated synchronous online interviews. As well as immersion in research data, this also involved distancing: about stepping back from explicit meanings (Clark & Braun, 2015). A rough transcription was created by an online transcription tool, and then checked and corrected manually by the researcher, necessitating very close listening and decision making on meanings.

Transcription reawakened the social and emotional aspects of interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Audio quality varied across interviews and interviews were a mix of video and audio recorded. Therefore, only verbal contributions were transcribed. I tried, when transcribing, to create readable texts, which captured the sense of participants’ narratives in sentence forms, rather than verbatim representations in terms of repetition, false starts and features of spoken language. Verbatim transcriptions can misrepresent participants and stigmatise

their language use (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Participants were offered the chance to check interview transcriptions after they were completed.

After transcription, the process of reducing down the mass of qualitative data commenced. I did not attempt to force data into pre-existing categories. Instead, I first descriptively annotated each transcript with aspects which struck me as significant, my 'casual observations' (Clarke & Braun, 2015, p.90). These included the influence of participants' backstories, how they worked with others, the exchange of teaching resources and what their artefacts "said" about learning and teaching (see *Appendix Six* for example casual observations). These casual annotations led to more systematic descriptive codes, with the same codes being applied across all interview data. All coding was manual, and at this stage, tended to be descriptive. Codes across all data were also recorded on spreadsheet, and each interview was checked for each code, to avoid 'coding drift.' Codes were, however, at this stage very numerous, and it was necessary to condense them down, but to do this in a principled and rigorous manner. To achieve this, I applied specific analytical tools. Firstly, to create a sense of what was important in each interview, I wrote narrative accounts of each participants' story, a step often applied in IPA (Smith & Eatough, 2015). These accounts created an interplay between the participants' own words and my researcher interpretation (see *Appendix Seven* for a narrative account example). This first enabled deep understanding of each research story, and then later helped identify convergent and divergent aspects of becoming a teacher through the practicum across stories.

From each narrative, I created memos of significant aspects of each narrative: the key topics in each account. Memos are a central element of grounded theory, guiding the researcher to examine data from multiple angles (Hawker & Kerr, 2015). Across all 17 interviews, I created descriptions of journeys through each emerging theme, as well as accounts of the themes themselves (see *Appendices Eight and Nine* for an example memo and emerging theme account). At this stage, there were around 18 potential themes and it was necessary to both test them across the data set and to combine them meaningfully. To do this, I switched medium again to compare cases, moving

on a spreadsheet to reduce data and to begin to finalise themes. Variation across themes was also identified (*See Appendix Ten*). At this stage, the theoretical model of Biggs' systems-form 3P (presage-process-product) model of learning (Biggs, 1993) was applied to organise themes into a framework. This was inspired by the clear importance of presage factors to teachers' learning trajectories, apparent across all interviews from an early stage in data analysis. Emerging themes were grouped into presage, process-relational and process-learning aspects. This grouping facilitated the condensing of themes, the patterning of cases across each theme within these three broad categories, allowing interviews to be grouped according to similar patterning through the presage, process-relational and process-learning aspects (*See Appendix Eleven* for an example of patterning). As a result of this grouping, six trajectories were developed, accounting for teachers' varied pathways through the teaching practicum, and descriptions of each trajectory were developed. Once developed, verbatim data were selected to illustrate each trajectory. These six trajectories are described and analysed in the following chapter.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has justified and reflected upon the project's research design. Online synchronous artefact-mediated interviews were developed as a pragmatic solution to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, however their use highlighted benefits in illuminating practices which aligned well with the project's intentions. Technological issues and extensive pre-interview contact around selecting and sharing artefacts built rapport. Participant selection of artefacts and choice around the interview medium enhanced their agency and increased comfort, enhanced by an open guided framework. The use of artefacts within interviews promoted reflection and recall and supported narrative creation, sometimes around the artefacts' previous embodied use in physical form, creating a vivid sense of the practicum. Reservations around the ethics of researching during the pandemic were replaced with a sense that participation was cathartic, contributed to sense-making and helped maintain an educational community in the research setting, albeit at a distance. The next chapter presents six teacher trajectories through the teaching practicum.



Chapter 4: Findings: Trajectories through the practicum

4.1 Introduction

Teacher learning through, from and around the practicum is conceived as a dynamic web of social practices which these findings explore and attempt to disentangle. This inquiry conceptualises ways of becoming a teacher through the ITE practicum by analysing accounts of the processes and practices of learning which took place within practical teaching environments, the precursors to this learning and the product of this learning, emerging teacher identities. Variations in teacher learning are developed into six teacher trajectories, presented then discussed below to form systematic accounts of ways of becoming a teacher within this collective case study. In each trajectory, Biggs' (1993) systems-form 3P (presage-process-product) model of learning is applied as an organising framework to analyse influences on learning to become a teacher. Factors related to teachers themselves, as well as the interrelated and sometimes competing influences of ITE programmes, teacher educators, practicum settings and teaching mentors are explored.

To foreground and uncover the social practices which constitute teacher practicum learning, in the analysis of interview data in this study, the data from all participant types, namely teachers, teaching mentors and teacher educators were agglomerated. This approach consciously aligned with a practice-based view of becoming a teacher in that it sought to highlight specific practices which teachers engaged in and interacted around within the practicum (Francisco & Boud, 2023) rather than particular participant perspectives on this learning. Through the data analysis process outlined above, the six practice-based accounts of becoming a teacher presented below were developed, illustrating the practices, on more expansive trajectories, which constituted learning with others and, on the most restricted trajectory, learning in isolation. Positioning practices at the centre of the analysis enabled the identification and close examination of the specific learning practices which constituted different types of teacher learning. Lastly, combining data across participant roles avoided privileging any one viewpoint on teacher learning,

specifically that of teacher educator, my own work role within the research setting. Data combination only occurred after the researcher had gained a deep understanding of each research story so significant aspects of these were preserved and represented within the presentation of findings.

This chapter begins the presentation of findings by detailing six teacher trajectories, tracked through presage, process and product stages. In Chapter five, influencing factors across all trajectories are analysed. Finally, in Chapter six, these findings are related to existing literature, leading to, in Chapter seven, the study's original contribution to knowledge and recommendations to enhance the practicum learning of all teachers undertaking ITE for the Further Education and Skills sector. In this study, Biggs' 3P model (Biggs, 1993), is adapted to account for a view of learning to become a teacher as a social practice. Originally, the 3P model considered presage factors regarding both the context for learning and the learner, but process factors centred solely on the learner. Although the influence of the context for learning was acknowledged in the model, learning was conceived as essentially individual within a social environment rather than as a social practice. When a social practice view of learning is adopted, it becomes necessary to foreground the centrality of the learning context and individuals within it throughout the process of learning. To exemplify this, a key process factor in learning is building learning networks. Within the learning context, there must be both individuals willing to form learning networks as well as opportunities to make connections with those individuals, and these opportunities must be ongoing. Therefore, when considering the process of learning, Biggs' 3P model (1993) has been opened out to acknowledge ongoing process factors which surround teachers in the practicum, related to the setting, their teaching mentors, teacher educators and the ITE programme.

The term trajectory is used in this study to describe six patterns of teacher learning. The concept of a learning trajectory aligns well with Biggs' 3Ps model (1993) of learning, encapsulating several key strands of meaning. It firstly conveys a sense of momentum and direction through the process of practicum learning towards the long-term goal, or product, of becoming a teacher. The

pathway to this goal, whilst not pre-determined, is influenced by the confluence of presage factors of and around each teacher, illustrating aspects of both agency and structure. Trajectories are thus not fixed or set but are open to influence at both the start of their journey and through the process of building learning relationships and engaging in learning activities. Finally, the term trajectory captures the fluid journey of becoming a teacher, and the sense that teacher learning is never complete.

4.2 Teacher trajectories

In this section, six teacher trajectories are outlined in turn. Within each trajectory, the description flows broadly from presage factors through relational aspects of the practicum setting, to engagement in learning activities, culminating in the product, the resulting teacher identity created through practicum experiences. On the first three trajectories presented, *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent*, teacher learning was more expansive, and in the latter three, *contextually defined teacher*, *contractually obligated teacher* and *isolated practitioner*, it became progressively more restricted. The final trajectory, that of *isolated practitioner*, represents the most difficult practicum journey experienced by teachers.

4.2.1 The joint practice developer (interviews 3, 11, 14)

The trajectory of *joint practice developer* was evident in three accounts within this study, all of experienced in-service teachers undertaking ITE of their own volition. This was an ideal practicum pathway for in-service teachers, in that presage and process factors of and around the teacher, their teacher education programme, teaching mentor and practicum setting all aligned positively. These in-service teachers were immersed in their teaching settings, had identified collaborators within those settings and their ITE programmes, and had time within their working lives to plan, engage in and reflect collaboratively on activities which linked to their ITE programme and contributed to their own professional development. They commenced ITE programmes with significant

personal, professional and academic resources, which were valued in their settings, by the teachers themselves and those around them.

They used to teach in Adult and Community Learning, but now in training...very, very different roles. They completed a Foundation degree and an English specialism. They had experience teaching-wise, but they wanted to formally qualify as a teacher. (Interview 11)

Really nice to be on a course with new and enthusiastic teachers who want to try different things or have new ideas... because of all that enthusiasm... You can relax about it and just focus on your teaching and not on Ofsted... actually change activities and develop sessions. (Interview 3)

These teachers built strong professional learning relationships, so they did not necessarily require wide learning networks. They had developed clear sensibilities around practices in their setting, which allowed them to expertly navigate these and to work with others in a quest for continued programme enhancement, pooling their learning resources and experiences. The practicum was experienced as collaborative professional development, enhancing others' learning alongside that of the teacher.

We're really like-minded in terms of education. All my mentee and I want is to be better educators and to know more and do more... For example, we're really trying to push towards this just-in-time, learning-on-demand format. (Interview 14)

The resulting identity was of an experienced teacher, secure in their job role, directing their own collaborative learning and inquiry to enhance the setting. Engaging in ITE assisted the formalisation and structuring of learning.

It's nice to have that someone.... who says I've tried this strategy. Then I've enjoyed trying it out. The action research. That's the bit that I love. I'll try that in the next session and see how it goes and reflect on it. And I think it's made me really reflect on my own practice. (Interview 3)

Joint practice developers embraced opportunities to learn from and with others. Observations of teaching and learning and other programme assessments were approached as opportunities to enhance their practice. The openness of their work settings to ITE and teacher development engendered a synergy between individual teacher development and general practice development. This occurred through sharing existing practices and developing knowledge resources with others. As teachers with experience across educational settings, holding academic, vocational and prior teaching qualifications, these teachers brought considerable knowledge resources to the practicum. Their resources and those within the setting combined through undertaking joint learning activities. This created a secure teacher identity, with finely tuned contextual awareness, oriented to continue to learn with others.

They consciously used Mentimeter as a form of diagnostic assessment, the purposeful use of Mentimeter. From the analysis that we did in the ITE classroom, they identified this could be a good idea for their lesson. (Interview 11)

They did an observation write up on my lesson and picked up on loads of aspects of my teaching that I've never considered before, ways that I'd embedded British values they contributed to my CPD as much as I'm helping them. (Interview 14)

Joint practice developers benefitted from specific contextual factors. They had colleagues willing to act as critical friends who shared a commitment to professional development, the curricular freedom to experiment, and familiarity with their role and setting, which allowed them to harness the knowledge resources around them to bring about change. Akin to project work, the development accounts shared within vignettes and across artefacts synthesise multiple categories of teacher knowledge: a multidisciplinary view of subject knowledge, beliefs about learning, curricular knowledge, assessment knowledge, knowledge of students and their understanding as well as of knowledge of instructional strategies.

I'm very much a social constructivist, but also a cognitivist... I really have to break down a big concept into smaller chunks. And this artefact [self-created jigsaw reading case study] represents that element of me as a teacher...it's about engaging learners with everything that we wanted them to get out of the learning outcomes... providing them with a context for the things that they've learned and applying those things to an actual situation that they might see. (Interview 3)

The artefact [a spoke and wheel lesson planning tool] is a conceptual tool, encouraging learner-led structure and letting the class vote on what they want to go through next. They had seen me using Slido as a tool, so we started using Slido for my mentee to gather information on students. (Interview 14)

This trajectory resulted in teachers with a strong commitment to continuing professional development and a connectedness to other professionals. However, a very positive confluence of presage factors for and around teachers was necessary for this trajectory to be experienced. On this trajectory, the identity of a subject specialist teacher was not prominent. In fact, teachers had worked across contexts, with different types of students, teaching a range of subjects. This diversity was also mirrored in their collaborations: learning relationships spanned disciplines, and this was seen as an enhancing aspect of their journeys.

4.2.2 The collaborative new professional (interviews 2, 4, 6, 7, 9)

The *collaborative new professional* trajectory was experienced by pre-service teachers on full-time ITE programmes. These teachers came to ITE well-resourced with graduate and often postgraduate qualifications, professional expertise, some teaching experience, and the time to integrate into their practicum settings. The presage factors for these teachers resembled those of in-service *joint practice developers*, with some significant differences: these teachers had much less teaching experience and as pre-service teachers, experienced the practicum on a placement basis, rather than as an employment

setting. Importantly, these teachers all made a positive choice to undertake ITE, and were mainly intrinsically motivated, with some aspects of extrinsic reward motivation around career enhancement. They engaged in a great deal of relational work to enable and enhance their learning with others. The academic and vocational resources they brought to ITE assisted them in becoming part of the practicum setting, as well as shaping their emerging professional identities.

Their prior experience stood them in very good stead in terms of industry knowledge... They quickly recognised that [vocational currency] as something that could bring the curriculum alive. (Interview 6)

They did a Master's in supporting people with sensory differences... that fuelled a passion for teaching people with different needs. (Interview 7)

The positive presage factors which enabled *collaborative new professionals* to undertake ITE, their agency and motivation, their living situations, past qualifications and the financial means to study full-time set these teachers on a path to developing a collaborative teacher identity with a clear sense of their contribution to the practicum and profession. In the practicum setting, they built learning relationships to enable working with others: strong learning relationships maximised their learning opportunities.

X took me under their wing and was my direct mentor...I found them wonderfully supportive. They gave me quite a lot of autonomy straightaway, which I quite liked... They shared resources with me. (Interview 2)

We were very comfortable together right from the beginning, which helped me as the mentor as well. They kept me in check.... They weren't scared to say, I'm after information so I can do my pen profiles. (Interview 9)

The time in the practicum setting afforded by full-time study enabled teachers to showcase the vocational and other resources they brought to teaching, demonstrating their value as part of practicum integration. Also, these teachers'

views on learning matched those of their ITE programmes, valuing interactive learning with others for teachers and students. These aligned presage factors enabled them to attune to their practicum contexts and develop an emerging teacher identity grounded in understanding that their influence and growth lay in collaboration.

A learning curve for me was resource creation. If I wasn't really sure about how to teach a specific thing, I could go to and ask which way would you do this?... My mentor would stay in the classroom... and would sometimes also help with classroom management with large groups... We would team teach in situations like that. (Interview 4)

Collaborative new professionals quickly became attuned to the practices in the practicum through relational work. But they did not only adopt the practices they were exposed to, they also adapted and sometimes questioned them. They did not generally have the power to significantly reshape contextual practices, although this sometimes occurred. The most visible aspect of this trajectory was the process of working with others to share, adapt and share back lesson resources and formative assessment tools. Coming into teaching from higher level study, with up-to-date vocational experience, these teachers learned their resources were valued and valuable within teaching. They were therefore able to assimilate into learning cultures whilst making their own resources known.

I was giving them advice... And they would do it, but would put their own spin on it, which was fantastic. But they were very conscious about making sure that I was happy with it, which I always was. (Interview 9)

With their mentor they explored actions they could take to embed sustainability activities with their learners. We agreed that little starter activities would be a good way to begin. It [the artefact] reflects quickly applying both their enthusiasm and knowledge to what works with those learners. (Interview 6)

These pre-service teachers became competent in core teacher activities around planning, delivering and assessing learning but typically lacked experience in

and influence over broader elements of a teacher's role, such as curriculum design, involvement in summative assessment and quality assurance or improvement activities.

It could be a little bit frustrating working within the scheme of work, because although I was allowed to edit it, I still beholden to what the curriculum was. There wasn't much scope for me to really try and change it. (Interview 4)

However, *collaborative new professionals* weighed up learning cultures, assessed and blended influences on their development and had time to consider their teacher identities. Having space to question and explore practices allowed their own professional identities to emerge. Although prepared relationally to enter diverse teaching settings, they had a partial sense of the job role, aware that they were shielded from some of the harsher realities of the sector. Their status as pre-service teachers, yet to fully prove their worth, was evident to them and those around them.

There's a job being advertised. And I was thinking about my mentee, and I would be quite confident. The only thing is that they only worked with me. And it would have been interesting to see how they were with some of the other groups. (Interview 9)

A great deal of these teachers' learning with others was about their students, through detailed needs analyses, and responses to these needs in their planning and delivery. The development of subject or vocational knowledge occurred through careful consideration of contextual factors including students' needs and goals and was integrated with rather than distinct from other types of teacher learning. The realities of balancing out relationship and rapport building with creating a purposeful learning environment were also themes in many learning interactions, establishing teacher identities in relation to their students. Pre-service teachers desired even more opportunities to engage in this learning, which occurred through immersion in others' classrooms or learning spaces.

They got to know their learners as individuals... what motivated them, ... what worried them.... They really started to recognise the barriers that they'd encountered and thought about strategies to address them.
(Interview 7)

... the variety of needs that I had in my class. That helped me to understand individualisation, and differentiation a lot more... it was such a feature of the classroom. I couldn't not engage with that part of learning. (Interview 4)

Despite practicum integration, the professional identities of these teachers were still emerging, on the periphery of the professional teaching community. They were, though, able to carry aspects of their past professional identities in vocational and/or academic areas into their developing teacher identities. They were also, through working closely with others, able to reconcile and combine ITE learning and practicum influences with their own resources, demonstrating their value to their teaching contexts. Unfortunately, *collaborative new professionals'* learning relationship for the most part did not sustain through the turbulent period of pandemic lockdowns, as their teaching mentors focussed on adapting to delivering education at a distance, reinforcing pre-service teachers' positions on the edges of the teaching community. Their learning latterly became theoretical and based on retrospective reflection as their practice faded.

It was just a shame that it came together at once, then all of a sudden everything that they'd been working towards wasn't really there to continue. (Interview 6)

4.2.3 The subject specialist change agent (*interview 13*)

Only one teacher undertaking a specialist ITE programme followed this trajectory, although a third of interviews concerned teachers studying on specialist programmes. The trajectory of *subject specialist change agent* was followed by a pre-service teacher already employed within an educational

context in a non-teaching role, well-integrated into the setting, with significant exposure to practices within it and considerable contextual knowledge. The prominent aspect of their teacher identity was their subject specialism, with the development and application of research-informed specialist approaches to planning, teaching and assessment seen as the main reason for undertaking ITE. This teacher chose to undertake ITE and had time to collaborate and reflect with others. Additionally, they had academic and vocational resources, experience within a range of educational settings, and relationships with colleagues who had also undertaken the same ITE programme.

They have a degree in art and digital art, and had done various learning support jobs, including at a specialist college. And they heard about the course from colleagues. (Interview 13)

Although this teacher came to ITE with existing resources, their exposure to contextual practices was not necessarily a positive presage factor, as contextual practices did not always align with subject specific pedagogical knowledge. Perhaps the most significant presage factor for this teacher was their educational values, specifically a sense of social justice, which aligned with the values of the ITE programme and thus helped them to build a strong relationship with their teacher educator. These values centred on inclusion, advocacy and acting in students' interests.

It's inclusion. We used to not let people in. Now we let people in. It takes teachers a long time to unpick that through the dilemmas they face in their teaching practice... This teacher has got a real vocation for it. (Interview 13)

Through their on-programme experiences, the *subject specialist change agent* encountered specialist pedagogies, and contrasted these with the ground level practices within the practicum. They then tried to reconcile differences in their teaching practice, whilst also maintaining their position within their setting, accommodating multiple stakeholders through the planning and assessment documentation they created. This teacher was aware of the complexities of the

teaching role, and of balancing out competing demands whilst paying close attention to the needs of students.

The scheme of work is keeping the boss happy, ticking all those boxes for the accreditation. Then you can then really talk about what your strategies are and that's what the teacher did on this session plan. 'They're going to listen, match the verbally stated item to the bingo cards and they're going to tick them off.' (Interview 13)

Adopting the identity of change agent necessitated careful management of workplace relationships to protect the teacher's own position and employment. Identifying as a subject specialist teacher had the potential to create a degree of separation from the teaching context, as some other teachers within the setting did not identify in this way. A key aspect of the teacher's learning was the application of subject specific pedagogies through a detailed analysis of students' needs, identified in conjunction with an expert, their teacher educator. This knowledge was then applied through undertaking supported curriculum planning, using exemplars as a guide. The teacher, through their planning activities, acted as a change agent, introducing their specialist learning through ITE into their practicum. This change was also promoted by the teacher educator.

... I gave the teacher an example... from what we've talked about here, you can then attach the strands of the specification, you can attach them per week and then you tick those boxes. And then they created their own scheme of work, for each student. (Interview 13)

Due to their positioning within the practicum setting, this teacher was able to explore wider aspects of a teacher's role and implement change whilst adhering to the requirements of that setting. They firstly unpicked practice-based problems with their teacher educator, then applied solutions within their planning, delivery and assessment activities which subtly enhanced practices and the student experience within their setting. They also spread their specialist learning from ITE by sharing knowledge resources and physical resources with

others. This was a great responsibility to take on early in a teacher's career, necessitating careful management. Balancing competing demands and managing relationships left little space for this teacher to apply the resources they brought to ITE to create a more individual sense of their identity as a teacher. A subject specialist teacher identity underpinned by specialist pedagogies may have been regarded by colleagues with suspicion, due to a perceived mistrust of theory within the sector.

That's the way the landscape is at the minute. And it's going to probably take at least a generation for everybody who's in it to have had some form of specialist qualification. (Interview 13)

To adopt the role of a *subject specialist change agent* teacher required a confluence of factors: having access to a specialist ITE programme and the foundational resources for developing subject specific pedagogical knowledge, being able to spend significant time in the placement setting, having freedom to apply ITE learning, continued support and encouragement from a specialist teacher and a lack of pressure within the practicum to adopt contextual practices. This trajectory was only accessible to those already employed in educational settings but not in teaching roles, who had the security in their setting to be able to experiment. Other teachers in the study were not positioned to act in this way.

4.2.4 The contextually defined teacher (interviews 8, 15, 17)

Contextually defined teachers had experience in either current teaching or past educational roles and were extrinsically reward-motivated to undertake ITE, seeking job security and career progression through carefully planned journeys into a teaching role. They undertook ITE in-service, employed in practicum settings, or pre-service, aiming to transition into employment by actively integrating into the practicum context. On this trajectory, work intensity within the practicum setting resulted in limited time to learn through interaction with experienced others. Practicum learning was seen as arising from spending time in the setting and through observation of experienced teachers. Although

contextually defined teachers were well-resourced with past vocational, academic and teaching qualifications, vocational and educational expertise, these resources were not seen as assets to the practicum, as they represented beliefs and practices which did not align with those of the setting.

They had worked as a teaching assistant in London... had done the CELTA course... had teaching experience teaching English. They were already coming with a lot of subject specialist knowledge. (Interview 17)

Adopting the espoused beliefs of the teaching context was a mark of belonging and assimilation into the setting. This was illustrated by adopting planning, teaching and assessment approaches stemming from these beliefs within teaching practice.

From the mentor or a curriculum review point of view even, I need to support the tutor to make something that's suitable... Because I'm ultimately the IQA for the site as well. So, I want to make sure that we're hitting the assessment criteria overall. (Interview 8)

Acceptance within the setting was achieved by adopting clearly defined routines and resource styles: creativity in planning was not encouraged. Teachers were consumed by the norms of their settings, minimising their own knowledge resources, including their learning from ITE and their previous experience in order to gain acceptance. Submitting to the primacy of the teaching context brought rewards.

... teaching more to our students... changing the way they taught to better suit or better meet the needs of our students. (Interview 17)

They documented all the planning that went on by email They liaised and really worked as member of staff, even though they were only there on placement. They have sessional work now. So, it really paid off. (Interview 15)

The close alignment with the practicum setting stemmed from presage factors of and around the individual teacher and the setting. Teachers desired joining the community for future employment and/or current job security; joining that community meant subscribing to the practicum context's prevailing views of student and teacher learning. Contextual pedagogies were based on a perception of a student typology, including their needs and ultimate learning goals, and the teaching and learning approaches adopted were considered to meet those needs. To assimilate, teachers adopted these approaches. Within this trajectory, their learning from the ITE programme was seen as separate from rather than synthesised with practical teaching.

They have a wealth of teaching experience, know how to challenge behaviour, know how to put lessons together. It's now... looking at the theories and supporting them with that. (Interview 8)

Contextually, teacher learning was viewed as individual practice adoption rather than a two-way process of knowledge exchange. Learning activities with other professionals were observation of experienced teachers, working alongside them or listening to their guidance. Consequently, teachers' own resources were actively unhelpful if they ran counter to the contextual expert's espoused knowledge.

I gave them my adapted lessons so they could focus on building Smartboard materials around that... not have to worry about reinventing the wheel... it's about adapting to how the students usually have their lessons... making sure that they complied. (Interview 17)

This view of teacher learning contrasted strongly with the prevailing ITE programme view of learning as a social practice. The emphasis on the primacy of espoused contextual knowledge severely restricted the application of ITE-based learning, and also constricted teacher identity development, in that there was little space for becoming familiar with a range of learning and teaching approaches.

They were working within the constraints of the routines in that group....
(Interview 15)

A strong sense of practicum community was evident, but questioning practices was not a positive trait in new community members. Observations of teaching and learning were an opportunity to judge the degree to which contextual practices had been applied, rather than part of a teacher's more holistic developmental journey.

We're going to back into observation windows...learning walk throughs... just making sure that they have retained that confidence... just maintaining the overall delivery now. (Interview 8)

They created a booklet, which is what me and the other teachers do... the finished result looked exactly like my adapted booklet... And the students instantly knew what they were doing.... I think they felt a lot better about that, being in line with what we were doing. (Interview 17)

The types of teacher knowledge developed were also controlled by the setting, around core elements of a teacher's role. Broader elements such as curriculum design and summative assessment were tightly protected areas. There was also little space for teachers to use situated reasoning and reflective discussions to work with others to solve practice-based problems. Instead, they were encouraged to adopt approaches utilised by experienced others.

...this practice of decontextualised spoken activities, almost like the audiolingual method... you have to work within the methods that are being used... they were confident with those methods. (Interview 15)

For teachers on this trajectory still teaching through Covid-19 lockdowns, delivery at a distance allowed contextual practices to develop in collaboration with others, but this period was short-lived. Overall, contextually defined teachers were prepared, relationally, to work with others, but were not necessarily equipped to learn with rather than from educational professionals around them. For teachers on this trajectory, assimilating into their teaching

settings was the central part of the development of a teacher identity. The process of fitting in took precedence over developing an individual teacher identity, particularly one which encompassed aspects of their former professional identities or their ITE learning.

4.2.5 The contractually obligated teacher (*interviews 1 and 5*)

This trajectory was followed by in-service teachers with some experience who approached initial teacher education with a positive orientation, but who were funded and contractually bound by their employer to gain a recognised teaching qualification alongside recent employment in a teaching role. These co-occurring presage factors established a tension which ran through teachers' practicum experiences. Undertaking ITE in-service, *contractually obligated teachers* were immersed in their practicum settings, had potential collaborators here and on their ITE programmes, but their work demands left little time to engage with others in collaborative learning. These teachers also taught across a range of subjects and courses and had a plural sense of subject specialism.

I absolutely love it, but I'm finding it difficult alongside a full-time job. I thought because I was doing the job, I would find it quite easy just to slot in. (Interview 1)

They came with a very good level of enthusiasm, very motivated, but at the same time, ... definitely under-confident... They teach not only one subject, but many of them. (Interview 5)

These teachers commenced ITE programmes with past vocational and teaching qualifications, vocational expertise, and experience teaching and in educational roles, but these resources were not always seen as valuable by the teacher or others. Additionally, they experienced significant practice differences and beliefs between their teaching settings and their ITE programmes around fundamental topics such as how student learning occurs and should be assessed. These beliefs, present as presage factors, made it difficult for teachers to fully engage in practicum learning; a preoccupation with trying to please teacher educators, managers and learning mentors overshadowed their

development. They lacked the time, the perceived resources and the learning relationships to reconcile the different perspectives around them.

Just the wording of the objectives, I still have the old-style objectives where you want learners to understand... How can you prove that? So, I've changed it to more identify, describe... I used the proper words. But I've tried to make sure that I've used the words that are in the criteria as well. (Interview 1)

Contractually obligated teachers undertook ITE with an identity grounded in two perceived deficits: firstly, they did not hold full teaching qualifications, and secondly, through following non-graduate routes into teaching, they lacked higher level academic skills. Through ITE, they encountered theoretical underpinnings to everyday practices and had to rapidly develop academic study and writing skills. The academic aspect of becoming a teacher combined with a high new teacher workload was very demanding.

Making positive steps to engage with that form of literature for the assignments.... it's a daunting task for some of them to try and do that level of research. (Interview 5)

The conditions around employer sponsored ITE contributed to a constricted teacher identity, where the teacher was compelled to prove their worth by acquiring academic skills and complying to practice norms, despite a wish to contribute to practice development in their teaching setting. From an employment perspective, the product rather than the process of ITE was valued by those around the teacher, and the challenges of undertaking ITE in-service were not acknowledged. This was illustrated in microcosm through attitudes to ITE teaching observations, which became a high stakes summative judgement rather than a formative development tool.

They picked out that it was well planned and that I had a good rapport with the learners.... I would be upset if I didn't get that feedback because that's something I focus on. (Interview 1)

Teachers on this trajectory were attuned to the practices of their teaching setting, had a desire to enhance them, but generally adopted them. Their creativity in designing learning, although evident, was constricted by the pressure on teachers to prove their teaching met an acceptable standard. They attempted to reconcile the planning practices from their teaching setting with advice from their ITE programme but were not always successful in this.

The reason I've done that is just to keep them on task... It's just about being creative but also having the restrictions. So, then I'm in control.

(Interview 1)

These teachers engaged in learning activities across a number of categories of teacher knowledge: developing their students' employability, taking a multidisciplinary approach to developing subject knowledge, managing and individualising learning, applying specific pedagogies and curriculum knowledge. However, these developments were in isolation, as these in-service teachers were not able to spend time in mentors' and others' classrooms, so did not experience their practices in action. Their vignettes around artefacts involve learning from and around others within the ITE classroom, but not in their own work settings.

I tend to learn by watching people... when I'm doing the course, I'm standing watching how my teacher educator is delivering. (Interview 1)

Consequently, there were few opportunities for teachers' learning to mesh with the practices of others, limited scope reflection with others, and little chance to foreground their value to their teaching setting. Their practicum learning was thus constricted by a lack of opportunities to interact developmentally with others, limiting their ability to merge research-informed general pedagogies of ITE with prevailing ground level theories in action. There was an absence of informal practicum interactions: those which occurred were more formal, around observations of teaching and learning and adherence to quality processes.

I like to be productive, to hit criteria. I'm an IQA, so I'm aware of the shortage of time to get the evidence together. All tasks still have to be

relevant. As much as I like doing creative things, they've got to hit points.
(Interview 1)

These circumstances made it hard to develop teacher identities where their value as teachers was recognised by those around them, a situation compounded by a blurring between mentor and manager roles within their workplace. Dialogues around practice differences could have been perceived as non-compliance, from a managerial perspective.

The mentor hovers over all the classrooms and keeps an eye on what's going on in all the provision all the time... overseeing all the teachers.
(Interview 5)

Although *contractually obligated teachers* developed a full sense of their job roles, they struggled to perceive their own value as teachers despite completing the multiple complex tasks which constitute a teacher's role. The unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education created a brief window for these teachers to show their value through innovative responses and increased collaboration with colleagues, although this period also meant looser connections with their ITE programmes. Covid adaptations resulted in rapid development of programmes and enhanced opportunities to undertake wider aspects of a teacher's role. These benefits did not necessarily sustain but perhaps created a blueprint for a fresh approach to practicum learning for in-service teachers who are contractually mandated to undertake ITE.

So, think, pair, share.... I've been putting a lot more activities like that in because that really works. I've been writing courses for the other tutors, and I've used similar tasks. (Interview 1)

4.2.6 The isolated practitioner (*interviews 10, 12 and 16*)

The *isolated practitioner* trajectory was followed by teachers who occupied a middle space between pre- and in-service status, and who developed a solitary teacher identity, with both weak interpersonal connections and weak practice connections with other educational professionals. The origins of these teachers'

uncomfortable practicum journeys lay in an absence of positively aligned presage factors around the teachers, particularly related to time to devote to their practicum learning. This was attributed to the work demands on mentors' time as well as teachers' employment and caring responsibilities. Not having opportunities to learn with others negated other potentially positive presage factors such as the vocational and academic resources and prior teaching experience teachers brought to the practicum.

We were very, very time poor. They came in 10 minutes before the lesson started... always a terrible rush. I never felt I had enough time with them or for them. Every week there was some drama, and they would tell me about it... And it would distract from the ability to talk about the teaching side of things. (Interview 16)

I just put my PGCE on the back burner and I just didn't really balance things well at all.... But with the PGCE teaching, I lost the engagement. I'll be honest. I did. (Interview 10)

Inauspicious presage factors led to an absence of positive relational and sensitising factors which adversely affected teachers' process of practicum learning. They did not form meaningful learning relationships around the practicum, and due to their isolation, they did not develop a sense of the practices of other professionals through immersion or interaction. Also, they could not make known what they offered the setting. As collaborative teacher learning did not occur, teachers were not attuned to the typical planning, teaching and assessment strategies within their settings.

Once they got that job, it took over. They found it really difficult to attend and engage. They were inundated with the newness of the job... sad to see that. (Interview 12)

Isolated practitioners' position on the periphery of learning communities was linked to their uncertain professional status, neither fully in-service nor fully pre-service teachers. This situation arose through gaining a teaching position whilst undertaking ITE, or by undertaking ITE after having held a teaching role. Their

extrinsic reward motivation, needing better employment prospects and future job security but having limited time to commit to ITE resulted in teachers being overwhelmed. Others around them saw their difficulties but could not help them positively navigate these issues and develop as teachers.

The new job... It was hitting the ground running.... Just very scary for a trainee teacher to not have that security. My mentor would hone in on things that I'm doing wrong rather than my strengths.... on my weaknesses. (Interview 10)

I don't think we developed a very good relationship because even after the class, I wasn't given enough time to support them. It was all stress - they were juggling the job, the family, the teaching practice, trying to get the hours in, and doing the assignments. I used to hear that they were overloaded. (Interview 16)

Isolated practitioners engaged in core and sometimes broader aspects of a teacher role, but alone. Consequently, they developed personal pedagogies which blended influences from their past vocational and/or teaching experience, their own interpretation of their ITE programmes and their perspective on their teaching contexts. These practices were not well understood by those around them. Teacher educators, teaching mentors and others around these teachers expressed a desire to interact with them around their learning but had limited success in this and were distanced from the teachers and their practicum journeys.

They are very able to engage independently. That's why I chose the artefact, to discuss support.... a module that they could engage with in their own time and at their own pace because basically, they missed the lessons. (Interview 12)

On all other trajectories, regardless of their learning situations, teachers developed core relational and management skills in the classroom and knowledge of their students through their teaching practice. Relational skills were not strongly evident for *isolated practitioners*. As there were few

opportunities for these teachers to interact with others, their perception of students and their needs and of typical learning activities within the teaching setting was a solo endeavour. Although these teachers portrayed confidence, their apparent confidence was fragile, and when punctured, caused teachers to retreat further into isolation.

When they taught, they were very confident... you could tell that they'd stood up in front of people before... they had a lot of skills. (Interview 16)

I had done planning sheets ... the learners absolutely loved them. My mentor said, 'Why are you doing those for them? You don't need to do those.' And I was like, oh bugger. Even though I'm working my ass off, I'm doing things wrong again. (Interview 10)

These teachers endured ITE and the practicum: the resulting teacher identity was of a lone practitioner, struggling to survive. Despite their challenging isolated situation, these teachers still perceived teacher learning and that of their students as individual, from an expert. The value of collaborative learning was realised neither for them nor their students. Their journey through ITE, because it was not shared with others, was not understood by them. They were seen as being unable to meet the needs of students in the practicum.

I don't think I would have used that resource. I would have broken it down in some way. (Interview 16).

The observer was pretty harsh on this particular day... afterwards they ran through the observation, their thoughts about it. And although the notes actually look quite good and quite supportive, their dialogue was just really harsh. (Interview 10)

Teachers' planning and delivery practices diverged from the expectations of ITE programmes and practicum settings. Where interactions with other professionals around key learning topics occurred, these resulted in disagreements. Observations of teaching and learning appeared to have little impact on these teachers' development, with areas for improvement in

planning, delivering and assessing learning still remaining at the end of teaching programmes. These teachers' isolation resulted in observations of teaching and learning, feedback on them and other ITE activities causing them significant stress. For *isolated practitioners*, changing teaching context and status mid-programme fragmented their experiences of ITE. Without meaningful learning relationships to help navigate new contexts, they retreated into themselves. Conversely, this highlighted the importance of stable learning relationships, consistent teaching contexts and the gradual assumption of a teaching role on other more positive trajectories.

This chapter has described and exemplified six teacher trajectories followed through the teaching practicum, tracking each trajectory through presage, process and product stages, culminating in descriptions of teacher identities. In the following chapter, enabling and constricting factors across trajectories are brought together and analysed to draw conclusions about how to optimise practicum learning for FE and Skills teachers.

Chapter 5: Findings: Factors influencing practicum trajectories

5.1 Introduction

Viewed together, the trajectories outlined in the preceding chapter illustrate the considerable variation in the practicum experiences and learning of the teachers in this case study, from expansive, collaborative development, through contextual and contractual constriction to the limited learning of isolated practitioners. Across these teacher trajectories, a number of influencing factors emerge which are discussed and analysed in this chapter. Biggs' (1993) presage-process-product model of learning is applied as an organising framework to assist the analysis of influences on practicum learning. This chapter's structure mirrors that of the literature review, beginning with presage factors, then moving through the processes of practicum knowledge development to the products of practicum learning, emerging teacher identities. Presage factors affecting teachers' journeys through the ITE practicum were numerous. They related to teachers' situations, motivations, agency, attitudes, time for learning, existing resources, conceptions of teacher and student learning as well as to organisation of the practicum learning component of ITE programmes. Presage factors existed for teachers themselves, their mentors, teacher educators as well as the teaching practicum setting and the ITE programme. Where presage factors of and around all parties aligned positively, this resulted in trajectories through the practicum which were generally enriching for teachers who followed them. Conversely, where presage factors did not align or positive presage factors were largely absent, this led to more isolated and difficult experiences of becoming a teacher, with a lack of connectedness to other education professionals.

In this study, across the six trajectories described, the process of practicum learning was conceived as comprising of two elements: relational/ sensitising factors and learning activities. Relational and sensitising aspects of learning, including building learning relationships, establishing learning networks and developing an awareness of contextual practices, were intangible aspects of the task of learning which appeared to be both foundational to and intertwined

with the activities which constituted more visible aspects of practicum learning, such as managing classes and assessing students' learning. Within the above trajectories, deeper learning occurred when relational and sensitising aspects of the process of learning were apparent as a precursor to engaging in learning activities with others. This was particularly evident on *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent* trajectories. On these trajectories, presage factors of and around teachers were also positively aligned. It is through the relational and sensitising elements of the learning process that teachers appeared to weigh up influences on their development from their ITE programmes and teaching contexts. They first established their own positioning in relation to others and then were able to reconcile and combine these influences. On other, less developmental trajectories, this process was much less apparent. *Contractually obligated teachers*, without contextual practicum collaborators, remained caught between influences, trying to prove their value as teachers. *Contextually defined teachers* engaged in relational work to position themselves within the practicum setting and aligned with its norms to gain acceptance. *Isolated practitioners* withdrew from other educational professionals and their influences. Whether teachers were able to build relationships to navigate diverse influences and practices affected their resultant teacher identities.

The second part of the process of practicum learning was engaging in learning activities, with others or independently. From interview accounts stimulated by practice artefacts, all teachers in the study engaged in a set of core learning activities. In-service teachers also reported learning through activities which represented broader aspects of an FE and Skills teacher's role: developing the curriculum, conducting summative assessments and managing online and distance learning. These learning activities constituted the task of learning and were the tangible proving ground of learning. The way in which teachers engaged in learning activities shaped their emerging teacher identities, laying the foundations for the 'product' of becoming a teacher. However, the boundaries between the process and product of learning to become a teacher were blurred, in that learning was never complete. Influencing presage and

process factors on this teacher learning are explored below, culminating in an analysis of the product of learning, the resulting teacher identities. The key presage and process themes explored are summarised in the figure below.



Presage	Process: relational	Process: learning activities	Product: teacher trajectories
teacher situations, motivation and agency	relational work	engagement in teacher activities	joint practice developer
alignment of presage factors	time and space to explore contexts and practices	<i>Preceding themes work together to influence how teachers engage in learning activities</i>	collaborative new professional
teacher status, experience and positioning	awareness of teacher resources		subject specialist change agent
the permeability of learning systems			contextually defined teacher
teacher resources			contractually constricted teacher
			isolated practitioner

Table 5.1 Key presage and process themes

5.2 Presage factors

5.2.1 Situations, motivations and agency

Essential differences in teachers' ability to choose whether and when to undertake ITE, their motivation and circumstances impacted strongly on their practicum learning and resulting teacher identities. Where teachers elected to undertake ITE and were intrinsically motivated, this led to secure professional identities: teachers who were oriented to enhance both their own practice and that of their wider setting. However, not all teachers' employment situations, financial stability and personal circumstances were such that intrinsic motivation was a possibility for them. Extrinsic motivation led to more restricted pathways through the practicum, where teachers were not able to make known the vocational, educational and academic resources they had to offer teaching settings and where they were much less able to maximise their learning with others. Equally, the attitudes of other educational professionals supporting practicum development also influenced teacher trajectories.

On the trajectories of *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent*, teachers generally had a strong intrinsic motivation to undertake ITE, coupled with the agency to choose the timing and mode of ITE study. This facilitated reflective, developmental and collaborative practicum learning. External and structural factors such as teachers' financial situations were evident but not significantly detrimental to their practicum engagement, although *collaborative new professionals* desired more time in practicum settings to experience broader aspects of being a teacher. *Contextually defined teachers* and *isolated practitioners* generally chose to undertake ITE, but their decisions and routes were restricted by current and future financial considerations, resulting in extrinsic reward motivation. These teachers' life situations did not allow their motivation to be solely intrinsic. Instead, they made carefully planned journeys into ITE, often from other educational jobs, aiming to enhance their job security and/or career progression. Their choices of ITE routes, mainly part-time, were influenced by familial as well as financial factors.

Extrinsic reward motivation resulted in differing experiences of ITE, depending on its intersection with other presage factors. *Contextually defined teachers* committed considerable time and energy to aligning themselves with the beliefs of their teaching context in order to enhance their career opportunities within practicum settings. This process integrated them; they were perceived as fitting in by other professionals. However, close assimilation into practicum settings came at the expense of asserting their pre-teaching identities. *Isolated practitioners* also sought to develop their careers, employment prospects and job security, but for these teachers, an intersection of demands on their time, demands of the setting but predominately demands of their employment and lives meant they were unable to integrate into their practicum settings. This unfortunate situation, also influenced by the work conditions of those supporting them, created an uncomfortable middle space between pre- and in-service status, where teachers become isolated, sometimes despite or because of achieving the desired security of a paid teaching role. Their employment and personal circumstances undermined their ability to fully engage with practicum learning and separated them from the practicum community.

Contractually obligated teachers experienced mixed motivations, but little agency. Although intrinsically motivated to develop through the practicum, they also experienced pressure exerted by contractual obligations to achieve an ITE qualification, which led to an extrinsic punishment-influenced motivation. Their positioning in their work settings as unqualified teachers set up an identity grounded in a deficit which operated to stifle these teachers' practicum learning, particularly their confidence to question practices and engage in professional dialogues with others. ITE began as a developmental opportunity, but practicum learning was undertaken in addition to already heavy workloads and became entwined with local quality processes. Overall, teachers' situations, motivation for and agency over undertaking ITE were influential factors in determining teachers' practicum journeys, which intersected with other practicum-focussed presage factors, explored in the next section.

5.2.2 Alignment of presage factors

The alignment of presage factors across those involved in teachers' practicum journeys affected practicum learning opportunities. For intrinsically motivated teachers, other presage factors of sufficient time in the practicum setting, awareness of teacher resources and perceptions of teacher and student learning were in broad alignment across parties: teachers, their mentors and practicum contexts, their ITE programmes and teacher educators. On the trajectories of *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent*, the more aligned presage factors were, the more likely teachers were to have smooth and developmental practicum journeys. In contrast, where teacher motivation was extrinsic, presage factors for and around teachers were less likely to be aligned. *Contextually defined teachers*, who were reward motivated, experienced aligned presage factors around relational elements, but not around perceptions of teacher and student learning. Others in their practicum settings conceived teacher learning as individual, from an expert within that setting; from the ITE programme perspective, teacher learning was seen as collaborative. This fundamental difference, together with the primacy of contextual knowledge, restricted the application of ITE-based learning within the practicum.

The dichotomous situations of *contractually obligated teachers* created a mixed set of presage factors. Despite limited time for practicum development and limited awareness of teachers' resources, these teachers established positive learning relationships. However, teacher educators' and mentors' very different views of the purposes of the teaching practicum affected these teachers: a regard for the process of learning through exploration and growth versus an emphasis on the product of the practicum, of achieving a desired standard of teaching. *Contractually obligated teachers* were caught between these two positions, unable to reconcile them. For *isolated practitioners*, also extrinsically motivated, the picture was bleaker. The negative presage factors around these teachers intersected and snowballed. A lack of time for the practicum affected learning relationships and engagement with others. *Isolated practitioners* became inwardly focused and withdrew from their ITE programmes and practicum settings. Across trajectories, both negative and misaligned presage

factors around teachers are predictors of less comfortable and less developmental practicum experiences. The next section considers how teacher status affects teachers' practicum journeys.

5.2.3 Teacher status, experience and positioning

Whether teachers were pre- or in-service affected the routes through practicum which were open to them, and particularly their exposure to others' teaching practices. Pre-service teachers gained practical teaching experience through teaching placements, mainly working alongside a mentor, whilst in-service teachers undertook the practicum within their job role, with mentors often more distant. This structural difference in practicum arrangements affected the nature and frequency of teachers' interactions with others around the practicum, and most strongly affected their exposure to the practices of others within their teaching settings. The categorisations of pre- and in-service do not, however, encompass all teachers' experiences. *Isolated practitioners* occupied a middle space, shifting status from pre- to in-service during their ITE programme, or undertaking ITE having had previous teaching employment. Changes in practicum arrangements and support tended to disrupt practicum experiences across trajectories but were most apparent for these teachers.

Solely in-service teachers followed the *joint practice developer* and *contractually obligated teacher* trajectories; these trajectories differed greatly, and specific presage factors accounted for these differences. *Joint practice developers* were experienced teachers, well-positioned in their teaching settings, who chose to undertake ITE when they had collaborators and a work situation which supported their journey. Reflective of the deregulated nature of FE ITE, these teachers were able to wait until they had a positive confluence of factors around them to undertake ITE, enabling their practicum journeys to be fulfilling and developmental. In contrast, *contractually obligated teachers* undertook ITE at their employer's behest, recruited as vocational professionals on the condition they successfully completed a teaching qualification. However, the newness of these teachers to their roles was not acknowledged in their practicum settings: their practicum learning was monitored rather than

mentored by more powerful others. The presence or absence of supportive collaborators, as well as their differing amounts of pre-ITE teaching experience account for the starkly contrasting experiences of these two sets of in-service teachers.

Almost all teachers undertaking ITE full-time and pre-service in this study experienced developmental practicum learning on the *collaborative new professional* trajectory. These teachers were able to actively integrate into their practicum settings as their full-time route enabled an extended presence in the practicum setting, with at least double the weekly practicum hours of a part-time route. Thus, they were able to engage in an active two-way process of showing what they brought to the practicum setting whilst gaining exposure to its practices. Spending time with mentors and other professionals and having lived experience of practice was crucial to this process. Only one full-time teacher in the study followed a different trajectory, the *contextually defined teacher*. Significantly, this teacher split their practicum across two settings to gain breadth of experience but therefore had less time to establish themselves within each setting and did not gain depth of experience or relationships, highlighting the importance of stability within the practicum setting to the processes of practicum learning. It is noteworthy that full-time ITE programmes, accessed by graduates, were most likely to lead to immersive and collaborative practicum learning.

Part-time, pre-service teachers who had previous experience working in educational settings followed *subject specialist change agent* or *contextually defined teacher* trajectories, resulting in quite different practicum experiences, rooted in their positioning and time in practicum settings. The *subject specialist change agent*, undertaking practicum teaching within their employment setting, was already deeply assimilated into that setting and therefore most able of these teachers to carry their learning from ITE into the practicum. With similar past work experience within education, *contextually defined teachers* were new to their practicum teaching contexts and used their limited practicum time to actively assimilate into them. Without extended exposure to practices within their settings, these teachers were much less able to bring their learning from

ITE and their own resources into their practicum teaching than those on more expansive trajectories.

The *isolated practitioner* trajectory, followed by middle space teachers, appeared strongly linked to teacher status. These teachers' practicum identities, like those of *contractually obligated teachers*, were grounded in a deficit, where teachers felt pressure to prove their teaching competence, despite their newness as teachers. When their novice status went unacknowledged by those around them, these middle space teachers became isolated, leading to the least connected, least developmental and most unhappy of all of the trajectories. For these teachers, their uncertain identities, the instability this caused them whilst grappling with new practicum contexts appeared to disconnect them from mentors and teacher educators. They also projected a confidence to others which they themselves did not feel. Unable to navigate learning communities and the practice differences they encountered, they retreated to a solitary position for survival. Conversely, their experiences underscore the importance of the gradual assimilation into and assumption of a teaching role within consistent teaching contexts as a crucial aspect of other, more positive trajectories experienced by new teachers.

5.2.4 The permeability of learning systems

Whilst engaging in ITE, teachers were part of and influenced by several learning systems, influences which they had to navigate and reconcile in their practicum teaching. At a minimum, they navigated practices in and around their ITE programme and practicum setting, as well as carrying into ITE their own past experiences of learning and often, of teaching. In this study, teachers' experiences of the practicum and their resulting teacher identities were affected by whether there was a flow of ideas and practice between themselves, their teaching setting and their ITE programmes: whether these systems were permeable and open to change, or more fixed. Within the trajectories outlined above, particular practices served as a window into attitudes towards teacher development in practicum settings. The most apparent of these, discussed in all interviews, was observations of teaching and learning (OTLs), where teachers

were observed teaching within their practicum setting by a teacher educator and/or teaching mentor. Where a restrictive view of teacher learning was adopted, OTLs were seen as a summative judgement, and feedback on teaching was instructive to enable compliance with a contextual norm or standard. This view was evident on *contractually obligated, contextually defined teacher* and *isolated practitioner* trajectories, and alluded to on the *subject specialist change agent* trajectory. Where a more exploratory view of teacher learning was adopted, feedback was more dialogic and OTLs formed part of a formative assessment loop and a process of knowledge exchange. This was evident within *subject specialist change agent, joint practice developer* and *collaborative new professional trajectories*.

Cooperative and collaborative teacher identities were promoted by an exchange of ideas and practices between the ITE programme, the teacher and practicum setting. These permeable learning systems were evident within the trajectories of *joint practice developer* and *collaborative new professional*. Teachers on these trajectories, their mentors and teacher educators through their vignettes around artefacts emphasised the process of learning through and around the practicum, rather than a standard achieved through it. Importantly, on these trajectories, learning mentors and teacher educators described their own and others' learning from working alongside teachers in the practicum. Teachers' practicum work and learning influenced mentors' practice and that within the setting. For this mutual learning to occur, teachers and those working with them required time to undertake and reflect on learning tasks together. The *subject specialist change agent* trajectory too illustrated that teachers can 'carry' specialist knowledge and practices from one setting to another. This involved challenging practice differences by opening up the teaching setting to change. Where learning systems were permeable, learning around the practicum benefitted all of those around that learning.

Teachers' practical and embodied learning was constricted where the product as opposed to the process of practicum teaching was valued within the teaching setting, and where teachers' learning from the taught elements of ITE programmes was not perceived as relevant to their practicum experience; also,

conversely, where contextual practices were not well-regarded from the perspective of the ITE programme. This confluence of factors created the more restricted professional identities evident in *contractually obligated* and *contextually defined* teachers. *Contractually obligated* teachers' work intensity resulted in them having little exposure to the practices of others, or interactions around the practicum. Consequently, their ITE learning could not permeate their contexts, or enmesh with their jobs, and their teaching was focussed on meeting standards, both for themselves and their students. For *contextually defined teachers*, their settings were not open to external influences. Practicum learning was seen as arising from being in that setting and becoming attuned to and adopting the practices of the setting. Teachers' own resources and their ITE learning were not viewed as contextually applicable. The success of both sets of teachers was judged by compliance with practice norms through the medium of OTLs. To optimise their practicum experience, teachers themselves also needed to be open to and have the circumstances to interact with others: *isolated practitioners* did not demonstrate this openness. As a result, these teachers did not become attuned to key contextual practices and instead, developed personal pedagogies, which were not recognised or valued by other professionals.

The permeability of the learning systems around teachers during their practicum was a significant presage factor in shaping teachers' emergent professional identities. More collaborative and developmental professional identities arose when teachers were able to explore and become familiar with practices, then had freedom to explore, question and develop practices with others. Where this exploration was restricted and the purpose of the ITE practicum was seen as compliance with contextual norms or meeting a standard, the result was a model of teacher development based on adherence. Where restricted models of teacher development were prevalent, teachers adopted those to survive, at the expense of developing a teacher identity which encompassed their own beliefs and experience. The processes of teacher learning are explored in the following section.

5.3 Process factors

5.3.1 Relational work

Having opportunities to collaborate, interact and reflect with others around teacher activities was a precursor to deep practicum learning. Engagement in relational work resulted in teacher trajectories with an orientation towards working with others, which also encompassed and valued teachers' existing resources: *joint practice developer*, *subject specialist change agent* and *collaborative new professional*. These teachers engaged in relational work, built learning relationships, which, once established, enabled informal interactions around teaching and learning through engaging in teacher activities with others. Relational work positioned teachers well within their practicum contexts, but this work required time and regular contact with other professionals and was optimal when it was a two-way process. Spending time in practicum settings enabled exposure to and involvement in the practices of other educational professionals and allowed teachers to sense-make around these practices and to consider how they could benefit their settings. Teachers' ability to engage in relational work depended on presage factors related to the teacher, the setting, others within it and the employment demands of the FE and Skills sector aligning.

All teachers in the study had a named teaching mentor but this did not in itself bring about practicum collaboration: relational work and time together in practicum settings proved necessary to build trusting learning relationships. Relational work was most strongly evident and perceived as beneficial for *collaborative new professionals*. These teachers participated in an active two-way process of becoming part of their practicum setting, making known the academic and vocational resources they offered the practicum whilst gaining exposure to contextual practices by spending time with their teaching mentor and other professionals. *Contextually defined teachers* also engaged in relational work, gained acceptance in their practicum settings and were exposed to practices within these settings. Although they made known their existing vocational, academic and educational resources, these were not seen as enhancing the setting and the process of assimilation was not two-way. To forge and maintain relationships on this trajectory, teachers aligned with and

adopted existing teaching and learning practices. How teachers' existing resources were regarded, and whether there was space for these resources within the practicum shaped trajectories of teacher practicum learning and subsequent teacher identities.

Learning relationships within the practicum ranged from hierarchical to non-hierarchical. Non-hierarchical learning relationships were beneficial; for strongly hierarchical relationships the picture was more mixed. Acknowledgement of teachers' existing resources and examples of other professionals learning with or from teachers around the practicum were indicators of less hierarchical learning relationships. *Joint practice developers* benefitted from a small network of deep learning relationships with mentors and teacher educators. Established as experienced teachers within their contexts, they worked with collaborative partners in their mutual development. These in-service teachers spent time with others exchanging ideas, resources and practices. *Subject specialist change agents* benefitted from hierarchical but reciprocal learning relationships both within ITE and the practicum. They formed coaching partnerships with subject specialist teacher educators, to spread subject specific pedagogies through their practice; they carefully managed practicum relationships to achieve this end. *Contractually obligated teachers* had more limited learning relationships as for them, mentor and managerial roles overlapped, restricting the developmental potential of the practicum. Additionally, their working situations or conditions precluded working with others. *Contextually defined teachers* too experienced strongly hierarchical learning relationships where learning was not reciprocal. However, all learning relationships appeared in some way beneficial to teachers' development, highlighted by contrasting the *isolated practitioner* trajectory with other pathways. These teachers' engagement in relational work was very limited, and the absence of strong learning relationships adversely affected their process of learning. Interactions about teaching, when they occurred, often resulted in misunderstandings, due to their infrequency. Learning relationships, when available to teachers, created opportunities to undertake teacher activities with others, opportunities which were generally more available to pre-service than in-service teachers.

5.3.2 Learning with others, from others and individually

Descriptions of practicum learning on the above trajectories suggest that it was optimal when synthesized rather than atomised, achieved through joint enquiry rather than compliance with norms, with a strong emphasis on the role of praxis or practical, contextual knowledge, combined with teachers' theoretical ITE programme learning and their existing knowledge resources. These factors were evident in practicum examples judged to illustrate the deepest learning, occurring on the trajectories of *joint practice developer*, *subject specialist change agent* and *collaborative new professional*. Undertaking learning activities with others and interactions around these activities appeared crucial to bringing about this learning. Across trajectories, a key difference was whether teacher learning was perceived within the practicum setting as an individual activity or as a social practice involving others. Learning with others through interaction and by undertaking learning activities enabled theoretical or conceptual learning to combine with practical, contextual knowledge and teachers' own resources. Individual learning appeared much less successful in this regard. But rather than being a stark binary, different types of individual and collaborative learning were evident across teacher trajectories.

Individual learning mainly occurred through circumstance rather than choice. *Contractually obligated teachers* were surrounded by experienced others but unable, through their working situations, to learn collaboratively with them. They attempted to develop their planning and delivery, had resources to offer the setting, but only found collaborative partners within the ITE programme rather than the practicum setting. Their lack of contextual collaborative partners diminished the application of their ITE learning, although they benefitted from learning with and from others when attending their ITE programme. In contrast, *isolated practitioners* had limited learning relationships across their ITE experiences. This resulted in their practices, a personal combination of influences from their past vocational and teaching experience, their ITE programmes and their own interpretations of the practicum simply not being recognised or valued by other professionals. Interactions around their teaching practice were peppered with misunderstandings. Without exposure to others'

practicum perspectives, it proved difficult to become part of a teaching and learning community.

Learning with others enabled teachers to combine their own resources, pedagogical knowledge from ITE with espoused contextual pedagogies, evidenced through activity and resource creation and execution in their practicum settings. *Joint practice developers* engaged in mutually and contextually beneficial activities such as team teaching, observation of other teachers or collaborative planning. The positioning of these experienced teachers, able to maximise learning opportunities and exert influence, facilitated this process. *Collaborative new professionals* undertook an active two-way process of integration into their teaching contexts, making known the resources they offered the practicum whilst becoming attuned to contextual practices. The placement nature of their practicum experiences enabled observation of others' teaching, team teaching and dialogue around these activities. Equally balanced and intensive time spent in ITE programme and the practicum, working with others in each setting on sense-making and pedagogies, enabled *collaborative new professionals* to blend these influences. They combined their own knowledge resources with those of the setting to evidence their learning but also their belonging to the teaching setting. This was illustrated by sharing, adapting and sharing back lesson resources and formative assessment tools with mentors and other educational professionals. *Subject specialist change agents* combined subject specialist pedagogical knowledge with their own resources and contextual understanding to spread subject specific pedagogies into their teaching contexts, as well as develop their own practices. Their coaching partnership with subject specialist teacher educators enabled them to unpick practice-based problems then carry the solutions back into their teaching setting. On all three trajectories, teachers successfully synthesised personal, ITE and contextual knowledge through working and learning with others in subtly different but ultimately enriching ways: engaging in joint enquiry, sharing and sharing back resources and unpicking practice-based problems.

Learning with others provided opportunities for deeper learning than learning from others. *Contextually defined teachers*, who learned from others, had few

opportunities to bring their personal knowledge, experience and ITE learning into their teaching settings, aligning with their teaching settings as opposed to other learning communities. Contextual practices had primacy, so their teacher learning was through observing and applying others' practices, rather than through joint activities. Learning relationships were one-way, perceived as a transfer of knowledge from an expert with fine-grained contextual knowledge. There was little evidence of making sense of practices with others. Therefore, teachers' learning, like the learning of *contractually obligated teachers*, was constricted by perceptions of teacher learning in the practicum setting combined with a lack of interaction opportunities. However, for these teachers, the creativity required to sustain practice through the Covid-19 pandemic period enabled some in-service teachers to develop closeness at a distance with colleagues, engaging in learning activities together as they adapted teaching and learning to continue to support their students. Although short lived, this period demonstrated the benefits for in-service teachers of time spent learning through undertaking activities with others in their professional environments. The importance of this aspect of practicum learning cannot be underestimated. Opportunities to learn with others in the practicum setting benefitted teachers greatly and led to collaborative and developmental teacher identities.

5.3.3 Practicum learning and knowledge development.

Practice stories and vignettes around selected practice artefacts indicated that across trajectories, all teachers developed practicum knowledge of core teacher activities: knowing students and perceiving their needs, applying pedagogies, designing learning tasks and activities, managing face-to-face learning and engaging in assessment for learning. Understandings of broader teacher activities such as curriculum planning and summative assessment were accessible to few teachers, mainly those on the *joint practice developer* trajectory. The degree to which teachers could carry their previous professional identities into practicum settings, the space for teachers' existing knowledge resources in their practicum development and opportunities to apply learning from ITE varied significantly across trajectories. Where teachers worked collaboratively with others, they were able to combine these practice influences.

Where collaborative teacher learning did not occur, this opportunity was much less evident, resulting in more restricted, less synthesised and less satisfying practicum learning.

Practicum learning was least apparent for *isolated practitioners*. On all other trajectories, regardless of their learning situations, teachers developed recognised learning relationships with students and knowledge of managing learning. For *isolated practitioners*, these skills were not strongly evident, a marker of their limited practice development. Artefacts of teachers on this trajectory illustrated difficulties accepting others' practices, some pride in developing personal practices, attempts by those around the teachers to support them but also an acknowledgement of the lack of connection with the teachers or understanding of their planning and teaching decisions.

Conversely, the most satisfaction and pride were expressed around the practicum learning of teachers well positioned to synthesise different types and sources of knowledge: *joint practice developers*, *collaborative new professionals* and *subject specialist change agents*. Artefacts selected for these teachers illustrated close collaborative working, the combining of contextual knowledge and research-informed pedagogies, reflection from different perspectives around practice-based problems, joint enquiry and exchange of resources and ideas between teachers, mentors and teacher educators. *Joint practice developers* were able to use ITE to develop and refine already secure skills, jointly redeveloping resources and aspects of classroom practice, as well as developing wider projects linked to assessment and curriculum enhancement. Their practicum learning benefitted their wider settings. Similarly, *subject specialist change agents* developed and synthesised knowledge across broad domains. Artefacts illustrated close collaborative planning, with considerable interaction between teacher-generated and teacher-educator generated artefacts. The teacher's application of subject specific pedagogies was considered through a detailed analysis of students' needs, identified in conjunction with their teacher educator. Only on this trajectory was teacher knowledge described as subject specialist knowledge. Across other trajectories,

although vocational pedagogies were developed in a multidisciplinary and collaborative ways, they were not described in these terms.

Collaborative new professionals explored lesson planning, resource creation, varied student activity types, class management, adaptive teaching, formative assessment, promoted student-centred learning and embedding of inclusivity and education for sustainable development. Selected artefacts illustrated learning through collaboration, the personal vocational knowledge and values pre-service teachers brought to ITE, but also the influences of their ITE programme regarding theoretical understanding, and of the practicum setting regarding knowledge of students and common practices. For all of these teachers, successful practicum development was the synthesis of these elements within each teacher's personal learning journey. Accounts of learning conveyed a fine-grained sense of each teacher's journey, but also an aware of their newness as teachers. The brevity of their ITE programme meant that their teacher knowledge was still developing. Notable experience and knowledge gaps included summative assessment experience, quality assurance activities and curriculum-level planning.

Neither *contractually obligated* nor *contextually defined* teachers were able to synthesise their own knowledge resources, their ITE learning and contextual practices. *Contractually obligated* teachers, with few collaborative practicum opportunities, attempted through selected artefacts, to illustrate the resources they brought to teaching settings but not in combination with other types of knowledge. Artefacts on this trajectory illustrated variously teachers' own resources, contextual awareness, dissatisfaction with contextual practices, research informed pedagogies and academic literacies development, but in a separate rather than synthesised way. There was little evidence that these teachers had opportunities engage in discussion and reflection to assist them in combining these knowledge elements, or in consolidating and applying their learning from the ITE classroom. For *contextually defined teachers*, teacher knowledge developed around core elements of a teacher's role; activities around broader elements of the role such as curriculum design and summative assessment were tightly protected. Artefacts selected illustrated that teachers

were expected to notice and apply contextual pedagogies. Their planning and assessment practices, resources and activity types mirrored those used by mentors, contrasted with earlier examples which were less contextually aligned. Teachers were discouraged from applying research-informed and subject specific pedagogies, although some artefacts illustrate attempts at their application. *Contextually defined teachers* were also discouraged from using situated reasoning to solve practice-based problems. Prepared, relationally, to work with others, they were less equipped for future learning with others. Whether through lack of collaborators or tight control around contextual practices, both of these trajectories represented a disempowering model of teacher development which did not value learning beyond the context, or encourage learning which encompassed wider elements of a teacher's role. The following section explores the product of practicum learning, the resultant teacher identities developed through the intersection of presage and process factors so far discussed.

5.4 The product of practicum learning

The processes of practicum learning and presage factors of and around teachers underpinning this learning shaped emerging teacher identities. All teachers commenced their practicum learning with existing educational, academic, vocational and/or other professional resources and identities. These resources had the potential to enrich their teaching and enhance the FE and Skills sector. The degree to which presage factors of and around teachers were positive and aligned, teachers' motivations, situations and agency and the permeability of the learning systems around them established conditions for their practicum learning. Regarding the process of learning, teachers who were able to engage in relational work opened up opportunities to learn with or from others; those who could not engaged in more individual practicum learning. Learning with others enabled teachers to synthesise diverse learning influences including their own resources around the practicum. For teachers learning from others or individually, this was much less evident. For those able to learn with others, teacher artefacts illustrated a wide range of collaborative learning activities which enabled rich and deep practicum learning where teachers'

emerging teacher identities were able to encompass aspects of their previous identities. Teachers learning from others experienced practicum learning heavily shaped by their teaching contexts, with few opportunities to incorporate their own resources or ITE learning. Those learning individually evidenced the least learning from the practicum, developing insecure or isolated identities, unable to make known what they could offer the sector.

The trajectories outlined above highlight both enriching and more impoverished practicum journeys. They also highlighted the role teachers' existing resources played in shaping those identities. Within the FE and Skills sector, the concept of the dual professionalism is widely used to acknowledge teachers' pre-teaching professional identities alongside their more recent, teaching identities. Within this study, dual professionalism only appeared possible for teachers who experienced particular practicum conditions. *Collaborative new professionals* brought experience, academic and vocational qualifications and currency to the practicum, and made others aware of these resources, allowing them to assert their past identities whilst developing a teacher identity grounded in working with others. Their past professional and/or academic identities enhanced their emerging teacher identity. For these teachers, the status of dual professional may have been achieved. Certainly, their teacher identities were able to accommodate and indeed were established at least in part through what they brought to the practicum.

The most experienced teachers in the study, *joint practice developers*, had established identities as educational professionals prior to commencing ITE and this appeared to be their primary identity. For these teachers, dual professional identities had not sustained through their careers. These teachers' pre-ITE experience spanned a range of further education contexts, subjects and job roles. Hence, within their trajectory there was a sense of expertise across a range of FE and Skills contexts and a plural rather than a singular sense of the subject, with all teachers having taught across subjects and vocational areas through their careers. This may have contributed to their primarily educational professional identities, which were shared by *subject specialist change agents*. These teachers came to ITE with a strong sense of the subject specialist

teacher they wanted to become, underpinned by specific values. Their position as agents of change, who carried up-to-date subject specialist pedagogies and practices into their teaching contexts was a definite educational identity, underpinned by values. Because their pre- ITE professional identity was an educational one, they sought to develop this further by opening up their subject areas to new influences to extend and develop their curricula.

Teachers who followed the trajectories of *contractually obligated teacher* and the *contextually defined* teacher were not able to retain pre-teaching identities as vocational professionals when assuming a teacher identity. The benefit of the vocational and academic resources and expertise these teachers brought to their practicum settings were not fully realised. *Contractually obligated* teachers gained employment within the sector through the vocational resources and experience they brought to teaching roles, yet once in post, they struggled to utilise these resources and demonstrate their value to practicum settings. This, together with being judged on teaching performance like other, more experienced and qualified colleagues, constricted their growth and teacher identities. Maintaining their pre-teaching professional identities whilst developing teacher identities proved impossible in their circumstances. These teachers did not appear to become dual professionals, and the vocational resources which made them valuable to the sector were only partially recognised within their teaching settings. Similarly, *contextually defined* teachers began ITE with academic, subject specific and prior educational experience to offer their teaching settings, but their resources were not seen as assets. These teachers were not able to maintain dual professional identities as becoming part of their practicum setting meant subsuming their past professional identities. Their vocational or academic knowledge and experience was not perceived as relevant within their setting.

The trajectories of the *contractually obligated* and *contextually defined* teachers exposed the myth of an unproblematic dual professionalism which is presented to new vocational entrants to teaching in the sector. From this study, new vocational teachers require a particular set of conditions to develop a second professional identity as an FE and Skills teacher whilst maintaining their

existing vocational identity, which are lacking on these trajectories. This absence is most acutely felt on the *isolated practitioner* trajectory, where teachers' identities were in a liminal space between pre- and in-service status. New vocational teachers required acknowledgement of the resources they brought to the sector, interaction with others and the time and space to be new teachers in order to fully realise a second professional identity as an FE and Skills teacher, whilst maintaining their pre-teaching professional identity.

Taken together, these varied teacher trajectories call into question the concept of dual professionalism as an all-encompassing and satisfactory description of teachers in the FE and Skills sector. Instead, they highlight the nuances involved in emerging teacher identities. In this study, these could be more collaborative and expansive, oriented towards future development with others, or more restricted, focussed on meeting teaching standards or contextual norms. Teachers also become isolated from others in their settings, leading to unhappiness and insecurity. Practicum learning cultures opened up or closed down opportunities for teachers to bring their existing resources and ITE learning to their practicum teaching. Some teachers developed identities which incorporated vocational elements, but for others, teacher identities were primarily of FE and Skills teachers, knowledgeable about the sector, rather than a subject. The identity of a subject specialist teacher was only apparent in one teacher's trajectory.

This Chapter has analysed presage, process- relational and process-learning factors across six teacher trajectories to identify, across trajectories, enabling and restricting factors influencing teacher development. In the following chapter, the findings presented in Chapters four and five are discussed, and their contribution to the existing research base of the FE and Skills ITE practicum is justified.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This collective case study contributes to the knowledge base of FE and Skills sector initial teacher education by identifying and analysing the influencing factors around teachers' learning trajectories through the practicum on ITE programmes in one college-based higher education institution. Little attention has been paid to the processes of teacher practicum learning in this sector. This study is rare in representing the experiences of pre-service, in-service and shifting status teachers, and in its attempt to reflect through the cases studied the wide range of routes by which teachers enter the sector's ITE programmes (ETF, 2022a). Past studies mainly represent in-service teachers (Maxwell, 2009 and 2010; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Orr, 2012; Maxwell, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017; Olukoga, 2018; Husband, 2018 and 2020; Powell, 2020; Boodt, 2024) although selected work reflects pre-service teachers' practicum experiences (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Wright, 2017; Wright *et al.*, 2018; Brown & Everson, 2019). By describing the variation in teacher learning and contrasting teacher trajectories, this study develops what is known about enabling and restricting factors around teachers' practicum learning. It is also unusual in its proximity to the practicum, in that it was conducted within the FE and Skills sector it represents. This location brings an insider perspective, uncommon in past research.

The study's first aim of representing participants' conceptualisations of practicum learning was achieved through the analysis of dialogues around participant-selected practice artefacts. The existing research base is developed by representing and reconciling positions on practicum learning of three key parties: teacher educators, teaching mentors and teachers. Overwhelmingly, past studies which explore practicum experiences do so from teachers' perspectives (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Maxwell, 2009 and 2010; Orr, 2012; Maxwell, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017; Wright, 2017; Wright *et al.*, 2018; Olukoga, 2018; Husband, 2018 and 2020; Brown & Everson, 2019; Powell, 2020; Boodt, 2024), rather than also encompassing the perspectives of those

they learn with and from. Where other positions are evident, they have the narrower focus of mentoring new teachers (Cunningham, 2007; Tedder & Lawy, 2009; Ingleby, 2014; Kentzer, Bracey, & Devecchi, 2019; Hobson & Maxwell, 2020; Tyrer, 2023).

The study's second aim was to chart the trajectories teachers followed through the practicum. The analysis of patterns across participants' varied accounts of practicum learning through the application of Biggs' (1993) systems-form presage-process-product model of learning culminated in the development of the six teacher trajectories, presented in Chapter four. Across these pathways, significant variation in the nature and quality of teacher learning was apparent, despite all teachers commencing ITE with resources to offer the sector. Practicum learning journeys ranged from the collaborative and rewarding, through the contextually and contractually restricted to the isolated and difficult. Teachers' practicum trajectories in turn shaped their emerging teacher identities, and the degree to which these identities accommodated their pre-teaching professional, academic and vocational identities. Although existing literature acknowledges teachers' diverse backgrounds and situations embarking on ITE (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011; Wright, 2017 and Powell, 2020), only Avis *et al.* (2011) contrast ITE learning experiences of different groups, finding an academic pre-service teacher and in-service vocational teacher divide. This study builds on and refines that work to draw conclusions around a range of influencing presage and process factors and their practicum effects.

The factors underpinning and accounting for differences between the six teacher trajectories were, in Chapter five, mapped through a cross-trajectory analysis of the presage and process factors, achieving the study's third aim. Teachers' personal and professional situations, their motivation and agency, the alignment of factors and attitudes around teachers and of other professionals all influenced practicum journeys. Teachers' positioning in the teaching context, the resources they brought to ITE and the possibility of using these resources to enhance their teaching intertwined with the permeability of learning systems around them to shape their practicum learning. The time,

space and opportunity to build strong learning relationships enabled the exploration of teaching practices with others, and equally, allowed teachers to demonstrate the resources they brought to the teaching setting. Engagement in teacher activities with others resulted in the deepest practicum learning, through the synthesis of diverse learning influences evidenced in practice artefacts and through vignettes. In settings where relational work was restricted or did not form part of the process of learning, this led to shallower and less synthesised practicum learning, where teachers were much less able to apply their own resources or combine learning influences within teaching practice. These findings thus combine and expand themes from diverse past studies, into a coherent analysis of influencing factors on practicum learning.

The role played by teachers' existing resources within their practicum journeys and resultant teacher identities is not explored in past work, although the potential of the experience and resources new teachers bring to the sector is beginning to be recognised (Husband, 2020). Here, the valuing of teacher resources and their application within the practicum was found to be significant in shaping more positive teacher identities, resulting in the validation required for new teachers become part of a learning community (Wright *et al.*, 2018). The teacher trajectories sketched in this case study highlight the influencing factors over practicum trajectories, enabling the theorisation of optimal conditions for teachers' practicum learning. Positive and aligned presage factors for teachers and around their practicum learning appeared necessary for deep and synthesised learning to take place.

The discussion in this chapter addresses the fourth research aim: how learning through the practicum can be optimised within further education and skills ITE programmes, making links throughout to the topic's existing research base. The implications of the findings detailed above are addressed systemically at micro, meso and macro levels. Micro level is applied to teachers undertaking ITE, their practicum settings and teacher education programmes, meso level to FE and Skills leadership and macro level to FE ITE policy, which influences the future workforce of the sector. The affordances which assist and constrict knowledge development and learning trajectories of teachers through ITE are considered

through these levels; in Chapter seven, this discussion is developed into recommendations encompassing all three levels. A model of the conditions promoting positive trajectories through ITE is also proposed. This study therefore achieves its goal of adding to the knowledge base of the less understood area of teacher learning through the practicum in the FE and Skills sector (Maxwell, 2014; Allison, 2023).

6.2 Micro level

6.2.1 Teachers

Teachers' trajectories through the practicum laid the foundations for their teacher identities and professional orientations. Positive practicum pathways were evident for both pre- and in-service teachers. Equally, though, less positive trajectories were also experienced, by in-service and particularly by shifting status teachers, whose situations were not evident in past studies. The stark contrast found by Avis *et al.* (2011) between the learning conditions of pre- and in-service teachers was, in this study, more nuanced, although new pre-service teachers tended to have constricted practicum journeys. Pre-service teachers on full-time programmes and experienced in-service teachers experienced the richest practicum learning. By accounting for the differences in practicum experiences by mapping underlying presage and process factors, this work responds to Heinz's (2024) call for studies of the practicum which consider diverse groups of teachers, in order to harness the potential of all new teachers. This is timely as the diversity of routes into the FE and Skills sector is starting to be acknowledged (ETF, 2022a). Although this is a small-scale study, and as such, its results are not generalisable, it continues to highlight constricted practicum learning for some teachers, also evident in a succession of past studies (Avis *et al.*, 2011; Maxwell, 2014; Olukoga, 2018; Hanley & Thompson, 2021; Boodt, 2024), with implications for teachers themselves, the larger sector and the sustainability of its workforce. Equally, the development of detailed positive practicum accounts suggests a reconsideration of the practicum conditions of the sector's future teachers to enable positive, supportive and effective practicum learning for all.

Aligned presage factors across teachers, the practicum setting and the teacher education programme led to more expansive and fulfilling learning, but some teachers were subject to negative presage factors beyond their control. Intrinsically motivated teachers had more positive practicum experiences than those extrinsically motivated by either reward or punishment but teacher motivation, a seemingly personal factor, was heavily structurally influenced. Some teachers' personal circumstances, finances and/or employment situations did not allow them to be intrinsically motivated, a situation particularly evident for non-graduate teachers, who were only able to access ITE provision on a part-time basis, often through employer funding, as a non-graduate full-time route was not available to them. The impact of teachers' personal situations on their ITE choices and subsequent practicum learning is not apparent in past studies, although the situation of new staff assuming teaching roles direct from industry is recognised (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Orr, 2018; Flemons *et al.*, 2024). In this study, employer funding compounded teachers' perceived deficits around their own qualifications and experience, deficits also noted by Boodt (2024). Additionally, new in-service teachers and shifting status teachers had little or no control over their practicum arrangements: their workplace constituted their practicum setting. To benefit from the teacher development with other professionals within the practicum, new, non-graduate in-service teachers required practicum conditions which dovetailed with their working lives, enabling them to engage in learning activities and with mentors and others. The difficulty of vocational in-service teachers finding time to learn with others is evident in many past studies (Maxwell, 2010; Thompson, 2010; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Olukoga; 2018). In this study, the contrast with more positive trajectories enabled an analysis of the factors required for these teachers' learning to be deeper and more fulfilling, extending knowledge around this practicum aspect. The experiences of *isolated practitioners* illustrated starkly the inhibiting effects of solitary practicum learning on teacher development and identity creation.

Time to build learning relationships emerged as a key influence over teacher trajectories. Expansive trajectories offer accounts of the activities undertaken to

build practicum learning relationships and to learn with others. The general effect of the presence or absence of learning relationships on practicum learning is noted in many past studies (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Maxwell, 2014; Lahiff, 2015 and 2017; Broad & Lahiff, 2017; Wright, 2017; Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019). This study underscores and develops that finding by contrasting the learning of teachers with and without time to build learning relationships, and how those learning relationships operated to validate teacher resources. Lack of time to establish learning relationships negated the potential positive influence of the resources teachers brought to their practicum setting. Without time spent with other professionals, and the resource exchange involved in collaborative learning, impoverished teacher identities were established on *contractually obligated* and *contextually defined* trajectories, variants of the conservative and compliant identity noted by Orr & Simmons (2010). The positive effects of valuing teachers' pre-teaching identities within feedback discussions were evident in past studies (Lahiff, 2015; 2017). This study suggests the benefits of celebrating what teachers offer the sector are felt throughout the teaching practicum and shape teachers' emerging identities. A heavy teaching load, with limited remission is detrimental to in-service teachers undertaking ITE (Olukoga, 2018). In this study, new in-service and shifting status teachers were most at risk of isolation, and least able to build learning relationships. Relationship building around the practicum, facilitating resource exchange, joint learning activities and dialogic reflection were key in the development of positive, secure and collaborative teacher identities.

Through the development of trajectories, this study sheds light on the journeys of vocational professionals into teaching, a less understood area (Greatbatch & Tate, 2018). Teacher identities emerging from the practicum were more varied and complex than the dual professional status, spanning teaching and vocational areas, seen as desirable for Further Education and Skills teachers (Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning [CAVTL], 2013). In this study, only *collaborative new professionals* developed identities which reflected their past academic/ vocational identities. *Joint practice developer* and

subject specialist change agent identities were primarily educational in nature, but accommodated teachers' existing identities. On all three of these trajectories, teachers gained validation and a sense of community through the practicum. Undertaking ITE in the early stages of employment led to trajectories where teachers were not able to retain their pre-teaching identities. Employer control of ITE experiences, where teachers felt pressure to conform to a perceived standard or restrictive contextual norms shaped teacher identities. Teachers on more restrictive trajectories did not gain validation through the practicum, although *contextually defined* teachers did achieve a sense of community. Teacher identities grounded in a deficit can lead to dissatisfaction with working lives (Brown & Everson, 2019), and often, teachers leaving the profession. As Allison (2023) notes, there is a pressing concern to consider at policy and organisational level the structural agentic factors influencing FE and Skills ITE. Findings of this study suggest supportive practicum arrangements for in-service and shifting status part-time teachers is an area of pressing concern, to allow them to develop more expansive and rewarding teacher identities when establishing their teaching careers.

6.2.2 The practicum setting

The most valuable aspect that the practicum teaching context contributed to teachers' ITE journeys was to create a permeable learning culture where knowledge flowed between the ITE programme, the setting and key actors around teachers. This enhanced the learning of *joint practice developers*, *collaborative new professionals* and *subject specialist change agents*. The FE sector is a series of intersecting learning subcultures, which can become siloed (McCarroll & Lambert, 2024). For teachers on more restrictive trajectories, these silos were evident in practicum journeys, with a perceived disconnect between perceptions of teaching conveyed within ITE programmes and practicum settings. Encouragingly, unlike in Orr's (2012) work, this disconnect did not permeate all teachers' experiences. The integration of employment and ITE activities can enhance teacher satisfaction with ITE (Husband, 2018). This study suggests that an integration of learning cultures across practicum settings and the ITE programme is also necessary to optimise practicum learning.

Where learning cultures were not aligned, for *contractually obligated* and *contextually defined* teachers, 'support and judge' models of mentoring (Tedder & Lawy, 2009) were also evident. In these cases, teachers survived rather than thrived in the practicum.

Three other aspects of practicum experience were unequal for teachers in this study: exposure to the range of activities which constitute a teacher's role, recognition as novice teachers and opportunities to learn with others. In-service and shifting status teachers gained experience of a wider range of teacher activities, while pre-service teachers had greater exposure to the practices of others, sustained collaborative opportunities, and acknowledgment of their newness to teaching. The contrast of available routes, not apparent in past studies, revealed these areas, all of which could benefit all teachers in their practicum learning. Recognition of novice status enabled *joint practice developers and subject specialist change agents* to experiment within the practicum whilst for *isolated practitioners* and *contractually obligated* teachers, their newness remained unacknowledged by those around them, affecting their ability to explore teaching approaches. Lack of recognition of newness to the role is a long-standing issue for in-service teachers (Husband, 2015; also Orr & Simmons, 2010). Tackling this could enhance the practicum learning of in-service and shifting status teachers but requires collaborative learning opportunities with others. Access to the placement practicum arrangements available to pre-service teachers, with dedicated time with other professionals within teaching and learning environments, is a specific measure which could improve these teachers' situations. Equally, pre-service teachers desired extended practicum experience of the full teacher role, particularly activities bookending the academic year, such as programme evaluation, summative assessment and curriculum development. In partnership with ITE programmes, practicum settings can enhance these aspects of teacher learning.

Protected time spent with other professionals, a focus on relational-sensitising factors, resource and reflection sharing and promotion of permeable learning cultures all enhanced practicum support. This finding both aligns with and develops the mentoring principles outlined by Hobson & Maxwell (2020). Past

mentoring research and policy centres on working with an experienced other as a teaching mentor (Tedder & Lawy, 2009; also Ingelby, 2014; Kentzer, Bracey, & Devecchi, 2019; Hobson & Maxwell, 2020), stemming from Ofsted's influential (2003) call for all teachers to have a single subject specific mentor. This study suggests a reconceptualisation of supportive sector mentoring may be necessary. Mentors in this study were not portrayed as subject specialists; nevertheless, their guidance was crucial in acclimatising teachers to practicum contexts and the needs of their students, evidenced in practice vignettes and reflections. Particularly pre-service teachers were sensitised to aspects of practice through contextual understanding of their students, who were central to planning and resource decisions. A repositioning of mentors as practicum and contextual specialists may more accurately define their role. Lahiff's (2017) concept of pedagogical expertise for vocational practice appears to be a more accurate and sector-sensitive description of what mentors offer teachers' practicum learning.

Broader learning networks also played a role in teacher's practicum learning, assisting their identity formation. *Collaborative new professionals* were successful in building learning networks, developing a learning orientation with others to carry into their careers. This strongly contrasted with the workplace isolation of *isolated practitioners*. In these teachers' stories, the need to appreciate teachers' newness and shifting identities was evident. Where teachers develop negative attitudes to the sector during their practicum, these tend to sustain (Kentzer, Bracey & Devecchi, 2019). Sharing the nurturing of new teachers across teams avoids it becoming burdensome to one individual mentor (Thompson, 2014) and could also sensitise colleagues to these teachers' situations. The *contractually obligated trajectory* illustrates the multiple identities navigated by non-graduate vocational in-service teachers. The interaction of paid teacher and student teacher identities (Orr & Simmons, 2010), the lack of recognition of novice status (Husband, 2015) and the challenges of adopting an academic identity (Boodt, 2024) evident separately in past studies were all apparent on this trajectory. These multiple identities, all with perceived knowledge gaps, placed heavy demands on new in-service

teachers, without the assistance other teachers had in navigating their emerging teacher identities. These findings suggest practicum contexts must develop a sensitivity to the particular conditions of new pre-service teachers by reframing ITE as part of their job role, reducing workload, enabling practicum learning with others, and celebrating the resources teachers offer the sector.

6.2.3 The teacher education programme

This study found practicum learning to be a nuanced and relational effort. It is much more easily achieved with the support of and through interaction with knowledgeable others and by engaging in learning activities with them, sharing and combining resources. This characterisation further refines Maxwell's (2014) description of practicum learning as an interplay between teacher factors and workplace factors. Reflections around practice artefacts suggest optimal practicum learning is holistic not atomistic, collaborative rather than individual, blending influences from the teacher, the teaching setting, other professionals, and the ITE programme. Further, this learning originates from attempts at practice enhancement, flowing from access to experiencing and discussing the practices of others. This rich picture of teacher learning cannot be inferred from the achievement of a set of competencies for learning and skills teachers (DfE, 2024c). Despite repeated criticisms (Bathmaker, 1999; Lucas, 2007, Maxwell 2010), this model of ITE learning has perpetuated through the successive qualification iterations outlined in the introduction to this work. To counter this perception of teacher learning, a research base of the sector is needed: this study builds on and contributes to that base. It adopts Lucas' (2007) social vision of learning, restates Maxwell's (2010) emphasis on collaborative and contextual learning, further refining knowledge of the optimal conditions for practicum learning (Maxwell, 2014) to outline how teacher development with others occurs. Specifically, it foregrounds the crucial role learning relationships play in enabling teachers to merge their resources with those of the setting, evidenced through joint activity and artefact creation. This finding broadens and complements the conclusions of Lahiff (2015; 2017) and Powell (2020), who explore the reshaping of teachers' resources within feedback discussions and taught elements of ITE programmes respectively.

Across trajectories, differing expressions of teacher professionalism arose from practicum learning. Teachers on expansive trajectories moved beyond the 'effective teacher' paradigm (Menter *et al.*, 2010, p. 17) to reflective or, in the case of *joint practice developers*, enquiry-focussed positions. This movement, also observed by Gossman & Horder (2016) in pre-service teachers, was not achieved by all teachers. *Contextually defined* and *contractually obligated* teachers complied to contractual and contextual perceptions of the effective teacher, whilst *isolated practitioners'* solitude limited their development even as effective teachers. Dissonance between models of teacher development surrounding teachers can cause isolation (Orr, 2012). As part of ITE, therefore, it is crucial to sensitise teachers to successful and expansive models of practicum learning: to view it as a social practice. Discussing relational work as a precursor to learning with other professionals, highlighting the purpose of informal practicum interactions, the necessity of experiencing contextual practices at ground level and of the artefacts teachers create to try to encapsulate their learning may better prepare teachers for their own practicum learning. This picture of teacher learning may differ significantly from teachers' mental maps, pre-ITE, of how professional learning occurs. It certainly cannot be inferred from much criticised lists of teacher competencies. The value of time to assimilate into teaching settings must be stressed to prospective teachers, to mentors and to teaching contexts as a precursor to learning with others. Promoting models of teacher learning to mentors which acknowledge the teacher as an active and interactive participant rather than an adopter of existing practices can similarly raise awareness in practicum settings. The above trajectories suggest that without time to learn with others, the practicum experience is impoverished.

Teachers who were able to identify and apply their academic and vocational resources within their practicum teaching experienced more positive and rewarding trajectories than those who did not. Therefore, raising teachers' awareness within the ITE programme of what they can offer the practicum is timely. Teacher identity work does not, currently, have an established place within the FE ITE curriculum, yet the FE and Skills' sector's diversity is

sustained by the wide range of teachers who enter it through varied routes (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Avis *et al.*, 2011; Wright, 2017; Powell, 2020; ETF, 2022a). Through overt identity work, teachers can codify their pre-teaching identities, foreground the resources they bring to ITE and systematically identify ways to apply these within the practicum. The deficit experienced on restrictive teacher trajectories may be countered by teachers' realisation of their potential to enhance practicum settings. It could also reduce teacher isolation, which proved, in this study and others (Orr & Simmons, 2010; Thompson, 2014; Hanley & Thompson, 2021), so damaging to teacher development. Awareness of teacher resources is part of knowing teachers (Wright, 2017), a precursor to developmental practice dialogues. It may help counter more judgemental models of mentoring (Tedder & Lawy, 2009) still apparent in the sector.

On all trajectories, particularly *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent*, selected teaching and learning artefacts operated as windows into teachers' development. Discussions around their creation and use illustrated ways of sharing and relating, constrictions on teachers, aspects of their practice they valued and how they combined learning influences. Therefore, the power of artefacts within ITE programmes can be harnessed as an authentic form of teacher assessment and a way of mapping vocational pedagogies, which are currently not well understood in the sector (Thompson, 2014; Hanley & Thompson, 2021). Teachers undertaking ITE pay close attention to the minutiae of practice, so are positioned to record existing pedagogies of their vocational or subject areas, addressing a perceived deficit of generic ITE programmes (Thompson, 2014). This could constitute an authentic summative assessment, as well as assist with assimilation into practicum settings. This socially situated approach could develop pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) appropriate for sector, arising from practicum contexts (Hanley & Thompson, 2021). The concept of subject or vocational specialist teacher was not prominent as part of most teachers' identities within this study, despite its prominence within the sector's professional standards (ETF, 2022b). This absence is considered by Ofsted (2003) and some researchers as a deficit (CAVTL, 2013; Thompson, 2014;

Hanley & Thompson, 2021) However, the majority of trajectories traced here showed a contextual, student-focussed and often vocational sensibility, which maps well to Bernstein's (2000) reconceptualisation of the subject within FE but poorly to a singular view of a subject specialism. Teachers undertaking ITE within the sector could help to develop a sector-focused sense of vocational pedagogies.

6.3 Meso level: FE and Skills sector leadership

The developmental practicum journeys evident on the *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and subject *specialist change agent* trajectories provide a model for enhancing teachers' practicum journeys. These journeys, enabled by support from sector professionals, suggest that for the pre-service teachers in this study, practicum support has developed greatly since the work of Bathmaker & Avis (2005). Experienced in-service teachers too had enriching practicum journeys. Both sets of teachers also benefitted from expansive organisational cultures (Fuller & Unwin, 2003) and attitudes towards practicum learning which valued the process of that learning. The retrospective benefits of ITE noted by Burton (2020) of professionalisation, skills development and an enhancement of self were, in this study, evident during and shortly after these teachers' practicum journeys.

Conversely, deficits perceived by in-service vocational teachers in past studies were also evident in this one, around teacher identities (Boodt, 2024) and the space to be new teachers (Orr & Simmons, 2010). Crucially, this study found lack of opportunities to engage in learning activities with other professionals due to the nature of their practicum arrangements reinforced these deficits. Although a commitment to nurturing many new teachers was evident in this study, sector employers still have work to do to enhance all teachers' practicum experiences, as well as creating cultures where new in-service and shifting status teachers are able to reconcile vocational and emerging teacher identities. Since 2012 (Lingfield, 2012), decisions around teacher qualification have rested with employers. For the new in-service teachers in this study, this created a situation where their part-time ITE study was perceived as a

probationary period, with continued employment dependent on successful ITE completion, but without contractual accommodations for the ITE workload or the facility for practicum learning with others. Structural factors which serve as barriers to pedagogical development, time and space to attend ITE programmes and to be supported in practicum learning (Olukoga, 2018), were evident in this study, although not experienced by all teachers.

The contrasting trajectories in this study strongly indicate that new in-service teachers and shifting status teachers would benefit from equal practicum experiences to teachers on expansive trajectories. Specifically, they require reduced teaching hours, protected contact with colleagues to support their practicum learning, a daytime ITE programme with remission from teaching, as well as recognition of their new teacher status. A culture shift around in-service ITE is necessary for it to be perceived as a right of all employed teachers rather than a contractual obligation. There are clear benefits for teachers and organisations of synthesising ITE with early employment experiences (Husband, 2018 and 2020). For this to occur, ITE must be integral to FE organisations, structurally and culturally.

There was a great deal of positive mentoring practice in this study, but not across all trajectories. Many pre-service and experienced teachers benefitted from developmental mentoring. These teachers' experiences met and often exceeded the mentoring guidelines developed by Hobson & Maxwell (2020) regarding ethos, the parameters of mentoring and relational support. The less positive experiences of mentoring on *contextually defined, contractually obligated* and *isolated practitioner* trajectories suggests that Hobson & Maxwell's (2020) final, and most significant recommendation of a cross-sector, whole organisation structural commitment to mentoring in the form of time, timetabling and resources has not yet been achieved. Within this study, there were accounts of rich pools of practicum learning. FE organisations should nurture these expansive learning cultures, assess how these can spread and what enables them. Promoting a culture of engagement in learning activities with others from the ground level up over develops a meaningful CPD culture within FE organisations (Goldhawk & Waller, 2023). Within an expansive model

of teacher development, where the knowledge resources within organisations are valued, a collaborative and interactive model of ITE could thrive. This could, in future, avoid teachers experiencing the isolated practitioner trajectory evident in this study.

Further education organisations have a rich resource in the teachers they support through practicum teaching, and consideration should be given to retaining these teachers. During a teacher recruitment crisis, particularly in areas such as engineering, construction and digital skills (ETF, 2022a; Flemons *et al.*, 2024), workplace culture and support in the early stages of teaching careers are two factors likely to improve new teacher retention (Flemons *et al.*, 2024). Conversely, higher workload, lower pay and a lack of support drive teachers away from the sector (Orr, 2018; ETF, 2022a; Flemons *et al.*, 2024). Enriching ITE practicum experiences of new in-service teachers improves the chances of the sector retaining them and should be addressed by FE and Skills sector leadership.

Many aspects of ITE are subject to the oversight and influence of quasi-governmental and governmental organisations: Ofsted, who inspect ITE provision, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) who developed the latest FE ITE qualification framework (DfE, 2024c), and the Department for Education, who control bursary access and, since 2024, have assumed responsibility for ITE qualifications. The trajectories within this study suggest that practicum opportunities and current models of ITE provision for the FE and Skills sector are a poor fit for the predominantly vocational nature of the sector. Available routes into ITE privilege potential teachers' academic achievement over vocational experience, which adversely affects opportunities for practicum learning. The impact of bursaries for ITE, programme funding and modes of programme delivery offering a wider range of options to graduates than non-graduates was apparent in more restricted practicum learning for non-graduates. This appears at odds with the sector's aims to improve employment skills, prepare students for future workplaces, encourage adult learning and to develop social inclusion and wellbeing through continued learning (Crawley, 2012; Nash & Jones, 2015; Orr 2018; Alison, 2023). The learning trajectories

available to non-graduate teachers were, in this study, limited: forced into in-service ITE by structural and financial factors, more agentic trajectories of practicum learning were closed down. Past research (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Maxwell, 2014; Olukoga, 2018; Husband, 2015, 2018 and 2020) suggests that some of the power to open up or close down more developmental learning trajectories lies with FE and Skills leadership. More of this power may, though, reside at policy level, the focus of the next section.

6.4 Macro: FE ITE Policy

In this study, a contrast was evident in the depth and richness of teacher practicum learning across trajectories, despite a general uniformity in the reported themes of teacher learning on all but the *isolated practitioner* route. *Joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent* trajectories illustrated personal and rewarding journeys through the practicum, through which teachers developed professional identities where their value to their teaching contexts was recognised and where their learning around teaching occurred through sustained collaboration with other professionals. Conversely, other teacher trajectories illustrated much less positive journeys. *Isolated practitioners*, who experienced becoming a teacher as an individual journey, struggled to survive as teachers or to develop a core skillset without collaborators to learn with and support them. *Contextually defined* teachers illustrated the restrictive effects of conforming with contextual norms and lack of recognition of individual teacher resources on teacher growth, whilst *contractually obligated* teachers commenced their careers with many perceived deficits, and without the support to challenge these. Practicum experiences are the most important aspect of ITE in shaping teachers' identities (Brown & Everson, 2019). This study is significant in mapping practicum trajectories and in analysing presage and process factors which result in particular trajectories.

The standards and competency model of ITE, criticised since its inception, is currently perpetuated through ITE qualifications mapped to the apprenticeship standard for learning and skills teachers (Institute for Apprenticeships and

Technical Education, 2019). Under successive governments and programme specifications (FENTO, 1999; LLUK, 2007b; Thompson, 2014; DfE, 2024c), the overarching trend within ITE FE and Skills sector ITE has been to attempt to micro-proscribe what teachers learn. This study suggests that despite this, developmental and reflective models of practicum learning have sustained and that achievement of a set of standards does not adequately capture or represent the nature of teachers' practicum learning. Across trajectories, there were clear patterns of learning topics, similar to those identified in other studies (Harkin, Clow & Hillier, 2003; Maxwell, 2009). The most significant variation across trajectories was in the synthesis of learning themes through combining learning from different sources.

The deepest practicum learning occurred when teachers had opportunities to experience others' practices, to engage in learning activities with others, to evidence creativity rather than conformity, to utilise the vocational and/or subject specific expertise they brought to the sector through resource exchange and by apply their learning from ITE programmes within their own teaching. This resulted in teachers who were reflective, enquiring and, in the case of *joint practice developers*, 'transformative' (Menter *et al.*, 2010, p. 17). These findings suggest, from a policy perspective, the most fruitful area for programme standardisation should be in ensuring the conditions for all teachers to be equally supported to engage in developmental practicum learning with others. Since September 2024 (DfE, 2024c), the practicum has assumed greater significance, with an increase in practicum hours, and a focus on new teachers spending increased time in the practicum setting to assist their understanding of the wider responsibilities of a teacher. For this positive move to be truly effective, there is an urgent need for a threefold consideration of the needs and circumstances of all teachers during the ITE practicum, how these can be best supported to promote learning with others, and the work intensity of the sector's current teachers, which can restrict them from supporting new teachers.

A diversity of FE ITE provision still exists, despite decades of policy attempts to streamline routes (Simmons & Walker, 2013; Allison, 2023), and it is argued, is

necessary to cater to the heterogeneity of those becoming the sector's new teachers (ETF, 2022a), and to encompass and value their varied backgrounds. Across this provision, this study suggests, there is a need to value new teachers equally and acknowledge their diversity. For the FE and Skills sector to continue to fulfil its vocational remit, a more supportive pathway is required for non-graduate vocational professionals to enter teaching, and for their existence and importance to the sector to be acknowledged. Currently, both this study and Boodt's (2024) recent work indicate that it is still difficult for these teachers to join the sector without feelings of inferiority. In this study, the in-service route created an extremely heavy workload for new teachers and created a deficit model of teacher professionalism through no acknowledgment of their novice status. Shifting status mid-programme from pre- to in-service put a great strain on teachers and based on this study, increased their chances of professional isolation. Current ITE qualification guidance (DfE, 2024c), particularly its references to *trainee teachers* and *placements* suggest a qualification based on a pre-service model of ITE, seemingly ignoring the delivery to in-service teachers assuming a second career from industry (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Orr, 2018; Flemons *et al*, 2024). This, unfortunately, perpetuates the lack of consideration of the situations of in-service teachers evident in much past literature as well as in this study.

It is in the interests of the sector and its future teachers to develop an ITE practicum model which serves its in-service teachers well. An apprenticeship route into teaching exists, with provision for 20% off-the-job training. However, the naming and tradition of the apprenticeship is a poor match for mature, vocational professionals, who join the sector as a second career. Additionally, although apprenticeships guarantee off-the-job training, what teachers require for practicum learning is workplace collaborators. A practicum experience for new teachers where the skills they offer the sector are valued, where they have time to develop with other professionals as part of their working lives, and are supported financially without the labelling of apprenticeship is needed. This route should encompass time away from as well as time within their usual learning spaces and input from educational professionals as well as from their

setting. A central consideration is how such a route could and should be funded to allow the skills and resources teachers have to be valued. At a policy level, there is an urgent need to firstly acknowledge the in-service route, and to open up the benefits of collaborative working experienced by pre-service teachers to all in-service teachers. It is, perhaps, still indicative of the sector's poorly understood position (Crawley, 2016; Orr, 2018), and the low position in the academic value system (Randle & Brady, 1997) that ITE policy apparently disregards some of the sector's most valuable potential teachers.

The teaching practicum is an essential component of ITE courses. It is in learning spaces, while planning, delivering and managing learning, and through interactions with others around these activities that much learning about teaching takes place. Yet in this key aspect of ITE programmes, great variation in teachers' experiences is evidenced within the six trajectories of teacher experience outlined above. The importance of the practicum setting and of learning from it is emphasised within past studies. Adopting a social practice view of practicum learning enables the examination of this aspect of ITE, avoiding the problematisation of individual teachers or those supporting them. This is part of a conceptual shift towards teacher development as a group activity and towards the FE and Skills sector taking collective responsibility for the initial teacher education of its teachers. Recognition and reward are required for those committed to this endeavour, alongside an organisational and sector-wide commitment to supporting the practical teaching development of all of its teachers.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1 Research aims

This study set out to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' learning through the practicum within Further Education and Skills ITE. Firstly, it identified how practicum learning was conceptualised and illustrated through practice artefacts by teacher educators, teaching mentors and teachers. Secondly, it mapped trajectories of teacher learning through the practicum. Thirdly, it analysed enabling and constricting factors influencing that learning. Finally, in this chapter, through an analysis of these factors, it makes recommendations to optimise practicum learning on FE and Skills ITE programmes.

To achieve the above aims, the study adopted a social constructivist epistemology underpinning an interpretivist paradigm, generating data through the sharing of meanings around participant-selected practice artefacts, in a single collective case study around the teaching practicum in one FE and Skills ITE provider. These practice artefacts, explored within online synchronous interviews, were successful in eliciting insider perspectives, creating a window on practicum worlds which, at the time of data collection, were otherwise inaccessible to the researcher. The global pandemic functioned as a critical incident, revealing taken for granted aspects of the practicum and enabling the generation of data which shed light on how the practicum is experienced.

7.2 Contribution to knowledge

This study makes an original contribution to knowledge about practicum learning on Further Education and Skills ITE programmes by acknowledging, exploring and attempting to account for the differences in teachers' practicum learning in one ITE provider. These are not evident in past studies. This was achieved through mapping six variations of practicum learning. The teacher trajectories are significant in highlighting the ways teachers learned with others, from others and alone, the influences on their learning and the depth of that learning, judged by teachers' synthesis of learning influences. A cross-trajectory analysis, achieved by applying an adapted version of Biggs' 3P model (Biggs,

1993), revealed the presage, process-relational and process-learning factors which shaped teachers' journeys. This resulting analysis considered diverse influencing factors, some evident in past studies, but importantly, considered them in combination. Thus, it refined previous findings on relationality within teachers' practicum learning, by examining how learning relationships operated. Through relationships, teachers showcased the resources they offered the practicum and combined these with contextual practices and resources. Supportive practicum relationships enabled teachers to apply the resources representing their pre-teaching identities in their practicum learning, leading to the emergence of expansive teacher identities. Without collaborative practicum opportunities, learning was restricted, and teachers' resources were evident in neither their practicum nor their teacher identities. Restricted practicum learning was common for new in-service and shifting status teachers, attributable to conditions of their employment, their ITE study and their practicum contexts. Learning in isolation led to the least developmental and most difficult practicum learning. The contrast of teacher trajectories within this study led to recommendations for optimising the practicum learning on FE and Skills ITE programmes, presented later in this chapter.

7.2.1 Situatedness

This project conceptualises learning to become a teacher as a social practice. Therefore, it is fitting, when outlining this study's knowledge contribution, to return to the features of practice which served as sensitising tools throughout the exploration: 'embodiment, material mediation, situatedness, emergence, relationality and co-construction' (Boud & Brew, 2016, p. 80). Throughout this study teachers' practicum journeys existed within larger cultures and socio-political structures: what occurred at the micro level of the practicum was affected by factors at meso and macro level, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Aspects of situatedness, namely available ITE routes, programme funding and finance all influenced practicum learning. Access to graduate, full-time ITE courses led, for the majority of teachers, to positive practicum experiences. For these pre-service teachers, practicum arrangements, on a placement basis, generally positioned teachers to work with others within the

practicum. Experienced in-service teachers, with the agency to choose to undertake ITE when their working conditions could enhance practicum learning, were also well-positioned. For new in-service and shifting status teachers, with little agency over their situations, their practicum was their workplace and their part-time evening ITE study was undertaken in addition to an already heavy workload. Available ITE routes and the agency to choose these routes impacted on the practicum situations available to teachers.

7.2.2 Emergence

This study found where teachers were able to exert agency, assimilate and adapt practices with others, 'connect the individual with the social' (Boud & Brew, 2016, p. 88), there was most evidence of emergence, changes in practice. On more expansive trajectories, practice artefacts illustrated the influences on teachers' practice and their assimilation of these influences. This was rarely evident on more restricted trajectories, where teachers had little agency, high workloads and constricted practicum situations. Previously, little was known of the differences in practicum experiences of teachers beyond the stark pre-service and in-service divide described by Avis *et al.* (2011). Here, the influencing presage factors were found to be both multiple and more nuanced. Whether ITE was self or employer-funded, teachers' financial and employment situations, their motivations for undertaking ITE and choices around ITE were presage factors which combined to influence their practicum journeys. Intrinsic motivation and agency enhanced practicum journeys, but not all teachers were in life situations which allowed them agency around ITE. Structurally, the more enhancing full-time pre-service practicum route was unavailable to non-graduate vocational teachers.

Optimal practicum learning arose from a confluence of presage factors across all involved parties. This confluence included time to engage in teaching activities with others, permeable learning systems and aligned views of student and teacher learning as collaborative activities. The structural factors discussed above meant this alignment was achieved by full-time pre-service teachers and experienced in-service teachers but less available to other teachers. Through

interactions with others around practices and practice differences, teachers navigated and reconciled different knowledge influences. These factors shaped their practical learning positively, on subtly different but broadly developmental learning trajectories. Adopting a social practice view of this learning highlighted the importance of considering all presage factors surrounding practicum journeys, moving beyond solely teacher-related factors. Individual influencing factors evident in past studies were here considered in combination, an important aspect of this study. Within three developmental trajectories, teachers moved beyond the effective teacher paradigm which predominates in FE ITE policy. The work of Menter *et al.* (2010) established that teacher professionalism is shaped through how teachers engage with practicum learning. This study adjusts that finding to propose that teacher identities are shaped by how teachers are enabled or constricted by their practicum circumstances, including their own engagement. On the *contractually obligated* and *contextually defined* trajectories, influenced by contracts and norms of teaching contexts, teachers developed identities akin to the effective teacher (Menter *et al.*, 2010). These teachers' situations prevented them from experiencing the paradigm shift through the practicum to become reflective teachers noted by Gossman and Horder (2016). For *isolated practitioners*, due to their solitary learning, even this paradigm was unavailable.

7.2.3 Relationality and co-construction

Relationality and co-construction were central to teachers experiencing enhancing practicum learning. This study established that relational work operated as both a precursor to and an integral part of engagement in learning activities with others, and shaped teaching identities. Through relational work, teachers positioned themselves as valuable within teaching settings, by making known the resources they could offer that setting. Time interacting with others allowed teachers to make sense of and synthesise the diverse aspects of their ITE learning. Conversely, where relational work and therefore collaboration were limited, teachers were unable to demonstrate what they brought to the setting, limiting their practicum learning to adopting contextual or effective teacher practices through the observation of experienced others, or developing

their own practices. Expansive trajectories suggest teacher practicum learning is optimal when it synthesises the contextual, the practical, ITE learning and teachers' own resources through a process of joint enquiry, often achieved through sharing and sharing back resources. It is only through working with others that the resources teachers offer their settings become apparent. The general importance of relational aspects in teachers' practicum learning, previously established by Husband (2018; 2020), Wright *et al.* (2018) and Brown and Everson (2019) is here sharpened, through bringing together the concepts of relationality and co-construction, to explain how practicum learning with others deepens that learning whilst allowing teachers to incorporate their own resources into their practical teaching.

7.2.4 Material mediation

Practice artefacts and vignettes around them illustrated how materials encapsulated practicum learning, across trajectories. On expansive trajectories, teachers took an idea, a resource, or an activity and developed this further. Their own input operated as a tangible means of demonstrating their developing knowledge. This process of resource exchange, or combined practice development appeared to validate teachers who could engage in it. Wright *et al.* (2018) identify validation as crucial to teacher identity creation and community membership. This study illustrates how the processes of sharing and sharing back resources and engaging in learning with others, evidenced by those on enriching trajectories, brought about validation. More restricted trajectories, bound by contexts or contracts, or individual learning did not result in this validation. All teachers across trajectories engaged in learning around the same core teacher activities, similar to those reported in previous studies (Harkin, Clow & Hillier 2003; Maxwell, 2009). What proved crucial to the identities teachers developed was *how* they engaged in this learning; whether they were able to learn with others and utilise their existing resources within the practicum.

The optimal practicum learning in this study differed from that in past studies, in that it successfully synthesised diverse knowledge aspects. The richest learning

expressed around artefacts and through practice vignettes occurred through collaboration; it synthesised practice aspects across the curriculum, student needs, assessment for learning, learning resources, prior knowledge, class management and learning through interaction. Working with other professionals enabled this synthesis. The knowledge synthesis evident here differs from that in Maxwell's (2010) earlier work, which noted that differing clusters of knowledge, vocational, general teaching and learning and students were developed through different means: individually, through ITE activities and with students. The results of this study suggest that extended interactions within the practicum enabled the synthesis of diverse knowledge types. Interaction and discussion around the cognitively complex activities of planning and delivering lessons made decision making processes explicit. In contrast, teachers with fewer opportunities to learn with others, did not synthesise multiple knowledge elements. Their practice artefacts illustrated singular elements of teacher knowledge, or compliance with contextual norms. Across almost all trajectories, a careful consideration of the context for learning, the needs, profiles and prior learning of the students, together with their vocational goals, was apparent, although not always considered in combination.

7.2.5 Embodiment

The expansive teacher identities of *joint practice developer*, *collaborative new professional* and *subject specialist change agent* embodied teachers' values and beliefs as well as valuing their pre-ITE identities. Teachers who were positioned to synthesise different type of knowledge began their post-ITE careers with reflective and developmental identities, orientated to work with others. Teachers who were not able, through practicum learning, to develop identities which encompassed their pre-teaching identities, values and beliefs experienced a more disempowering model of teacher development which may shape their future careers. This echoes the conclusions of Brown & Everson (2019) that a sense of belonging is crucial to developing a secure teacher identity, a point starkly highlighted by the *isolated practitioner* trajectory. Furthermore, this study pinpoints synthesis of different knowledge types within the practicum through interactions with others, in ways which encompassed

resources related to teachers' pre-teaching identities, appeared to be key to developing an enriching teacher identity which encompassed pre-teaching academic and vocational identities.

7.2.6 Summary

In summary, this study contributes to the existing knowledge base around learning from the practicum in FE and Skills ITE through accounts of rich practical learning which occurred within the practicum setting with others. Descriptions of knowledge development around practice artefacts suggest that learning was optimal when it occurred with other professionals through joint or shared enquiry, when it was holistic rather than atomistic, when there was a strong emphasis on the learning context, combined with teachers' own knowledge resources and theoretical learning from ITE programmes. This learning was available to teachers with the agency to position themselves to learn relationally and collaboratively; practice artefacts acted as a window on this learning, allowing teachers to carry aspects of their pre-teaching identity into their teacher identity. Conversely, non-graduate in-service vocational teachers were much less able to bring their pre-teaching identities into the practicum, let alone to reconcile these identities with teacher identities. Within a single ITE provider, various models of teacher learning through the practicum were evident: those which were deeply collaborative, where learning was reciprocal, and acknowledged what new teachers brought to the setting benefitted the teacher, the mentor and the larger practicum setting. Those which did not offered the teacher and other parties far fewer benefits.

The accounts of learning in this study are influenced by researchers who preceded me. This study illustrates the social view of practicum learning theorised by Lucas (2007) in practice. Its account of the influencing factors on learning builds on Maxwell's (2014) conclusions that support for teachers and positive workplace conditions are necessary to optimise practicum learning to explore and contrast a wide range of influencing preage and process factors. Optimal portrayals of practicum learning are personalised and contextualised, also prominent aspects of Goldhawk and Waller's (2023) findings on in-service

FE teachers' perceptions of successful professional development, suggesting parallels between optimal teacher learning during and beyond ITE. This study suggests that becoming part of a learning community through sustained professional interactions correlates strongly to satisfying routes through ITE, and results in teaching identities orientated to work with others. This indicates that the benefits of developmental mentoring identified by Hobson and Maxwell (2020) may extend beyond ITE. Relationally, mentor support can be a gateway to assimilation into teaching contexts. In this study, mentors' contextual knowledge proved invaluable to teaching development, more important than the subject specialist knowledge noted by Thompson (2014) and Hobson and Maxwell (2020).

The rich, interactive model of learning evident on enhancing trajectories was not available to all teachers, and proved difficult for new in-service non-graduate teachers or shifting status teachers to achieve, echoing past studies (Maxwell, 2010; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Maxwell, 2014; Olukoga, 2018). Where teachers were learning in relative isolation, with limited opportunities to engage in learning activities with others, this resulted in a deficit model of teacher development which adversely affected emerging professional identities, where teachers survived, but without a strong sense of their own professional worth. The more isolated teachers were in the practicum, the more acute this pattern was. This finding, related to restrictive trajectories, resonates with and expands the conclusions of Bathmaker and Avis (2005), Orr and Simmons (2010) and Olukoga (2018) around the negative impact of restrictive workplaces on teacher learning. The design of this study and the existence of expansive learning trajectories enables a comparison with more positive trajectories, indicating what could improve these teachers' learning. This study found that learning with others helped teachers join a learning community and a profession; learning from others was less effective in this regard and learning in isolation not effective. Working with other educational professionals helped teachers become aware of what they offered the practicum setting and enabled them to apply their knowledge resources within the setting. It also enabled them to influence others' learning and practice through sharing their resources and

collaboration. These processes of learning made teachers feel valued and created a sense of belonging within their practicum setting. Additionally, it was through working with others that teachers made sense of the diverse inputs around them on ITE: their own past learning experiences, their ITE programme content, their ground level practicum experiences, awarding body information as well as reading and research. Learning with others provided greater opportunities for sense making than learning from others, but learning from others resulted in a more supported ITE experience than learning in isolation. Teachers who learn with others are more able to carry their past vocational professional identities into their teaching settings than those who learn in a more isolated way or from others.

7.3 Recommendations and implications

This thesis has foregrounded stories of teacher trajectories through the teaching practicum on FE and Skills teacher education programmes, highlighted the trajectories which resulted in developmental and collaborative practicum learning, and analysed the factors which enabled and restricted this learning. These findings have implications for all stakeholders, which are discussed below, through macro, meso and micro levels. At all levels, there is a need for a greater understanding of how the processes of practicum learning occur.

7.3.1 Macro level

This study restates the need for a model of FE and Skills ITE which moves away from the individual achievement of standards and competencies, towards the view of becoming a teacher as a social practice presented in this as well as earlier research. Such a change, reflecting at policy level how practicum learning operates, is a long-term goal. Within existing provision, there is a pressing need to address unequal ITE programme routes for graduates and non-graduates, both to enhance equity as well as secure the sector's future workforce. In this study, graduate teachers on full-time ITE routes have the greatest likelihood of a positive practicum journey, time to integrate into settings

as well as work and learn with others. The development of a full-time, non-graduate ITE route, with intense, supported practicum elements funded as, but not labelled as, an apprenticeship could enhance the attractiveness of FE ITE for vocational professional, and enable them to learn collaboratively within the practicum. To fund this, the apprentice levy could be utilised, as could a parallel expansion of FE ITE bursaries to encompass a wider range of subjects, particularly those where teacher recruitment is problematic. Through such a route, teachers' vocational resources could be valued by the sector.

All teachers undertaking ITE have a right to a supported and positive practicum experience, of the type illustrated in this study on expansive learning trajectories. Since September 2024, the teaching practicum has had an enhanced role in FE ITE programmes, recognising its centrality to teacher learning. Despite this, guidance around the practicum, particularly descriptions of trainee teachers and placements within it, does not represent the majority of those undertaking ITE in the sector, in-service teachers. There is an urgent need for their situation, and the range of entry routes to FE and Skills ITE to be represented linguistically and acknowledged at policy level, within practicum and ITE programme guidance. Further, standardisation of FE ITE programmes should be around enabling supportive practicum experiences and opportunities to work and engage with others in the practicum. On the evidence of this study, these are much more limited for non-graduate, in-service vocational teachers than for graduate pre-service teachers. Such support and a change to the in-service practicum model requires investment. The scaling up and broadening of the Taking Teaching Further (EFT, 2023) initiative which currently offers some limited support to institutions for in-service teachers' initial teacher education could enable remission, support and enhance sector recruitment. The existence of this initiative is a positive step in recognising the in-service ITE route but scaling it up could reward institutions which commit to enhancing the sector's workforce. More positive practicum learning within ITE may increase the longevity of new teachers' service by engendering positive attitudes to their roles (Husband, 2018).

7.3.2 Meso level

The positive trajectories in this study indicate that in the sector, there are expansive learning cultures, positive practicum environments, support for new teachers' practicum learning, and evidence of rich mentoring relationships. These are, however, not uniformly available, particularly for in-service and status shifting teachers. Within positive trajectories, there is some synthesis of ITE and organisational structures and cultures. The benefits of synthesising ITE with early employment experiences are evident on the positive trajectories described here as well as in past studies (Husband, 2018 and 2020) and should be adopted across the sector. Past research indicates the impact of performative and unsupportive sector cultures on teachers' ITE experiences (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Orr & Simmons, 2010; Olukoga, 2018). This study, in addition to other recent work (Husband, 2015; 2018;2020), suggests it is within the power of FE and Skills sector organisational leadership to open up developmental practicum learning trajectories, but that this will involve structural shifts. This study recommends new teachers have daytime ITE with remission from teaching, reduced teaching hours, systematic and protected contact with colleagues and mentors, acknowledgement of novice teacher status, and celebration of ITE achievement to provide them with the same opportunities others in the study benefitted from. Alongside this, a full institutional commitment to protected and timetabled mentoring time would support all new teachers (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). Similarly, pre-service teachers would benefit from greater consideration of how they can become part of a teaching community through learning activities around the broader teacher role. They could also be encouraged into the workforce by closer liaison between employers and ITE providers.

7.3.3 Micro level

Teacher education programmes can be enhanced by promoting exemplars of practicum learning as a social practice to teachers undertaking ITE, and to their practicum settings, to optimise this learning. Preparation for the practicum, moving beyond working with a single mentor, is necessary to prepare teachers for the relational work of learning with other professionals. Tasks to assist in assimilation into practicum settings, noting and noticing informal interactions,

can be embedded into practicum formative assessment. The learning work of the practicum, adopting and adapting contextual resources, can form a portfolio of artefacts which illustrates practicum engagement and contributes to programme summative assessment. Alongside this, teachers should engage in identity work around the resources they bring to ITE, and how these may be applied within practicum settings. To assist with assimilation into practicum settings, a more formal consideration of the practices which constitute pedagogies in those settings may also be beneficial. This mapping of vocational pedagogies could contribute to the development of this area within the larger sector, as well as equip teachers to navigate their practicum. Paying close attention to commonly used resources, the planning, management and assessment of learning within teaching settings, and whether this matches their ITE learning may promote reflection on practice influences upon their emerging identities. Additionally, such work may help to strengthen connections between the ITE programme and the practicum setting, promoting discussions about how teachers learn.

All positive teacher trajectories outlined above involve a tripartite relationship between teacher educators, mentors and teachers working dialogically towards new teachers' development. Such relationships are enhanced by clear mentor training, contact between all parties and the sharing of programme information. Where links between practicum settings and ITE programmes were strongest, teachers benefitted the most, as this created open learning systems and a permeable learning culture around teacher learning. The recommendations above regarding teacher identify work and deepening awareness of vocational pedagogies should also serve to sensitise teacher educators to contextual practices, enabling ever closer working. Protected time for mentors and mentoring will also enhance this. There are many signs in this study of a move away from 'support and judge' mentoring (Tedder & Lawy, 2009) towards more collaborative work. The 2024 ITE programme changes foregrounding the practicum within ITE create an opportunity for an enhanced role for mentors in developing teachers' practical learning, but also a return to suggestions that they should summatively assess teachers' practicum learning. This must be

carefully managed to prevent a return to more judgemental mentoring, particularly for in-service teachers. Mentors are to be valued as contextual specialists but equally should not bear the weight of individual teachers' development. Instead, this should be spread across practicum settings, to enable new teachers to build learning networks.

Lastly, ITE programmes and teacher educators must continue to advocate for individual teachers, to replicate elements of positive practicum trajectories in this study across all ITE provision. This is particularly important for in-service vocational teachers, who require accessible routes which enable practicum learning with others, ITE attendance within daytime working hours to avoid the deficit model of teacher development which some teachers experience. Additionally, we must work with teachers on identity work to assist them in showcasing what they offer the sector. Equally, teachers can work in partnership with teacher educators not only to map but to celebrate the vocational pedagogies they develop.

7.4 Limitations

Whilst this study offers a range of meaningful conclusions, and in so doing, adds to the small but growing research base around the FE and Skills ITE practicum, it also has several limitations, outlined here. The first limitation relates to sampling, cases studies, and the diversity of the sample. In the study, 17 research interviews were completed, despite recruitment challenges. The project aimed to reflect the triadic nature of relationships around the teaching practicum, recruiting trios of participants, by first identifying student teacher participants, then approaching their teaching mentors and teacher educators to also participate in the project. Overall, I desired a sample size of six triads. This aim proved impossible to execute in practice. I anticipated proportionally more student teacher participant responses, as this was the largest recruiting pool. This recruitment strategy, due the cascading nature of consent, proved impossible to enact in practice. Therefore, a convenience sample became necessary. I did not anticipate how difficult the circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic would make recruitment of student teacher participants.

Interviews did not form the hoped for triads, however all student teacher accounts are complemented by either a mentor or teacher educator account. One teacher educator was interviewed twice, about the journeys of two student teachers, one full-time and one part-time. Other teacher educator or mentor accounts provide the stories of less represented groups in the first round of data generation: those on subject specialist ITE programmes, and teachers whose employment statuses shifted during their ITE programmes. Across the interviews, I aimed to represent the diversity of teachers undertaking FE and Skills ITE. Full-time and part-time ITE routes are represented, as are pre- and in-service teachers as well as teachers whose statuses changed. Retrospective cross-checking of student teacher backgrounds with the ETF's (2022a) categorisation of the pool of prospective FE and Skills sector teachers indicates that all seven categories are represented in this data: recent graduates, early career professionals, mid-late career changers, portfolio career professionals, engaged industry professionals with FE connections, teacher transition candidates and specialist support practitioners. It should be acknowledged that those willing to participate may be seen as constituting Yin's (1993, p.12) 'exemplary cases', or 'strong positive examples' and therefore not representative of the wider student teacher population. However, the accounts given by participants of teacher practicum development varied, constitute rich data and are, it is hoped valuable in their contribution to FE ITE's research base.

I have reflected deeply on whether difficulties in recruitment of student teacher participants could have been anticipated and have concluded that it could not. My assessment was based on willingness of this participant group to participate in previous doctoral projects, for example Dunn (2019), and interest expressed in the previous iteration of this project, as well as responses to pilot interview requests in this iteration of the study during June and July 2020, which were numerous. With the benefit of retrospection, in previous studies, a key factor in successful recruitment had been speaking personally to cohorts of student teachers about projects and their intentions, which generated high levels of interest. This approach was impossible due to circumstances around this study.

Student teacher participants were approached via organisational email addresses, using their teacher educators as gatekeepers. Additionally, the period of data generation, between September 2020 and February 2021, was a very challenging one for those working in education, with first, the return to face-to-face and/or hybrid delivery in September 2020, then subsequent shifts in social distancing requirements, culminating in a second lockdown between January and March 2021. In comparison the period of pilot interviews in June and July 2020 was much more stable. These factors may well account for recruitment difficulties and for a number of student teachers who initially agreed to participate but withdrew ahead of data generation.

Lastly, the period of data generation was, unfortunately, interrupted between November 2020 and January 2021, as I had a leave of absence from work, due to bereavement and the personal impact of the Covid pandemic. A number of potential and actual participants also experienced similar absences, necessitating the rescheduling and/or cancellation of several research interviews. This meant that the data were generated over a longer period than was originally planned. Also, as outlined above, the unprecedented nature of this period means that it is difficult to judge its effects on the interview data. Given the extraordinary nature of these times, I do not think these difficulties around recruitment were fully anticipatable in advance.

This study, like other valuable work on the FE ITE practicum (Maxwell, 2010; Lahiff, 2015; 2017; Wright, 2017), is small scale, an organisational case study. Whilst this offers clear benefits in terms of granularity of data and knowledge of the setting, its findings are not more broadly generalisable. However, it does, in capturing multiple perspectives, offer a form of triangulation (Smith *et al.*, 2009) and may contribute to generalisability through its theoretical inferences developed through comparative analysis (Hammersley, 2012). The study's generation of explanatory theory on the processes of practicum learning (Meyer, 2001) aims to address perceived limitations of a case study approach. Further funded studies around the teaching practicum across a range of providers could enhance and refine these conclusions.

7.5 Closing comments

This study set out with the personal rationale of exploring teachers' practicum experiences to gain insight into the variation I had observed in teachers' journeys, and to enhance the practicum experiences of future sector teachers. It is hoped, through dissemination, that it achieves that goal. Within my own setting, at a micro and meso-level, the study has been a contributing factor in a number of positive changes to enhance teacher learning. Organisationally, many in-service teachers now benefit from remitted daytime ITE, some protection of mentor time and more acknowledgment of their new teacher status. Across ITE pathways, increased attention is paid to early assimilation into practicum settings, with accompanying noticing tasks to draw attention to practices. New programme summative assessments foreground the practicum: artefacts and resources play a central role in modules exploring vocational pedagogies and theories of learning. Conversational assessments have been implemented to bring the practicum to life and allow for extended discussion and exemplification of practices and resources. Lastly, tripartite relationships around the practicum become stronger each academic year. The success of these changes within my setting encourages me to disseminate this work.

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Appendix One: Ethical Approval

Educational
Research

Lancaster
University



2nd June 2020

Dear Shona

Thank you for submitting your ethics application and additional information for **Practice interrupted: becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education in uncertain times**. The information you provided has been reviewed and I can confirm that approval has been granted for this project.

As Principal Investigator your responsibilities include:

- x ensuring that (where applicable) all the necessary legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and the necessary licenses and approvals have been obtained;

- x reporting any ethics-related issues that occur during the course of the research or arising from the research (e.g. unforeseen ethical issues, complaints about the conduct of the research, adverse reactions such as extreme distress) to the Research Ethics Officer (Dr Murat Oztok).

- x submitting details of proposed substantive amendments to the protocol to **Prof Paul Ashwin** for approval.

Please do not hesitate to contact your supervisor if you require further information about this.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Doherty

Programme Co-ordinator

PhD in Higher Education: Research, Evaluation and Enhancement

Appendix Two: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Participant information sheet: student teachers

Practice interrupted: becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education in uncertain times.

For further information about how Lancaster University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our webpage:

www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/data-protection

Dear ,

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project conducted as part of my PhD studies with the Higher Education Research and Evaluation Centre in the Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University. The study explores the impact of interruptions to face-to-face teaching on student teachers' knowledge development and the practices which emerge in response to this.

Before you decide if you wish to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the study about?

This study aims to explore how interruptions to face-to-face teaching impact on student teachers' knowledge development and the process of becoming a teacher, using both naturally occurring data and interviews. I hope the project will shed light on this aspect of student teachers' workplace learning.

Why have I been invited?

I have approached you because as a student teacher, a key part of your programme is experiential learning from teaching practice. I am interested in this learning and talking to you about your perceptions of it and how it contributes to your development as a teacher. I am especially interested in ways this learning has continued during the lockdown situation. Your views and experiences are of great importance for the project. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decide to participate, I will ask you to take part in two telephone or video interviews, each lasting around 30 minutes, arranged at a time, which is convenient for you. These will take place during and shortly after your teacher education programme, and in them we will discuss the development of your teaching practice, and the process of becoming a teacher. To assist with this, I will ask you to share with me some artefacts related to your teaching practice. These may be resources you have developed related to your teaching.

I will also ask you to share your written feedback from teaching observations with me. In addition, you can choose to share with me your written or audio/ video recorded reflections on how your teaching develops through your teacher education programme.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

Taking part in this study will give you the opportunity to reflect on the development of your teaching practice in detail. Talking about this could help your general development as a teacher and a reflective practitioner. The project will also shed light on the process of becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education.

Do I have to take part?

No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide not to take part in this study, this will not affect your studies or the way you are assessed on your teacher education course.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time during your participation in this study. If you want to withdraw, please let me know, and I will extract any ideas or information (data) you contributed to the study and destroy them. However, it is difficult and often impossible to take out data from one specific participant when this has already been anonymised or pooled together with other people's data. The pooling and analysis of data will happen in two phases in this project. Therefore, I will seek your consent for each phase of the study and you can only withdraw up to two weeks after being interviewed in each phase of the study.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no risks or disadvantages to the best of my knowledge. Taking part will involve a time investment of two 30-minute interviews but I will try to organise these to fit in with your schedule.

Will my data be identifiable?

Only my supervisor and me will have access to the ideas you share us. Interview data will be transcribed by an online transcription service and checked/ amended by me. I will keep all personal information about you (e.g. your name and other

information about you that can identify you) confidential. I will remove any personal information from the written record of your contribution. All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the identity of the participants involved in this project.

How will you use the information I have shared with you and what will happen to the results of the research study?

I will use the information you have shared with me for research purposes only. These will include my PhD thesis and other publications, for example journal articles. I may also present the results of my study at academic and/ or practitioner conferences.

When writing up the findings from this study, I would like to reproduce some of the views and ideas you shared with me. I will only use anonymised quotes, so that although I will use your exact words, all reasonable steps will be taken to protect your anonymity in any publications.

How will my data be stored?

Your data will be stored in encrypted files that no one other than me, the researcher will be able to access, and on password-protected computers. I will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in my office. I will keep data that can identify you separately from non-personal information. In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years.

What if I have a question or concern?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact my supervisor or me:

Research Student: Shona Dunn

Full Address:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

████████████████████
████████████████████

Emails: s.dunn1@lancaster.co.uk

Supervisor: Professor Paul Ashwin

Educational Research Department, County South, Lancaster University, LA1
4YD, UK

Tel: + +44 1524 594443

Email: paul.ashwin@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact:

Director of HEREE Doctoral Research Programme: Professor Paul Trowler

Educational Research Department, County South, Lancaster University, LA1
4YD, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1524 592879

Email: p.trowler@lancaster.ac.uk

<p>This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School's Research Ethics Committee.</p>
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Thank you for considering your participation in this project

Consent Form

Project Title: Practice interrupted: becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education in uncertain times.

Name of Researcher: Shona Dunn

Email: s.dunn1@lancaster.co.uk

Please tick each box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during my participation in this study and within 2 weeks after I am interviewed for the study, without giving any reason. If I withdraw within 2 weeks of taking part in the study, my data will be removed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I agree to the use of written teaching practice feedback and reflections generated as part of initial teacher education for research purposes. Any video material submitted for use as part of the project will be transcribed and the original recording will be deleted to preserve anonymity.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I understand that any interviews will take place by telephone or using Microsoft Teams and will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Data will be protected on encrypted devices and kept secure. I will have the right to check transcriptions of audio material generated as part of this project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications or presentations by the researcher, but my personal information will not be included and all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I understand that my name/my organisation's name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentation without my consent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I understand that data will be kept according to University guidelines for a minimum of 10 years after the end of the study.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I agree to take part in the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent _____ **Date**
_____ Day/month/year

One copy of this form will be given to the participant and the original kept in the files of the researcher at Lancaster University

Appendix Three: Sample recruitment email

Dear Student Teacher,

I hope this message finds you well and that you and your loved ones are coping well with the unprecedented challenge of Covid-19. Please excuse me for writing to you with this request in the current circumstances. I was hesitant to do so but decided to contact you so that we can stay fully committed to offering the best initial teacher education experiences.

I am emailing to invite you to take part in a research project conducted as part of my PhD studies. The study explores the impact of interruptions to classroom-based teaching on student teachers' practical knowledge development. I have approached you because as a student teacher, your perceptions of your development as a teacher and your experiences are of great importance for the project.

Each participant will take part in two remote interviews, by telephone or on Microsoft Teams, lasting around 30 minutes each. These will be several months apart, and the first one will be in September or October 2020, at your convenience. We will talk about your teaching practice and your experiences of becoming a teacher. I will also ask you to talk about some artefacts from your teaching such as resources you have developed and to share with me some written feedback from your teaching observations. In addition, you can choose to share with me reflections on how your teaching has developed through your teacher education programme.

Taking part in the project will give you a chance to reflect on the development of your teaching practice in detail. This could help your general development as a teacher and a reflective practitioner.

I have attached a participant information sheet and consent form, which tell you more about the project. If you would like to discuss the project with me before agreeing to take part, just let me know and we will arrange a time to talk. My

email is [REDACTED]

If you would like to take part, please email me and let me know. Then I will also approach your mentor and course tutor about taking part in the study.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Best regards

Shona Dunn

Appendix Four: Interview schedule (teachers)

Interview schedule: teachers

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself: your background, subject specialism, and how you got into teaching?
2. Tell me about your experiences on your teacher education course.
3. Can you describe your teaching placement: the subject, the setting, the students, your mentor and your experiences?
4. Think back to an early lesson you taught on your placement and talk me through planning and delivering it, and your learning from it.
5. Now think about the lesson linked to artefact 1. Tell me a bit about why you selected it, about the lesson it is from and about you as a teacher.
6. Now can you do the same for artefact 2. Tell me a bit about the lesson it is from, and what it shows about you as a teacher.
7. From your descriptions of teaching practice, what do you think has helped you to develop as a teacher?
8. Since the Covid-19 lockdown, how have you continued to develop your practical teaching? What has helped with this?
9. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your practical teaching experience and working with your mentor/ others to develop your practice?
10. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Thank you for your time and comments.

Interview schedule (Interviewer version)

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself: your background, subject specialism, and how you got into teaching?

Prompt/ probe

Had you done any teaching before?

What did you do before?

What were your motivations for joining the course? Have these changed through the course?

2. Tell me about your experiences on your teacher education course.

Prompt/ probe

How do you feel about the course?

What are the rewards and challenges?

Have there been any surprises?

How have you found the course post-lockdown?

Did lockdown change the way you engaged with the course?

3. Can you describe your teaching placement: the subject, the setting, the students, your mentor and your experiences?

Prompt/ probe

How have you worked with your mentor? Have you observed each other/ team teach/ share resources, for example?

How much teaching did you do? How did you find the teaching?

What have the rewards and challenges been?

Have you stayed in contact with your placement post-lockdown? Why/ why not?

4. Think back to an early lesson you taught on your placement and talk me through planning and delivering it, and your learning from it.

Prompt/ probe

How did you decide what to teach? What stands out for you about the planning?

What stands out for you about the lesson?

How did you work with others, for example your mentor/ tutor/ peers on that lesson?

5. Now think about the lesson linked to artefact 1. Tell me a bit about why you selected it, about the lesson it is from and about you as a teacher.

Prompt/ probe

Why did you pick the artefact? What does it say about you as a teacher?

Tell me a bit about the lesson it is from.

What does it not say about you as a teacher?

Have you shared the artefact with others?

-
6. Now can you do the same for artefact 2. Tell me a bit about the lesson it is from, and what it shows about you as a teacher.

Prompt/ probe

Why did you pick the artefact? What does it say about you as a teacher?

Tell me a bit about the lesson it is from.

What does it not say about you as a teacher?

Have you shared the artefact with others?

How does it link to artefact 1?

7. From your descriptions of teaching practice, how have you developed as a teacher? What has helped you?

Prompt/probe:

What role have others played in your development?

How have feedback and reflection contributed to your development?

How confident do you feel now about taking on a full teaching role?

You might want to draw on something you said earlier or give some extra examples.

8. Since the Covid-19 lockdown, how have you continued to develop your practical teaching? What has helped with this?

Prompt/probe:

What role have others played in your development?

How have feedback and reflection contributed to your development?

How have your studies since lockdown contributed to your development?

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your practical teaching experience and working with your mentor/ others to develop your practice? Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Appendix Five: Table of participants and artefacts

Interview number	Participant	Teacher Details	Artefacts
1	Teacher	In-service Part-time	Artefacts created by teacher, used by students F2F. Artefact 1: Creative resource from F2F lesson (card and paper instruction sheet, statement review) Artefact 2: Communication resource from F2F lesson. (word search and sentence making)
2	Teacher	In-service Part-time	Artefacts created by teacher, used by students F2F, collaboratively and individually. Showcasing thorough planning practices, combining diverse influences. Artefact 1: Travel scenario task from F2F lesson Artefact 2: A day in the life Bingo activity from F2F lesson
3	Teacher	Pre-service Full-time	Artefacts created by teacher for use in F2F classes. Show teacher's own vocational experience, working with mentor and teacher educator. Analysis of theoretical underpinning to artefacts.

			<p>Artefact 1: safeguarding jigsaw case study.</p> <p>Artefact 2: acceptable practice discussion and answer key.</p>
4	Teacher	Pre-service Full-time	<p>Artefacts created by teacher for use in F2F classes. Application of resources, ideas and practices from tutor, mentor and past experience.</p> <p>Artefact 1: visual task instructions for puppet making.</p> <p>Artefact 2: student vocabulary recall activity.</p>
5	Teacher Educator	In-service Part-time	<p>Teacher educator created resources for developing teachers academically and theoretically.</p> <p>Artefact 1: Padlet of research resources for asynchronous use.</p> <p>Artefact 2: Moodle site for online module-can be accessed synchronously and asynchronously.</p>
6	Teacher Educator	In-service Full-time	<p>Teacher produced artefacts which reflect close collaborative working with ITE tutor and mentor on a project.</p> <p>Artefact 1: project report on sustainability- collaboration with mentor and tutor.</p>

			Artefact 2: starter activities face to face lessons.
7	Teacher Educator	In-service Full-time	<p>Artefacts created by teacher educator and student teacher, F2F and online, linking ITE input with placement setting and promoting close collaborative working with ITE tutor and mentor.</p> <p>Artefact 1: student profile template.</p> <p>Artefact 2: Moodle discussion forum from asynchronous lesson</p> <p>Artefact 3: observation report from face to face lesson</p>
8.	Mentor	In-service Part-time	<p>Artefacts created by teacher, F2F and online, adopting practices and resources shared by mentor.</p> <p>Artefact 1: planning documents- skills audit for module.</p> <p>Artefact 2: adapted assessment from online and distance learning</p>
9.	Mentor	In-service Full-time	Artefacts created by teacher for F2F use, applying activity types from mentor. Application of ideas and practices from mentor and past experience

			<p>Artefact 1: Advent calendar PowerPoint for lesson.</p> <p>Artefact 2: 321 starter activity.</p>
10.	Teacher	<p>Shifting status</p> <p>Part-time</p>	<p>Artefacts created by teacher educator and teacher F2F and online. Illustrate own practices and difficulties understanding others' practices.</p> <p>Artefact 1: feedback notes from an early teaching observation</p> <p>Artefact 2: a tutor-created assessment plan and a Padlet.</p>
11.	Teacher Educator	<p>In-service</p> <p>Part-time</p>	<p>Artefacts created by teacher educator and teacher, F2F and online. Linking ITE input with practicum setting and promoting close collaborative working with mentor and tutor to develop reflective skills.</p> <p>Artefact 1: feedback notes and a reflective model video.</p> <p>Artefact 2: planning documents and digital demonstration.</p>
12	Teacher Educator	<p>Shifting status</p> <p>Part-time</p>	<p>Artefacts created by teacher educator to support the teacher.</p> <p>Artefacts 1 and 2: a series of reflective tasks and</p>

			discussions from Moodle VLE site.
13.	Mentor	In-service Part-time	<p>Artefacts created by student teacher for F2F use with students. Close collaborative working with mentor and specialist approaches to planning and pedagogies.</p> <p>Artefact 1: conceptual tool: Slido voting poll to select lesson content.</p> <p>Artefact 2: using Turning Point voting system as an initial assessment.</p>
14.	Teacher Educator	Pre-service Part-time	<p>Artefacts created by teacher educator and teacher, illustrating close collaborative working on specialist approaches to planning and pedagogies.</p> <p>Artefact 1 and 2: Scheme of learning, lesson plan, accreditation mapping, Venn diagram- all connected to designing learning.</p>
15.	Mentor	Pre-service Part-time	<p>Artefacts are books and specific programme specific resources shared with teacher to assist planning.</p> <p>Artefact 1: A book on basic literacy teaching.</p>

			Artefact 2: A book on Teaching Grammar with practice exemplars.
16.	Mentor	Shifting status Part-time	Artefacts created by student teacher for F2F use with students. Absence of close collaborative working with mentor. Artefact 1: Pdf resource booklet describing people and objects. Artefact 2: Pdf resource booklet ordering food in a café.
17.	Mentor	Pre-Service Full-time	Artefacts created by student teacher for F2F use with students. Teacher not adapting planning to adopt the practices common the context. Artefact 1: PowerPoint and lesson activities. Artefact 2: Lesson activities in a pdf booklet.

Appendix Six: Data analysis: casual observations extract

Interview 2 Transcript	Casual observations
<p>Yeah, of course. Well, my subject is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I had been toying with the idea of going into education for a little while, but I've come straight from industry, I have kind of a good 10, 12 years of experience working in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] industry. Initially, I worked in [REDACTED] [REDACTED].</p> <p>That was my most recent employer. And then I just kind of decided that I was sick of working for a big organization when it was all about making money and not really thinking about the bigger picture. My sister's a teacher and she'd been saying to me for a while, why don't you get into teaching? So that's when I kind of made the initial, you know, tentative kind of inquiries into doing the PGCE. And then everything happened quite quickly. And then I found myself on a course which obviously was quite a culture shock, having gone from working back to education. And I was quite nervous initially because I have... I had actually no teaching practice whatsoever, but obviously felt very confident in kind of a training capacity, having done quite a lot of that in my management background. But I kind of I found it a little bit hectic initially, trying to get my placement secured. I had initially had a placement sorted out at a university which sadly fell through, but the college were really good and kind of stepped in quite quickly. And then I'll be</p>	<p>Backstory: vocational (coming from industry)</p> <p>Motivation- not just about making money- making a difference</p> <p>Came from industry- 10 plus years' experience- "it was quite a culture shock", a little bit hectic.</p> <p>Motivation- not just about making money. Confident about training but not teaching</p>

<p>honest, I'm quite what's the word, academic, I don't like to kind of jump in and kind of engage straightaway. I am quite reflective and I was quite nervous about getting into teaching immediately. I kind of envisaged doing lots of study and then starting to teach. And then obviously my tutor said, no, no, we expect you to get in the classroom quite quickly so that I found quite scary initially. But once I was thrown in the deep end, I realized that actually it's quite easy. I think I find kind of writing the lessons and kind of planning my assessment. I find all that side quite easy. I am quite academic by nature. And if anything, I think the first few weeks kind of managing student behaviours I found the hardest. And also coming from... I think you teach often in the fashion that you were taught yourself. And I came from a very traditional academic background, very pressurised. So I was quite shocked at how some of the students weren't really engaging or kind of, you know, were using kind of negative language in the class. I mean, I'll be honest, I had my eyes open probably for the first few weeks.</p>	<p>Backstory: part of past job role</p> <p>Experiencing ITE: nervous to jump in</p> <p>Idealised expectations/pre-conceptions- a strong sense of feelings and emotions</p> <p>Didn't want to jump in, wanted to reflect. Wanted to study first, not get in the classroom quickly.- thrown in the deep end</p> <p>Teaching behaviour: thorough planning</p> <p>actually it is quite easy"- planning and resources.</p> <p>Teacher behaviours: managing student behaviours</p> <p>Managing behaviour was the hardest-traditional academic background-shocked that Ss weren't engaging, but could adapt fairly quickly I kind of found my footing by kind of halfway through the course</p> <p>Learning environment: a culture shock</p>
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Appendix Seven: Data analysis: narrative account example

This student teacher has a vocational backstory. They came onto the course from at least 10 years' experience in industry. As part of their role they were confident in staff training but came with no teaching experience. Working in an educational setting was a culture shock initially and they didn't want to jump into teaching or be thrown in at the deep end, although when they were, they found planning and teaching quite easy. The biggest culture shock was lack of student motivation and the need for classroom management. This student teacher was strongly motivated by wanting to give something back and make a difference to students. They want to promote aspirational goals and create leaders of the future by transmitting vocational expertise, showing leadership qualities and enthusiasm. They want to do this by transforming the curriculum and increasing its vocational relevance. Their relationship with their mentor was strong and supportive but also allowed for autonomy. The mentor took them under her wing. Resources were shared, although the student teacher preferred to develop classroom activities herself. Early teaching experiences of jumping in the deep end were confidence building. Initially teaching was quite didactic but quickly became more interactive. More experienced peers on the ITE programme could be intimidating at first. One of the trickiest elements of the course was navigating relationships with teachers in the placement setting and dealing with both expectations and office politics. This teacher was conscious of not assuming a full teacher role, for example not being responsible for tracking students' progress and assessments. Time and staffing issues on the placement exacerbated this. During lockdown, the student teacher remained in contact with the staff but did not continue with the placement. This was due to juggling familial and ITE responsibilities. At this point the course became very much theoretical. There is a sense of development goals going with this student teacher into the first job role. There is a strong sense of experiencing ITE as a personal journey and that each student teacher's journey is different. This is particularly true of placements, although the early stages of placements were stressful for many teachers. Talking around lessons, vocational knowledge

is applied very directly to create resources and try to meet students' needs. Vocationally relevant and up to date content together with teacher enthusiasm help build rapport, as does bringing vocational experiences into the classroom. Learning is seen as problem solving, as from adversity comes real learning and adaptive creative thinking. Learning is also working with others and thinking about the bigger picture in a fun way. This student teacher is very conscious of trying to prepare students for a range of roles in industry, and of the role of placements in this. This teacher would like her students to have bespoke journeys through education. Work placements prepare them for job roles of interest to them, in a way that her placement has prepared her for a job role of interest to her. There is a strong sense of social mobility promotion in their discourse. Liaison with others in the department is likely to bring this about. Some students are used as role models to promote the importance of placement. The teacher is very aware that she could be wearing rose tinted glasses in terms of her view of education.

The hardest part of ITE was building initial confidence and dealing with the emotional rollercoaster. There are strong parallels between the student teacher and the student journey: it's as much a journey for you as it is for them. There were a lot of moments of doubt about possibly going back to industry and of being too old but she also stresses the value of life experience. In lockdown there was no online distance delivery, so practice was sustained by theoretical work. This theoretical work has really influenced future practice around the area of the importance of embedding literacy and numeracy skills. New teachers can bring creativity and different ways of doing and mentors can provide support beyond the course. The placement here led to a job role in the next academic year.

Appendix Eight: Data analysis: example memo generating themes

Interview 2

Overall: extensive vocational experience and past training experience helped this pre-service teacher on a full-time programme in becoming a teacher, as did strong mentor and tutor relationships, and building rapport with students. For her, managing the learning of groups of 16 to 19 year olds was initially a shock, and a key part of becoming a teacher was building confidence, with this, partly by getting to know her learners and promoting high aspirations in turn. Becoming part of the larger team in the placement setting was also very important to this teacher: being accepted as not only a student teacher. When lockdown hit in March 2020, she felt she had just hit her stride. ITE then became largely theoretical. The academic/ theoretical sides of the course are not discussed as a particular challenge. The student teacher later progressed into employment in the placement setting.

The road to teaching: came straight from industry (██████████) with a traditional academic background and found FE students' lack of engagement a culture shock.

Theorising and reflecting came naturally.

Relating and being part of a team very important, within placement and on ITE course- a strong part of learning.

Sharing vocational experience helped develop her teacher identity.

Experiencing strong emotions around student behaviours and motivations and around fitting in the placement setting.

Planning taking pride in creating own resources.

Teaching the importance of being thrown in at the deep end, having mentor support, but being allowed about to build own relationships. Managing behaviours was a challenge.

Meeting students' needs

Learning through lockdown some contact with staff, no contact with students-time and familial factors took over. Did not do any online delivery. Learning became theoretical.

The wider job role viewed as a development area around understanding assessment, marking work summatively, processes such as standardisation.

Learning from adversity comes real learning and real adaptive creative thinking.

Appendix Nine: Data analysis: emerging themes from memos example

This study's initial focus was the effect of interruptions to the practicum on becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education. Through working with data, its focus has shifted to how the practices which constitute teachers' identities are constructed and developed through ITE, and the ways in which reflection on interrupted practice through the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 can make visible the previously taken-for-granted practices which constitute being and becoming a teacher in post-compulsory education. The processes and practices of becoming a teacher are viewed through the eyes of pre- and in-service teachers, their mentors and teacher educators and illustrated by artefacts selected by participants and their descriptions of their uses and what they represent.

Time to become a teacher: juggling multiple responsibilities

Initial teacher education is undertaken by pre- and in-service teachers following full or part-time routes to qualification, which are designed to widen access to programmes and therefore participation in them. But engaging in these routes often requires significant juggling of familial, work and other responsibilities on the part of teachers in order to navigate teaching programmes successfully and become teachers. These practices of managing becoming a teacher alongside other responsibilities can be seen as a taken-for-granted aspect of ITE, preparation for the juggling of responsibilities which constitutes teachers' working lives. However, pre- and in-service teachers' responsibilities beyond their ITE programmes can impinge upon the time these teachers are able to devote to the tasks a teacher undertakes and to talking and thinking about teaching whilst undertaking ITE.

A great deal of teaching and learning within the Further Education sector is vocational in nature and programmes of study are enhanced by teachers with

up-to-date vocational and professional knowledge and experience, yet the ITE journeys of new vocational teachers are not smooth. Prospective teachers who wish to move from vocational areas into teaching have to carefully plan these career changes and often have to work alongside their studies in order to make a career in teaching possible financially. Where bursaries are available, these allow prospective teachers to worry less about money and focus more on developing teaching skills by spending more time in their teaching placement settings. Teachers who first secure paid teaching work within the sector then undertake ITE as in-service teachers often have ITE programmes funded by their employers. However, these teachers are expected to study part-time in addition to undertaking employment in a new job role. For them, the pressures of the new teaching position, although complementary to ITE, can prevent them from focussing on their teacher education programme. These practices of taking on a very high work and study load have become normalised. The period of lockdown, where pre- and in-service teachers were studying from home and a number were also working from home made visible the familial, schooling and caring responsibilities that many pre- and in-service teachers manage alongside their ITE programmes. Through this time period, it was common for teachers to request and be granted extra time to complete ITE programmes as a result of these visible pressures during periods of lockdown. Prior to this, few accommodations were made to take into account the effect of work pressures and other responsibilities on programme completion. For both pre- and in-service teachers, other demands on their time can prevent teachers from gaining the maximum from their ITE programmes.

Immersion in settings, exposure to and reflection on practices

Having time to learn with others in a profession where much work is undertaken individually leads to reported satisfaction and success for pre- and in-service teachers, their mentors and tutors. But this learning is experienced differently for pre- and in-service teachers. For teachers new to the further

education sector and the teaching setting, a great deal of learning appears to occur through immersion in that setting which in turn allows for exposure to a wide range of practices. This extended involvement in the setting and its everyday activities seems more important than formally planned learning events such as observation of experienced teachers. Pre-service teachers, especially those with limited experience of the FE sector, value the time spent in the practicum setting and often express a desire for more time to spend in and assimilate into these settings and to be able to reflect on what happens there. However, for pre-service teachers, time to devote to ITE can be a scarce commodity, juggling familial and caring responsibilities with part-time work and full-time study, or full-time work and part-time study. Lack of time on the part of teachers alongside the work pressures experienced by teaching mentors can make it hard for pre-service teachers to both become attuned to practices within the teaching setting and to be able to discuss and unpick these practices. Conversely, where new teachers have the time to experience, reflect upon and adopt planning and teaching practices, they develop confidence in their roles.

Dedicated time to reflect on practice is also important for in-service teachers. For this group, attending taught aspects of their ITE programme can create the space and opportunities for this to occur. These teachers, who typically spend significant periods in their teaching settings as part of their job roles, are more likely to report conscious learning from deliberate learning events which separate them from their everyday work, events such as observation of other teachers or dedicated application of ideas from ITE course sessions within their practice. For in-service teachers, these aspects of ITE can be protected time away from work responsibilities to allow them to take notice of, isolate specific practice aspects and reflect on them, often with others.

Reflecting with others on aspects of the teaching role is a practice which makes learning within ITE visible, whether in their teaching context and/or the ITE learning space. Reflection can be portrayed as an individual act but

interview data suggest that reflection with and around others is at least as important and under-explored. Reflection occurs around many facets of being a teacher: positioning as a professional, belonging, taking on wider aspects of the role as well as planning and teaching. But in order to be able to reflect with others, learning relationships must first be built and sustained. Through the 2020 lockdown, when teaching practice continued, it was by necessity more isolated, with reduced contact with other professionals. The interpersonal contact which remained was largely through telephones and online platforms, and was deliberately organised, rather than naturally occurring. This lack of incidental and unplanned interactions also reduced opportunities for reflection with others. However, the absence of these interactions through the lockdown period served to highlight their importance within pre- and in-service teachers' reflection and professional learning. Even for those who continued to teach online and/or at a distance through this period of time, there was a sense of reflecting on diminishing practice, perhaps through reduced interpersonal contacts and disappearing or fading relationships. It is in retrospect, through dedicated time to discuss the period that significance of the emergent practices of the period as well as their lasting impact have become apparent. ITE programmes build in dedicated spaces for reflection around teaching observation but this is a structured, formalised process, taking place at a specified time in a specified way. Vignettes shared suggest that informal and incidental reflection with others may be at least as important as planned time to reflect.

Appendix Ten: Data analysis: theme reduction and variation example

1. Time to become a teacher
2. Immersion in settings and exposure to practices
3. Building and sustaining networks of learning relationships
4. Teacher learning within ITE
5. Teacher resources within learning relationships
6. Becoming attuned to ITE and contextual practices
7. Navigating fixed and flexible practices
8. Knowing students and perceiving their needs
9. Designing lessons and learning activities
10. Developing the curriculum
11. Conceptions of student learning
12. Leading and managing face to face learning
13. Assessing learners and learning
14. Teaching observations as a mechanism of practice adoption
15. Combining practices and pedagogies: weighing up contextual, vocational, subject-specific and research-informed perspectives
16. Artefacts as reservoirs for practices
17. Leading and managing online and distance learning (divergence of practices)

Theme	Categories	Interview
<p>Time to become a teacher (face to face)</p> <p>Juggling responsibilities is a key element of a teacher's role. (<i>too much to do/ taking on too much</i>)</p> <p>Managing multiple demands and responsibilities is part of most teachers' experiences of becoming a teacher. In the main, pre-lockdown teachers managed to make time for ITE although new, in-service teachers struggled with this area. Managing multiple demands can result in no time to collaborate and reflect with others; time to do this could make their jobs more manageable.</p>	<p>Managing multiple demands and responsibilities alongside ITE</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16
	<p>Dedicated time to collaborate and reflect with others (F2F)</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15
	<p>Insufficient time to collaborate and reflect with others (F2F)</p>	5, 10, 12, 16, 17
	<p>Time not discussed (F2F)</p>	8

<p>Time to become a teacher (post-lockdown)</p> <p>Post-lockdown, three distinct effects are noted: a distancing from teaching practice, an intensification of work in adapting to online/distance delivery and a disconnection from the teacher's development. The post lockdown situation magnified differences between pre- and in-service teachers.</p> <p>As a result of these changes in circumstances post-lockdown, teachers in each group required more time to complete ITE for a range of reasons: workload changes, lack of motivation, responsibilities, anxiety. This period made their circumstances more visible.</p> <p><i>Immersion in the setting</i> is connected to time to become a teacher.</p>	Time post-lockdown	
	Reflecting on receding practice (post-lockdown)	2,4,6,7,14
	Adapting to online/distance delivery (post lockdown)	1, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13.
	Disconnected from the teacher's development (post-lockdown)	5, 9, 11A, 11B, 15, 16

Appendix Eleven: Data analysis: developing trajectories

Cases / presage	Common factors Process		Tentative description
<p>3, 11, 13 Collaborative professional development In service Presage</p> <p>Dedicated time to collaborate and reflect with others</p> <p>immersed in</p> <p>Valuing teacher resources</p> <p>Interactive group learning preference / learning from an expert/ individually</p>	<p>Satisfactory network/ wide network</p> <p>jointly redevelops</p> <p>Expertly navigates and influences</p> <p>Reconciles ITE and contextual influences/ ITE-aligned planning practices</p>	<p>Vocational and/or academic perspective</p> <p>Contextual and research-informed general pedagogies</p> <p>Creates and co-creates with others</p> <p>Reconciles ITE and contextual influences</p> <p>Balancing out rapport and management</p> <p>Skilful class manager/ communicating with students and setting up tasks</p>	<p>Time for collaboration and reflection</p> <p>Collaborators and collaborative</p> <p>Freedom to experiment.</p> <p>Immersed in setting- Joint redevelopment</p> <p>Secure skillset</p> <p>Learning conversations</p> <p>Broad range of skills</p> <p>Personal resources are valued</p> <p>Vocational perspective on students</p> <p>Focus on diagnostic/ formative assessment</p> <p>Learning can be a social practice</p> <p>In-service</p> <p>Ideas for descriptions</p> <p>Can hone specific aspects of practice</p> <p>Model of collaborative CPD- experienced teacher immersed in their setting with valued resources – working with others to refine skills.</p> <p>These factors are unlikely to be in place for many</p>

